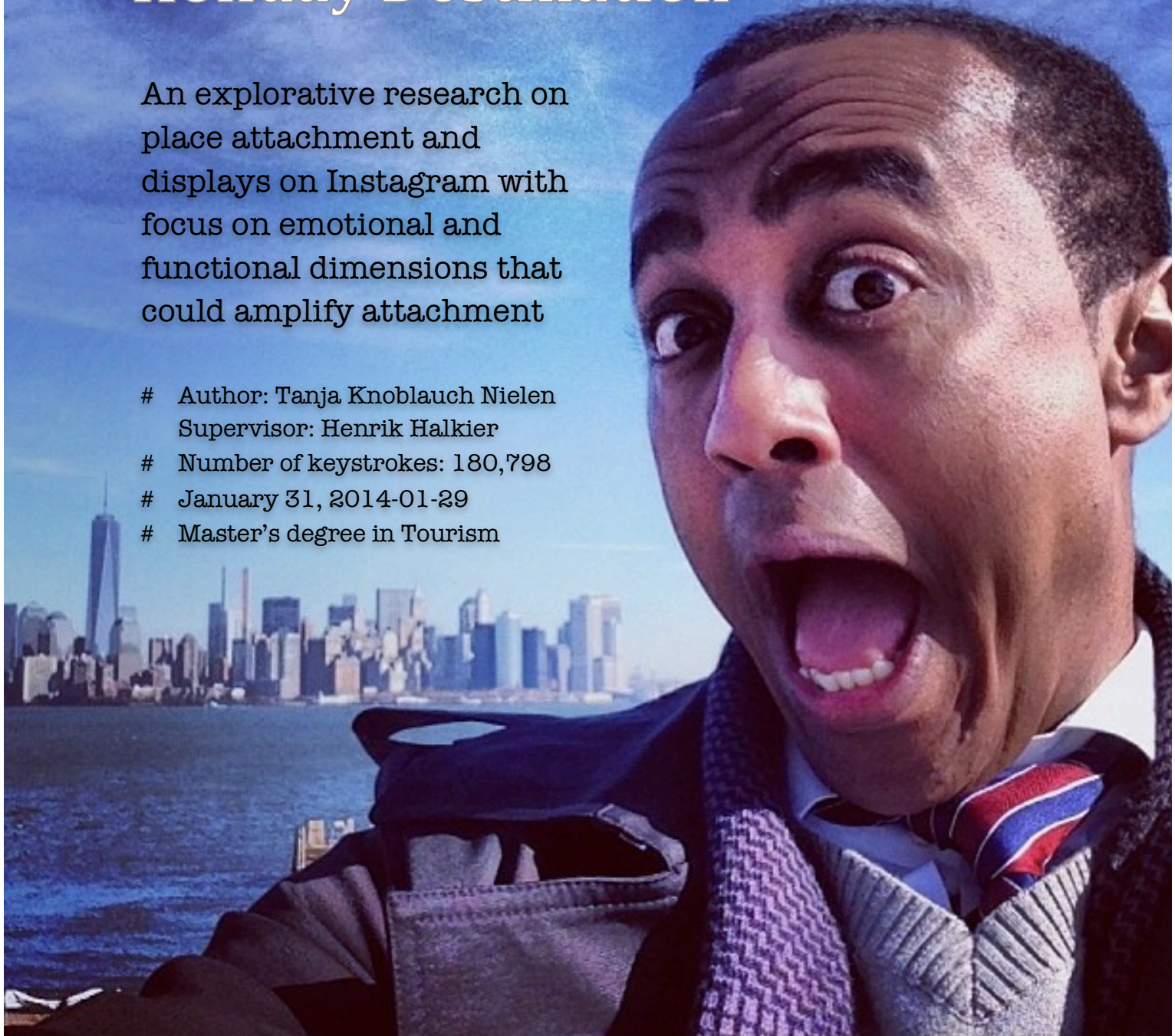


Emotional Place Attachment to a Holiday Destination

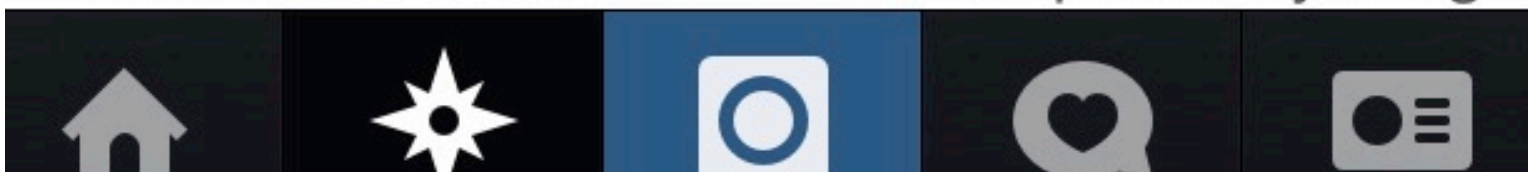
An explorative research on place attachment and displays on Instagram with focus on emotional and functional dimensions that could amplify attachment

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- # Number of keystrokes: 180,798
- # January 31, 2014-01-29
- # Master's degree in Tourism



♥ 27 likes

- 💬 **woldusdk** LOVE THIS CITY ON MY SHOULDERS !!!! #liberty #nyc #crazy #fun
- nand0_0** Nice pic!!
- woldusdk** Thanks brother - hope everything





*An explorative research of place attachment and displays on Instagram place:
A case study of Danish Tourists in New York City*

Abstract

Findings from a case study suggest that emotional place attachment to a holiday destination is generated through functional values (such as the physical setting of a place) and emotional values (such as the value of intimacy in social interactions with locals) in tourists' psychological investment with a setting defined by individual's place identity. The functional values were detected in place dependency of what made the place seem attractive and satisfying (place satisfaction) in the alternatives of activities and sociocultural relationships which lead to different levels of loyalty behavior. The emotional values were detected in love declarations and affection for a place (place affection) in the attitudes about the meaning of a place which made the tourist feel at home or gave a strong sense of belonging because of psychological well being. The functional values seemed to be the catalyst for attachment that embodies action or behavior tendencies in Instagram imagery. The affective values were the conditions of attachment that lead to emotional attachment embodied in attitudes for a place which were evident in Instagram text (narratives and hashtags).

Keywords: Place attachment; tourist experience; place satisfaction; place dependability; place affection; place identity; functional values; emotional values; love(marks); Instagram; qualitative research, netnography

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Prologue: A Personal Reflection

You must see why I love New York. Because the whole world's in New York. -

Oriana Fallaci, famous Italian journalist and writer (midmanhattan.com)

I was in love with New York. I do not mean 'love' in any colloquial way, I mean that I was in love with the city, the way you love the first person who ever touches you and never love anyone quite that way again.

- **Joan Didion**, American author best known for her novels and her literary journalism (ecosalon.com)

As a part of a six months long internship with the New York Office of VisitDenmark, the Danish national destination marketing organization, I experienced New York City (NYC) for the first time. The city overwhelmed me with various feelings and emotions of both positive and negative character. My first week in New York, I was sure I could never live there permanently but the last week, I was not sure if I could ever leave again. It wasn't love at first sight, but was it love...?

Love was traditionally associated with love attitudes to a romantic partner, friends and family (Hammock & Richardson, 2011). Now emotions and attachment are known expressions within tourist behavior and product performance (Pawle & Cooper, 2006). The role of place attachment in tourism is recognizable, especially within the assessment of satisfaction and tourist experience (Bowen & Clarke, 2009). Attachment to holiday destinations can be expressed in travel photos. For me personally, travel photos on my smart phone and sharing them on social media had an important role for my stay in NYC and memory of the holiday experiences. I felt compelled to reevaluate the function of travel photography in social media as more than just a means of remembering a vacation but as a notion of place attachment. Hence the explorative thesis examines attachment to a holiday destination and photo sharing in the use of Instagram as representation and means of display in various ways.

1 Introduction

Research on place attachment has started to emerge in the tourism literature (Gross & Brown, 2008) however, to the best of the researcher's knowledge, attachment to places is still a relatively unexplored concept in a tourism context with limited academic research that thoroughly examines tourist's attachment to holiday destinations.

Tourism research has long been with focus on people's conscious actions of holiday planning, information gathering, cognitive evaluation and decision-making approached from a rational aspect (Bowen & Clarke, 2009; Zakrisson & Zillinger, 2011). Such approaches are certainly important to understand tourist behavior and functional benefits for the consumer, but the role of emotion has started to receive more and more attention (Zakrisson & Zillinger, 2011).

Feelings or emotions, which occur in the unconscious mind of the consumer, seem to have a strong influence on rationality (Pawle & Cooper, 2006), decision-making, and consumer behavior. In the constructive mindset, the significance of emotional components of destination image is thus hard to overlook, both for researchers and destination (marketing) managers, because tourist experiences replete with emotional reactions (Bowen & Clarke, 2009) and may not only evoke place attraction but also place attachment.

While recognizing there can be found a large body of literature about destination image and destination choice related to place attraction, the current thesis is based on a critical examination of existing research relating to the concept of place attachment and relevant theoretical ideas, in particular focusing on two main categories: functional and affective/emotive attachment with underlying sub-dimensions of both tangible and intangible elements. Academic literature about travel motives is brought in to examine place attraction in the vein of place attachment. This is mainly because emotional characteristics can be outlined in the internal and affective appraisals which offer an in-depth way of identifying and explaining the nuance of emotions and feelings for a place (Bowen & Clarke, 2009).

Rationality and functionality can be studied in the view of external motivations (the drive from external stimuli), cognitive motivations (linked to the need for meaning) and functional benefits (the personal value and meaning attached to a functional attribute) (Bowen & Clarke, 2009; Gartner, 1996). With the extensive amount of travel motive literature, the purpose of the thesis is not to thoroughly review existing literature about travel motivation, but to consider how some of the theoretical elements could be used to explore place attachment.

A long-term involvement with a place can be ritualized in social media use (Wise et al., 2010). Capturing a moment by taking photographs can be used to remembering holiday experience and creating a memory. The photograph is able to present us with the social and material world in a ritualized or habitual use of a particular medium which lead to different cognitive and emotional outcomes. (Wise et al., 2010). Instagram (IG) is a high valued medium as on the top of the most used picture-based social media in the world, and according to Hanan & Putit (2014:471) it is as a trendy tool in digital tourism activities where snapshots of tourist experiences can be shared across different social media channels expressing likes or dislikes towards a place of interest. These are emotional responses based on cognitive evaluation, and the notion of “emotion” is not a simple phenomenon to explore or measure (Bowen & Clarke, 2009; Pawle & Cooper, 2006). Taking definitions into account, the present thesis does not intend to clarify the full range of consumer emotions from a psychological aspect. Instead, the explorative thesis examines emotional and functional dimensions that amplify attachment to a place including positive (e.g. interest and joy) or negative (e.g. disgust or fear) experiences and affective declarations.

The concept of love or affective declaration in place attachment appears to be a relatively unknown phenomenon in a tourism context. Therefore, a paragraph on love(mark) theory (e.g. Pawle & Cooper, 2006; Roberts, 2004; Roberts, 2006) has been included to discuss an otherwise overlooked aspect in place attachment.

Based in the above considerations, the present thesis sets out to explore place attachment and love declaration for tourism places. Accordingly, point of origin is taken in the mind of the consumers (demand side) with focus on place attachment detected in the use of Instagram and interview narratives.

1.1 Problem Statement and Introduction of the case study

From a cross-disciplinary approach the problem statement is addressing the following question: *what is emotional attachment to a holiday destination and to what extent can it be detected in the use of Instagram in social media networking?*

The problem statement entails a theoretical and methodological enquiry firstly by examining the theoretical aspect of place attachment to a holiday destination, and secondly a methodological discussion of collecting and interpreting data on Instagram to identify attitudes and behavior patterns of place attachment.

The problem statement is examined in a case study design because without the case study, the thesis would solely be a review on existing literature about place attachment, but hence the explorative character of the thesis, it is the intention to investigate new potential linkages and views on place attachment to a holiday destination

To the best of the researcher's knowledge, the link between place attachment and IG use has not been studied before. A case study research allows in-depth review of new or unclear phenomena based on real-life events and experiences (Phelan, 2011), and hence a case study design was chosen to explore place attachment at various stages of the research process with insights and explanatory value (Bryman, 2012) within and beyond existing theory.

The case focuses on Danish tourists who are IG users and have been to NYC as leisure tourists. It could have been explored in the nature of other nationalities, but based on the investigator's background and personal experiences with being a (Danish) tourist in NYC (cf. the prologue), there was already established an insight and pre-understanding about "Danes in NYC", hence seemed as natural point of departure of the case study design.

New York City (NYC) is a particular case in the means of its exceptional high brand awareness and popularity with arrivals of 52 million visitors in 2012; a all-time



record and a 2.1 percent increase over 2011 (NYC.gov, 2012). Hence, this case choice potentially delivers various aspects of place attachment in being attractive for numerous reasons. In accordance to the problem statement, it is not particularly about the significance of places *measures* ("how much") but an enquiry about the *meaning* of the place ("what and why") from a tourist perspective

2 Theoretical framework

To address the problem statement it is relevant to clarify and break down the construct of the problem statement, both the explicit and implicit theoretical themes, as well as define and discuss these variables in accordance to existing academic writings. In other words, the purpose of this chapter is to examine different “parts” in accordance to the “whole of problem statement which can be related to the hermeneutic circle by having a movement back and forth between the parts and the whole of the academic writing that needs to be interpreted (Langergaard, Rasmussen, & Sørensen 2006). In the end of this chapter the different parts are connected in a figurative recapitulation to illustrate how the different parts seem to be interrelated. Additionally, the summarizing figure also functions as a theoretical guiding tool for the upcoming analysis.

The explicit variables in the problem statement are “tourists”, “emotional” “place attachment” (to a holiday destination), and “Instagram” (in Social media networking). The first part of the theoretical background is to introduce a short clarification of the term “tourist” and how it is used and understood in the present thesis. Secondly, to discuss travel motives and place attraction based on conventional approaches to tourist motivation. Thirdly, to review and discuss existing definitions and approaches to place attachment, including different sub-dimensions according to two overall classes of place attachment; the functional view and the affective/emotive view.

The second and final part of the theoretical framework introduces the practice of IG and user-generated content related to the discussion of place attachment.

#1: Place attachment to holiday destination

2.1 Place Attraction: Point of Departure

2.1.1 Defining the “Tourist” and the “Temporal Process”

The present thesis focuses on Danish “tourists”, which makes it relevant to clarify how the term “tourist” is understood and used in the study. A tourist can be described as being outside the usual environment or normal place of residence and work with duration involved, typically referred to as length of stay from one night to maximum 1 year (Bowen & Clarke, 2009; WTO, 1991). There are different types of tourists depending on activity undertaken by choice, e.g. business tourist and leisure tourist (Cohen, 2004). This thesis focuses on leisure tourist, both tourists who went to New York on a city break/vacation, and students who went abroad (on an exchange student or internship) for less than a year. The city break tourist and the student may not evolve the same place attachment, and length of stay could be an influential factor in the process of place attachment. Consequently, both students/interns and city break tourist are included in the study to examine the significance of the temporal process (e.g. Zakrisson & Zillinger, 2011).

The temporal processes can be reviewed in the notion of “time and space” (Zakrisson & Zillinger, 2011) meaning that vacations and experiences take place in a scenery (e.g. in a city) in a limited time period. Individuals generally start to develop attachment after one visit or more, although it could be possible to develop feelings for places one has never visited (Lee, 1999; Moore and Graefe, 1994). Consequently it is relevant to consider the temporal process which can be divided into three stages (Ek et al., 2008) as illustrated in figure one (on the next page).

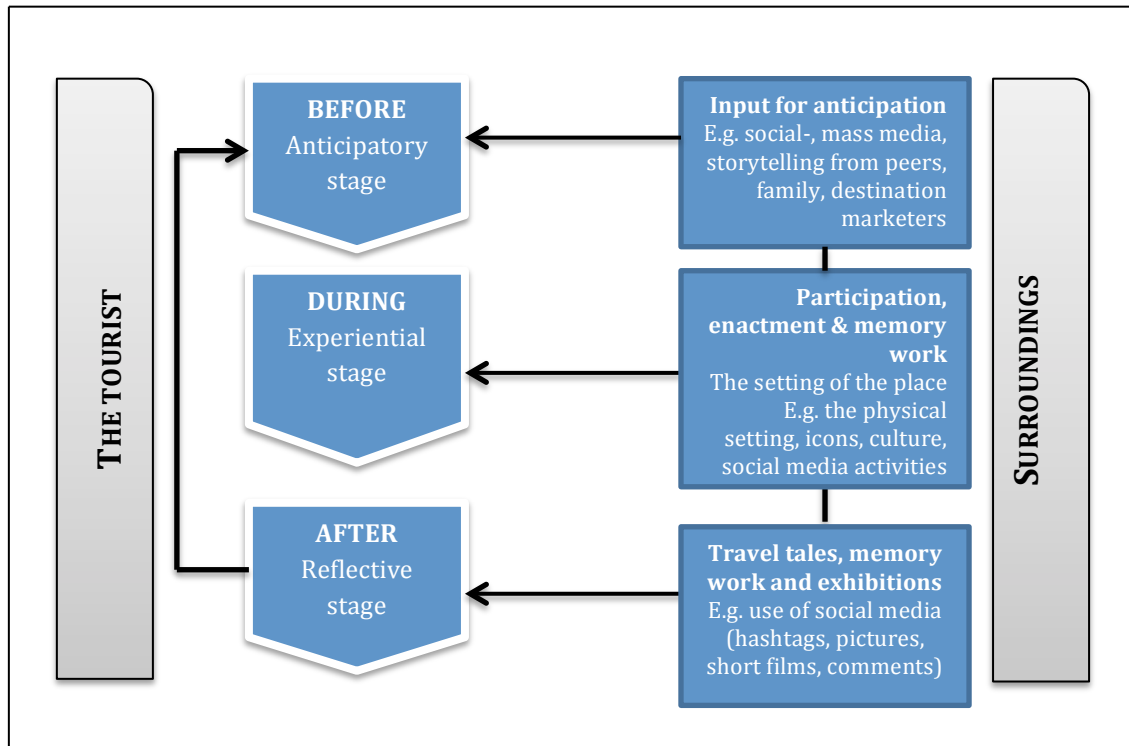


Figure 1: The temporal process of vacation and place attachment (inspired by Ek et al., 2008: 127; Tussyadiah, & Fesenmaier, 2009) (Self-made, 2013)

Even for first- time visitors, a sense of place attachment could emerge prior to the visit to the destination (Halpenny (2006) in the anticipatory stage formed by stories and narratives about the destination from e.g. friends and family, and different types of (social) media, e.g. IG or marketing initiatives by destination marketers. In the experiential stage, there are different tangible and intangible attributes to impact the holiday experience which is discussed in (section 2.2. *From Place Attraction to Place Attachment to a holiday destination*, p. 11) in terms of functional and affective values related to place attachment. Ek et al. (2008: 136) emphasize memory work in the reflective stage; however social media networking, e.g. IG, allows memory work to take place in the experiential stage which is discussed in Part 2 of the analysis (p. 20) about IG.

In the reflective stage, when the tourist returns back home, the memory work continues. This happens either by telling travel tails to people in their physical surroundings or using social media to communicate with other IG users. Thus,

social media helps to create “an awareness of its having-been-there” (Trauer & Ryan, 2004) by creating attention about your self and subsequently social media could be a form of virtual diary to preserve good times and remind people and them selves of where they have been.

Figure one suggested a circular process similar to the hermeneutic circle (e.g. Andersen, 2008; Fuglsang & Olsen, 2007) because the memory work in the reflective stage changes the pre-understanding of the place to a new understanding when revisiting the place hence could impact the degree of place attachment in becoming more strong through revisit. The catalyst for a revisit could rely on different travel motives of the individual tourist and place attraction which is pivot for the following theoretical discussion.

2.1.2 Travel Motives and Place Attraction

Research on travel motivation is evolving along the general tourism studies agenda, and the amount of research of this topic is comprehensive. With the focus on place attachment, it is not the intention to make a complete and comprehensive review of travel motivation theories. Instead, the aim of this section is to review and discuss the role of tourists’ motivation and place attraction in the formation of place attachment.

Existing literature about travel motives mainly evolves around what reasons tourists have for going on a vacation (e.g. Poon, 1993; Ryan, 1997) and what makes them keep coming back which is related to destination loyalty. For instance Yuksel et al. (2010: 274) have studied loyalty and tourist satisfaction in the development of attachment to a destination, hence loyalty appears to be a value to consider in the exploration of emotional attachment. The early thoughts about motivation and place attraction have been explained by the notion of a number of motivational “needs” and “wants” (McCabe, 2000; Ryan, 1997). Especially needs has been located within a humanistic tradition associated with writers like Maslow with five basic needs to reach the higher level of “self-actualization” need in contrast to the lower level of “physiological” and “safety” needs (Maslow, 1970). While self-actualization has received a lot of attention in travel motives and tourism research

the emotional responses do not occupy the higher parts of the Maslowian pyramid of needs (Trauer & Ryan, 2004). What reasons consumers have for going on vacation is not only depending on needs but also desires that differ from individual to individual. A holiday could be purely hedonic (e.g. relaxation) reasons or utilitarian (e.g. prestige) but typically a combination of the two (Bowen & Clarke, 2009; Yuksel et al., 2010). According to Trauer & Ryan (2004: 489) a large number of people are seeking hedonistic experiences motivated by simply 'having a good time' (enjoyment) that are not purely hedonistic and may differ from tourist to tourist what make them feel satisfied and enjoyable.

With a pool of different functional and effective values related to travel motivation, different tourist motives are classified in two overall classes: 1) functional values and (2) affective/emotional/psychological values. The investigator is fully aware of the limitations of information that are gathered by the choice of two overall classes, however it seems necessary to make a structured and focused study. The choice of the two overall classes is based on how they represent both tangible and intangible components of travel motives and place attraction. Additionally, according to existing literature, examples of sub-categories that go under the two types of value (functional and affective/emotional) have been identified and classified under the main categories.

Values	Travel motivation
<i>Functional value (tangible) Pull factors</i>	
Scenery/environment of a place/climate	Variety of fauna and flora, beautiful landscapes (Bowen & Clarke, 2009; Echtner & Richie, 1993).
	Beautiful natural parks, icons in a city (e.g. Empire State Building in NYC).
	Climate (e.g. Seeking warm weather for a beach vacation).
Infrastructures, and socioeconomic environment	For instance convenience, shopping facilities, costs, quality, accommodation, nightlife, restaurants, subway system (easy to get around) (Bowen & Clarke, 2009).
	Good value for money, the attractiveness of the on-shore excursions at the destination, product performance, safety/safe place (Martín & Bosque, 2008).
<i>Affective/emotional/psychological and social values (intangible) Push factors</i>	
Atmosphere, relaxation and escapism	An atmosphere at the holiday destination. Temporary escape from ordinary (Bansal & Eiselt, 2004; Crompton 1979). To pursue activities of interest, get away from everyday routine, having a "good time", and romantic experiences (Lundberg, 1971; Crompton, 1979)

Adventure and novelty	Adventure as “something new”, to discover new places . (Lundberg, 1971; Shoemaker, 1994) or as the socio-cultural motive for “novelty” and “curiosity” ‘Adventure is a cultural motive whose force exerts a pull (Crompton, 1979).
Personal reasons and desires	"Prestige", "nostalgia/regression", i.e., visiting places for , “old times’ sake”), “enhancement of kinship relations”, “exploration and evaluation of self”, and “facilitation of social interaction” (Crompton, 1979). Arousing destination, exciting destination, or pleasant destination (Bansal & Eiselt, 2004).
Interpersonal relationships Cultural encounters in tourism Enrichments of education and travel	To meet new people. To integrate oneself into the life and activities of local people (Bansal & Eiselt, 2004). See how people in other cultures live, to see particular sights (that belong to the educational motive (Lundberg, 1979), and attend special events. To explore historical and cultural heritage. To learn about cultures and ways of life (Bansal & Eiselt, 2004). Social interaction and intimacy with travel companions.

Table 1: Functional and affective/emotional values related to travel motives and place attraction (self-made, 2013)

Motivation can be viewed as an internal (intrinsic) force influenced by so-called push factors (cf. table one) related to psychological investment with the place (Baloglu & Uysal, 1996; Cameron & Pierce, 2002; Knoez, 2005, Martín & Bosque, 2008). A place could have a push force when it is constructed in the mind of the tourist. Motivation can also be viewed as an external (extrinsic) force (Cameron & Pierce, 2002) that leads people to select one destination over another once the decision to travel has been made (Martín & Bosque, 2008). The external forces are influenced by so-called pull factors and can be characterized in terms of functional benefits or tangible and directly observable characteristics of the destination (Bowen & Clarke, 2009; Echtner & Richie, 1991, 1993). For example cheap shopping, perceived safety, quality, food choices, nature of the landscape/scenery, etc. could be valued by tourists to make them feel attracted and satisfied about a place (cf. table one).

The two approaches of functional and affective or emotional values do not necessarily exclude each other but could complement each other in a iterative process. For instance atmosphere (related to affective value) could be constructed in the physical scenery (functional values) hence physical assets also embodies emotional attitudes for a place and place satisfaction. Nonetheless, it cannot be assumed that place attachment and place satisfaction are complementary

constructs. Place satisfaction is both based on cognitive and rational judgments and emotive attitudes and evaluation (Bowen & Clarke, 2009) hence a sub-dimension to consider in the notion of emotional place attachment.

2.2 From Place Attraction to Place Attachment to a holiday destination

2.2.1 The construct of Place Attachment: loyalty and place satisfaction

A place can be defined as a “meaningful location”, an entity with both a social and physical dimension (Hankinson, 2007), and a tourist place can be defined as: “any place that fosters the feeling of being a tourist” (Tussyadia & Fesenmaier, 2009). The meaning of a place in the upcoming case study is related to a city, the New York metropolitan. A city is not a single standalone product but multifaceted consisting of individual services (such as shopping, sports centres, theatres, museums as well as infrastructural services such as road and rail networks) not only related to tourism offers (Hankinson, 2007), but services that local residents, businesses, employees, and investors can benefit from. Hence, the place product is characterized by multiplicity, not only co-produced but also co-consumed (Hankinson, 2007).

The concept of place attachment has been researched as an important factor in the prediction of loyalty intentions toward a destination, which in turn could be a predictor of loyalty behaviors (Su et al. 2010; Yuksel et al., 2010). Attachment and loyalty hence seem connected and Toyama & Yamada (2012: 11) defines destination loyalty in the measurement of tourists’ intent to revisit the same destination, and recommend it to others.

Hernández et al. (2007: 310) describe “place attachment” as an affective bond that people establish with a place where they prefer to remain hence also reflect on elements of loyalty and commitment. The level of attachment varies according to the three indicators of place loyalty that can be categorized into three sub-types of the increasing strength of sense of place: from place belongingness (the weakest

level) through place attachment, to place commitment (highest level) (Lewicka, 2011). This definition suggests that commitment is a deeper level of loyalty compared to attachment. According to Albert & Merunka (2013: 260) commitment is consumer's willingness to maintain a relationship with the brand, hence in a place attachment context could be a tendency of maintaining closeness with the place (cf. Knez, 2005). Hernández et al. (2007) definition is related to both natives and non-natives, and hence not particularly tourists who might not prefer to remain with the intention of returning back to their homes. Instead of wanting to remain, the tourists might want to revisit out of loyalty intentions. Having said that, the idea of wanting to remain cannot be dismissed if the place attachment becomes so strong, hence reach the level of deeply held commitment (Toyama & Yamada, 2012), and the tourist would desire to move there more permanently.

The loyalty depends on place satisfaction is a multidimensional summary judgment both predicted by functional benefits and cognitive evaluation of the place (when the tourists decide whether the environment and facilities enable to fulfill their holiday goals) (Brocato, 2006; Stedman, 2002). This description does not emphasize the influence of emotional responses in place satisfaction. However, emotions occur in the unconscious mind and could control peoples' rationality and decision-making (Pawle & Cooper, 2006). Affective evaluation can be a reaction (attitude) to something perceived as attractive, likable, pleasant, enjoyable, and satisfying etc. (Brocato, 2006) which may differ according to the individual tourist previous (travel) experiences, preferences and travel motives and their travel career patterns (Pearce, 2005, Pearce & Lee, 2005). Riley (1992: 13) emphasizes the affective relationship in place attachment between people and the place setting that goes beyond cognition, preference, or judgment. Altman and Low (1992: 5) also focus on interplay of affect and emotions and actions in reference to a place, hence both concerns attitudes and behavior patterns. More specifically, tourists' evaluation of a destination can be affected by a "sentimentally, emotionally, rose-colored views" (Yuksel et al., 2010) that go beyond rationality.

Yuksel et al. (2010: 274) state that limited research has been conducted to explore the likely influences of affective structures and emotional meanings that tourists attach to the place they visit, although it will likely impact their satisfaction and

future behavior. However, the role of emotion and satisfaction has come to play a larger role, because the tourist experience is replete with emotional reactions (Bowen & Clarke, 2009) and sensory responses with satisfaction as a major antecedent of loyalty (Lee, 2003; Sui & Baloglu, 2003) and hence place attachment.

One of the predictors of place attachment (in general) that has received a lot of attention is length of residence, and according to Hernández et al. (2007: 311) it is often the case that persons who have lived longer in a place feel greater attachment to it. This is related to place attachment in general and not particularly to a tourism context, however, as noted earlier about the temporal process (cf. fig. 1, p. 7) the length of stay could be a critical or influencing factor.

Yuksel et al., 2010 study place attachment in context of tourism related activities, but define “place attachment” in a broad perspective not particularly related to tourism:

“The process by which humans form emotional bonds to places is known as place attachment. In other words, the sense of physically being and feeling ‘in place’ or ‘at home’ can be considered as a sign that an individual has created an emotional tie to a place.” (Yuksel et al., 2010: 275).

The quotation reflects place attachment with focus on emotional investment with the physical setting, not only in the view of the tourists but e.g. residents or natives. Furthermore, the definition has no implications of how the sense of feeling ‘at home’ is obtained, e.g. through length of stay.

The definitions so far reflect on place attachment primarily based on emotional values and physical being. In the vein of this, place attachment can be divided into three overall classes of a social dimension and a physical basis (Brocato, 2006; Lewicka, 2011; Williams, et al., 1992), and the “affective” components” (Kyle, Graefe, & Manning, 2005). The social and affective components seem to relate to emotional attachment and the physical basis could be linked to functional attachment.

The construct of place attachment has been described as having two distinct dimensions; place identity, which refers to a symbolic or affective attachment to a place, and place dependence, which refers to a functional attachment to a place (Gross & Brown, 2006). The notion of emotional attachment (related to place identity) and functional attachment (related to place dependence) are thus reviewed individually starting with functional attachment of a more measurable character.

2.2.2 Functional Attachment to a Place

Place dependence is described as functional attachment based on level of physical involvement that refers to the importance of a setting to provide features that support specific desired activities, and hence can meet the functional needs and desires of the tourist (Su et al., 2010; Yuksel et al., 2010). Thus changes of tourism activities may well reflect changes in place dependency (Gu & Ryan, 2008), and place dependence is evaluated in its functional ability to satisfy preferred leisure activities in comparison with other place (Su et al., 2010).

A place setting's attributes are various functional components, typically of observable character or with functional value to the tourist, e.g. the climate, the physical assets (e.g. buildings, streets etc.), perceived safety (e.g. crime), costs, convenience (e.g. accessibility to go to the destination), value for money, quality (of e.g. food and beverage) (Bowen & Clarke, 2009). These are external controlling factors hence typically a matter of physical involvement for the tourist (ibid; Cameron & Pierce, 2002; Echtner & Richie, 1993).

Place dependence is closely related to place identity, because place identity also involves around the physical setting, thus are not necessarily that distinctively divided. This is discussed in the next section about emotional place attachment.

2.2.3 Affective and Emotive Attachment to a Place through Intimacy generation and place identity

Identity in general speaking evolves around an internal, subjective concept of oneself, and place can be defined as:

“the connection between the self and a particular setting that consists of a collection of “memories, interpretations, ideas and related feelings about physical settings as well as types of settings” (Yuksel et al, 2010: 276).

Place identity is thus connected with place dependence and the physical setting of a place which tourists may identify them selves with (Brocato, 2006; Kyle et al., 2004; Su et al. 2011; Yuksel et al., 2010) based on psychological investment with the place. Knez (2005; 208) introduce four processes related to place identity:

- # Place-related distinctiveness (place identification, e.g. I am a New-Yorker)
- # Place referent continuity (the place is a coherent reference for my past, e.g. I go on city breaks to NYC because I like urban areas) and place-congruent continuity (the type of milieu is congruent with my present self and how I want to live)
- # Place-related self-esteem (e.g. Vacation/living in NYC makes me feel good or proud)
- # Place-related self-efficacy (e.g. everything I need in my everyday is in NYC)

In that sense, the place identity can be considered as a component of self-identity to enhance self-esteem (Su et al., 2011) and wellbeing resulting from psychological and physical investment with a place (Hummon, 1992) connected to individual values and the environmental setting (Moore & Graefe, 1994).

The psychological or emotional investment with a place can take place in interpersonal relationships and generate a form of intimacy. Firstly, intimacy can be created in tourists' interaction with locals (also called the host) (Trauer & Ryan, 2004) that could generate highly emotional experiences (Ryan, 1998) with a potentially high level of intimacy disclosure, since the place could carry sacred values (Trauer & Ryan, 2004). This relates to the symbolic meaning of what a place

stands for (Greider & Garkovich, 1994) which could have a valuable meaning for the tourist to experience, even embrace, and be a part of the local culture in the interaction with locals in the physical environment. Interaction with locals is not necessarily with strangers. One partner between the holidaymakers or travel companion could have insider knowledge about a place (Williams et al., 1992; Li, 2000), e.g. the person could either have lived there for longer or shorter periods or traveled there in varying intensity. In the case of tourists who have traveled to a place several times or stayed there for longer periods up to a year at the time (e.g. exchange students and interns) may have become loyal and committed to the place, hence attachment to a place is evident when the tourists continue to visit the same place (Ryan, 1995; Trauer & Ryan, 2005). When commitment is viewed as the highest level of loyalty (cf. Trauer & Ryan, 2005) the tourist potentially perceive the place as a 'home of hearts', a second or another home full of feelings and intimacy, although different from the conventional home (Trauer & Ryan, 2005). Loyalty and intimacy hence seem to be two predictors or determinants of perception of place attachment.

2.2.4 The "deep" level of Emotional Place Attachment: lovemarks and love declarations

Today love attitudes and love declarations are not only related to the notion of human and romantic relationships (Hammock & Richardson, 2011) but consumers can experience a feeling of love for a brand (e.g. commitment, trust, identification) (Albert & Merunka, 2013). Because love is essentially a relational construct (ibid.), it logically could be linked to other relational constructs. Love and passion are viewed as two of the essential concepts in the attachment theory (Loureiro et al., 2012), and lovemarks can be defined as products, service, or entity that evoke "loyalty beyond reason" (Pawle and Cooper, 2006; Roberts, 2004), and hence are based on emotional aspirations. Pawle and Cooper (2006:38) argue it's time for brands to evolve into "lovemarks" as the next evolution claiming consumers no longer are motivated by brand loyalty, but the "lovemarks" (with emotional attachment to products or services) (Sayers & Monin, 2007). For a product or place to be called a lovemark, it must be perceived as irreplaceable (Pawle and Cooper,

2006) which seems to relate to loyalty and commitment hence contradicts the dismiss of loyalty.

According to figure two, lovemarks are based on love and respect hence are not constructed in new concepts per se, though lovemarks could be a way of conceptualizing it. Figure two illustrates “respect” is a critical factor in a “love relationship” (Sayers & Monin, 2007) which is related to objectivity, performance, reputation and trust, and reliability is the “door charge for respect

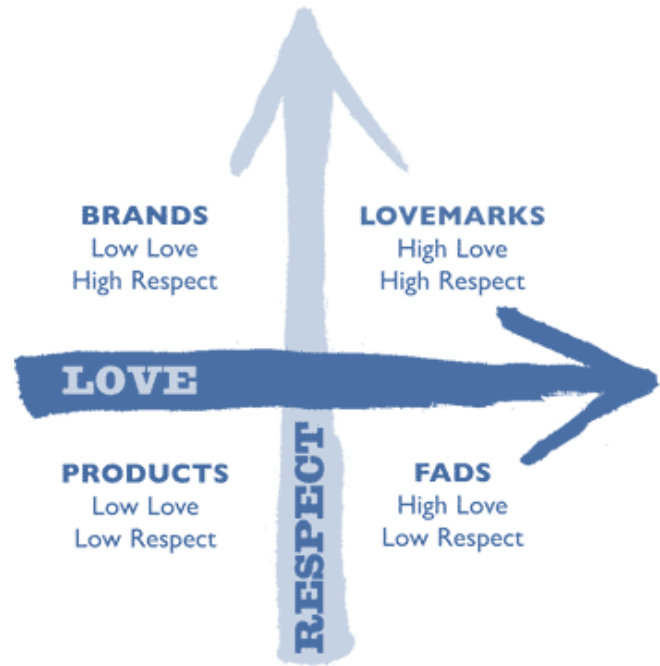


Figure 2: The Lovemark Grid (Roberts 2004)

before the shows begins” (Roberts, 2004). In a critical view on lovemark theory, Sayers & Monin (2007:674) draw attention to Roberts’ distinction that separates the emotional and the technical or functional, but the functional performance is not necessarily only based on rational assessment because every person we deal with is an emotional human being (bid.) with emotional responses to any event. The construct of “trust” encompasses both cognitive evaluation when the product (or in this case the destination) meets the expectations, and an affective evaluation based on perceptions of honesty and altruism (Albert & Merunka, 2013; Delgado-Ballester et al., 2003) resulting in emotional responses. Hence, the element of “respect” could both relate to functional values based on rational assessment such as quality and value for money (cf. Bowen & Clarke, 2009) or emotional values e.g. in the intimacy generation with local people.

The lovemark theory traditionally focuses on product development, and cities are more complex with multiple components and various business performances, different cultures etc. A business can treat the consumer with disrespect, but can a city do the same? The perceived disrespect in a city can be related to various business performances and services or interaction with local residents or other

tourists. Consequently, respect of a place also relates to culture and cultural encounters (e.g. tolerance) that is beyond any control.

Love in lovemarks can be characterized by mystery, sensuality, and intimacy (Pawle and Cooper, 2006; Roberts, 2004), and the “mystery” component of a lovemark is similar to novelty in motivational theory. It is what keeps the tourist intrigued and wanting to revisit the place (Toyama & Yamada, 2012) and creates a sense of loyalty. Consequently, “mystery” or novelty is linked with loyalty which again makes Pawle and Cooper’s (2006:38) argument about consumer no longer are motivated by brand loyalty but the “lovemarks” a little vague and just another of way of phrasing it.

According to Pawle & Cooper (2006: 39) “sensuality” is another essential element of the lovemark theory with the senses as an accelerator to touch human emotions hence influencing peoples’ emotional responses over and above the rational assessment (e.g. bigger, better, cheaper). Pawle & Cooper (2006: 39) further argue that for anything to evolve into a lovemark, it must touch directly on the personal aspirations in the means of commitment, empathy, and passion. These characteristics are not unique for lovemarks. According to Albert & Merunka (2013: 259) interpersonal love theory in consumption contexts, such as brand love, appeared to be composed of three dimensions: passion, intimacy, and, commitment. Furthermore, Loureiro et al. (2012:15) argues that attachment reflects an emotional bond similar to love in a construct of three factors; affection, passion and connection, thus the various aspirations seem closely related with the notion of ‘love’ in common. The third characteristic of a lovemark is intimacy (Pawle & Cooper, Roberts, 2006) that has already been discussed (in section 2.2.3, p. 15) in relation to different interpersonal relationships and cultural encounters.

Love declaration for a place is based on feelings, but how do we conceive our feelings (including love) towards a place or an object for that matter? Social constructions link objects and places with people, and designers and producers have always been making things and places desirable (Sayers & Monin, 2007), although does it make places lovable? Love and attachment may not be equal variables in the eyes of the tourist. Love means more than liking a lot; it is a profound sense of attachment based on affection (Roberts, 2004) driven from

within. Consequently, the place needs to not only be respected or liked by the tourist but also loved before it can be characterized as a lovemark for someone. However, love is a subjective and abstract phenomenon and the line between liking and loving may be blurry and individually interpreted. We may feel we have personal feelings and a unique relationship with certain places. The perception of “love” may have different value to different people and different cultures and it could be strange for some people to talk about love for a place and difficult to express feelings about it.

The discussion about lovemarks to a place indicates a blurriness between the functional and emotional separation. When studying the two dimensions, they can be discussed separately but in practice, the tourists do not distinguish between the two because they occur in the unconscious mind of human being (Pawle and Cooper, 2009). In some cases the functional and emotional values may exist simultaneously, e.g. when a tourist desires both the physical setting of the place and value intimacy in inter-personal relationships with an emotional value in it.

#2: Instagram and place attachment



The second and final part of the theoretical framework is an introduction and discussion of the practice and community of IG related to place attachment and how the IG photo contents can be categorized for the purpose of the analysis.

To the best of the researchers knowledge, there are still limited academic literature specifically examining the phenomenon of IG, but there are numerous online (non-academic) articles about IG, and it can be reviewed in the perspective of digital culture (e.g. Creeber & Royston, 2009), user-generated content e.g. (Boley et al., 2013), and social media as mediators for tourists' experiences (e.g. Tussyadiah & Fesenmaier, 2009).

2.3 Place Committing Behavior on Instagram

2.3.1 Introducing the Instagram Community and Practice

IG is a free social network platform and mobile application with more than 75 million daily active users and billions of user-generated images and videos (Hanan & Putit, 2014; theverge.com, 2013). IG enables users to immediately apply a digital hashtag and filter of the photo, and instantly post it on IG and share them on Facebook or twitter (Boley et al., 2013; Hanan & Putit, 2014). The images can be thematized and categorized according to given hashtags, which will add them to certain collections of similar ones as a form of organizing content across IG users. IG users can "like" a photo or video, both people they "follow" in the IG network (cmswire.com, 2013) or others beyond their network through active search of user names or through search of hashtags. According to Hanan & Putit (2014: 473) the uniqueness and art of snapping the photo creates a certain form of emotion and feeling toward the destination and hence could be related to affective values.

2.3.2 Instagram as mediator of Tourist Experiences and Place attachment

Adopted from Tussyadiah & Fesenmaier (2009: 32) a content analysis of the IG pictures and text can be interpreted according to different local concepts (e.g. bridge, building, face) that are particular for a place and global concepts (e.g. architecture, skyline, night scene) that are generic themes, and hence can be found in many forms around the place (as well as other places). The interpretation of local and global concepts and themes can be approached in the semiotic method that provides;

“a framework for understanding how representations convey meanings and thus can be used as a tool for the analysis of destination representations” (Pennington & Thomsen, 2010).

The semiotic process includes a triangulation between three elements for representation to occur:

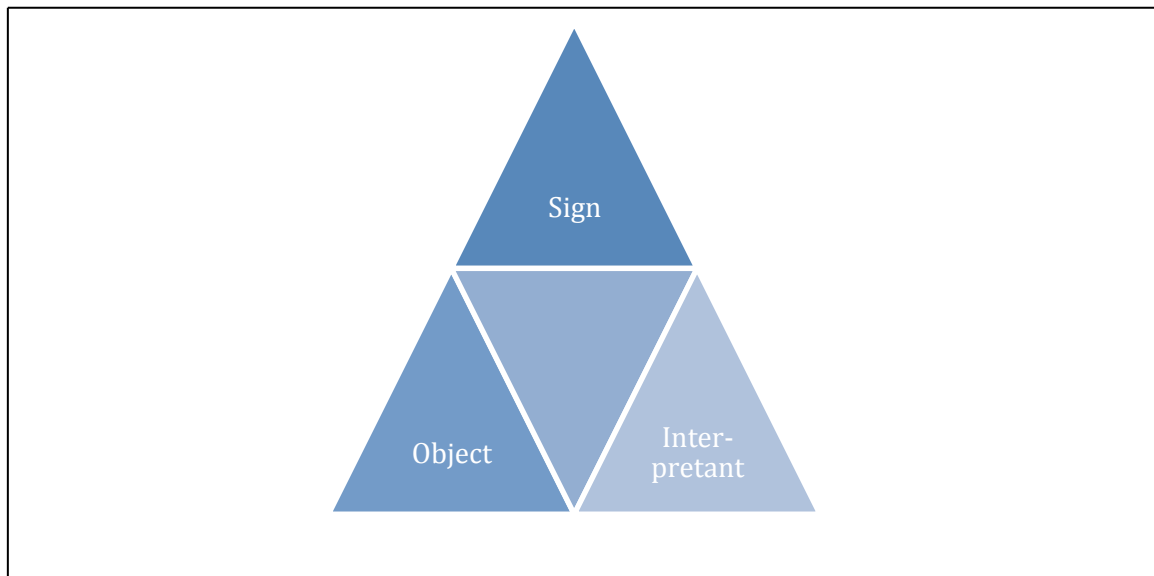


Figure 3: The semiotic process, adopted by (Pennington & Thomsen, 2010).

In the interpretation of a sign in an object, the interpretant must have previous experience and prior knowledge of that object to denote a sign in it (Pennington & Thomas, 2010) and choose what is important to present. The model utilizes a division of the sign–object relationship into icon, index, and symbol typically with a

combination between the three (ibid.). The sign can both be tangible and intangible, and the sign is an icon when the sign-object relationship is based on the resemblance to or qualities of the sign (ibid.), for instance the Empire State Building perceived as a sign for NYC. When the sign-object relationship is based on existential connection (physical appearance) between sign to the object, the sign is an index, e.g. what the place has to offer. Finally, the sign-object relationship can be based on social or cultural meanings, and hence the sign is a symbol, for instance the symbolic meaning in the Statue of Liberty in NYC sending signals through the use of objects (e.g. a statue). The notion of the semiotic process is brought into the study to interpret the IG images with potential representation of emotion for a place. In the vein of this, events evoke emotions but do photographs on IG evoke emotion or represent emotion or both? In the meaning of being a tourist, people are away from family, friends and colleagues thus feel a need to underline the fact that they are away from everyday life and having a good time (Thurlow & Jaworski, 2010) hence represent an emotion. The image could also evoke emotion both for them viewers and the one who posted it, e.g. in the reflective stage of place attachment in the memory generation (cf. fig. 1). In this sense, the use of IG is more than a stillness of a certain moments and a visual representation of the destination but also nuanced enactments of place attachment and self-enhancement.

Tussyadiah & Fesenmaier (2009: 32) present four different themes (themes: site-centric, activity-centric, self-centric, and other-centric) to categorize video contents which is adopted to the netnographic analysis. The activity-centric photos focus on experiences in a social related context, for instance walking the streets of NYC, people partying, eating at restaurants, sailing around Manhattan Island etc. In that sense, the activity-centric photos are related to functional values in the display of a place attachment all though there could also be aspects of emotional values, e.g. in display of social interaction: "having a good time".

The site-centric images feature a number of attractions and sites at the place without so much coverage of activities or people (Tussyadiah & Fesenmaier, 2009). This could be well-known, iconic buildings of NYC (i.e. Empire State Building, The Freedom Tower)



Image1: Example of site-centric image

or statues (i.e. The Statue of Liberty) hence first of all relate to functional values in the physical setting of the place. Yet, site-centric images could also reflect on emotional values, e.g. love declarations in hashtags and text that is dedicated to a photo.

Self-centric photos express experiences, the self-image and self-promotion (Tussyadiah & Fesenmaier, 2009). They are about building virtual identities and to tell stories about themselves in a public oriented community that leaves an impression of self-enhancement (cf. Bowen & Clarke, 2009). Self-representation is not necessarily achieved by posting self portraits, and might even be avoided by some. The representation of the self can be presented in different ways that reminds other of how funny, interesting, silly, sociable, cool, well-travelled (and other personal characteristics) they are (Tussyadiah & Fesenmaier, 2009). Self-enhancement and self-promotion could also be around the aim of generating more web traffic around the viewers, receive “likes” and comments on their pictures.

Other-centric images focus on “objects” in the city that are perceived as “foreign” or “special” (i.e., a manifestation of “it’s different here!”) including lifestyle, habit, performances and infrastructure (Tussyadiah & Fesenmaier, 2009).

The different types of “centric-images” witness multiple roles of IG activities that seem valuable to understand in the mediation and construct of place attachment.

In the different types of photos, the notion of place attachment may not be the direct implication and intention of sharing photos related to holiday activities, yet attachment could be found indirectly. The photos can display interpersonal

relationships with people in a social dimension and at the same time display the physical setting of the place hence the division between the different types of “centric” images are not that distinctive. Both the activity-centric and self-centric images emphasizes the self of the tourist: e.g. saying “it’s fun be in NYC”, “You only live once spirit” or “Hey I’m cool” etc. (cf. Tussyadiah & Fesenmaier, 2009). This can be related to the concept of “tourist gazing” (Urry, 1990) when photos gives pleasure to viewers in two ways. Firstly the pleasure of gazing at tourists/people and the activities they are performing, and secondly the pleasure of imaginative actions of being in the tourist’s place (ibid.). IG may not only provide pleasure to viewers but “gazing” could also give the tourist a form of personal satisfaction in return by receiving attention both passively or actively when viewers give comments and “likes” on their holiday hotos. Thus, place attachment could potentially be enhanced in the social interaction with others IG users in the matter of a strong social significance in the act of sharing and enabling others to derive the travel enjoyment (cf. Tussyadiah & Fesenmaier, 2009) from the mobility in IG.

The next and final section of the literature review summarizes the main variables and core concepts of the theoretical framework and hence functions as a guiding tool for the upcoming analysis.

2.4 Visual **R**ecapitulation of the Theoretical Framework

Based on existing literature that has been reviewed related to place attachment, the theoretical framework has focused on emotional and functional dimensions as two overall constructs that could amplify place attachment to a holiday destination. The model on the next page suggests a relationship between tourist and place in regard to the two overall constructs and how sub-dimensions can amplify the degrees of place attachment. The interrelated elements are further explained next after the model.

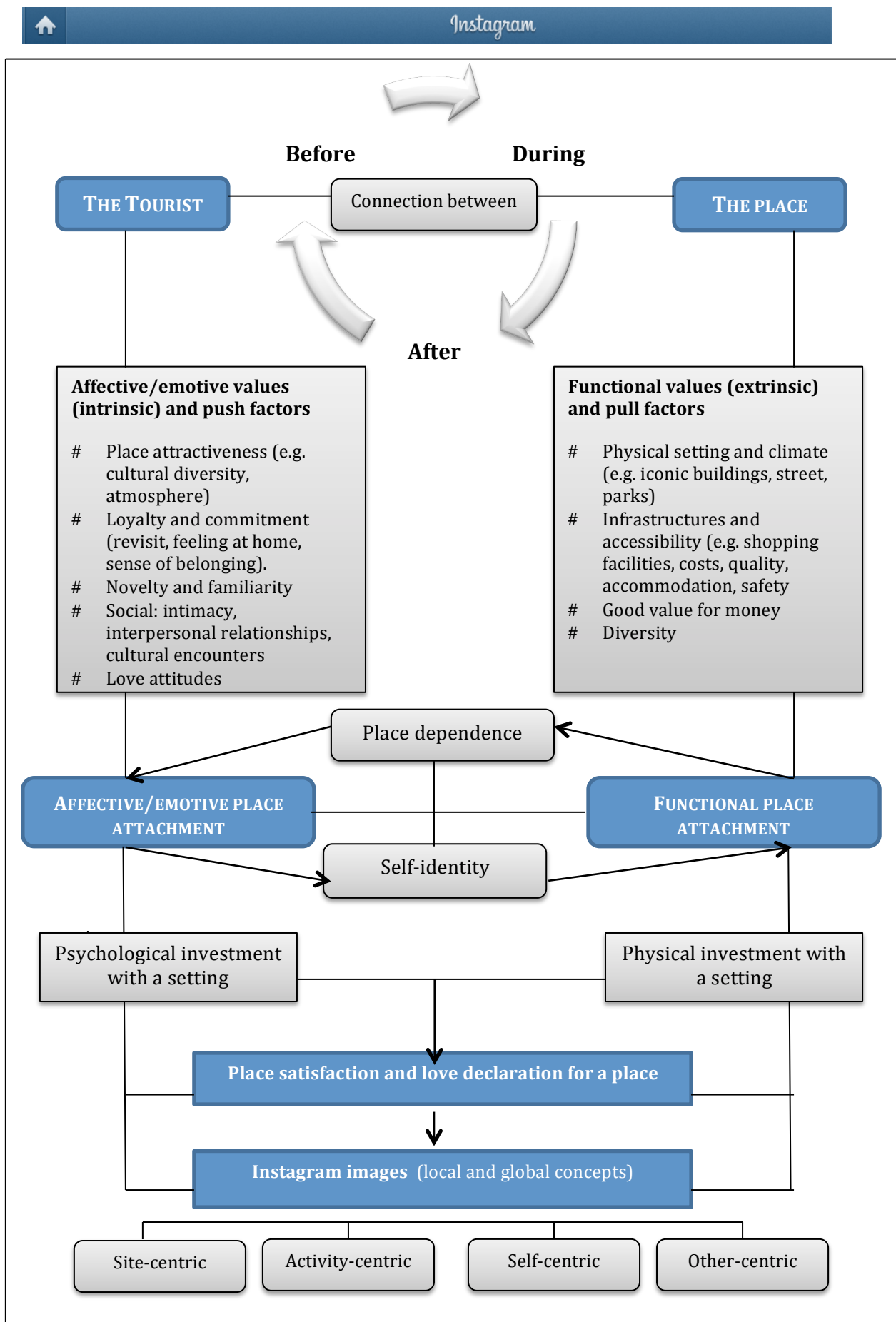


Figure 4: The core elements of the theoretical framework (self-made, 2014)

The model suggests a connection between tourist and place that is in constant motion, a development taking place before, during and after a visit, hence continues in the reflective stage (after) and returns to a new level in the anticipatory stage when the tourist revisits the destination.

The next step in the model indicates two overall types of values ('affective/emotive values' and 'functional values'), a form of hierarchy in the degree of place attachment that are amplified by embodies of sub-dimensions or determinants of perceptions. The emotive or affective values are characterized either by attitudes related to the place setting of both tangible and intangible characters (e.g. cultural diversity and atmosphere), hence are closely related to functional values, or it could be emotive evaluation that e.g. enhances loyalty. For instance destination loyalty may be easier to detect than emotional attitudes (e.g. how does the destination make you feel) towards the place based on e.g. love declarations amplified by intangible or symbolic representations at the place.

The criteria for functional values (in this thesis) are first of all functional, observable characteristics (cf. Echtner & Richie, 1993) or functional benefits at a destination such as value for money based on rational assessment and emotional responses hence these kind of benefits is found in a more blurry line between functional and emotive values. Consequently, the functional values are first of all amplified by the physical setting and infrastructures that are easier observable pull factors, hence will be the first elements to study in the upcoming analysis. The last two bullet points under functional values are 'good value for money' and 'diversity', hence is a deterrent of perception of a more intangible character compared to the two other factors yet with functional value. The diversity can be reviewed in tangible matters, e.g. variety in the destination setting, but diversity could also be of cultural matter, e.g. multi-ethnic society which is both observable with multi-ethnic people but intangible in the cultural customs and manifestations. Furthermore, value for money is a functional value but it is evaluated not only based on rational assessment but also emotional attitudes such as what the tourist likes, enjoys etc. What the tourist likes, enjoys etc. is related to place attraction of the physical setting, hence a matter of 'place dependence'; a sub-dimension placed underneath the functional values that affects the perceived 'place satisfaction'.

The box related to functional attachment has an arrow from the box related to 'self-identity', because place identity is a psychological investment with a setting (the functional place) that develops over time, hence it is illustrated as a circular process. The circular process furthermore indicates how functional and affective place attachment are two intermingled constructs going back and forth between place dependence and place identity in a constant iterative motion. Consequently, it is not only affective values and place identity that amplify the functional attachment, but place dependence also intensify the level of affective place attachment (place affection) by the physical investment with the place that embodies affective or emotive attitudes. Both the physical and psychological investment with the place enhances the degree of affection and love for place as indicated with the arrows correspondingly could influence embodies of attitudes and behavior tendencies on IG according to two overall concepts of local and global elements and four types of "centric" related images.

3 Methodology and Methods

According to e.g. Creswell (2003: 6) researchers make claims about what knowledge is (ontology), how we know it (epistemology), and the process for studying it (methodology). These different perspectives are the pivots of discussion in this chapter based on the problem statement of the research.

3.1 Methodology

3.1.1 Philosophy of Science: Ontology, epistemology and analysis strategy

The aim of this study is to identify and describe various attitudes and behavior patterns related to place attachment to a holiday destination, hence contribute to gradual knowledge generation about the subject in the explorative nature and qualitative research approach. The explorative nature of the problem statement is grounded in the interpretive approach to research; a humanistic enquiry within the field of consumer behavior (Goulding, 1999).

As the researcher of the study, the nature of paradigms holds the ground for criteria of the study in basic beliefs, worldview and what the “truth” is (Guba & Lincoln, 2005). Paradigms can be defined as a belief system influenced by socio-psychological backgrounds of the investigator (ibid.) In the explorative nature of the study, the problem statement is followed by the interpretive approach which makes the researcher involved in creating meaning of what is being investigated in interaction with the informants under research and past experience and knowledge (Banyai, 2010). In the interactive nature, the investigator plays an active role in the study; both in terms of choice of theoretical principles, consequences of sampling, and the process of organizing and interpreting data (Malterud, 2001). These choices are influenced by previous personal and professional experiences, pre-study beliefs about the “truth” and what is to be

investigated (ibid.). Prior to this research, I was a fully functioning member on IG hence had a pre-understanding about the social media.

From an epistemological point of view, the investigator takes a subjective position in the belief that realities are subjective and interpreted in the co-construct between the researcher and those under research (Banyai, 2010). The research is to a large extent depending on attitudes and behavior patterns of the informants with the aim of detecting the various degrees of place attachment. The attitudes are particular provided in interview narratives and text related to IG images. Furthermore, the behavior patterns can be interpreted within the image analysis on IG and comparing the different attitudes and behavior patterns.

The problem statement is the overarching research question and guideline for the research hence constantly considered throughout the thesis in an iterative process going back and forth between research question and academic literature related to place attachment along with getting better in touch with the topics of the research (Miles & Huberman, 1994). The dynamic process can be related to the explorative character of the thesis with openness to subjects that was not firstly identified by the researcher. First impressions and unclear understandings of place attachment and other underlying concepts happen within a spiral in the process of working with the problem statement and gaining new impressions and better understanding (Langergaard, Rasmussen, & Sørensen, 2006). This can be related to the interpretive method of hermeneutic endeavor; a social ontological principle related to existential phenomenology that proceeds by an interactive back and forth process in the attempt to relate a part of the text to the whole (Goulding, 1999). The application of phenomenology is evident in the research process with the basic assumption “that a person’s life is a socially constructed totality in which experiences interrelate coherently and meaningfully (Thompson et al, 1990). The social construction is important in the understanding of realities take form in multiple, intangible mental constructions hence are socially and experientially constructed in the mental construct for thinking about it (Guba, 1990). Therefore, the notion of “truth” is recognized as observations, and mental constructions as a part of a process and a product of interpretation (Goulding, 1999). Consequently, the social life is important in the interpretation of materiality in which members of

the “life world” interpretively produce the recognizable, intelligible forms they treat as real (Goulding, 1999). Interpretations are continually revised as the researcher becomes more familiar with the notion of place attachment and the text and digital materiality in the IG images provide the focus for interpretation. The iterative process is illustrated in figure five:

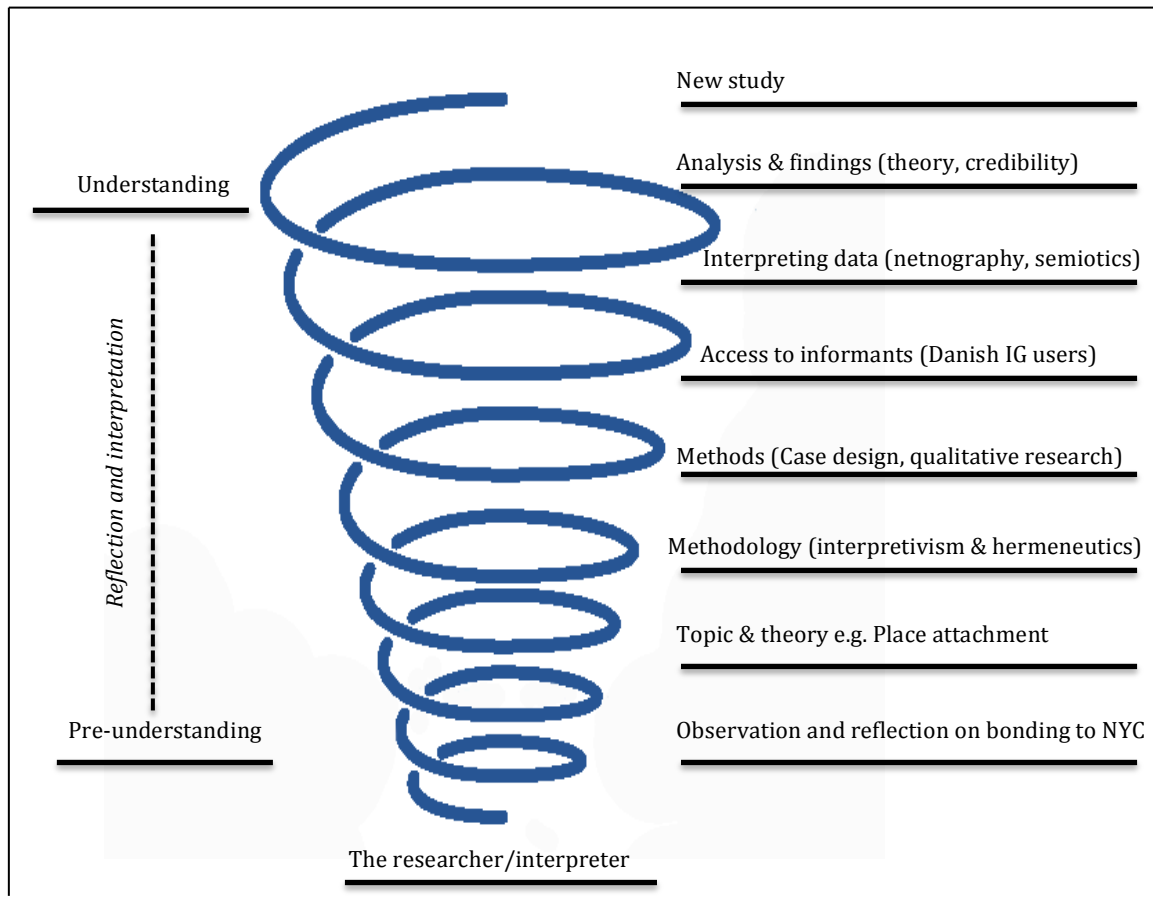


Figure 5: Elements of knowledge production in the hermeneutic spiral complied to this study (self-made 2014)

To summarize the approach, the starting point was of detailed observations of the world based on reflection on own experiences (cf. the prologue) by the investigator and the spiral opens up and moves towards more abstract generalizations and ideas (Rageh et al., 2013) about place attachment. The next stage is to enter into a dialogue with others to gain experiential description about place attachment. This can be related to the inductive approach and analysis, (Bryman, 2008) which include using detailed readings of raw data (transcriptions, IG images and text) to identify common structures or themes, through

interpretations of the researcher (Thomas, 2006) to contribute towards development of theory. In the inductive approach, the research is a procedure for creating meaning in complex data (ibid.) by detecting attitudes and behavior patterns related to place attachment and categorize both the manifest and latent meaning into themes or categories from a “pattern coding” (cf. Miles and Huberman, 1994; Thomas, 2006). These themes are connected in a figurative illustration that summarizes the key themes and processes in the interpretation of the researcher. Although the study is mainly in the inductive mode, the first part of the problem statement is a start with a general research question of what place attachment is. This allows a more clarifying view of the general theoretical domain on the study that is on most of interest in the overarching question (Miles & Huberman, 1994).

3.2 Research Methods: A Qualitative Research

3.2.1 Qualitative Interviews and Netnography

The interpretive approach is based on a qualitative research because using quantitative methods to understand deep feelings and emotions lived by the tourists could be problematic. The informants might not know what they are answering or might not ever have reflected on their place attachment (Rageh et al., 2013).

The data analysis is approached with a case study design that can be defined as a phenomenon occurring in a bounded context (Miles and Huberman, 1994). The research is based on a single case. On the one hand, a multiple case sampling could be the next step for enrichment that adds confidence to findings as a way to understand the single-case findings (Miles & Huberman, 1994). On the other hand, a multiple-case study does not change the issue of generalizability, and hence the choice of multiple cases should not be chosen on representative grounds (Miles & Huberman, 1994) but for a comparative purposes. The case design draws on two qualitative research methods to collect primary data on the basis of a netnography

research method (e.g. Hopkins, 1998; Kozinets, 2002, 2010; Krippendorff, 2004; Rageh) and Skype interviews (e.g. Hanna, 2012; Kazmer & Xie, 2008).

The netnography is an online practice adopted from the qualitative nature of ethnography to study culturally grounded communities of language, meanings, rituals, and practice that emerge through computer-mediated communications in so-called collective and tribal environment (Bowler, 2010; Kozinets, 2002, 2010). The ethnographic research method is an in-person study whereas the netnographic analysis is based on reflexive narratives and imagery that people publishes online (Kozinets, 2002) in which the researcher is purely observational and a specialized type of “lurker” (Bowler, 2010; Kozinets, 2002). The qualitative nature of netnography is relevant to gain the consumer understanding of how the “mysterious” consumer is really like (Kozinets, 2006). The interactive nature of combining interviews with the netnography provided an understanding of place attachment attitudes and behavior patterns on IG on nuanced levels. Consequently, the interviews provided nuances of IG behavior in the interpretation of how the informant perceive his or her own IG behavior and how they correspond with narrative and representations of their social world on IG and the interpretations by the investigator (cf. Boellstorff, Nardi, Pearce & Taylor, 2012). As a result, the interviews and netnography turned out to be equally important to identify the “relationship between what the informants “say they do” and “what they appear to be doing on IG” (Boellstorff, Nardi, Pearce & Taylor, 2012).

3.2.2 The procedure of the netnography and recruitment of informants

Referring to common ethnographic procedures, Kozinets (2002, p. 63) recommends the following methodological stages and procedures for netnographic studies:

- # Investigating possible online field sites, initiating, and making cultural entree;
- # Data collection
- # Analysis and interpretation
- # Research ethics
- # Member checks

In the “entrée” of studying the online IG environment, the investigator had a pre-understanding as a fully functioning member of the social media. In the collection of data from the profile content of the informants, the investigator needed access to the profiles. The once with a closed profile needed to accept a request - other participants had open profiles and hence the researcher was more of a covert observer to begin with (prior the interviews).

In collecting data, it was the same informants that were being studied on IG and in the interviews to study the relationship between actions and narratives. Bowler (2010: 1272) highlights so-called “devotees” (the most enthusiastic, actively involved and sophisticated users) as the most important data sources for researchers. Consequently, it was important to recruit informants or participants who are active users on Instagram. They participants were recruited on Facebook: 1) via Facebook groups for Danes in New York, and 2) people in the Facebook, because IG is imagery related hence not probable to recruit people when it specifically was Danish IG users who had spend their vacation in NYC. According to Miles & Huberman (1996: 27) a qualitative study is usually not solely pre-specified but can evolve during the field research. The open request on Facebook did result in limited control of whom to look at (Miles & Huberman, 1996) and how many. However the request of Danish IG users, who had been or were in NYC at the time made the sampling somewhat purposive. Some of the participants were in NYC when they were interviewed, others just got back home and some had been home for a while. Thus, the informants were in different stages in the temporal process (cf. fig. 1) and brought nuances into the study. Some were in the experiential stage, and hence potentially in the middle of the process of getting attached to the place while others in the reflective stage hence were no longer physically involved with the city (cf. Appendix 1 about participant information).

The primary goal of this study is not statistical significance hence does not have a large sampling size (Miles & Huberman, 1996) but to explore determents of perceptions of place attachment including attitudes towards a place and action or behavior tendencies on IG. It is possible to generate information that relies on smaller samples of informants (Kvale, 1997; Shenton, 2004) which enabled the investigator to distinct between the informants and their own distinct “voices” and

capability of self-reflection in how they in various degrees were able to reflect on their own place attachment attitudes and IG behavior tendencies.

The sample size was twenty-five informants and the recruitment on Facebook lead to informants in the ages between 19 and 39 year old with a vast majority of people in the twenties. There has not been identified any significant differences between the genders, instead it seemed relevant to distinct between the length of stay (last time they were in NYC), first visit or not, and the informants location while being interviewed (Denmark or NYC) in relation to the temporal process. More specifically to understand if the individual informants were in the experiential stage (hence located in NYC) or in the reflective stage (in Denmark) in the process of place attachment (cf. fig. 1) and it enabled to distinct any differences between the informants who visited NYC short term (7-14 days) vs. more long term (1-7 months). This information can be found in *Appendix 1* including an overview of IG names or profiles (which is how they will be referred to in the analysis), age, and number of IG images in their profiles.

The data analysis (cf Kozinets, 2002) on IG was structured according to local and global concepts in photos (cf. Tussyadiah & Fesenmaier, 2009), hence this part of the image research was based on a quantitative structure to begin with by systemizing the pool of IG pictures according to the concepts. Appendix 3 provides directories of the individual informants and one illustrating the average frequency of the concepts. Furthermore photos were selected out for examples in the analysis in accordance to the four types of “centric” photos (cf. Tussyadiah & Fesenmaier, 2009). The scanning and coding of concepts is purely based on the investigator’s interpretation hence there could potentially be overlooked concepts. The trustworthiness of the research is discussed in the end of the thesis.

The research ethics and member check (cf Kozinets, 2002) can be related back to first step in the netnographic study “entrée” in how the informants were recruited with openness about the purpose of the study, and the investigator made an open request for their IG profile names to examine the IG content.

3.2.3 The Interview procedure and data analysis

The IG profiles were scanned before the individual interviews, and the interviews were conducted over Skype (a technology for text, voice and video make) (Skype.com) which made it possible to interview participants who were in NYC during the fieldwork. The significant difference between the Skype interview and a personal face-to-face interview is, that Skype makes it harder to read body language and there were incidents where the online connection was cut of and hence disrupted the flow of the interview (ibid.).

The interviews lasted between 35 minutes to 2 hours, and the image scanning on IG provided a total number of 1189 images. Obviously two hours long interview is more in depth than ones lasting 35 minutes. I used the same interview guide but the flow of conversation varied and seemed to be connected with how passionate the participants were about NYC and how self-reflective they were about their attachment to the place. The ones who were significantly passionate and attached, they seemed to find it easier to express their thoughts and feelings about NYC in a more elaborating way.

In the explorative character of the research, the interviews were semi-structured and open-ended (Bryman, 2008; Kazmer & Xie, 2008; Kvale, 1997) that allowed dynamic, conversational interviews with openness to subjects that were not firstly identified by the researcher.

The first part of the interview focused on emotional and rational reactions to their memorable experiences of current or previous vacation(s) in NYC. The second part of the interview were asked questions related to IG behavior and their own reflections on their IG behavior and attitudes. The construction of the interview guide is grounded in the theoretical themes of the theoretical framework (chapter 2). For further insight in the interview guide, please find appendix 2. There are some potential challenges and advantages of investigating emotion and rationality which in everyday life are unconscious decisions and actions. (Pawle & Coor, 2009), hence the open dialog and interaction between interviewer and interviewee were significant.

Some of the participants are personally known by the researcher that on the one hand potentially made the informant feel more comfortable and relaxed in terms of trust, openness and supportiveness (Blichfeldt, 2006; Hirschman. 1994). On the other hand, it could also affect the quality of the research if the atmosphere gets too cozy or unfocused (Blichfeldt, 2006) hence the “interviewer role” had to be maintained by the investigator to keep a focus.

The interviews were conducted in Danish for the sake of the informants to ensure a flow in the conversation now that all the informants were Danish, and the Skype interviews were recorded for the purpose of not leaving out any relevant information. However, the interviews could make participants sound awkward once the data are transcribed because most people do not speak fluent when they are thinking and answering a question they have just been asked (Kazmer & Xie, 2008). Consequently some parts were left out to make the language more fluent.

The transcription and translation are parts of the interpretation when choosing relevant quotes for the analysis and translating them into English (Kvale, 1997). The process was gradually refining the raw data into key concepts based on the theoretical framework of the analysis (and figure four) which was organized through colour coding (Bryman, 2008a), and additionally new themes emerged that were not identified in the theoretical framework to begin with. The transcription of the twenty-five interviews provided 156 pages of raw data which can be found in the enclosed CD-ROM together with the interview recordings¹.

¹ **Note:** because of technical difficulties, one of the interviews (Hekrdk), lasting 1 hour and 57 minutes, could not be transferred to the CD-ROM, but if needed, the interview can be accessed through the investigator's phone.

4 Analysis: Relationship between Tourist and Place

In continuation with chapter 2, this chapter aims to empirically explore the theoretical elements in the recapitulating model (figure four) and introduce and discuss new perspectives on the subject of place attachment based on the interview findings and netnographic study on IG. The analysis is divided into two parts cf. (fig. 6). The first part of the analysis explores the theoretical notion of place attachment using first-order (interviews) narratives which can be defined as stories that individuals tell about themselves and their own experiences (Elliot, 2005). Second order narratives are the accounts the researcher may construct and interpret to make sense of other people's experiences and set them into a social category to which the individual belongs (ibid.). Consequently, interpretation of the researcher is not only what the informants say (consciously) but also what they express more implicitly (unconsciously). The narratives in part one are to a little degree supported with IG images to illustrate an argument. In the second part of the analysis the IG images are in center of attention to explore levels of place attachment according to the informants own reflections of their IG behavior hence brought to a meta level. Consequently, the IG images are the main source in part two yet strongly supported with interview narratives to compare the perceived behavior of the informants (based on the informants' own reflections) and the researcher's interpretation of what they say explicitly and implicitly in the interviews and what attitudes and behavior they project on IG.

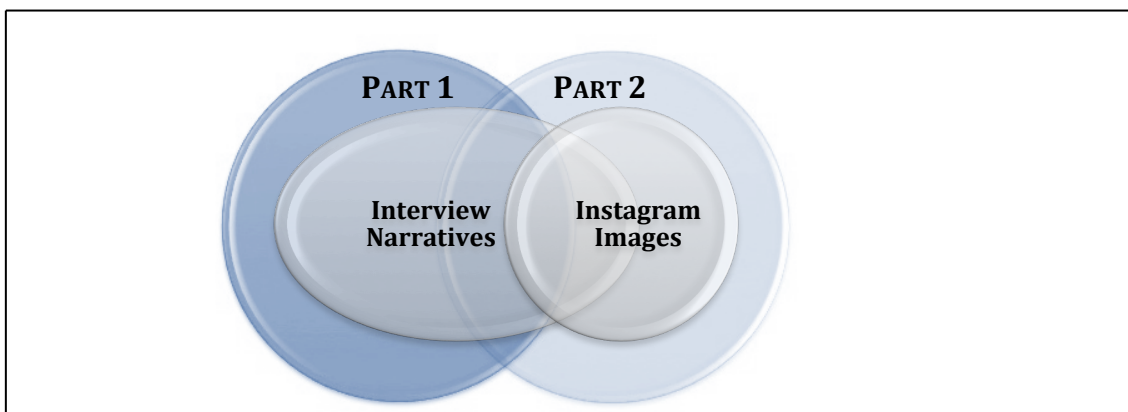


Figure 6: The division of using interview narratives and IG images for documentation in the analysis (self-made, 2014)

#1: Interview narratives

4.1 The place: The Functional Values and Pull Factors

In accordance to figure four (the recapitulating model), there are two main actors in focus namely the “tourist” and the “place” (host) with a connection between the two actors in the development of emotional attachment. This section (4.1) focuses on the investigation of functional values, starting with the values that are more “purely” functional for a place, that has been detected in the interviews narratives then moving towards more nuanced functional values because of their interrelatedness with emotional values. Section 4.2 brings social and affective values of the place into focus, again starting out with the most obvious types of emotional values in place attachment and finally reflects on emotional values on a “deeper” and more nuanced level concerning declarations of affection and love for a place.

4.1.1 The physical setting, Infrastructures, and good Value for Money

As noted in section 2.4 in the explanation of figure four, there are differences in the functional values in terms of being “purely” functional and observable (e.g. cost savings) based on rational assessment, or functional yet intangible such as value for money which is not only based on rational assessment and cognitive evaluation but also affective evaluation and emotive attitudes.

Of the more “purely” functional benefits that were detected in the interview narratives were perceived ‘cost savings’ at the holiday destination in comparison to home, and perceived ‘quality’ of restaurant facilities mentioned as follows:

Maybe I wasn’t aware of it, but one of the things that pleased me the most was eating out all the time and still haven’t spend a lot of money, it

was cool restaurants and bars, and you spend half of what you'd spend in DK (Idomonday: 3,4).

She reflects upon functional values of a place that are external controlling factors, and directly observable components of the destination. In relation to figure four, she indirectly reflect on 'good value for money' based the rational assessment of good quality compared to the money she spend.

Another functional value that could be detected in the interview narratives was perceived 'safety' at a place which is not tangible when it is evaluated as a feeling within the tourist, yet in general safety and security at a place can be measured in tangible facts, numbers of crime, police appearance etc. thus affects the destination image as exemplified by three of the informants:

I feel NYC is pretty unique, it's like a cities within the city where you feel safe, at least on Manhattan and most places in Brooklyn (Sifens: 57).

I think there is a fantastic "Leben", I really feel save when walking around the streets (Gertrudbirk: 140).

There is a "dark side" to NYC with a lot of attacks but on Manhattan it's almost non-existing, I felt safe, but places in Brooklyn are not safe (Tobiaskrogh:16).

Tobiaskrogh reflects on functional values by referring safety to certain physical areas or neighborhoods hence place dependence (cf. fig. 4) and the quotes reflect on so-called place-related self-efficacy which is detected in statement such as "I feel safe and secure in this place" (cf. Knez, 2005). Hence it both entails the emotional, and psychological aspect of "feeling" safe and a functional, and physical dimension of neighborhood ties to places they feel safe about hence found in a 'symbiotic relationship'.

As suggested in figure four (p. 25) there is a connection between tourist and place in the construct of attachment which is in constant motion in a temporal process. According to Lewicka (2011: 215) it is possible that attachment develops faster for the physical dimensions than for social dimensions of place attachment, and thus tourists who visit holiday destinations, mostly because of their environmental

qualities, will develop attachment faster than tourists for whom the social dimension is the most important. All the informants seemed attracted the physical components of the place in form of the scenery (e.g. the streets, buildings and skyline) which the following statements exemplify:

The tall buildings do something to you, the one-way streets and boulevards, where you can look kilometers straight ahead: I cannot describe the feeling when I take a cab over to Manhattan (Yvonne_xina: 124).

One of the most amazing things about NYC is definitely the skyline, when you see it in distance; it's amazing (Idabliesman: 74).

NYC skyline is so impressive the way you can see the buildings and the water. It's so amazing. For me, NYC is the tall buildings (Henrietteshun niche: 94)

It was pure love to use an entire Saturday walking around, it is nothing specific but the feeling the city provides in me. I think it's the physical setting, the tall buildings, the flow of people of various ethnicity, the tolerance, and how the neighborhoods are divided (Mariechristensen 87: 142).

The importance of the physical assets of the city can be found in the affective evaluations of the physical scenery and the people/host, and thus this is an example of "blurred lines" between functional and affective attachment because of their interrelatedness. In relation to the semiotic model (cf. fig three, p. 21) the symbolic importance is evident in how the physical assets are perceived as a sign for the city and the skyline seems iconic to them. Consequently (in relation to figure four) the tourist is not only physically involved with the environment, related to 'place dependence', but they are clearly emotional involved (e.g. "the feeling the city provides me"). The symbolic meaning of the assets becomes meaningful when it is something the tourists can identify them selves with in the psychological investment with the place, hence related to place identity in the circular process in figure four.

In relation to figure four, there is a motion in the temporal process (before, during and after stage) between tourist and place, and especially informants who stayed in NYC 3-6 months highlight development of functional attachment over time by establishing familiarity with the place in terms of infrastructure and the transportation system which the following statements touch upon:

I felt at home quicker than other places I've been to. I felt so in place. It took me six years in Copenhagen and six month in NYC (Tobiaskrogh: 17).

It took me six months to feel at home due to getting to know the metro system, shopping for groceries etc. Then it's not new to me anymore, and I don't feel like a tourist, I don't feel alien anymore when I go into the metro (Pernilleulriksen: 97).

It changed over time, I started to feel like it's my city, where I belonged. To begin with, I felt like a tourist but over time I learned to get around, using the subway, getting familiar with the neighborhood which made it feel like my city (Sifens: 57).

The quotes reflect upon a connection between tourist and place based on functional values (cf. figure four) that makes them feel at home once they become familiar with functional values related to grocery shopping and taking the subway. The activities that take place in the physical setting affect their place dependency (level of involvement with the place), and the non-tourism related activities seem to development their self-identity going from feeling alien or as a tourist to feel at home. Hence the functional value of becoming familiar with the holiday destination seems to generate not only functional attachment but also emotional attachment detected in the affective attitude of "feeling" at home.

Beside the functional value in getting to know the infrastructure of the place, another aspect of physical connection took place in form of establishing a favorite neighborhood where they felt at home. They explained as follows:

I started to feel at home in the area around the university, I came there a lot, also getting to know Central Park where I could chill and relax, so these places I felt at home (Andreasskriver: 111).

I think my favorite area is West Village (...) so relaxing and reminds me of Denmark, not that I want to go back to Denmark yet, but it's intimate and cozy (Onlineskettrup: 86).

The relationship between place identity and place dependence was discussed earlier (p. 26 cf. figure four) with an interrelatedness between the two elements with place identity being the connection between the self and a particular place and place dependence being a functional attachment to a place (cf. Gross & Brown, 2006). The quotes illustrate examples of so-called "place-related self-esteem" statements: "I feel good when I am in this part of the city" (cf. Knez, 2005), which has created memories and feelings about a physical setting thus a matter of place identity. Furthermore the notion of "place dependence" is evident in the informants' familiarity with specific areas and in developing favorite areas such as Central Park. This indicates that neighborhood ties could to be a predictor of functional value but the distinction between functional- and emotional attachment is not a clear cut because the functional values produce emotional responses. In the vein of this, it became evident in the interview findings that the attachment to the physical nature of the place derives both from cultural divisions in neighborhoods (tangible, functional values) and cultural diversity that brings soul to the place (intangible, effective values):

I think NYC is a place where you can feel at home because of the diversity, also on a cultural level with a bigger accept of living with your fellow species. It's OK to have a China town, Little Italia etc., but in DK you think of that as a ghetto, and I learned that it works in NYC (Sifens: 57, 58).

It's charming with the various cultures in the different neighborhoods (...) I like it's not huge (Manhattan) and still have everything. That's what I felt for (9000girl: 21).

Why NYC, It's just the capital of the World and the whole world is represented on a few square meters. It's the soul of NYC, the way it's constructed (Hekrdk: 151).

According to Lewicka (2011: 210) neighborhood diversity does not seem to foster attachment in general by further arguing that socio-economic and racial diversity of neighborhoods contributed to a decline in place attachment. However in tourism it is known that a multi-cultural city attracts tourists (place attraction) (Florida, 2002). In line with this, the quotes indicate they are positively affected by ethnic diversity with positive a relationship between ethnically different and similar neighborhoods and local culture becomes a pull factor (functional value). By that means, the diversity can be related to place dependence which is not perceived as a racist pattern that forms ghettos, instead a pattern that allows a city to contain a multitude of different ways of life with the greatest possible intensity (Lewicka, 2011). Furthermore, a sense of "respect" and "trust" (cf. Pawle and Cooper, 2006; Roberts, 2004) can also be detected, for instance Hekrdk brings status upon the place in a cognitive evaluation by characterizing NYC as "the Capital of the World". Moreover, the quote by Sifens reflects upon affective attachment of "feeling at home" because of the diversity, hence she has established a closeness to the place in her place identity. In the mind of figure four, this again highlights the interrelatedness between place dependence and place identity which connects functional and emotional place attachment.

The perceived cultural diversity indicates that both environmental (functional values) and social dimensions (emotive values) of a place are desired elements for the tourist, but after all, as noted by Lewicka (2011: 215) it takes longer time to create a network of stable social relationships with locals than to develop affective bonds with an attractive scenery (cf. fig. one, the temporal process of place attachment). Having said that, it was evident that social engagement with locals, and willingness to be involved in various forms of social recreation activity and learning and accepting the culture (Brocato, 2006; Lewicka, 2011; Williams et. al., 1992) are either conditions of attachment or a catalyst for attachment as indicated by one of the participants:

It's a chicken and egg situation, I think it's the relations that matters the most but it's put into a context that is amazing to be in. There is this hidden atmosphere that makes people who they are (...) it's great with the sites, it's a combination but it's the relations I have enjoyed the most (Hekrdk: 152).

According to Lewicka, 2011: 215) the social and community factors are anchors rather than magnets, while the physical-recreational assets may be magnets rather than anchors of places. Hekrdk reflects on her self-perception in what comes first; the physical assets of a place or the social, psychological relations, and she seems able to distinct between the value of the physical and social relations in the experiential stage and reflective stage in place attachment. Hekrdk highlights the physical environment is amazing to be in the experiential stage in place attachment (cf. fig. 1), but the social value plays a role both in the experiential and reflective stages of place attachment, hence is not only a magnet but an anchor that remains in her memory generation. Accordingly, it is not purely about the difference between the physical and the social elements per se, but the psychological role the two aspects play in the different stages in the processes of place attachment.

4.2 The Tourist: The affective Values and Push Factors

4.2.1 The comparison between "home" and "holiday destination"

The previous section focused on the physical assets that generate effective attitudes. Closely linked to this, the next section brings the emotional values into focus in the relationship between the physical setting and the social value in interpersonal relationship with other people at the destination. Hence, the next section discuss the emotional links that tourists could develop with a destination that are generated from intangible assets of a place such as atmosphere and

cultural encounters yet is depended on the physical setting where the atmosphere is created and where the cultural encounters take place.

In the case of NYC, the interview narratives and IG imagery, it was evident that place attraction stem from three characteristics:

- # The diversity of the destination
- # The atmosphere in the destination
- # Intimacy generation through cultural encounters

According to the interview findings² the affection for a place are both influenced by place characteristics in the physical, tangible environment (e.g. the tall buildings, the avenues) and the social, intangible characteristics (e.g. culture, friendly people) which was stated as follows:

People are so friendly and not like people in Denmark. They way they treat you regardless if they know you or not, and I miss that in Denmark (Henrietteshunniche: 89)

NYC is so multi-ethnic, and you can find everything (...) you have so many different cultural neighborhoods, and when you go for a walk you will be amazed. You don't see that elsewhere (Calmar: 104).

Everything is centralized around Manhattan, everything is bigger, more crazy, more impressive and fascinating. The locals are perhaps a little aggressive one in a while (laughing), something happens all the time, you're never bored and that pace is so fascinating (Woldus: 31).

In accordance with the quotes, both cultural diversity (e.g. local peoples' behavior toward tourists) and the physical assets (e.g. tall buildings, different cultural neighborhoods) are emphasized by most of the informants as unique, exciting and overwhelming (cf. Bansal & Eiselt, 2004 in fig. 2). Consequently, the sense attachment is a form of emotional response or attitude, regardless what the attachment is related to, it is not critical to only clarify how they two types (functional and affective values) differ from each other but perhaps most

² (E.g. ambeier: 28; Andreasskriver: 112; Calmar: 104; Henrietteshunniche: 89; Nicolinagrahndin: 43; Woldus: 31)

importantly how they interrelate with one another in the study of emotional place attachment.

According to Trauer and Ryan (2005: 482) intimacies within a place can first of all be created by interaction with locals and secondly between travel partners or other tourists with following example:

It's also nice to travel alone because you make your own decisions, men next time I'd like to travel with someone. I need to share my experiences with someone and talk about it. But I went to meet new people, Americans and their lifestyle. Experiencing a new culture, talking with strangers plus the physical impressions with the tall buildings and architecture but first of all cultural encounters (Andreasskriver: 109, 110, 111).

In relations to the affective values in figure four, Andreasskriver describes a desire of intimacy, a closeness and connectedness with a travel partner and value of intimacy in the trade of cultural encounters with locals. He mentions the place attraction of the physical setting yet as more of a secondary value compared to the value of intimacy in cultural encounters. Besides the two types of intimacy highlighted by Trauer and Ryan (2005), the interviews introduced otherness of intimacy where the place goes from being a backdrop for intimacy to the center of attention between tourist and place. Hekrdk explains as follows:

The coolest experiences I had in my own company, I'm not a loner, I'm a social person, but just being in my own company and walk around say to my self: okay take a right or left turn and suddenly you've walked for five hours and had the coolest experiences (Hekrdk: 149).

In this case, the intimacy is not only created at the place but with the place in a sense of intimacy between tourist and place when Hekrdk adventures around the city by her own.

A significant relation between tourist and place is yielded in the place-related identity processes in becoming highly attached to it. The interviews proposed a tendency of "place-related self-efficacy" which means the informants think

“everything I need in my everyday life or in my holiday experience is in the city” (cf. Knez, 2005). Moreover, place-congruent continuity meanings were found when the place is perceived as compatible with their current beliefs; e.g. “I love this place because that type of environment is congruent with my present self, my opinions of how I want to live and what I like” (cf. Knez, 2005). Some of the informants explained as follows:

The needs I have in my age and my life fit perfectly with NYC, that’s why it’s been a great match (Mariechristensen87: 144).

The city never sleeps (...) metropolis atmosphere is so amazing (Henrietteshunniche: 89)

There is this special vibe, I feel it right away, and have you been there for a while, you become a part of it, and that’s something I love about the city. You start to feel this vibe or buzz and it does something to you, it’s hard to explain. NYC is so many things, you go out every night, this urban lifestyle, I find it attractive and other young people do too (Calmar: 103).

The statements exemplify that the City urban life is a preferred type of environment in matching their personal needs and desires. This can be related to so-called ‘settlement identity’ e i.e., attachment to general classes of places such as ‘mountain person’, ‘urbanite’, ‘rural person’ etc. (Lewicka, 2011) with the quotes illustrating examples of urbanites. The last quote by Calmar also illustrates an emotional reaction to the place environment, a perception of a unique atmosphere (a “vibe or a buzz”) which he elaborate as follows:

It’s a bit cliché but this atmosphere and “feeling” in the city. I’ve been in a lot of other American cities (...) but I think there is something special about NYC (Calmar: 103, 107).

All of the participants mentioned positive feelings about themselves (place-related self-esteem) when they visited the place, e.g. “I feel happy when I am in the city, and I become a better version of me”, hence provide them psychological well-being and emotional connection with the place. Here are some examples:

The way I feel about NYC, I understand other might feel about other places, because we are different from each other and what makes us happy (...) but my heart is in NYC (Yvonne_xina: 126).

I've never felt this good like when I'm there. I've never been happier, I think it's my happy pill (Frikkeknoerr: 49).

I felt it in my body, how happy and satisfied I am, and I become the best version of myself when I'm there. It's the closest thing I've ever been to happiness (Hekrdk: 149).

In relation to affective attachment they express feelings about their time of happiness, that are constructs within ourselves, and it suggest a pattern in the sense of belonging which implies a wish for enduring involvement, not simply a temporary phase but one which implies attachment and commitment to the place (cf. Trauer & Ryan, 2005). They can be seen to be searching for "paradise" or "new stimuli" that leaves old, perhaps "bad" ones behind. Intimacy with a place stem for a desire for passion for a time without 'normality' and a time of 'happiness', even if that means only for a limited time (ibid.).

The interview findings indicate that familiarity with the destination seem to be influencing the construct of place attachment in the means of not feeling alien:

I've been to Malaysia, and I felt alien. We are just more close to the Americans, we speak the language, know the food and music (Idomondays: 7).

Idomondays seems to connect with the place because "this destination feels familiar to me" that makes her feel close to the destination (cf. Toyama & Yamada, 2012). NYC is more familiar to Idomondays than e.g. Malaysia, hence could be a matter of preferring to experience novelty of a foreign place but within familiar means of food, music, language etc. (Mo et al. 1993). This can be related to the degree that tourists seek novelty and familiarity in their travel (Mo et al. 1993). Familiarity with a destination is manifested in previous experience that affects tourist behavior and likelihood of visitation (Lewicka, 2011).

The following examples indicate a desire to experience “the everyday-life” in NYC and intimacy generation through interpersonal relationships more than “conventional” tourist activities:

I was busy with work and social interactions; I had a daily life, a network and friendships to maintain. I was on museums but most for the social aspect (...) I stayed in NYC for six months without seeing Ground Zero (Tobiaskrogh: 16).

We weren't old enough to go out but wanted to be like “Sex and the City”, shopping, I didn't need to see a lot of sites (...) it was important to me to just walk around, spending a entire day in Central Park, reading a book and trying to be like a New-Yorker like we saw on the TV-show, getting that everyday life feeling (9000girl: 20).

The first quote highlights the emotional value of intimacy in interpersonal relationships, and novelty is reflected by seek of variety of social contacts with local people rather than visiting tourist attractions (cf. Mo et al., 1993). By that means, the local people (host) become the “attraction” for the tourist. Tobiaskrogh lived in NYC for six months and had established a sense of everyday life. The second participant stayed in NYC for 10 days yet reflects a desire to experience a momentarily feeling of the “daily life” in NYC. However, in this quote the experience of authentic foreign culture is not in the seeking of complete novelty by engaging directly with a variety of different people. Instead she prefers to observe the lives of local people and act like them, for instance by relaxing in central park which she perceives as a ‘local activity’. They both prefer to experience the authentic foreign culture, but the level of commitment seems to vary between the two. In the vein of that, the length of stay could influence this although they both desire the condition of everyday life at the foreign place which could imply that emotional attachment lies in the seek of becoming close and familiar with the destination.

Intimacy generation at a place is generated in the physical environment by social encounters which the following statement exemplifies:

When we are there, we usually rent through Airbnb (private house rentals) to get that private home feeling, shopping for groceries. We think it's nice to be like the locals for some time, go and work out in the gym. People are so friendly and open, I feel so welcomed and almost at home (Gertrudbirk: 137).

She relates to the symbolic meaning of what a place stands for such as "hospitality" which could have a valuable meaning for the tourist and hence influence the cognitive and affective evaluation of the place. She seems to be an explorer in the means of trying to associate with the local people and seek novelty by living in private homes as an instrument to feel in place and being a "local" (Yuksel, 2010). Furthermore she still maintains some basic routines and comforts from home such as working out (cf. Mo et al., 1993). Consequently the balance between novelty and familiarity could amplify the construct of place attachment, which is further analyzed in the next section.

4.2.2 Relationships between Novelty and Familiarity

Earlier in the thesis (p. 18), the "mystery"/"novelty" component of a lovemark was described as what keeps the tourist intrigued and wanting to revisit the place (cf. Mo et. al., 1993). Novelty or mystery can be divided into four types (Toyama & Yamada, 2012):

- # This destination offers an unusual experience
- # This destination offers new experiences
- # This destination offers new discoveries
- # This destination is new for me

An unusual experience that were brought forward by two participants was the shift in weather:

It was funny, because the week we spend there, when we came there Tuesday it was seven degrees and cold (..) and on the Friday it was twenty-seven degrees, and before I went home it was 1 degree below zero (Idomondays: 2-3).



The strangest thing about the city was the weather and how it changed from one day to another (Jakobdyhr: 37).

As noted in section 2.2.3, the climate is usually perceived as a common, functional attribute of the destination image (cf. Bowen & Clarke, 2009). However, in this case it is both a new and an unusual experience that relies on what the participants are usually familiar with (based on preferences and previous experiences), hence points out the relatedness between familiarity and novelty (Lewicka, 2010).

The desire for variety, novelty, and strangeness focus primarily on the destination itself in the desire for new and different holiday experiences in terms of culture, people and language (Mo et al., 1993). For some of the participants, the destination was new to them with unusual experiences:

I thought it was strange, I've never seen anyone paint their dog, and it's so typical; what you find over here you don't find elsewhere (Olinekettrup: 87).

The funniest thing I have ever experienced was some runners in Central Park with their two dogs, and they put them in swings like a baby. That only happens in USA – people are so strange (Idomondays: 11).



In these examples, the perception of novelty was found in objects (a dog in the swing), and the environment (cultural atmosphere), and the other people and animals (the man and the dogs) that was displayed in their IG activities. The exploratory behavior is an expression of curiosity that is aroused by an environment (the physical values) that is perceived to be novel (cf. Lee & Crompton, 1992).

The hashtags and text in the photos indicate the perceived strangeness by using hashtags such as *#crazy* affective evaluation of novelty by tagging the words: *#the #only #place #on #earth* and *#love #it* and the irony of “everyday morning. Curiosity drive and novelty seeking are based on personal desires (cf. table 1) and describe the quest for new experiences. In the vein of this, the IG examples indicate the perception of NYC being an arousing and exciting destination, and the involvement with the destination (Trauer & Ryan, 2005) implies place attraction thus potential place attachment.

Novelty seeking appears to be perceived as a general characteristic for NYC. A majority of the participants said as follows:

I was surprised the city was like in the movies and on TV. I was surprised about the low rate of crime, which was amazing (Frikke knoerr: 49).

There is one out-of-the body experience per day (...). If you adopt a positive attitude, the craziest experiences will happen (Woldus: 32).

You might have an expectation about how crazy the city is, but I still think it's surprising me. You see so many strange people (...) In Copenhagen you have whereabouts and here you have so many acquaintances, so you end up at new spots, and that's cool (Jakobdyhr: 37).

The statements seem to touch upon a perception of NYC being an arousing and exciting destination (cf. travel motives p. 11) and highlight that tourists want to experience something novel through their travel. Jakobdyhr's quote illustrates the comparison to 'home' (the normal place of residence) which is the familiar and

ordinary with the 'holiday destination' entering as the extraordinary and unpredictable (Thurlow & Jaworski, 2010). As mentioned in section (cf. table 1), novelty seeking is one of the central components of travel motivation in the desire of thrill, adventure, surprise, and boredom-alleviation (cf. Lewicka, 2010). The place identity of tourists evolves in the interaction with different tangible and intangible elements that occur at the holiday destination (Hernández et al., 2007) hence influence the place attachment.

4.2.3 Destination loyalty and commitment

Interview findings suggested that destination loyalty and commitment are two significant indicators for place attachment which can be detected in (cf. Albert & Merunka, 2013; Hernández, 2007; Toyama & Yamada, 2012):

- # an intense feeling that the place is irreplaceable
- # their intention to recommend the destination to others
- # a deeply held commitment to revisit the place, and
- # a deeply held commitment to move to the place

Commitment represents the tourist's willingness to maintain a relationship with the place and love is the intense feeling the tourist has toward the place (Albert & Merunka, 2013). According to Albert & Merunka (2013: 260) cognitive commitment (to a brand) means the perceived lack of alternatives in the comparison of existing alternatives in the marketplace which they believe rarely occurs with brand love. In context of places, the interview findings indicate cognitive commitment takes place in the comparison with other alternatives which the following statements touch upon:

I'm pretty sure, it's the only place on earth you can get that feeling (of it being unique) because people know about NYC and they visit the place because they know what it stands for, what it has to offer, so many interesting people go there because they want to accomplish something in life (...). The only place I would compare it with is London, but still

not the same at all. It attracts a lot of Europeans but NYC attracts people from all over the world on a totally other level (Jakobdyhr: 38).

NYC has some many opportunities, everything can happen, people go there with a dream they want to live out. I feel you cannot find that elsewhere in the World, it's only in NYC so many things can happen (Icbp: 79).

The cognitive commitment is evident in comparison of existing alternatives and the affective dimension is shown in the intense feeling that the place is irreplaceable and providing them a feeling of uniqueness. They seem to have high respect for place (e.g. "it's only in NYC so many things can happen") and the place is perceived as irreplaceable by both of them thus could be a case of lovemark (Pawle & Cooper). Yet, according to Albert & Merunka (2013: 259) love relationship with a brand is deep and enduring that goes beyond simple affect such as considering the brand or place as irreplaceable. This could also be the case of a place, a discussion that is brought up again in section 4.2.5. *Love attitudes for a place*.

The participants seemed to be willing to recommend the place based on positive evaluations about it. The interviews suggested that the emotional bond to NYC varied among participants which was evident in their desire to return to the holiday destination. A few of the participants did not have NYC as their first choice in their next travel plans even though both were positive in the evaluations about the holiday experience:

It's not that important, there are so many places I want to go to, but it's easy to find someone who wants to go to NYC (Merete_toft: 55).

There are other places I want to experience first (Andreasskriver: 112)

The statements seem to reflect a desire for novelty (Toyama & Yamada, 2012) by visiting other destinations they have not yet discovered. Commitment represents the tourist's willingness to maintain a relationship with the place (Albert & Merunka, 2013), hence they do not seem to reach this level. The loyalty does not

seem as strong as ones who feel the need and desire to revisit NYC (Toyama & Yamada, 2012) which the following examples touch upon:

I could go to Tokio but I just want to go back to NYC (...) and get that feeling of being “home” (Calmar: 108).

I have “withdrawal symptoms” at the moment; I so want to go (Idomandays: 5).

For me personally I just have to go back (..) as soon as when I’m back home, I instantly think when can I go back (Frikkeknoerr: 49).

I so want to go back (9000girl: 22).

I have to go back again and again, also to experience other seasons of the year (Sarahbasseoconnor: 130).

The quotes reflect place satisfaction and attachment as a strong indicator of revisit and recommendation of the place to others. There seem to be a component of “mystery” or “novelty” at the place that keeps them intrigued and wanting to go back for more.

Other participants did not consider NYC as their next holiday choice, not because they were not committed to revisit, but simply because they felt a vacation for a short period of time would not be satisfying:

When I came home I wanted to go back right away but I don’t think my next vacation will be NYC, it’s just too hard to only be there for a week or two. I need more time (Lisaashleymcculloch: 122).

This experience takes up everything in my head, and all I can think of is to go back. I don’t think I could ever go back for only a week, I need at least a month (Hekrdk: 151).

These statements reflect an emotional reaction to the place in wanting to maintain closeness by revisit (Knez, 2005). They have both stayed in NYC for more than a month, and as a result, it is their perception that a week would not be enough to fulfill their holiday goals.

As noted earlier (p. 17), it was argued by Pawle and Cooper (2006:38) that consumers are no longer motivated by brand loyalty but the “lovemarks”. However, in context of tourists’ place attachment, one of the most significant overarching factors in the interviews that indicated the strongest level of place attachment was first of all a deeply held commitment of wanting to move to the place after spending their vacation in the city because of a strength of affection and deeply commitment motivated by destination loyalty. Eight participants³ seemed to reach the highest level of place commitment (Lewicka, 2011) in the desire of wanting to move to NYC which the following statements exemplify:

Right now, I cannot image living elsewhere than NYC if it was possible (Mariechristensen87: 144).

I’ve experienced the lifestyle and the contrast to Denmark. We are so reserved, perhaps even snobbish. I’m ready to move there right away (Nicolinagrahndin: 43).

I love NYC, it’s a lot about if I can see my self live there, and I can (Frikkeknoerr: 50).

I so want to try to live there (...) I care so much about that city and would give away my right arm to move there tomorrow. Some think Berlin is the coolest city, and that’s okay but my heart belongs to NYC (Yvonne_xina: 126).

It was argued in section (xx) that length of stay is one of the predictors of place attachment and according to Hernández et al. (2007: 311) it is often the case that persons who have lived longer in a place feel greater attachment to it. Consequently, as the participants differ between lengths of stay (cf. appendix 1 with overview of participant information), it could be expected there is a variety of commitment patterns in the vein of the temporal process (cf. fig. one). Quite interestingly, as indicated by the quotes above, both a participant who stayed for 10 days (Yvonne_xina: 126) and the rest who stayed for 1-6 months have a desire to move to the place. In that matter, the length of stay could be an influencing

³ (Ambeier: 27; Getrudbirk: 137; Frikkeknoerr: 50; Nicolinagrahndin: 43; Mariechristensen87; Tobias Krogh: 12; yvonne_xina: 123; 9000girl: 23)

factor but not a critical one. In the case of Yvonne_xina, frequency of her visits could have influenced the establishment of commitment, because she has revisited NYC several times (app. 1, p. 122). Consequently, putting a sign of equivalence between attachment and length of stay should not be a matter of course. According to Lewicka (2011: 2015) it is presumed that tourists are not able to develop “strong attachments in comparison to ‘insiders’ who were raised and/or have resided for long periods of time in a place”. Nevertheless as noted in the quotes, place attachment may develop independently of residence time, but it may be of different quality than attachment of more permanent residents. The focal point of the present study has not been a direct comparison between tourists and locals with regard to the reasons for attachment but the interview narratives brought perspectives on tourist’s self-perception and how they identify themselves in the category of being a tourist or local. This is in focus in the next section.

4.2.4 Tourist: Self-perception in Place identity development

Length of stay is an example of a socio-demographic predictor that has been found to foster attachment to places of recreation (Lewicka, 2011). As noted in the previous section, length of stay seemed to influence the informant’s self-perception outside their home environment. The participants who stayed in NYC for longer periods (1-7 months) subjectively believe “I know more than others about this destination” (cf. Toyama & Yamada, 2012), and “we are more attached to the place” than tourists who stayed there for a week or two by stating:

I think you get a romantic impression what it means to live in NYC. You don’t feel the emptiness you sometimes feel even though you’re living among millions of people, you still feel alone (Tobiaskrogh:15).

When people talk about NYC, I feel it’s more mine than it’s theirs because I’ve been here longer and that will remain inside of me how proud I am to have had this opportunity (Icbp: 82).

The quotes reflect on a perception of length of stay as a critical factor for them to increase the degree of attachment, and e.g. has a sort of “possessive” attitude in

feeling the place belongs more to her than other tourists who have not been there for long. Icbp furthermore display a so-called place-related self-esteem statement (cf. Knez, 2005) because living in NYC makes her feel proud.

Furthermore, when interviewing participants who studied, worked or had an internship in NYC, there seemed to be a pattern in the seek of differ themselves from the stereotypical tourist and instead aiming towards a perceived “authentic” foreign culture at the place (cf. Mo et. al., 1993). Focusing on this aspect, some of the participants offered the following statements:

I think it's unfair to the city to visit if for a week, I feel they have not experienced NYC the same way as me (...) I have a closer relationship and they can't say they love NYC when they haven't been here for as long as us (Icbp: 79, 80).

New-Yorkers are used to people coming and going which make it easy to get in place, and the culture is that when you have lived in NYC for seven months, you're a New-Yorker too (Mariechristensen87).

I no longer feel as a tourist, only the first couple of weeks. Now I have gotten into the New-Yorker role, which I think is natural (Madshebbel: 135).

In the notion of place identity, the informants who have lived in NYC for 5-7 months distinguish themselves from others which is substantiated by referring to: “I am New-Yorker, not a tourist” and they feel close to the destination hence what goes beyond “simply” being a tourist. It is important to keep in mind that reflection on the meanings they have for a place and about the definition of a tourist are subjective, and hence perceptions of the stereotypical tourist are constructions within people's minds (Zakrisson & Zillinger, 2011). They stem from a combination of several sources; past experiences, preferences, prejudices, and the situations in which they take place (ibid.). Even though the majority of the informants distinct them selves from being a tourist, they can still be characterized as one because becoming a tourist means shedding parts of one's core identity and routines, in this case by coming into contact with locals during their travel, and feeling they are becoming one of them (Zakrisson & Zillinger, 2011). This behavior

pattern could imply attachment and commitment to the holiday destination to obtain closeness with the place (cf. Knez, 2005). The desire of becoming 'other' persons in the desire of becoming a 'local' for a limited time was not only found among 'long-time-visitors'. Idomondays visited NYC once for 10 days but she obtained a perceived closeness to the place by briefly shedding parts of one's 'core' identity and routine behavior (ibid.):

It's amazing an you don't feel like a tourist because people want to get to know you, and I was with my friend to event talking to locals, and not the typical tourist experience, so I got to be a New-Yorker on a very short time (Idomondays: 3).

This can be related to place identity (cf. fig. four) and self-perception of being a tourist or not (tourist self-image). The self-image is what the individual believes him- or herself to be (Moutinho, 2007), and Idomondays' cognitive and emotional distance of being a tourist seems be a condition in the desire of becoming attached to the place. Interestingly, one of the informants who had stayed in NYC for five months (because of an internship) perceived her self as tourist opposite to other participants who stayed for a semester:

Perhaps a little bit tourist, because we are so many Danes together, but I think you can feel at home, but five months are not enough not to make me feel like a tourist. I have a general impression of the American culture, but I'm also aware of my own, but I haven't started to be like an American or New-Yorker (Icbp: 78).

She lives in a dorm with mainly Danes (p. 131) and her social circle was with Danes (tourist to tourist) which seemed to prevent closeness with the place (Knez, 2005). Some tourists prefer to seek the novelty by engaging in direct contact with a wide range of different people while others prefer to observe the lives of the locals (Mo et al. 1993). This is described by one of the participants:

I lived together with Americans so I got close to the American people pretty quickly and hung out with Americans and New-Yorkers, but if I lived with Danes it would be more like a folk high school (Calmar: 102).

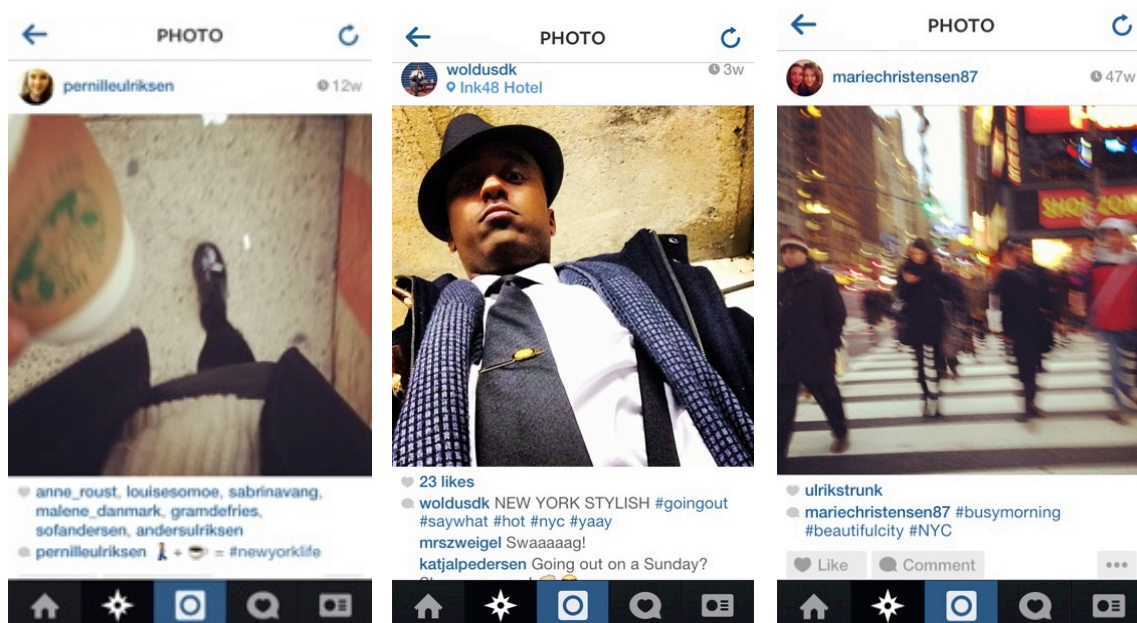
According to Calmar, social interaction with locals enhances a tendency of obtaining and maintaining closeness to a place.

Furthermore, the interview findings suggests that in the desire of becoming a local resident, a “New Yorker”, they avoided large tourist attractions, particular the informants who stayed at the place for a semester. This is illustrated in the next quotes, in which two participants talk about the issue of tourist vs. non-tourist:

I felt more like a tourist the first time I visited NYC, and was a part of all of it, but when I moved there a became a part of the city and got annoyed by tourists and them not walking when the pedestrian signals was red. I didn’t feel like a part of the tourist things, and I didn’t feel alienated (Calmar: 102).

The tourists got in my nerves, I lived just by Times Square and had to go with the subway in the morning, and people came with their luggage. I tried to find ways to avoid this, and when you went out, you avoided the tourist places, so started to become a little like a New-Yorker or local (Mariemolbak: 63).

In these quotes, the informants point to the idea of perceiving them selves more as locals rather than tourists because of their “non-touristic” behavior which the following images also illustrate.



Both the quotes and photos indicate a desire and perceived prestige in becoming a New-Yorker (act like one and dress like one). In Woldusdk's photo he added the text: "New York stylish", and Pernilleulriksen is with a Starbucks coffee in her hand; a display of "the everyday life in NYC" detected in the hashtag: #newyorklife. Mariechristensen87 (147) explains that walking around with a cup of coffee in your hand is a label for NYC, particularly a "Starbucks coffee, and she calls it a "cultural marker", and hence appears to have symbolic aspect of representation in the semiotic model (cf. fig three, p. 21). Mariechristensen87's photo is a bit shaken that demonstrate the hectic morning "buzz" in NYC with the hashtag: #busymorning thus indicating she is on her way to work like a New-Yorker. Moreover, the statements indicate they try to be like a New-Yorker by avoiding or rejecting conventional tourist attractions as a reaction to getting familiar with the authentic foreign culture at the destination (cf. Mo et al., 1993). Hence, the length of stay could amplify the desire for familiarity with the place. As noted in section 2.1.1, all the informants are tourists compared to the official definition relating on the length of stay from one night to maximum 1 year (WTO, 1991). Having said that, it is evident that the informants who stayed up to 7 months at the place do not only seek the temporary, extraordinary and unpredictable experiences at the place (cf. Thurlow & Jaworski, 2010) because they also work (though this could be new and temporary to begin with), and hence the routinized and non-routinized becomes blurry over time when they do routinized activities alongside with seeking novelty, and strangeness in new experiences.

4.2.5 Love attitudes for a place

One of the main questions in emotional attachment to a holiday destination is the concept of love and whether tourists can express feelings of love for a place. This section discuss; is the feeling of love for a place similar to feeling love for a person and do people feel this love relationship in the same way across cultures (cf. Albert et al., 2008)?

Four of the informants⁴ used the metaphor of comparing their feelings for NYC to a love relationship with another person:

“It’s like an ex-boyfriend no one else can have” (Mariechristensen87: 145)

“It’s like being in love with a man with the longing I have” (Nicolinagrahndin: 44).

Frikkeknoerr further explains the comparison with love to a person:

It’s like being in love; it’s hard to explain what you exactly love about him. That’s how I feel about NYC and what makes it attractive (Frikkeknoerr: 47).

The quotes are declaration of love for a place in comparison with the feeling of being in love with a person. Furthermore, the interviews suggested a possible different intensity in the word “love”. The declaration of affect towards NYC seemed to vary among the participants. Twenty informants out of twenty-five were comfortable to talk about love affection for the place, but a minority⁵ showed more declaration of affect rather than love when they rather use words like “special”, “amazing” and “like” when talking about the place. Jakobdyhr explains as follows:

I’m not sure “love” is the right word (laughing) even though a lot of people say that. I think it depends on who you are. I like the city for its possibilities, for the people you meet and the way you’re social over here, it’s a quality I appreciate and what makes it interesting (...) it’s an amazing city, and I understand the wow factor and people saying: “I love it”. I partly agree, but perhaps not use the word “to love a city” (Jakobdyhr: 39).

When using these wordings, it does not mean they are not attached to the place because the distinction between love and liking in attachment is not uncovered here. Love and the expression of love are culturally grounded and the concept of

⁴ Frikkeknoerr: 47; Tobiaskrigh: 17; Mariechristensen87: 145; Nicolinagrahndin: 44

⁵ (Andreasskriver; Jakobdyhr; Madshebbel; Merete_toft; Onlinekettrup) were more hesitating.

love toward a brand, or in this case a place, does not necessarily fit with theories that define the feeling of love for person (Albert et al., 2008). Consequently, it could be relevant to distinguish between affectionate love and attachment and examine the concepts in different cultural settings in further studies.

The love attitudes for a place can already be detected in the anticipatory stage before they have ever visited the holiday destination (cf. fig. 1, p. 7). This seems particularly impacted by instrumental and ritualized media use (Wise et al., 2010) in the formation of destination image. More specifically, ritualized use is the habitual use of a particular medium e.g. social media and TV, while instrumental media use is deals with acquiring specific information which lead to different cognitive and emotional outcomes (Wise et al., 2010). The media use is interesting in the process of place attachment in the formation of destination image and attachment:

I'm a film geek and the city takes place in a lot of movies, so I was pretty in love with it before I ever came there and was very much in love after I've been there. There is not doubt about, it is NYC I love, I want to go back, and I feel at home (Sarahbasseoconnor: 127, 128).

I was in love before I ever went there. I'm a fan of the concept of an "open" city with a lot of different people (Yvonne_xina: 122).

In relation to the theoretical discussion of lovemark theory, Yvonne_xina seems to value availability which can be related to functional values in customer satisfaction with a cognitive judgment and affective reaction in finding it attractive, likable or satisfying.

There are different reasons why places have a special meaning, and according to Lewicka (2011: 214) journeys away from home reinforce people's emotional bonds with their real home rather than create new ones. However, the interview findings suggested the opposite scenario of the journeys away from home create new bonds rather than reinforcing people's emotional bonds with their "real home" which the following statements touch upon:

Previously I had a partiality to Copenhagen, but I must admit I'm being a little unfaithful right now (laughing) (Woldus: 32).

I remember, when I just got back home and saw some stupid TV-show that took place in NYC, I zapped away because I seriously had "reversed" homesickness. I missed the city so much and a think about all the time when I can go back again and again (Calmar: 107).

I got some serious strong reaction the days before I had to leave NYC, I cried a lot because I've never felt this way of being in place and feeling good about myself (Hekrdk: 150, 152).

Stedman (2006, p. 190) states that newcomers to a place cannot share values of the real community because they have not contributed to their creation, and because of the short time of encounter with the place they cannot develop attachment to it. However, in the case of tourists, the quotes suggest a strong emotional bond to the holiday destination that remains in the "reflective stage" in the temporal process (cf. fig. one) which could be considered as a high strength of attachment to the holiday destination with a 'reversed homesickness'. According to Thurlow & Jaworski (2010: 99) there could be some sadness for a tourist of leaving the familiar environment, hence with the intention of coming back. Interviews narratives⁶ explained an ambivalence and sadness of returning to home and reactions of seeing NYC in media which the following statement bring examples of:

When I went home I was surprised about my reaction. It was not pleasant. (...) I still haven't come to terms with it even though it's six months ago (Mariechristensen87: 144).

I'm still hooked, and not happy about it's been so long. I feel it in my stomach when I see pictures on Facebook. My attachment to the city has become even stronger but of course now that it has been a while, it's more of a feeling (9000girl: 22).

⁶ (E.g. by henrietteshunniche: 93; Lisaashleymcculloch: 118; Nicolinagrahndin: 43; Mariechristensen87: 148; icbp: 78; Sifens: 59; Yvonne_xina: 126)



On the one hand these emotional reactions suggest a strong emotional attachment because it is maintained or developed in the “reflective stage” of the temporal process (cf. figure one p. 8) – even for 9000girl who has not visited NYC for years, and only been there once for ten days. On the other hand, this is an example of that attachment is a subjective feeling and emotional attitude - 9000girl appears to feel attached to the place yet she has not visited the place for years hence the perceived attachment does not automatically mean deep commitment and loyalty by the action of revisit.

#2: *Instagram Images*

The interview narratives in this second and final part of the analysis are the informants' own reflections on their IG behaviour patterns and attitudes. They contribute to the interpretations of IG imagery related to place attachment in the relationship between what the informants' self-perception and behaviour patterns evident in their IG imagery.

In correlation with figure four, and part 1 in the analysis, the structure of this section is based on the two dimensions of attachment (functional and emotive), and hence related to the interrelatedness with place identity and place dependence yet with the awareness of the blurriness between the two attachment forms, when images and narratives on IG could display both dimensions in one photo.

4.3 **F**unctional attachment displayed in site-centric images?

4.3.1 Local and Global Concepts: site-centric vs. self-centric photos

The personal imagery on IG appeared to serve as mediators of tourist experiences, assumption about the destination and its people. Emotional attachment can potentially be identified through the special interest focus by firstly an interest in an activity, destination or setting, and secondly sharing with like-minded people in a social world both at the holiday destination and via social media (Trauer & Ryan, 2005). The informants' need to share experiences with others on IG seems to correspond with the view of Trauer & Ryan (2005) and was explained as follows:

I think it displays what I appreciate; to be social with people, go to different places and events, e.g. a drag queen show. It's not the site and local attractions I find important, but to display my life in NYC, not what to see (Ambeier: 29).

I never thought about what I put out on IG, but both social and work life, and I don't think people have any doubts about my fascination and love for the city (Mariechristensen87: 146).

What I love about IG is that is kind of a diary; what you have been doing and when. Then I can find it when recommending to other. Also it's about showing others: "look what a good time I'm having". My mom and boyfriend are on IG too, so it was for them to follow me (Idomondays: 9).

From the perspective of the tourist, the quotes suggest following overall purposes displaying holiday activities on IG:

- # Stillness of a certain moments or events
- # Sharing holiday and work experiences with peers and family
- # Remembering "good moments" which are transformed into "good memories"
- # Displaying your life (self-enhancement and nuanced enactments of tourist identities)

These purposes are manifested in IG photographs and attached narratives (text and hashtags). The netnographic study of the participants' IG images presents both social and environmental assets of a place in varying degrees. It became clear how the informants explore the space and surroundings around them that does not only take place in the physical constructs of the city, but also in confined spaces such as events (cf. Zakrisson & Zillinger, 2011) and other activity-related experiences. Appendix 3 provides a full overview with frequency of local and global concepts detected in the IG. In average, the most frequently local and global concepts that appeared in the images were:

LOCAL	GLOBAL
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Buildings and monuments (96) •Streets (67) •Faces (149) •People (91) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> •Architecture (44) •Culture & traditions (44) •Food & bevarege (197) •Skyline (52)

Table 2: Local and Global Concepts detected in Instagram Images (self-made, 2014)

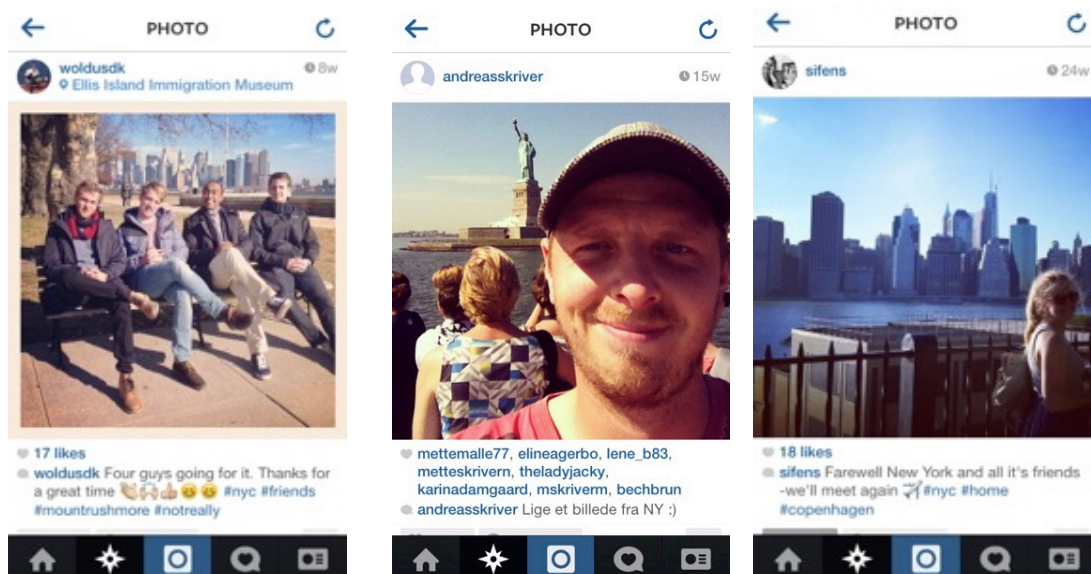


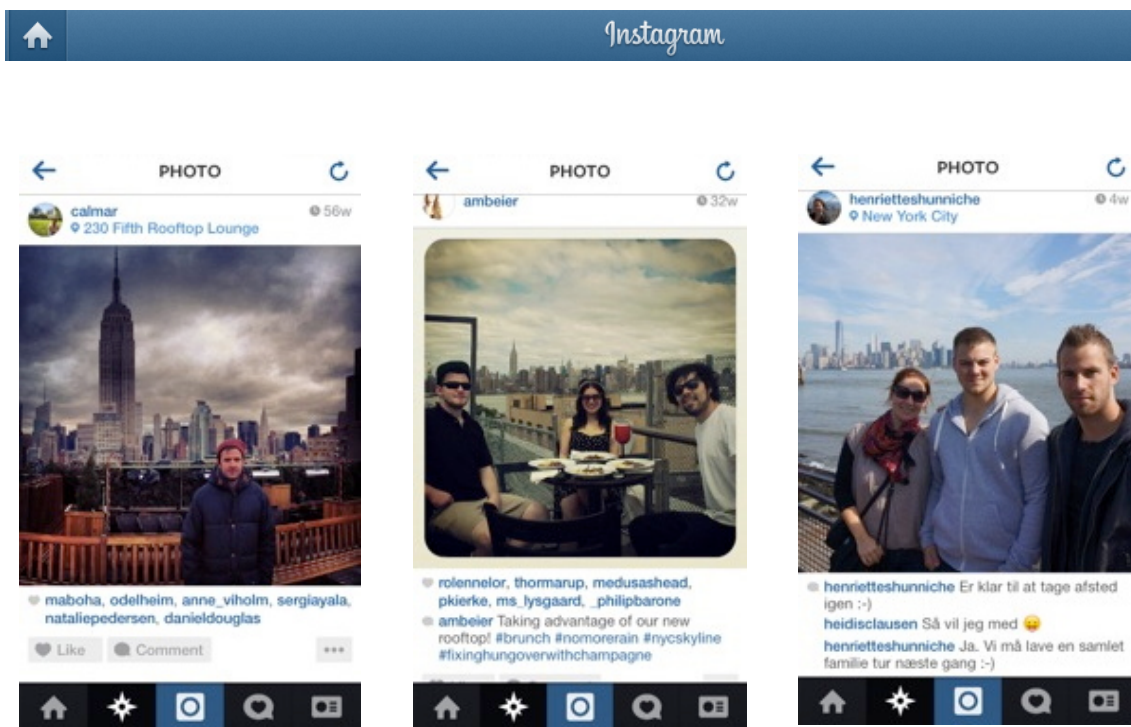
Local and global concepts could be related to both affective and functional values, however when scanning the most frequent concepts (table 2), they appear to be dominated by the physical assets of the place. ‘Faces’, ‘people’ and ‘culture’ could both could to some extent symbolize affective values, for instance the value of intimacy in interpersonal relationships (e.g. a photo displaying people are having a good time). However, Sifens and Lisaashleymcculloch seemed to value the functional assets of the place in their IG displays:

Persons are absolutely not important for me, it was most of the city itself, something I found esthetically nice, or something I thought was funny (Sifens: 60).

I have pictures of things I think are nice, not so much picture of people. So it has not been that informative for my friends: “see who I just met”. (...) It’s mostly images of buildings, objects and food, or something totally American (Lisaashleymcculloch: 120, 121).

“Interestingly, there might be gab between the self-perception of their IG priorities and what they display on IG. When scanning Sifens’ images (app. 3, p. 10) for local concepts, the “faces” (18 images) seemed to be the most frequent concept more than buildings and monuments (7 images). However, of global concepts, the “skyline” was most frequent in her images, hence more of functional value in the physical assets of the city. Both “face” and e.g. “skyline” or “statue” could appear in the same photo:

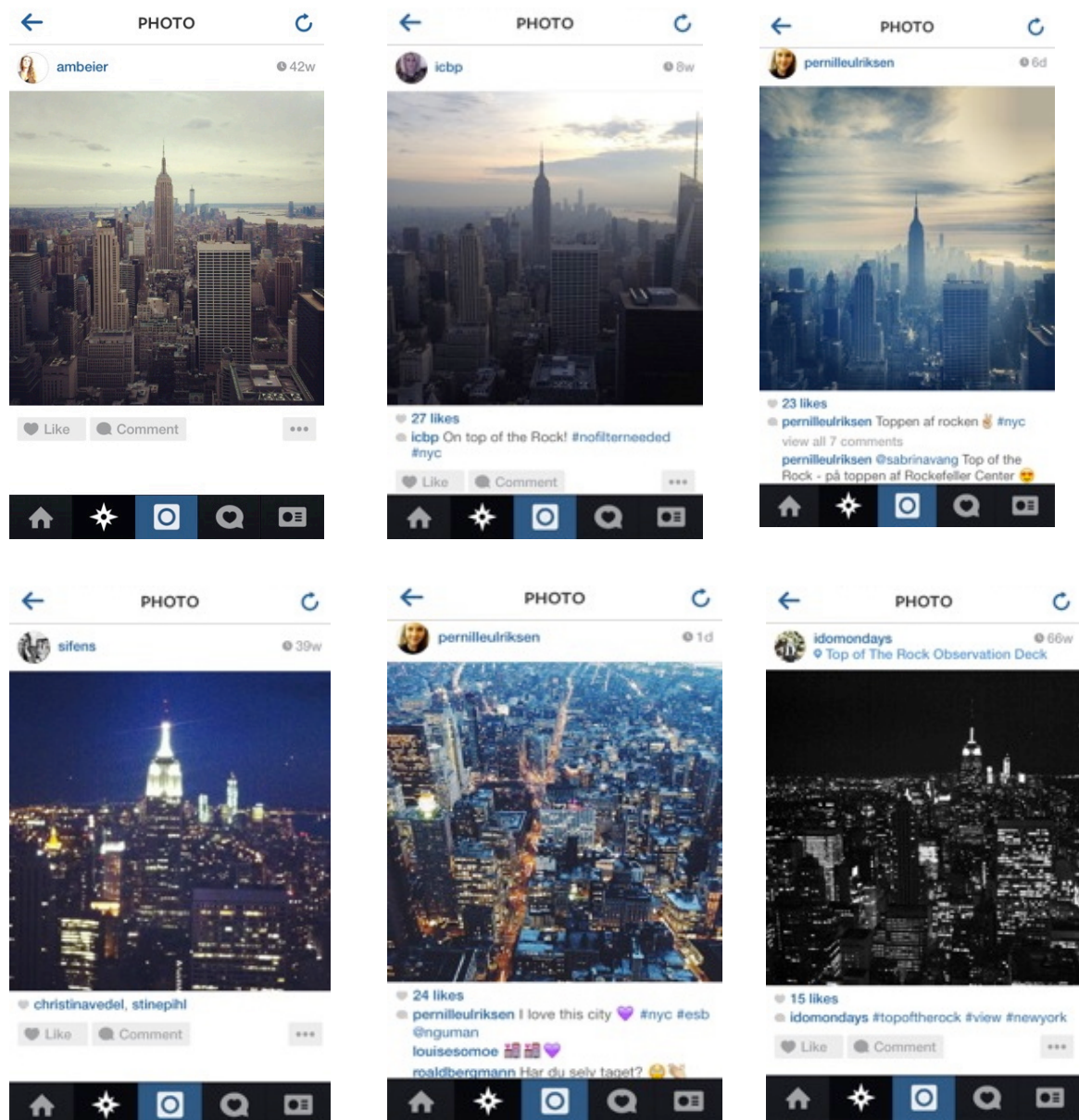




As noted in section (2.3.2., p. 21), there can be found different meanings to images and text in the semiotic process. Within the local concept (table 2), the images above have ‘faces’ or ‘people’, typically in the front, and they are represented with “architecture and skyline” in the background. For instance Calmar and Ambeier have Empire State Building in the photos that can be interpreted as a local concept (building) and an icon for NYC as the sign in the semiotic process (cf. the triangle (p. 21). According to Tussydia & Fesenmaier (2009: 32) a skyline is a global concept, however, the skyline of Manhattan could arguably be a local concept when it is perceived as a icon for the place. A vast majority of the informants document on IG that they have seen the skyline of Manhattan, and iconic buildings of NYC, which can be related to the functional values in figure four. The positioning of self in the front of the picture implying privilege of “this is the scenery I am looking at right now”, and e.g. Ambeier’s photograph with the text: “taking advantage of our new rooftop” implies “this is the view from our rooftop”. This does not only serve to situate the tourist but the “stunning” view is also a moment of showing off and enticing admiration or even envy (cf. Thurlow & Jaworski, 2010).

Although the majority of informants do not wish to be defined as tourists (as noted earlier in section 4.2.1, p. 58), especially the ones who stayed in NYC for a longer periods, the images above are examples of transience of tourist identities and tourist culture both physically and mentally in an awareness of its “having-been-

there". This seems to amplify emotional attachment with the physical setting of the place. A majority of the participants features site-centric images with photos of an iconic view of the city from the top of the Empire State Building or Rockefeller Centre hence the photos among the participants had a significant resemblance.



From the perspective of the semiotic model (cf. fig. three, p. 21), Empire State Building and The Statue of Liberty are perceived as icons that resemble the objects, and emphasize recognizability and familiarity, e.g. from seen in different media. The representation and perceptions of the sign varies depending on the



interpretant of (Pennington & Thomsen, 2010) which the following statements touch upon.

You were always oriented towards Empire State Building, and what color it had, because it glows all over Manhattan (Sifens: 61).

Empire State gives me the same feeling as when I hear the song Empire State of Mind with Jay Z. It's totally iconic and represents what you have seen in the movies, and it's just the symbol of NYC (Hekrdk: 154).

According to Pennington & Thomsen (2010: 38) the familiarity can exert a positive influence on attitudes toward destinations, and consequently iconic objects such as Empire State Building seem significantly related to the cognitive perspectives on the object-sign relationship hence could amplify functional attachment to a place. On the one hand, the iconic familiarity can be a powerful pull factor, but on the other hand other iconic representations, for instance the Statue of Liberty, can quickly become generic hence lack individuality (Pennington & Thomsen, 2010). The two-edged sword are highlighted in the next dialog:

Interviewer: You have a picture of The Statue of Liberty and text saying "my heart", what do you mean by this?

Interviewee: It's the symbol of NYC, and it was shortly after I got home.

Interviewer: You posted it when you got back home?

Interviewee: Yes, it's the symbol and everybody knows what it represents (Nicolinagrahndin: 44).



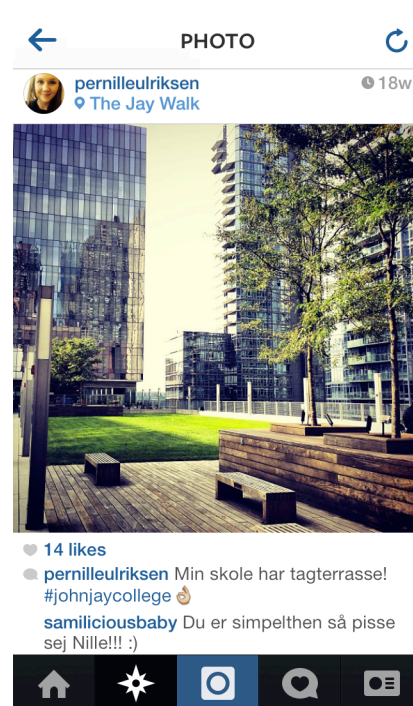
Others seemed to think that iconic representations lack individuality and appeal by stating:

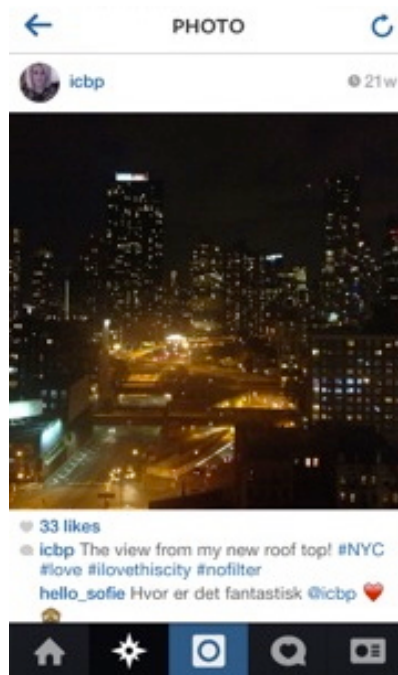


I don't want to post photos of the State of Liberty that could have been from a postcard. I rather display my everyday life here and what I experience, so it's not a tourist blog but more personal (Icbp: 81).

I think you are selective of what you post, everybody has the Statue of Liberty. To me it was more about what I found fascinating, everyday experiences and not something you have shared a thousand times. I guess you want to be more original on a media like IG (Mariechristensen87: 147).

The next photos represent "site-centric" images; they do not only reflect on functional attachment to the physical assets of the place, but they also entice admiration (and perhaps envy) as a precondition of attachment for other IG viewers, who comment on the photos: e.g. "I so want to go to NYC", "you are so cool", and Wow, where in the city do you live?"





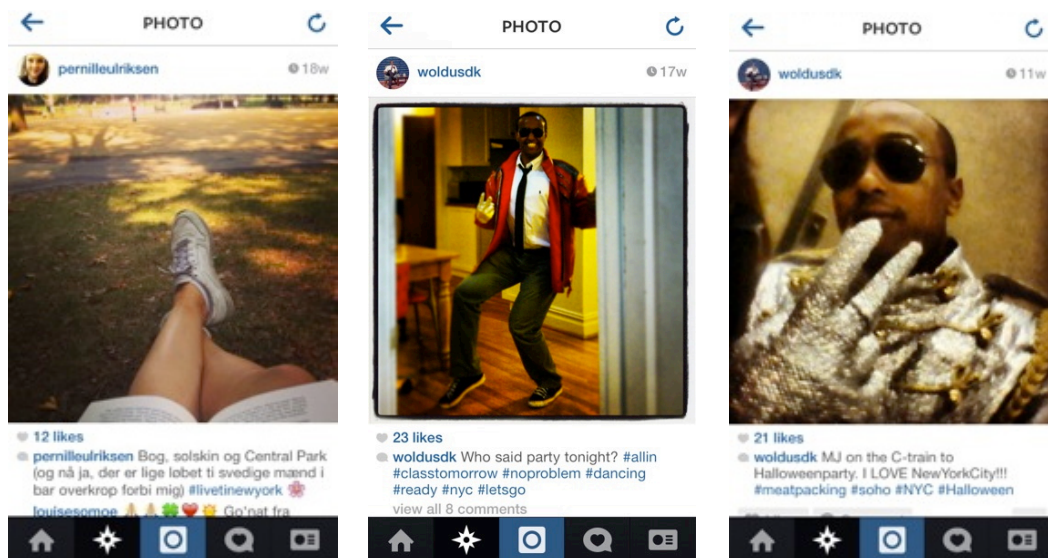
IG viewers give comments or “likes” and express personal appreciation of the IG user’s image and thus enable the tourist to have the “viewer gaze” by giving them imaginative access to the holiday experiences they desire to be in. This gives the “sender” a self-satisfaction of having-been-there, hence embodies not only functional attachment but also emotional attachment in the psychological investment with a setting that is enhanced by IG viewers’ admiration. Tussydiah & Fesenmaier (2009: 33) make the distinction between site-centric and self-centric images, however, in the study of IG, there seems to be blurred lines between e.g. site-centric and “self-centric” related photos, because self-promotion can be found in a site-centric photos with no people in it, and attachment to the place gets enhanced by reactions of the viewers which the following statements touch upon:

It’s basically showoff to display where you are and what you have been doing (Icbp: 80).

It sounds superficial, men I like to show other that I have the most awesome life ever and how nice it looks like. Not that it’s fake (Nicolinagrahndin: 44).

To display different sites of NYC and my experiences, and I guess it’s self-promoting: “look at this or me” (Sifens: 61)

Besides the self-promoting motives, the sharing of holiday experiences on IG is done in full knowledge that the IG “followers” are not as lucky as them and could even lead to further injection of humor by mocking peers back home or sharing pictures displaying how happy they are and having fun as follows:



These images exemplify conditions that take place at the destination without directly displaying physical assets. Instead they demonstrate that being away from home is wonderful: “I am having the time of my life” (cf. Thurlow & Jaworski, 2010) and “I am living in the moment” with the hashtags in Woldusdk’s photo (in the middle): #classtomorrow #noprobem #dancing. In the second photo (to the right) by Woldusdk, it does not only imply he is having fun, but he added a text saying: “I love NYC” which could amplify an emotive meaning of the holiday destination related to an activity-centric image.

The vast majority of the informants seemed to agree on three overall motives for using hashtags which the following quotes exemplify upon:

There are people who use hashtags, the so-called “like” hunters hoping for exposure of their picute and receiving “likes”. There there are ones like me who use them in a funny way to express something, e.g. saying I’m in NYC, describing the picture with hashtags instead of text (calmaer: 106).



The good thing about hashtags, they indicate the thoughts and feelings in the moment (ambeier: 30).

Accordingly hashtags were used to get likes, describe the picture or location and express momentarily thoughts and feelings about the place or activity displayed in the photo. Only a few participants used hashtags to get more followers, “likes” or exposure by including tags that enable the photo to be easily found by other users on IG in the search function. The hashtags appeared to be mostly used to enlighten the viewer of the emotive meaning in the photo and the location of where the shot was taken. It can either by individual tags that are with individual meaning or supposedly tied with each other albeit creates a sentence as a description of the photos or the emotive aspect in it.

4.3.2 Emotional attachment to a place: love declarations on Instagram

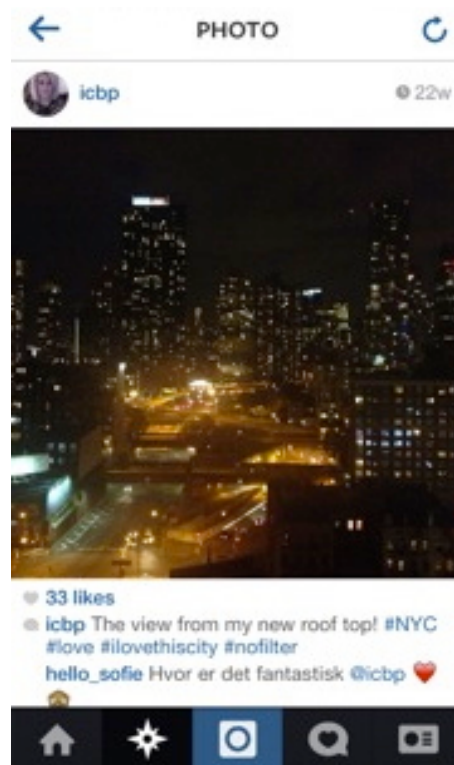
In the scanning of the informants’ IG images (1189 images), the rhetoric tone in the text and hashtags appeared to be informal style and the two most frequent used hashtags were #NYC and #Ilovenyc with a functional value indicating the location in the photo and an emotive meaning of love declaration for the place. Interestingly, the use of love declaration in hashtags does not automatically mean attachment For instance Merete_toft stated in the interview (p. 53) that her attachment to NYC is not that strong, that she didn’t love the place but liked it, and she felt more attached to London. Yet, she still posted following image with the hashtag: #Ilovethatcity which could indicate a generic value in the use of love declaring hashtags.

Meret_toft (p. 53) explained it was a feeling in the moment, hence not a long committing relationship with the place.



Icbp also used love declared hashtags (e.g. #ilovethiscity) early in her stay but interestingly it was only found in one of the first images she posted related to the NYC holiday experience. She explained how the meaning of the wording changed for her over time:

It was definitely a tourist surface and being overwhelmed of the city, but now it has really gotten under my skin, so I feel it was “tourist-me” who said: “I love this city”. Now it’s totally different (Icbp: 80).



Woldusdk had the opposite reaction to the use of love declared hashtags. He had ninety-nine images in total (related to NYC), and he did not use the wording “love” before he had posted twenty images and been in NYC for two weeks. He explained as follows:

Previously I was a type of person who would never use the word “love” thinking it was cliché. Then you come here, and it’s so overwhelming, and the things I displayed on IG I would never be able to experience in Denmark (Woldus: 34).

Furthermore, Woldusdk explained a development in his images which seemed to be going from site-centric images to more self-centric images but still having the skyline (global concept) or iconic buildings (local concepts) in the background:



When I started to get to know the city better, I started to Instagram other things, not just the Statue of Liberty “Click”, but more having the

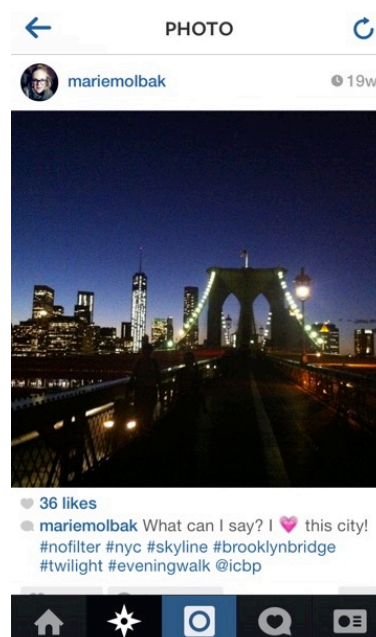


city in the background. Over time it became more refined. I know I can take a good picture of a building, but it has to be more than that (Woldus: 34).

The photo highlights place dependence in the place attraction of the physical setting he displays in the background of the photos. Furthermore, the text underneath the photo amplifies place affection saying: “love this city on my shoulders” meaning “this place means a lot to me”. Consequently, the distinction between emotional and functional attachment are perhaps not the dominating dimensions when detecting the degree of attachment on IG. Instead place dependence and place affection could be important cornerstones in the different degrees of attachment. The love declared IG images were in particular site-centric images. Mariemolbak used tags such as #loveit and narrating: “what can I say, I heart this city”. The meaning of the tags were explained as follows:

The first photo: In this context it is: “fuck this is cool and amazing”. And you learn that in the U.S. “love” is a common word in any context (Mariemolbak: 66).

The second photo: I thought it was a breath taking view, and I saw the city from another angle, how beautiful it was. When you walk in between the tall buildings you forget to look up. Seeing it from distance or from above made a big impression (Mariemolbak: 66, 67).





Both photos are site-centric with no people in it, and the quotes indicate functional place attachment in the physical appearance of the place. Moreover, as noted earlier in the analysis, the informants seemed to identify the streets of New York (a local concepts) as a main “attraction” and some had emotive ties to particular streets or neighborhoods which can be detected in the IG example on the next page.

I took a photo of the street I lived on, that was the spot where I felt at home, and it's like in the TV-shows with cars on the side of the road and the fire escapes (Mariemolbak: 64).

The place affection is evident in the hashtag: #feelslikehome and #mystreet a form of ‘taking a possession’ of the destination (cf. Jaworski & Thurlow, 2010).

A majority of the participants had various photos related to local concept of ‘streets’ and seemed to shore up the extraordinariness of NYC. Hekrdk explained this:

I like to display different images and to me it was about catching atmosphere rather than traditional tourist photo. I particular focused on buildings, shapes, texture and architecture (Hekrdk: 156).

Photos of streets could be common resources that tourists use for escape the label of ‘being a tourist’ and confirm they cohere with the local community, and adding a message, for instance: “walking the streets” #NYC by Hekrdk (in the photo to right on the next page).





Some of the street-related images tend to signify artistic or esthetic intents of the environmental assets and display an admiration of the place. For instance photos of street art or the next example (taken by Icbp) with the hashtag *#beautifulbeautiful NYC*.

The image by Hekrdk (on the next page) is an example of place dependence and place affection displaying the street she lived on (*#mystreet*) with indication of closeness and neighborhood ties to a place by saying



“my” street. The hashtags and text adds on affective meaning (#ilovenyc). Hekrdk explained as follows:

I thought it was cliché to buy merchandise; a coffee cup that says, “I heart NYC”, but I got one, and I already love it because that’s what it represents. Almost all my photos is with #iloveny or something because it becomes love and a love affaire when you’re in NYC (Hekrdk: 153).



Furthermore, the hashtag in Hekrdk’s photo: #comingbackforsure” implies place attachment in loyalty behavior tendency in the meaning of wanting to revisit the place. Alongside the loyalty behavior, there appeared a principle choice of leave-taking formulae or displays:





Interestingly, Woldusdk's photo (to the upper left on the previous page) is site-centric but the narratives authenticate a travel story with relation to affective attachment in interpersonal relationships with statements: "so many amazing new friends", "I am going to miss you so bad". The place dependence is demonstrated in the image display and the place affection is expressed in the narratives and hashtags. Icbp's photo is site-centric including a global concept of with the skyline, it does not explicitly convey emotional attachment but indicates functional attachment and symbolic meaning of sailing away from shore as a form of leave-taking display saying: "farewell New York". The photo by Mariechristensen87 is different from the previous examples. She did not take this photo, yet it signifies a strong declaration of love for the city in the meaning of the logo. There is not text or hashtag in this image thus indicate: "the picture says it all" which the next quote touch upon:

The day before I went home, I was at my friend's apartment with a view of Manhattan (...) I was so emotional, and stood there for an hour just looking at the city, and that was my last moment with it. People started to comment on the photo, they were looking forward to I was coming home, but I didn't want to go home. Just let NYC and me have this



moment together, it was totally a love declaration (Mariechristensen87: 146).

In this case, the photo was for the purpose of her own to testify her attachment to the place. This demonstrates how IG can be used to detect emotional attachment, both implicitly with e.g. Woldusdk's photo, and more explicitly with the "I heart NYC" logo.

Furthermore, emotional attachment can also be detected on IG in the reflective stage (in the temporal process) of a holiday experience

The photos by Hekrdk and Idabliesman are shots of iconic buildings in NYC; they are local concepts of famous buildings in the category of site-centric type of image. Both informants declare a longing for the place: "I miss you/it", and emotional attachment with e.g. #myheartbelongstonyc and "newyork with a love sign. Consequently IG postings are not only still moments of events in the experiential stage. It enables you to detect attachment and commitment to a holiday destination in the memory generation of the reflective stage (cf. fig. 4).

Based on the previous examples, there appears to be a pattern of place satisfaction (e.g. found in loyalty and cognitive evaluation) can be detected in the visual displays on IG, typically related to site-centric images. Furthermore, the place attraction to the physical setting can be detected in how they enjoy the place based on physical involvement with the place hence a matter of place dependence. Consequently, both place satisfaction and place dependence embodies action or behavior tendencies on Instagram in the type of image they display. Place affection (e.g. "the place means a lot to me") and place identity (e.g. psychological





investment) are embodies of attitudes for the place that can especially be detected in the IG narratives and hashtags.

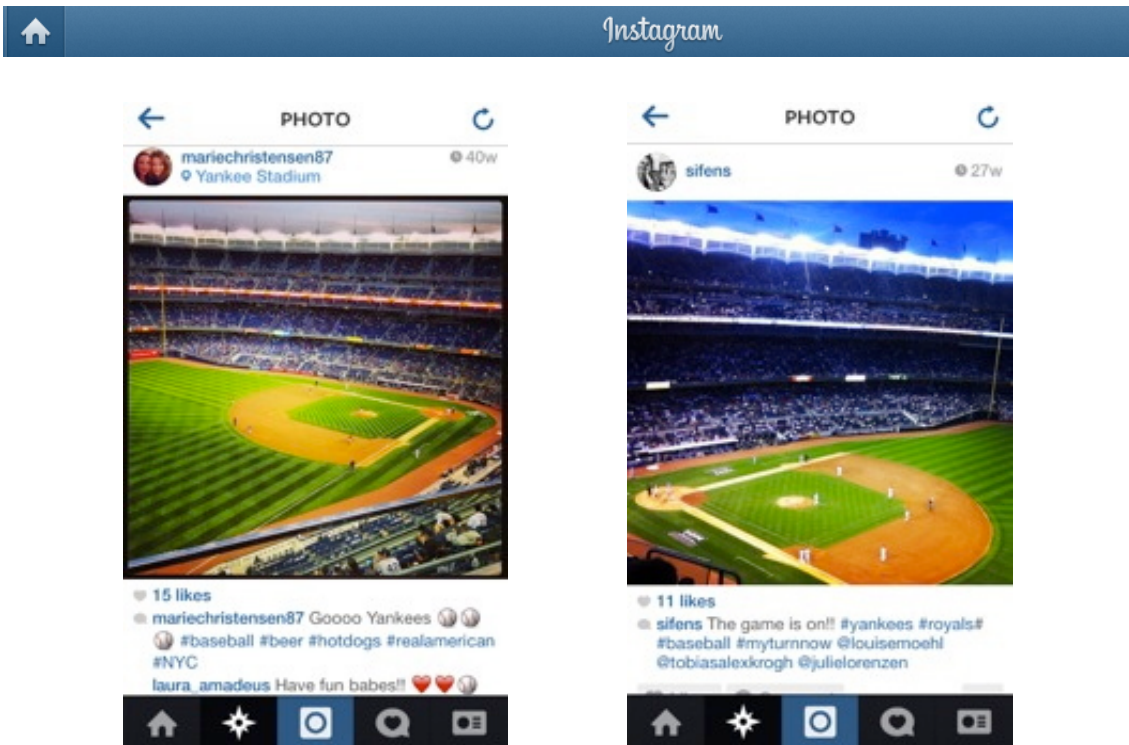
4.3.3 Place dependence in activity-centric photos

Place attachment could also be amplified in the physical involvement with the place in different activities, thus could be detected in the activity-centric images. For instance Icbp desired to experience what she perceived as “local” activities, a given aspect of locale’s culture or heritage.

I wanted to see what I watched on film, and something with sport.
Marie (Mariemolbak) had put up a photo of baseball, less touristy things that I wanted to experience (Icbp: 76).

Interestingly, four of the informants had similar photos related to: “baseball game and hotdogs” which the following photos illustrate.





In the right corner of the photos, it is indicated how many weeks ago the photos were taken, hence not at the same time. Having said that, it should be mentioned that these four informants know each other thus could have impacted each other's activity choices and the resemblance in the photos. That implies a level of place attachment that has not been discussed so far in the study in the means of developing attachment to a place through other IG users' imagery, and hence could amplify each other's place dependence.

4.3.4 The relationship between novelty and familiarity detected in other-centric photos

The "other site-centric" images can be related to the contrast of the "usual" vs. the "unusual" experiences, sites or people. The processes of taking pictures of interesting or different infrastructure and facilities that are perceived as "foreign" or "special" to the tourist is a part of the process of making sense of their tourist experiences (Tussyadiah & Fesenmaier, 2009). This includes sharing rituals and routines, especially in the case of informants who stayed at the holiday destination for more than a month. For instance something "ordinary" as laundry was perceived as something extraordinary through the comparison with ordinaries at home (cf. Tussyadiah & Fesenmaier, 2009) which the next statement touch upon:

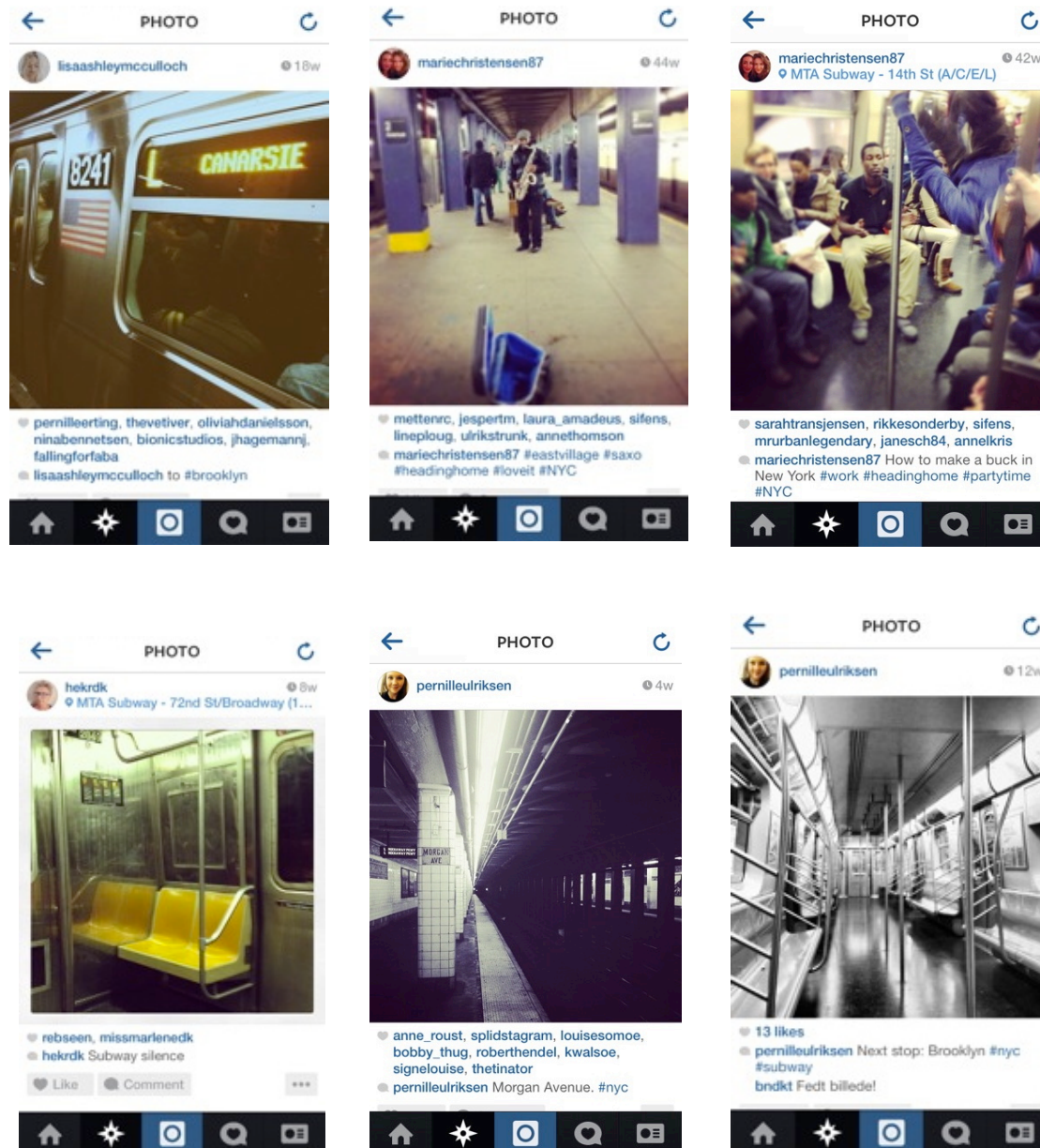


I think it's that laundry culture over there compared to at home and how it has been different for me to be away (Idablesman: 74)



These photos emphasize how the tourists have established a form of everyday life at the holiday destination and it underlines the need to play up the 'sacred' (the magic site of tourism) by up playing routinization and its ordinariness (cf. Jaworski & Thurlow, 2010).

The New York City subways appeared to be perceived as significant attractions of the city (comparable to Empire State Building and Times Square) (cf. Tussyadiah & Fesenmaier, 2009) with images and narratives related to the “everyday life” in NYC. The informants displayed whatever they are doing at the holiday destination, and wherever they are going including taking a ride in the subway.



When considering subways as indexes in the semiotic process, the photos have a documentary quality. According to Pennington and Thomsen (2010: 43) the indexical qualities are particularly relevant in heritage tourism because of association with “authenticity,” and how the tourist perceives an object being “the

real thing” rather than a replica. The cultural meaning is explained by two of the informants:

The subway is where you meet the tolerance and the diversity of the people and gets the essence of NYC (Mariechristensen87: 147).

I think the subway is pretty with the metal and the American flag. It looks cool, it's all these things and building that I have seen in TV, so it's funny to be in it (Lisaashleymcculloch: 121).

Consequently, iconicity does not have to occur in order for the interpretant to recognize authentic meaning of the object. As noted by Lisaashleymcculloch, the familiarity with the destination has already been established in the anticipatory phase of the temporal process (cf. fig. four) through media that has developed interest in cultivating familiarity with their holiday destination.

4.4 Final remarks and recapitulation

The examples of various displays on IG indicate that IG serves as mediators of tourist experiences, assumption about the destination and its people. Together these different mediators work in an exchange system of emotional place attachment to a holiday destination because people express interpersonal relationship and physical attraction to a place manifested in or through the IG activities. Tourists' self-presentation on IG seemed to contain predominately positive evaluations of the destination, activities and experiences, and the analysis has demonstrated that the positive tenor of displays on IG is simultaneously with self-presentation creating a sense of closeness and attachment between the IG user (the tourist) and the destination, as well as closeness with other IG users. The analysis may generate some new theoretical ideas concerning psychological mechanisms underlying people's emotional bonds with holiday destinations. As a result, the analysis provides a suggestion for a preliminary conceptualization of emotional attachment to a holiday destination and emotional responses associated with place attachment in the use of Instagram on the next page.

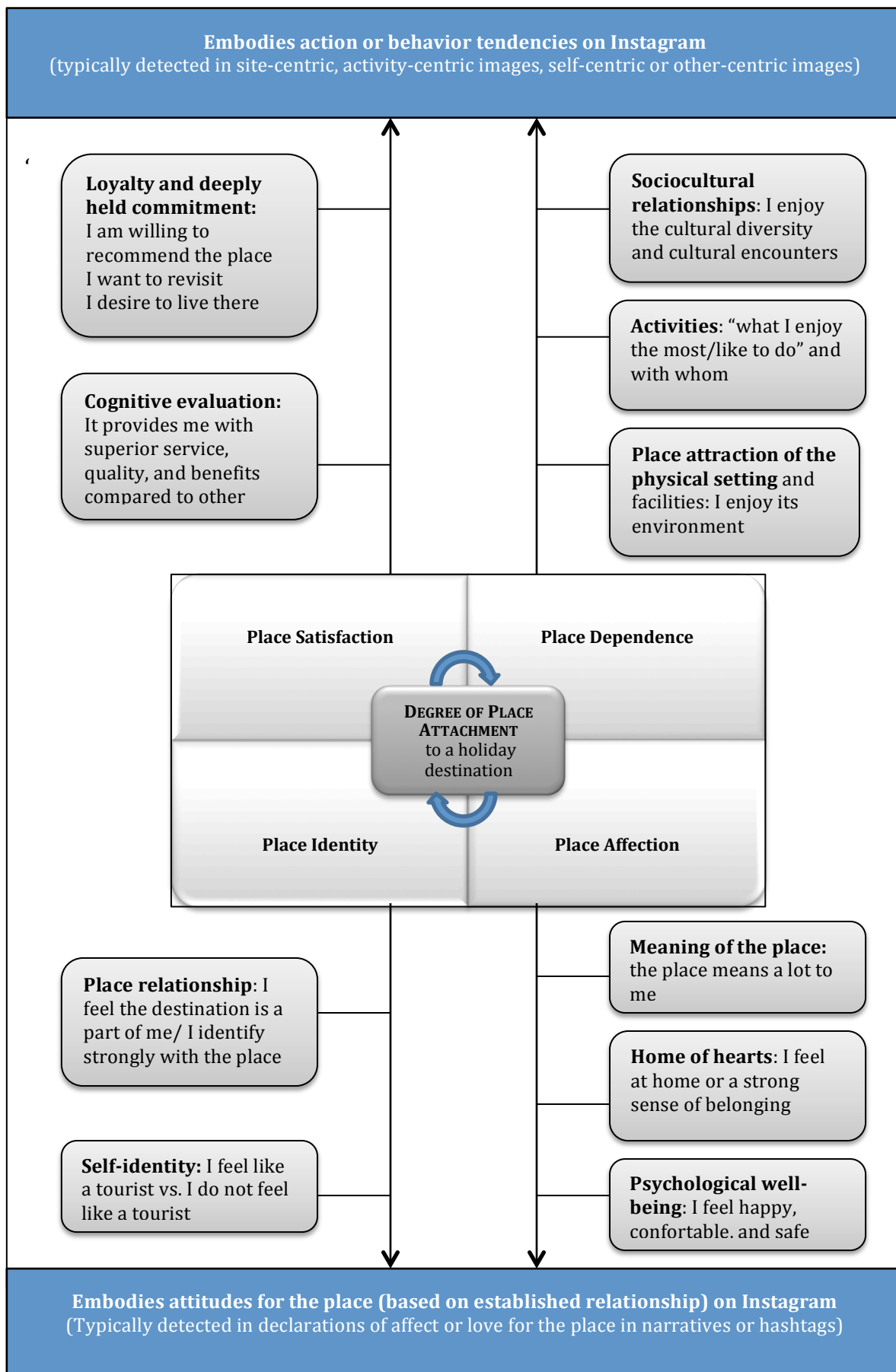


Figure 7: Recapitulation: Predictors of Perception of Place Attachment (self-made 2014)

The theoretical determinants of perception that could amplify place attachment are connected in figure seven to demonstrate their interrelatedness in a new perspective according the findings of the research. Compared with figure four, there has been a development from the separation of ‘functional’ and ‘emotional/effective’ values to a new point of departure of four degrees of place attachment that implicitly have dimensions of functional and emotional values:

- # Place satisfaction
- # Place dependencies
- # Place affection
- # Place identity

Based on existing literature related to place attachment, consumer behavior, and love theory, the functional and emotional values in figure four were systemized in a hierarchy with place dependence and self identity as sub-categories for to the two overall classes of values that in a interactive way of a circular process resulted in place satisfaction and love declaration as the “end” condition for place attachment. According to the traditional view, the theoretical paths linked to existing literature about place attachment were in particular destination attachment, and satisfaction and loyalty (Yuksel et al., 2010). These are found in figure seven, but the analysis further suggests attention to ‘place affection’ and ‘place identity’ as attitudes for deep level of emotional attachment. Furthermore, ‘place satisfaction’ and ‘place dependencies’ embodies action and behavior tendencies first of all related to the functional values.

The notion of place attachment is not a new concept per se (e.g (Yuksel et al., 2010), but this study has found a link between the four dimensions that affect attitudes on the one side and action and behavior tendencies on the other side which can be detected in the use of Instagram. Consequently it is no longer a two dimensional construct of functional and emotional values in the process of place dependence and place identity, but a four dimensional construct of different levels of place attachment. The development in figure seven is evident in the process of “steps on a ladder” that becomes evident in the “bubbles” with sub-categories and “controlling” quotation with narratives based on research findings and existing

literature. Compared to exiting literature, this model should illustrate a dynamic movement between the four dimensions, and more evidently how the link between the dimension has an effect on attitudes on the one side and behavior tendencies on the other side which is indicated with the arrows going in the two direction from each of the four dimensions. The arrow in the middle of the box suggests a circular movement related to the temporal process of in place attachment hence it is not given in which dimension that is the starting and ending position because in practice they are interrelated in a continuous movement depending on the individual tourist.

Existing literature focus on how attachment dimensions have differential effects on satisfaction and loyalty, and affective attachment has strong effect on costumer's satisfaction (Yuksel et al., 2010). However, as indicated in the model with the dimension of place satisfaction, the cognitive evaluation and loyalty behavior are valued as predictors in the condition of place satisfaction and not the other way around. Place satisfaction can be discovered in more favorable and positive cognitive evaluation, and the loyalty level should increase in a range from willingness to recommend the place to other, to revisit to the highest level in a desire to move (cf. Lewicka, 2011). The functional value in satisfactory holiday experiences is depended on the physical assets of a place hence leads to the second dimension; place dependence that represents functional attachment that derives in the alternatives of activities, sociocultural relationships (e.g. interaction with locals) in the physical investment with the setting of the place (Su et al., 2010; Yuksel et al., 2010). Hence place attraction in this this study is viewed as a criteria for place dependence.

The study suggest that place satisfaction and place dependence typically amplify embodies action or behavior tendencies on Instagram that can be detected in different IG displays (in site-centric, activity-centric images, self-centric or other-centric images) of an activity or tangible characteristics in the setting hence first of all related to functional values of place attachment.

The place dependence could in turn affect the development of place affection for a holiday destination in the ability to induce positive affection for the place which seems to result in great likelihood, a psychological well-being. The study suggested

the importance of the physical assets can be found in the affective evaluations of the physical scenery and the people/host hence place attachment in figure seven includes the affective component which is also indicated with the arrow in the middle of the box. Place identity is related to psychological investment with a setting hence related to the emotional values in place attachment that develops over time linked with a person's self-identification process of being tourist based on how strongly they identify themselves with the holiday destination. Consequently this links over to place identity, when the psychological investment with a place is defined by place identity. The relationship between place dependence and place affection was noticeably stronger than place satisfaction and demonstrated the salience of the affective component in place attachment.

The study also suggested a strong link between place affection and place identity based in the emotive component between the self and the destination, and e.g. 'the meaning of the place' (cf. figure 7) that goes beyond cognitive evaluation expressed in declaration of affection and love for the place hence an attitude that embodies attitude about the place (on IG). The study suggests that place affection will increase the level in place identity in feeling strongly connected with the place; the tourist establishes closeness to the place in their place identity which makes them feel as a part of the place and not as a tourist.

Lastly place identity is linked with place satisfaction. In tourist's identification with the place (cf. figure seven) there must be a positive link between place identity, hence self-identity and place satisfaction. The study suggested that place satisfaction was not only found in cognitive judgment and but also in the condition of affect toward a place in the identification with the place thus influenced by place identity. Simultaneously, loyalty behavior in place satisfaction is connected with how the tourists identify themselves with the place.

The different parts of figure seven are individually theoretical elements adopted from different academic fields related to e.g. place attachment, customer satisfaction, destination image, development of brand image, brand love for a product, tourism brands, experiential aspects of consumption, travel motivation because the role of emotional place attachment to a holiday destination seemed rather limited. A cross-disciplinary approach allowed new linkages of place

attachment in the affective bond between tourists and holiday destination. The majority of the theories were not originally developed in a tourism context, but for service and product development, especially the theories related to branding. Theories of place attachment were in some cases developed for native place attachment hence not directly related to tourism either. Yet, adopting some of these theories and modifying them in the interaction with the primary research data contributed to perspectives on place attachment to a holiday destination and the case study made it possible to “test” the theoretical linkages that were interpreted by the researcher in a tourism context.

4.5 Evaluating the findings: Credibility

Based on the notion of “trustworthiness” the next section discusses and evaluates the qualitative research based on four criteria (Guba, 1994; Shenton, 2004):

- # Credibility
- # Transferability
- # Dependability
- # Confirmability

4.5.1 Credibility

The assessment of credibility in the findings includes evaluation of how congruent the findings seem to be (which is equivalent with internal validity addressed by positivistic researchers) in terms of adopting appropriate and well-established methods (Shenton, 2004). This goes back to the construct of the problem statement. In the qualitative nature of study methods, the case study design of the present thesis has been more about the about the meaning (“what and why”) known from qualitative studies of a place rather than significance of places (“how much”) known from quantitative measures (Lewicka, 2011). In the complex nature of qualitative totalities, place attachment was not only examined by means of scientific concepts and dimension but was also explored in the meaning of place images, feelings or emotion that constitute meaningful encounter for individual

tourists with an intermediate link between the place's physical assets and strength of emotional bonds with it (place attachment and commitment).

In order to identify meaning of a place (holiday destination), the exploration was divided into two groups: one consisting verbal measures of using narratives in qualitative interviews (Elliott, 2005). The other group consists of 'pictorial' interpretations and meaning in a netnographic study on IG. The interview form is a well-established qualitative methods which is useful when studying attitudes and underlying action and behaviour tendencies (cf. figure seven) (Bryman, 2008). Furthermore, the netnographic method is grounded in the well-established qualitative method of ethnography and allows access into "the naturally occurring reality of consumers" (Kozinez, 2006). Netnography is limited by the textual nature without the richness of "in-person" communication which the interviews contributed with.

4.5.2 Transferability

Transferability deals with extension of the findings can be transferred to other contexts (which can be compared with external validity) (Malterud, 2001; Shenton, 2004). Potential limitations of a single case study should be acknowledged in terms of generalizing findings across different social settings that are socially constructed thus may be context-bound in the constructive mindset (Guba, 1990; Miles and Huberman, 1994). However, as mentioned earlier in chapter 3 about methods and methodology, this is not the main goal of the thesis. The goal was not operational measurement of concepts or statistical significance (Miles & Huberman, 1996). Instead, the aim was to explore attitudes, action or behavior tendencies of the informants related to place attachment (Shenton, 2004). With New York City being a fairly unique city with high popularity and brand awareness, there could be challenges in the transferability to other cases. However, figure seven is a starting point which could be used for future case studies of different types of places; city urban life or rural areas related to so-called 'settlement identity' e i.e., attachment to general classes of places such as 'mountain person', 'urbanite', 'rural person' etc. (Lewicka, 2011).

4.5.3 Dependability

Dependability is the equivalent to the issue of reliability in the assessment of repeating the results (Guba & Lincoln, 2005; Shenton, 2004). When studying attitudes and behaviour tendencies, the purpose is not to repeat the result but develop them in the explorative nature. Dependability includes the operational details of data gathering, and there is a challenge of gathering and processing large amounts of data and interpreting them on your own (Shenton, 2004). The researcher's background affects angle of investigation and the investigator enter a field research with certain opinions about it and what is important (Malterud, 2001). As noted in the chapter about methods, the present study provided large amounts of information (156 pages transcription and 1189 IG photos) (cf. appendix 3) and the analysis involved decontextualisation (Malterud, 2001) in the matter of taking out parts of the subject matter (interview narratives and IG photos) and investigate them more closely. Hence, there could have been overlooked findings in the data that were left out in the nature of limitation of the study.

4.5.4 Confirmability

Confirmability within interpretivism (is comparable with objectivity within the positivistic paradigm) is trying to ensure that the researcher acted in "good faith" throughout the study process which means setting aside theoretical inclinations (Bryman, 2008; Shenton, 2004). However as noted earlier (in section 3.1.1., p. 28) the interpretive approach makes the researcher involved in creating meaning of what is being investigated in interaction with the informants (Banyai, 2010), hence complete objectivity is not possible or desired. Lastly, the investigator has acted in "good faith" by trying not to distort the meaning in the data collection.

5 Conclusion

The thesis has studied emotional attachment to a holiday destination and to what extent it can be detected in the use of Instagram in social media networking. This entailed a theoretical and a methodological enquiry.

In relation to the theoretical enquiry, the findings from a case study design suggested that emotional place attachment to a holiday destination is on the one side generated through functional values (such as the physical setting of a place, infrastructures and good value for money) and on the one side emotional values (such as the value of intimacy in social interactions with locals) enhanced in tourists' physical and psychological investment with a setting.

The functional values seemed to be the catalyst for attachment whereas the affective values seemed to be the conditions of attachment that lead to emotional attachment. In the catalyst for place attachment, two dimensions were in particular in focus, especially related to functional values; namely 1) place satisfaction and 2) place dependency whereas in the condition of attachment was grounded in emotional values of 3) place affection and 4) place identity. The research suggested that these were in a four-dimensional construct manifested in a curricular movement defining the degree of place attachment. Dimension one and two embodied action or behavior tendencies in Instagram imagery and dimension three and four embodied attitudes for a place which were evident in Instagram text (narratives and hashtags). The action or behavior tendencies on the one side and attitudes for a place on the other side suggested that place attachment detected in Instagram was nuanced with functional values for a place typically detected in imagery of the physical assets of a place (e.g. the skyline or iconic buildings of NYC) and emotional values for a place typically detected in text and digital hashtags in the Instagram photos embodied in attitudes of declarations of love or affection for the place. This testified the ambiguity of separating functional and emotional values of place attachment in the Instagram content.

In a figurative matter, this was illustrated in “steps of a latter” with different criteria or predictors that define the four dimensions for place attachment. The predictors for place satisfaction were grounded in functional values in cognitive evaluation of a place in how the place provides the tourist with satisfying services and benefits. Place satisfaction could generate loyalty behaviors related to the second dimension of place dependency in the place attraction of the physical setting of a place in what made the place seem attractive and satisfying in the alternatives of activities and sociocultural relationships which lead to different levels of loyalty behavior.

The emotional values in the third dimension of place affection were detected in the perceived meaning of a place which made the tourist feel at home or gave a strong sense of belonging because of psychological well being. The fourth and final dimension is place identity which is linked to place affection in the psychological investment with a place. Place identity is defined by the place relationship in how the tourist feel emotionally connected or close with the place which could be detected in their self-perception of being a tourist or not at the holiday destination with a tendency of desire to be one of the locals in identifying theme selves with the place.

The study was based on a case of twenty-five Danish tourists in New York City who were active users on the social media; Instagram. The tourists were both long (1-7 months) and short-term visitors (5-14 days). The notion of emotional place attachment appeared to be an affective state of mind, some kind of emotions that happens within the tourist. From the perspective of the tourist, the strength of attachment was subjective by the means of the tourist who stayed for longer time (months) felt more attached to NYC when they compared them selves with tourists who stayed there for one or two weeks. The ones who stayed for longer time typically worked for a semester on an internship, and this made them feel closer to the place. This was evident in their perception of becoming one of the locals (a New-Yorker) because they did not only seek experiences of novelty at the place but familiarity (e.g. taking the subway everyday to work) enhanced the closeness to the place and made them feel at home. Place attachment seemed to require both regularity (e.g. familiarity) and variety (e.g. novelty) in order for place-related

emotions to develop through movements. The study suggested time spent in a place and frequency of visits were found to be the best predictor of the temporal process of place attachment. Length of stay did have an increasing effect on familiarity, and hence had an influence on the degree of place attachment yet was not a critical factor because short-term visitors were also able to feel at home and close to the place even though it was not at the same level as long-term visitors. Consequently, emotional place attachment is happening within the tourist in practice. In theory the degree of attachment could be detected in predictors of perception of place attachment in the construct of the four dimensions that have been introduced. The complexity of emotional attachment to a place was evident varying declaration of affect or love for a place. The exploratory nature of the research did not enable clarifying the relationships among the different dimensions of the feeling of love for a place but it was evident that the line between liking and loving a place was with individual meaning and significance for the tourists hence the comparison of affection was found in the subjectivity and perception of the meaning of 'love'.

In relation to the methodological enquiry, the study draws on a qualitative research in the use of narratives from Skype interviews and Instagram imagery and text (including digital hashtags) conducted in a netnographic study which is an internet research adopted from the qualitative method of ethnography. In retrospect, the netnographic study and Skype interviews proved equally useful data as they showed how important need it is for tourists to share their experiences with others with their photography from afar and how they function in the everyday ritual of travelling by posting pictures directly from their mobile phones while they are still on vacation. The interview narratives and imagery analysis (drawing on theoretical elements within semiotics) complemented each other in different levels. In using first-order narratives of stories that informants tell about themselves and their experiences brought first of all perspectives on place attachment in the view of the tourist. Secondly the interview narratives were useful to compare the perceived behavior of the informants (based on the informants' own reflections) with the researcher's interpretation of what they say explicitly and implicitly in the interviews and what attitudes and behavior tendencies the investigator detected in their Instagram contents. This allowed

comparison and linkages of tourists' self-perception of their attachment to a place compared to action behavior in practice (what they say they do, and what they seem to be doing). This result strengthens the chosen method in this research project and demonstrates that the comparison of interview findings and Instagram images was meaningful.

5.1.1 Epilogue: Implications for Managers and further studies

Most studies assume place attachment to be a good thing (Lewicka, 2011), and in a tourism context emotional bonding for a holiday destination and the concept could be an important measure of not only tourist satisfaction and loyalty behavior (cf. Yuksel, et al., 2010). The positive effect of place attachment is supported in this thesis, but from a destination manager's perspective there may not only be positive consequences to place attachment in the risk of boosterism where "culture and natural resources are regarded as objectives to be exploited for the sake of tourism development" (Hall, 2008). Linking back to the case example of NYC, the identity of the city draws enormous visitor volumes mainly centralized around Manhattan in one of the five boroughs (nycgo.com). Exploring the nature and the extent of place attachment among visitors could be useful for destination authorities in planning and marketing for tourism and outdoor recreation services (Brocato, 2006; Gross & Brown, 2008; Gu & Ryan, 2008). In tourism development (e.g. of the other four boroughs in NYC), the concept of place attachment could be studied in context of destination branding and brand communication in challenging simplicity in place branding of "one clear image" (Ren & Blichfeldt, 2011). Destination branding can be divided into two key dimensions functionality (performance, features) and representationality (value-expressive, of representationality and functionality in a "brand box model" (Caldwell & Freire, 2004) which seem to be closely linked to the dimensions of place attachment (e.g. functional and emotional values) that has been studied in the present thesis. Consequently, there could be found new linkages in studies of place attachment in a place branding context.

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Skype: <http://www.skype.com/en/about/>

The official New York state tourism site: <http://iloveny.com/>

Quote in prologue:

<http://www.midmanhattan.com/articles/new-york-quotes.htm>

<http://ecosalon.com/50-best-quotes-about-new-york-city/>



6.1.3 Sources of Images

Image 1: Instagram Logo, available online:

<http://www.bubblews.com/news/1666416-favorite-social-media-instagram>

Image 2: “taking a shot of NYC”, available online:

<http://www.rachelsimmons.com/2013/02/instagram-unmasked-a-teen-explains-why-its-all-the-rage/>

Figure two: Illustration of The Lovemark Grid:

<http://thelegacyproductions.wordpress.com/lovemarks/>