

# Place Attachment

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## Defining Place Attachment in Long-term Residents

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## Abstract

**Object:** The aim of this study was to identify pathways of place attachment in long-term countryside residents. 3 participants, an elderly couple in their late 80's and a woman her mid 50's, who all resided in the same area were interviewed about their place attachment experience. **Method:** It was a semi-structured photo-elicitation interview with private participant produced- and selected photographs but not produced in the context of the study. The interview guide was not meant to be followed rigorously but to follow the flow of the participants and their choice of photographs. The data was categorized and analyzed as inspired by the interpretative phenomenological method.

**Findings:** The interviews showed that three major themes were recurring in both interviews. The themes presented themselves as the participants' accounted for place attachment experiences. In the analysis they were identified as *community*, *temporality* and *embodiment* with the exception of one theme *living in the countryside* which was only expressed in one of the interviews. It was found that individual temporal and embodied experiences were always closely related to place and were affectively, cognitively and behaviorally processed. **Discussion:** The findings have been incorporated into a model of place attachment. The themes found in the analysis are presented as *individual*, *psychological processes* and *place* which make up the three main elements of place attachment. The aim is to create a model which will help expand the framework of place attachment research while also allowing different elements to fluctuate in relevance and strength depending on individual experiences. The discussion also touches upon model use and limitations of the study. **Conclusion:** The study concludes that the themes give insight into how place attachment is formed and maintained specifically in long-term residents who live in a nature rich area. The themes can be incorporated into a model which allows for further developments of the place attachment framework. Further research would benefit the subject greatly. More specifically it would be worth looking into other types of residents such as short term or traveling, looking at different areas such as cities and regions, smaller and larger group's attachment and finally different individual and global circumstances such as past trauma or place attachment in the context of a pandemic.

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Appendix 1: Interviewguide

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## Introduction

Writing a thesis in the middle of a global pandemic can feel like a bit of challenge. How can it be relevant in any way to sit inside in the safety of my home and write about place attachment. It would be much more relevant to write a thesis on how pandemics influence people's psychological wellbeing. Alas, this thesis is about place attachment inspired by my 9<sup>th</sup> semester project which focused on ecological grief amongst populations around the world who live in climate sensitive areas. Interestingly enough it seemed that people's way of relating to and being in space also is relevant when talking of pandemics. While pandemics are not the initial inspiration to this thesis it's still interesting to see how the local community of Hindsholm, Fyn, has fled to the countryside. Walking by the ocean, where you on a bright and sunny day can see Sealand and Storebæltsbroen, people have removed themselves and their families from nearby towns and taken them into nature. Never before have I witnessed so many people in the area's forests on a Tuesday or such a well invested use of the stone filled beaches in March, April and early May. Growing up on Hindsholm it is hard to ignore the strong identity amongst "Holmere" as the locals call themselves (population 2106 as of 2015). People know each other and of one another. Most of the land and houses are owned by the count of Hverring and the feudal history of Denmark has at times repeated itself when local residents have felt cheated by the count when it came to rent or ownership of land. Hindsholm, a peninsula (91 km<sup>2</sup>), is a dense area, rich in nature.

The clear attachment and use of nature rich areas in Hindsholm during the coronavirus pandemic speaks to the connection that most people feel towards nature. The small towns don't have much to offer if the small cafes, hairdressers and ice cream shops aren't allowed to open. So, people find their entertainment and escape in nature. Hindsholm is a very specific area geologically as there are traces from the postglacial period; where the country was "molded" after the last ice age. It is from this period that Hindsholm has its varied and beautiful landscape and some areas are also protected along with most of the timbered

houses. This job is taken on by the count of the estate of Hverringe.

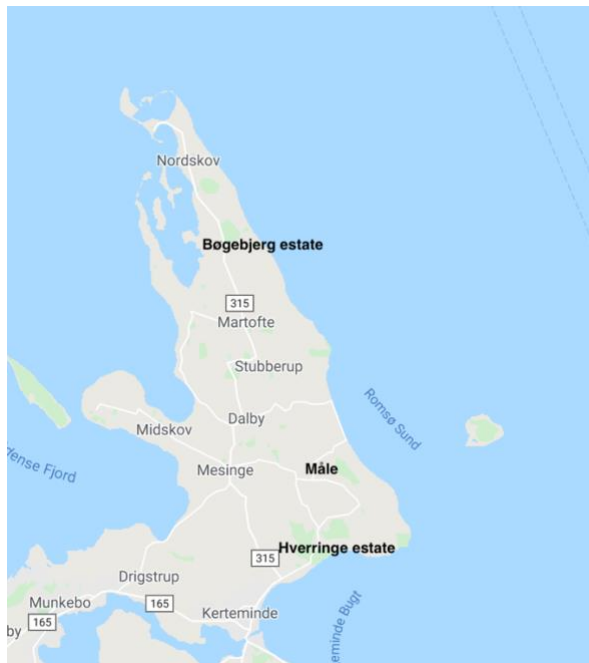


Figure 1 Hindsholm. Google maps.



Figure 2 Bøgebjerg beach. Researcher produced images.



Figure 3 Bøgebjerg estate. Researcher produced images.

With Hindsholm and Bøgebjerg as the setting, this thesis aims to explore the concept of place attachment. Spurred on by climate change dramatic disasters have become recurrent events in recent years, leading to people's loss of home, mass destruction of landscapes, animal population and general biodiversity. There is an urgent need to understand how people are affected by the irreversible loss of place and with it this immediate cut to their attachments. In other words, what are the psychological consequences when the place one is attached to is no longer there or when the place has vanished.

This thesis will focus on attachment to place in a nature rich area, seen from two different generations. The significance that place attachment has on experience of home, attachment, community and identity will be investigated as well as the experience of being in place and what elements make up significant and meaningful place attachment. This attachment could apply to natural landscapes or our urban areas such as seen when Notre Dame burnt down. This thesis will remain focused on the place attachment constructed by long term residents in the countryside context.

## Research question

This thesis has its focus on the phenomenological experience of place attachment and more specifically the research questions: *How is place attachment formed in long-term countryside-based residents?* This led to an investigation of which pathways contributed to forming place attachment. Such pathways have been identified as primary themes in the interviews conducted as semi-structured photo-elicitation interviews. The thesis is focused on the experience of being in place and which pathways create place attachment. Place, individual and psychological processes will in the discussion be presented in a model as significant elements and combine theory and interview material presented in this study.

## Theory

The theoretical section will take the reader through the most relevant concepts that make up place attachment as described by the participants. First there will be a terminology clarification of place attachment, embodiment and temporality followed by a real-life example of how disrupted place attachment is experienced when long-term inhabitants live with ecological grief. This will take the reader through a theoretical understanding of the



subject and the most important themes that presented themselves in the participants' place attachment experience.

Before diving into place attachment, it is worth mentioning that attachment theory is unifying several psychological perspectives such as evolutionary, interpersonal, cognitive, affective, cultural and behavioural (Ainsworth 1963; Bowlby 1980; Walsh, Teo & Baydala 2014). This is simply to clarify that while there are differences in interpersonal attachment theory and place attachment theory such as the attachment figure isn't human, they share multiple defining attributes. These are expressed in the analysis where psychological processes such as cognition, affect and behaviour are overlapping with participants' experiences of place attachment.

## Place attachment

According to Seamon (2013) place attachment can phenomenologically be described as *any environmental locus in and through which individual or group actions, experiences, intentions, and meanings are drawn together spatially* (Casey 2009). A place can range from a room to a region as it is not the physical environment detached from people living in it but rather the experiencing of place by people. To define what "place" is one must accept the ontological assumption in this phenomenology that people are intertwined with place and it is through place that people's experience of being-in-the-world can be articulated in research. According to Seamon (2013) it is not possible to identify degree of attachment based on age, social status, physical features and physical traits of the place; rather, attachment is united with relative rootedness in place, geographical and cultural qualities, quality of life, degree of personal and social involvement, individual and group identity with place etc. It is the bodily routines that extends themselves over time and space that contribute to the lived experiences of place and attachment. The bodily routines interact with a particular environment, gives meaning to it and sustains a long-term identification with place, meanwhile the habitual bodily routines are sustained by the environmental attachment (Seamon 2013).

The typical makeup of place attachment is overall considered to consist of positively experienced connections to a specific place or environment by individuals and groups. Place attachment can grow from behavioural, affective and cognitive ties and can relate to more local and personal environments, such as homes and neighbourhoods, or more global

spaces (Brown, Altman, Werner 2012). There are many different concepts related to the place attachment phenomenon, such as place identity, place dependence, sense of place and territoriality, amongst others. Place-identity consists both positive and negative cognitions or beliefs about different places that take part in defining self- and group identity (Seamon 2013). Place dependence refers to the capability of a place to satisfy needs in comparison to other places. Sense of place is related to meanings, attachments and satisfaction that arrive from social constructions and properties of the area and finally territoriality is the perception that specific places and areas are owned by individuals and groups. This territoriality arises when there is psychological attachment combined with long term occupancy (Brown, Altman, Werner 2012). Generally, there are many different conceptual versions of place attachment and also some that look more specifically at community attachment (Cuba & Hummon 1993) but overall place attachment can be considered an emotional attachment and investment in a place or environment. The overall range of place attachment can be spatially stretched to not only ones' home, local community but also nations, cities and greater nature areas meaning that there can be different spatial and emotional levels of attachment.

In place attachment research the richness of positive bonds to place are recognized in people-community connections, environments and homes. In contrast to other research that focused on a financial gain from buying property, place attachment research looks at emotional connections and how people transform a house into a home by investing meaning in house and local community (Brown, Altman, Werner 2012). Common themes have been found in place attachment research; a main theme is that people are unaware of their deep place attachment until they are asked or forced to reflect upon it by an outsider or a threat that alters or turns their lives upside down. Previously research was mainly focused on urban living and the changing landscape of cities due to urban neglect or/and renewal. More recent research, however, has begun looking at other types of place attachment and how it fluctuates with different spaces, climate change, ageing, life events and relocation (Hidalgo, Hernandez 2001; Brown, Altman et. Al 2012). Other studies look at the different factors that play into place attachment and cases where place attachment has been built upon social dimension through ties in the local community or where it primarily

was the physical dimension and attributes of the place that determined the sense of attachment (Riger and Lavrakas 1981; Taylor et al. 1985).

Place attachment is not a static condition but can change over time with the underlying individual processes that influence how places become what they are and are experienced by people (Lewicka 2011; Seamon 2013). This change can derive from different processes in a person's lived experience in a place such as place-based interactions; meaning the actions and daily lives that take place within specific environments. This place interaction can consist of individual actions and interpersonal exchanges that are spatially embedded and co-create a connection to a neighbourhood or a street through the embodied experience of being in place through ones' actions (Jacobs 1961; Seamon 2013). Another aspect that helps people attach and create positive bonds to a place is what Seamon (2013) calls *place release*; the feeling that "life is good" partly because the place residence enables experiences with the community and are set free to be themselves. However, if experiences and situations become negative, the opposite can happen, and one can no longer associate the place with gratifying contributions to the daily life. Similarly, the ambience of a place and what makes a place what it is can change; the characteristic charm and atmosphere of Paris would not be the same if the design or sudden changes of the city negatively influences the substance of a place. The place is realized and appreciated when the physical attributes and human activities feel as "real" and as "soulful" as a human being. This soul, the identity of a place, is created by the people who populate it through thoughtful measures taken to improve and maintain a place's natural features. Here, a place's identity and survival are maintained by active participation in a neighbourhood or environment by the people living in it (Jacobs 2004; Seamon 2013).

These different processes don't necessarily happen all at once, but they all make up an important part of how people feel attached to places and to what degree. Our range of attachment or feelings towards a place can be profound and identity-making or superficial. The spectrum of emotional engagement can range from a pleasure coming from consumerism to a deep love and identification. Emotional engagement can come in many forms but often the places that are well known to most of us are collectively attributed with a sacred quality or we personally project meanings into our environments that make them significant to us privately. The following section will look at sacred place attachment and

how it works in different contexts. It's important to have this in the back of our minds when we generally consider place attachment as some areas are experienced with specific meanings to some while being neutral to others.

## Sacred place attachment

Throughout history we have found new ways to act with and upon the environment and spaces we live in. Here we project different meanings into our environments, both those immediate and those from afar. Those meanings tell us how we should act upon ourselves in this environment and the environment itself (Valsiner, 2014).

Through religious systems we assign some places a "symbolic power" and they become sacred. This happens out of the human need to make meaning and places significant to individual, groups, local communities and societies. Notre Dame is a contemporary example of a location where public mourning displayed the symbolic meanings and significance ascribed to it. Just like the church, nature (river, lakes, caves) can have particular meanings emerged from personal stories connected to them (Valsiner 2014). This is seen in, among other places, Murrumbidgee catchment of the Murra-Darling basin in Australia where aboriginals prescribe sacred ancestral meaning to the Murrumbidgee river (Conroy, Knight 2019). Here a particular river has been turned into a sacred place but also holds different meanings and functions for different groups of people in the area. It is both a river of consumerism and industry but simultaneously holds great cultural meaning to Aboriginals in the area and refer to the river as their friend. Found by Valsiner (2014) we attribute different parts of our land different subparts or "zones". The zones have different functions and meanings to different parts of the land and this "zoning" stems from distinguishing what is "our" place/home, what is "others'" place/home and what is outside the mark of "mine", "ours," "theirs". This can be attributed to ownership of land, urban/rural, sacred/profane distinctions and can also be political places where ceremonial practices can be performed.

The zones can also be attributed to the same place by people whose identity and lifestyle is highly connected to the lands and places they live in; such as north Canadian Inuits who experience their home and land as one. Their ancestral culture, history and knowledge are all tied up in their home (and) land and it carries a spiritual significance to them. According to their own cosmology, through this spiritual connection their land connects them deeply

to something beyond the human sphere (Cunsolo, Harper et al. 2013). Their spiritual connection to place was reported as significant to their sense of belonging and the way to maintain identity on an individual and collective level in the community. The sacred connection to place was also reported by farming population in Ghana but as the environment started to suffer degradation under climate changes the spiritual role otherwise played by nature was replaced with building of churches (Tschakert, Tutu et al. 2011). Institutional practices replaced to some degree the body-mind-community relationship built upon a foundation such as place or environment. It is clear that different cultures bring with them symbolic practices that help them connect to environments. They are not only connected to their places, homes and lands by an emotional or symbolic connection and interaction. The connection and attachment are an embodied experience that cannot be detached from the overall ontology of being in place. It enables people to act with and within their environments. They employ their whole physical and mental being in their environmental, spatial and temporal engagement with their place. The embodied dimension will be introduced in the following section as briefly situated in research method and ecological grief.

## Embodied Place attachment

A multi-modal approach to researching attachment tells us that individuals don't simply experience their physical worlds through a narrative but also by using their bodies in different settings. By using their bodies, they are already using multi-modal forms of expression, not only narrative but through gestures, sounds, smell, touch and facial expressions (Reavey 2011). Previously, there existed a dualism separating the mind and body from each other, cognition being abstracted from the embodied experiences felt and sensed in different spatial and temporal contexts (Del Busso 2011). The body is always socially, spatially and temporally situated and is a natural, integrated part of people's lived experiences. There is a continuous exchange between a person and the world, and the embodied experiences are understood as being-in-the-world are inseparable and simultaneously produced in an ongoing process (Merleau-Ponty in Del Busso 2011). When looking at embodied experience we see people in motion, negotiating their spatial opportunities and limitations in many different spaces and over long periods of time. We

become conscious of our bodies through the world and the body becomes a medium through which we become conscious of the world (Merleau-Ponty 1962).

This is found in the real-life example of ecological grief. Mourning is a condition of corporeality and inescapable. As Cunsolo & Landman (2017) writes we can communicate its affective dimension and share it relationally through mental, emotional, and bodily ties; *"(...) losses are carried in places as part of their (and our) embodied memory, and losses of places – in the novel, entire landscapes drowned or otherwise obliterated – are also written on the body in especially traumatic ways: habits and modes of inhabitation are unravelled, senses are disquieted, ecological and kinaesthetic connections are severed, relationships and rituals wither and die for lack of the right soil and lights."* The body is a vehicle of being in the world; to have a body is to be interlaced with a specific environment with which one identifies and is continually committed to it (Merleau-Ponty 1962).

The body also facilitates the passing of time throughout the life course of people. It is often with our bodies as a medium that we can account for and judge the way in which time has passed and referenced through our childhood minds and bodies. James (2002) found that the different perspectives on our bodies also guides how we respond to their changes and how we are in the world. The more naturalistic view has a focus on the biological capabilities and constraints of bodies and how they define us in our living in cultural, political and social design. From the social constructionist view point the perceptions of the body are constrained and shaped by society, it is a receiver of social meanings, it represents consumer culture and people experience themselves simultaneously in and as their bodies (James 2000). The most drastic change is experienced in our childhood as it is in this period that the "unfinished" body, as it was at birth, starts to complete and finish through participation and action in society. The acceleration of change that happens in a child's body might not be experienced by individuals again until they reach the end of their life course (James 2000). Here it can either be experienced as the embodied accumulation of a lifetime worth of wisdom and knowledge or as the age of physical and mental decline. You could say that we embody the cultural expectations of the ageing process depending on mental beliefs or the capabilities of our physical and mental mobility. Important to remember is that no matter age the body is a significant source of social identity, meaning-making processes and experience. Through our bodies the social world is realised, and forms

embodied knowledge that we bring with us in everyday interactions with our environment. It is through our bodies we perform gender, sexuality, race, age and disability (Gilleard & Higgs 2013) but these performances are shaped with the passage of time as well. With our bodies we perform the time and place we live in and we embody the passage of time.

This brings us to the next paragraph which will look at temporality. It is not possible to speak of place attachment in long-term residents and not look at the concept of temporality. Time passing is a theme that comes up in both interviews and with embodiment is a baseline for understanding the qualities of any type of place attachment.

## Temporal Place attachment

Embodied experience is an ongoing practice in the flow of space and time. Heidegger (1927/1962 in Valsiner 2015) found that temporality constitutes the ontological structure of existence. Experience is a temporal process made up by both body and mind where our being-in-place is conditioned by its temporal foundation and that our experiences are always situated in irreversible time. Events and experiences cannot be removed from the spatio-temporal context as the influence of time is born from our interactions with our surroundings: *"The present is the outcome of the past and the future is the outcome of the present"* (Merleau-Ponty 2012). Time is not just a linear process made up by consecutive "nows" as we with our minds can consciously imagine different possible trajectories of our future or the present if our past had been different. Even though our bodies are bound by time the mind is free to travel and explore. When recalling the past time can in some ways be reopened as we place ourselves back in time when the future that is today wasn't closed off. With our minds we can free ourselves from temporal limitations a freedom that doesn't apply to our bodies. We do not only move between physical contexts but also temporal ones. We can move distal temporal experiences into current ones which can foster self-reflection upon beliefs and narratives we might have had about our lives, identities or events that transpired in the past. Through cultural tools, such as pictures and photographs, we can stimulate memories from a different time, but those same memories might be transformed by the current perspectives. In these cases, they can also highlight the embodied experiences of being in the past and being in the present. In the order we account for events we also situate them into a storytelling that makes sense to our construction of self-identity at the present stage of life. Using photographs when exploring

experience is interesting as participants might select photographs independent from any timeline. Some life phases may stand out as more significant or impactful at the time they occurred. Needless to say, that temporality and the impact of time on human experience is a crucial component in understanding place attachment and how this is formed. The section that follows will describe trauma and place attachment and is a theoretical walk through how temporality and embodiment can show itself in place attachment in relation to trauma. I find this particular aspect of place attachment necessary as the participants interviewed in this project bring up traumatic events that are experienced as such but also downplayed to a certain degree. However, it is important to include them in order to understand some elements that may have a negative impact on the experience of being in place.

## Trauma and place attachment

Looking beyond the anthropogenic relations (human made relations) and looking to the relational being-in-place the trauma of losing sense of place is within the ontological experience of being. It rests somewhere between the actor, their reality and the connection between the two: *“This is where the phenomenology of environmental distress gains greater traction, by way of suggesting that we suffer distress as our lived and imagined realities fall out of alignment.”* (Askland & Bunn 2017). Our well-being degrades when we lose a sense of control over our most secure base: home.

Askland & Bunn (2017) found that home refers to the phenomenological sense of being-in-the-world. Home is both living and “dwelling”: it’s a bodily perceptive experience that comes forward through movement, time and space. It emerges in the interrelationship between self and other.

A home becomes a pillar of identity and place, belonging and well-being, it is not just a physical place it provides a sense of belonging, refuge, rest and satisfaction. It is the psychological space (or one of) familiarity, relatedness and communion. But it can also be a place of alienations as well as belonging, refuge as well as insecurity. Home holds symbolic and ideological meanings and can be a space of dichotomies: Familiarities and predictability, conflict and coherence. The creation of home and the maintenance of place attachments and relationship is a dialectic relationship: *“between objective circumstances and the subjective appropriation of symbolic, bodily, psychological and material conditions associated with these circumstances”* (Askland & Bunn 2017). The home can remain in the



same physical condition as always but the sense of home itself could be damaged by factors that disrupt the sense of solace and connection. The trauma that can be caused by or be brought into place and trigger an “ontological anxiety” (Casey, 1997a: 254). Home is a temporal construct and one of its purposes is to provide and sustain continuity and predictability. The sense of home is materialised in habitual practice and embodied knowledge, it is established in relation to and through the past present.

## Ecological grief – Place attachment and climate change

To understand human experience, we need to connect affect, cognition, and behaviour to navigation within place, space and time. It is a necessity to understand the relationship between non-human environment and psychological and emotional wellbeing. It is in the spatial context that we find our emotions presenting themselves through mediation and articulation and it can help us understand the interplay between psychological wellbeing and environment. Intercorporeality (Fuchs 2017) is the shared reality between two people closely intertwined in their daily lives, usually in a relationship and can be connected to the concept of body memory (Casey 2002; Fuchs 2017) which consists of shared routines and habits created through mutual physical engagement with one another. In this shared intercorporeality and body memory there is an agreed upon meaning of memories, places and objects. The relationships we maintain and have with people closest to us with whom we share our life-worlds with also play a significant role in how we relate to our environments. Our sensorial similarities with a significant other can be compared to that of a place of environment that holds deep meaning and with what our realities have been intertwined within a significant way to our identities and sense of belonging. By looking at “ecological affect” (Cunsolo, Harper et. Al 2013) it is possible to look at different geographical, emotional and psychological realities and the interaction between them in different areas of the world where specific climatic challenges are happening right now and have occurred over long periods of time and will continue to do so.

The main research on this area has been done on populations living in environmentally challenged and climate sensitive areas where daily life is usually affected by climatic fluctuations causing them to flee or experience grief related symptoms to the environmental- and human related losses. This has brought forward the argument in the

majority of articles that humans are intertwined with the spaces and environments. Often there is a connection between identity, generational ties and belonging, local traditional history, lifestyle and livelihood that in one way or another are affected by the state of our lived-through environment. To populations where the natural environment is a crucial part of individual and communal identity the losses and irreversible changes that come from climate changes (either rapid or slow) are in some cases experienced with the same sadness and grief symptoms as the loss of people. To understand how human-nonhuman relationships affect the mental health and psychological wellbeing we must also look at people living in areas who are either indirectly affected by climate change or not at all. It can provide a broader understanding of how being-in-place and place attachment is meaningful to human experience and gives psychologists an idea about how we can aid people in their place-based distress and grief.

Most of the articles referred to try to explain the makeup of ecological grief (Cunsolo, Harper et. al 2013; Cunsolo & Landman 2017; Gurney, Adger et al. 2019; Kemkes & Akerman 2019; Tschakert, Tutu et al 2011) where the responses are similar to that of acknowledged grief. Another theory on place-based distress and loss is that of solastalgia, coined by Glenn Albrecht in 2003. He combined the characteristics of nostalgia and solace in order to provide a more appropriate term for the distress caused by environmental changes and the impact it has on peoples' lives, while they are still connected to their homes and local environment. Place-based and displaced distress is often present in indigenous people and climate refugees but also in people who are not displaced yet witness their immediate environment undergo irreparable changes and damages (Albrecht et. al 2007; Ellis & Albrecht 2017; Tschakert, Tutu 2011). This is often experienced as threatening to identity, physical and mental health, psychological wellbeing and a loss of power to influence the outcome. Solastalgia primarily refers to material homes and ecological grief primarily looks at the spiritual connection to nature however none of them exclude the other and where solastalgia still is with a certain possibility of "returning" home and home going back to what it was, ecological grief refers to irreversible changes and permanent losses.

This disruption and loss of environment and places can be experienced with the same intensity as that of another human and speaks of how deeply impactful the person-environment relationship can be to peoples' psychological wellbeing (Windle 1992; Cunsolo,

Harper et. al. 2012, 2013; Cunsolo & Ellis 2018; Doherty & Clayton 2011; Albrecht et. al. 2007; Ellis & Albrecht 2017; Tschakert, Tutu et al. 2011; Conroy, Knight et al. 2019; Marshall, Adger et al. 2019). According to Cunsolo & Landmann (2017) this is what should become the work of mourning; finding a way to utilise the mourning for nature, lost species and biodiversity into something of political and ethical use. Striving for and creating change through mourning. The impact on the psychic process of losing the attachment or relationship to specific places is specific kind of loss that hasn't been looked at. It has been compared; the lost attachment to place to the attachment we lose when someone significant in our lives die. According to Sebastian Braun (2017) the kinship some groups have with their environment and non-human beings implies to them that an obligation and a responsibility towards non-human beings and their environment. There is an obligation to mourn the loss of this kinship.

It is important to remember that mourning and loss are always understood in a contemporary context, meaning that loss and mourning have social contexts that ultimately influence what is grievable and what is not; here it is specifically shown in the rituals available and applied to different types of losses. The rituals support acceptance of certain losses over others. This is a normative dimension to grievance objects and what ethical responses we have to the loss of the *other* (what we define in the category as the *other* seems to be slowly expanding). It seems there is a dichotomic understanding of space, environments, place and nature as something natural, not necessarily human made. We consume and exploit the environments around us, but we don't find their deterioration grievable. At the same time there is a meaningful emotional response to the loss of flora and fauna, that both has a meaningful dimension to individuals but also has taken on a normative dimension in other societies. What can we grieve and what can't we? Braun (2017) finds that there seems to be an incapacity to grieve nature in modern societies while there in others exist in obligation and kinship towards with the environments are its non-human residents.

## Method

The following section will first take the reader through previous research done on being-in-place followed by examples of research methods used to investigate ecological grief. This is to show the reader why semi-structured photo-elicitation interviews were chosen for this

thesis. The final sections will describe visual methods, method of analysis and an introduction of interview guide and participants.

### How has being-in-place been researched so far?

Previously place attachment research was based on surveys (Brown, Altman, Werner 2012; Manzo & Devine-Wright 2014) used to measure the different scales of attachment while some qualitative methods have been used in parallel to that. Those two approaches have never been combined as there have been different epistemological goals with the different methods such as looking at the lived experience versus the identification of predictors of place attachment (Manzo & Devine-Wright 2014). In order to understand the different methodological perspectives on place attachment research there is need to distinguish between the two different meanings place attachment can have. One is the measure of attachment's strength, also described as locus of attachment, the functionality of a place and the second one is psychological process of attachment and meaning making, also as centre of meaning or where the symbolic attitudes towards a place (Williams 2013). When looking at place as locus of control the majority of attempts have been to quantify the strength of bonds and were in the beginning mostly focused around urban areas, neighbourhood communities and identity. The focus has moved from looking at behaviour, such as long-term residency as the main factor playing into attachment and moved into self-reports of affective dimensions (Gustafson 2001; Manzo 2005). With the context of affective dimension, such as identity, additional aspects of attachment are also starting to be explored. Amongst others, communal ties and the extensive range of what can be the object of space attachment; house, neighbourhood, city, region, country, and what connection we as people have to different places, whether it be as a resident or visitor (Williams et al. 1992; Giuliani 2003).

In place attachment research it is important to distinguish if the place bond it built upon a temporal affective experience of if it is a sensory response to an environment's aesthetics (Williams 2013). However, one should not attempt to measure components of place attachment separately as the strong bonds are built upon many components and must be understood holistically. The place is experienced as a whole by participants and a researcher should attempt to capture that in their research.

The interest in quantifying place bonds grew in the 90's but at the same time the wish to qualitatively understand what kind, as opposed to what degree, emerged as well. Bruner (1990) drew psychologists from the causality and prediction towards understanding the symbolic meaning-making processes that people use when they construct and interpret their worlds. According to Williams (2013) there can be identified four epistemological principles in place research (Patterson et al. 1994 in Williams 2013); First is to understand the meaning that guides human action. Second, the person-place relationships are identified by distinctive identities and spatial influences emerging over time as opposed to be a measurable outcome. Third, people construct and narrate their lives through storytelling and fourth, their narratives can help interpret social interaction and the patterns they display there. Following this, Gustafson (2001) created a three-pole model *self-others-environment* looking at cultural and social processes and their influence of environmental bonds and relationships. He found that multiple place meanings were concerned with the connection between other people and self, other people and environment, self and environment or all three at the same time. It suggests that social relationships in one's residential environment highly influence the feeling of belonging and connecting with a place but can also cause feelings of exclusion and alienation.

The more recent methodological turns in researching place attachment are discursive social psychology which emphasizes how meaning are discursively constructed and accomplished (Williams 2013). Discursive psychology doesn't see attitudes as predictable behaviour but more that people are establishing discursive positions based on "*a repertoire of interpretive frames, scripts or tropes to account for their actions*" (Williams 2013). They show themselves in daily interactions, like conversations and verbal descriptions. Much place research is conducted with open ended interviews where participants usually are asked to describe and reflect upon/discuss their relationship to and with a specific place or area.

When looking at places, buildings and areas with historical meaning, such as Notre Dame, it can be argued that meaning does not come from the physical features but from the collective memories assigned to it. It was evident when Notre Dame burnt down and the whole world gathered to pay for restoration and mourned the loss. We could also question whether we ascribe meaning to significant historical places or if we derive it from them. A quantitative method could look at the individual properties ascribed to places and from that

could assess the holistic entity of a place (Williams 2013). From a qualitative and interpretative perspective meaning of place is a negotiation between person and place mediated by culture, social interaction and past individual experiences.

### Examples of research methods

Some of the research that has been done on the field of place attachment has focused on how place attachment looks in the age of climate change to populations living in climate sensitive areas. The focus of this research has been to understand the lived experiences of people in places directly affected by climate changes. Researching narratives made it possible to see prejudice, misunderstandings, feelings and under-lying opinions in participants (Jackson 2002). Research on this area found that narratives reveal how complex and contradictory behaviours and emotions can be when attachment to place is disrupted by climate changes. As the events are happening as of right now, it means that narratives change along with the new experiences and people borrow from different sources to understand and explain what is going on in their familiar environments (Kemkes & Akerman 2019). Cunsolo, Harper et al. (2012, 2013) found that narratives changed, and psychological health and wellbeing was significantly affected towards the end of the research as opposed to the beginning. The understanding of place attachment in a time of climate change has the potential to challenge the discourse on both climate change and place attachment. Being both cause and object for distress and grief could legitimise policy changes on these areas (Askland & Bunn 2018; Conroy, Knight et al. 2019). The changes made to places, which in research is known to be an important factor in making up identities, sense of belonging and community-building are necessary aspects to consider when speaking of place attachment and psychological wellbeing (Randall 2009; Head 2016).

Alternative qualitative methods have been participatory mapping and walking journeys (Tschakert, Tutu et al. 2011). Coming from traditions of ecopsychology and solastalgia theories Tschakert, Tutu et al. (2011) wanted to understand how one's permanent home environment can be altered beyond recognition and decided to focus on more rural areas where threat to their environments are greater than in urban areas. Their participants come from a region in Ghana that is suffering under drought and participants move from rural areas to cities to establish new lives as they can no longer inhabit their home areas. Through walking journeys and participatory mapping, they wanted to understand the "*spatialities of*

*embodied experiences*” when looking at home, place identity and everyday landscape. Here they found that negative alterations in the landscape triggered negative emotions; sadness, violation of self-place connection, distress and helplessness amongst other. This shows that there is a reciprocal and dynamic relationship between place, individuals, meaning and geographical landscape, and the collective memories, experiences and identities.

Other methods that have been used in data collection have been focus groups (Albrecht et al. 2007; Conroy & Knight 2019), ethnographic field work (Askland & Bunn 2018) and surveys (Albrecht et al. 2007; Marshall et. al 2019).

### Interview guide

The interview guide was constructed based on existing literature on place attachment and with the aim of incorporating participant’s own photographs, as this has not been done in previous research. The aim of photo-elicitation was to conduct a semi-structured interview based on photos selected and previously produced by participants. Participants were told to select pictures that showed their connection to the place, Bøgebjerg and surrounding area. Normally, photo-elicitation would use photos produced and presented by the researcher or produced in the research context (Radley 2010; Reavy 2011) but this was not possible in this study. For these interviews the photos have been produced and provided by the participants as they can decide for themselves what pictures best depict their experience and how they related to space in their own way. The photos they chose in the context of the interview can depict meaningful aspects of their environment. Participants were asked about length of residency, relationships and emotional connection to their places on the basis of photos (See appendix 1). As this is an interpretative phenomenological study the questions were open-ended, and the interview guide was not meant to be followed rigorously. This allowed the participants to respond in a narrative fashion voicing reflections and opinions on the subject.

### Participant selection

As IPA research is primarily looking at small single-person accounts of experience it wouldn’t make sense to think in terms of bigger samples and random selection and work with concepts such as representativeness. Important for the selection was that all participants had a history of long-term residency in the same area, that the area was nature rich and that they represented different generations.

3 people were contacted, an elderly couple in their late 80's who lived in the same area for 43 years and a woman in her mid 50's who lived in the same area as the elderly couple for 20+ years. The couple was contacted via telephone and the woman via text. In both the phone call and text, the participants were informed that it would be an interview about place attachment, and they should supply private pictures that to them said something about their place attachment. They were also informed about anonymity and that I would take pictures of their private photographs to include in the thesis.

There has been no specific wish as to gender, race or socio-economic profile in the selection but rather what style of residency they have maintained throughout the years. However, there was a wish to find participants from different generations. Mannheim found that belonging to the same generation or age group means that they share a common location in socio-historical processes and people are there for limited to a specific span of potential experiences and to be predisposed to certain thoughts upon different subjects or events (Mannheim in Longhurst 1989). The category of generation location is based on factors such as birth, death and ageing and importantly implies a potential for a particular experience and way of looking at the world (Longhurst 1989). This is a consideration that should be brought into the reading of the analysis and understanding that place attachment is experienced with different perspectives and thoughts depending on generational standpoint.

### Procedure for Data Collection

The thesis has combined qualitative methods in data collection; the semi structured interview and photo-elicitation combined, and the analysis was completed using the interpretative phenomenological approach. Where interview will explore the worldviews, thoughts and experiences (Kvale & Brinkmann 2015) photo-elicitation will make the object of discussion more available to the participants (Radley 2010). The interviews took place and were recorded in the homes of participants and pictures taken of participants' self-produced and chosen photographs. One interview was conducted with a single participant while the other was made with a couple and it was overall attempted to conduct the interviews without too many interruptions on the researcher's part. The data collection has been minimized to two interviews due to the time-consuming process of analysis as the approach



to data collection and analysis is grounded in interpretative phenomenological analysis. The interviews were transcribed in IPA style focused on semantic meaning (Langdridge 2007) rather than conversational details such as pauses. As a tool IPA is focused on the individual's experiences, meaning making and lifeworld (Langdridge 2007) and is situated within a phenomenological framework.

### Phenomenological approach

Phenomenology is a philosophical approach to studying experience with different emphases and themes. Common for all of them is the interest in the human experience but mostly in relation to what matters to people and makes up the lived world (Smith, Flowers & Larkin 2009). Husserl (1927) expresses the intention of phenomenology which is to describe how individuals form and experience the world through consciousness. In the same sense IPA wishes to illuminate a phenomenon whether it's an event, process or relationship. The interest is in how this process can give us more knowledge on experience as they are lived by an embodied socio-historical situated person (Eatough & Smith 2017). It is the aspects of experience that matter to people and become part of their meaning-making processes rather than the phenomenon itself. This aim draws lines from Heidegger's phenomenology; he proposes that a person is *Dasein* or often understood as *being-in-the-world* (Eatough & Smith 2017). *Dasein* breaks up with the cartesian dualism as it acknowledges that people are being-in-the-world with others, are contextually connected and the human relationship with the world is equally constitutive. Merleau-Ponty (1945;1962) takes *Dasein* to another level by looking at the body-subject connection and how we embody experiences through the lived body "*To be a consciousness, or rather to be an experience, is to have an inner communication with the world, the body, and others, to be with them rather than beside them.*" (Merleau-Ponty 2012, p.99). Experience is a lived process with many different perspectives and meanings all unique to the individual's embodied and situated relationship and negotiation with the world (Smith, Flowers & Larkin 2009). People's relationship with the world is interpretative and people try to make meaning of their activities and the events that happen to and around them. This is what IPA attempts to understand.

Another pillar of IPA stems from hermeneutics. Hermeneutics can be applied to the lived experiences (*Erlebnis*) and comprehension is the moment when "life understands itself" (Dilthey 1976 in Eatough & Smith 2017). For Heidegger and Gadamer interpretation is the

foundation of being and that living a life is to interpret. According to Schleiermacher we need to have a holistic view on the interpretative process. The aim is to understand the recipient and the product (in Schleiermacher's case the writer and the text). This means that the interpretative researcher can offer a different analysis than the participant; some of it comes from psychological theory or a bigger data which shows connections between different participant experiences (Smith, Flowers & Larkin 2009). The interpretations say something about the individual and their intentions but also how it could be understood in a specific context. This also applies to the well-known hermeneutic circle which is looking at the relationship between parts and the whole at different levels; to understand the different parts you have to look at the whole and to understand the whole you look at the parts. This also means that interpretations come from a dynamic process. For IPA this means that there is a certain going back and forward when looking at the material at hand where different perspectives on the different parts are needed to understand the meaning of a phenomenon. IPA is concerned with examining how a phenomenon appears and through interpretations make sense of this appearance.

IPA is committed to understand the particular experiences or how phenomena appear to specific people in specific contexts and has a long tradition of doing single-person case studies (Harré 2012; Eatough & Smith 2017). This is where the idiographic perspective has contributed to IPA research. IPA grounds its generalizations in the particular by looking at a person's way of being-in-the-world, ways of seeing and experiencing certain phenomena (Eatough & Smith 2017). As IPA attempts to comprehend how people become situated in the world the idiographic approach can encourage researchers to look at multiple single-person cases that provide an overview of singular embodied situated experiences across contexts and time. This can show common denominators for people living with the same phenomena, events or processes and give researchers an idea of how the small parts paint a bigger picture of the whole.

### Why the semi-structured interview combined with photo elicitation

Qualitative methodologies are built on the notion that human beings are reflective and intentional creators of meaning. This means that the methods we choose to research human experience and phenomena must equally be able to capture these qualities of human life. The qualitative research interview aims to understand experiences from the

point of view of the participants. It is the intention of the interview to explore the meaning of experience and grasp the “lived world” beyond scientific explanations (Kvale & Brinkmann, 2015). The object of psychological research is experience and it should be studied as a complex and unique process. Experience is intertwined with time and space and interaction, meaning there cannot be two identical experiences even if the object experienced might be the same. Using pictures as tools in interviews can be a gateway to exploring some questions of human subjectivity, the emotional effect and different experiences of similar photos presented to different participants. The object depicted in the photo might have been experiences by participants in different timeframes and settings making the subjective and unconscious experiences differ. Here there would be a focus on how the image is looked at, “ways of seeing” (Berger, 1972) and how the participants position themselves in relation to the images.

### Why visual methods

This thesis will use visual methods as a part of its data collection methods. In a combination with a semi-structured interview the hope is to gather a deeper and more nuanced understanding of the participants’ experiences of place. There are certain limitations to the otherwise great sit-down interview and especially when the object of experience is place. In interviews there is the possibility to go beyond what is observable and visible, but some aspects of experiences may take on a richer form when combined with visibly observing the object of discussion. Using visual methods, such as photo-elicitation also presents different narratives than what might have been presented if solely interviews were used. Talking about familiar environments that have become a part of our identities can evoke feelings of homeness and give greater nourishment to the stories about places and attachment. Especially for some of the participants in this study, who moved away from their homes yet still are highly attached to them. Using visuals can help bring forth memories that might not have been available to them if only the narrative and not the visual aspect had been accessed. According to Harper (2002) using images as a part of interviews help access deeper parts of the brain than words, as this component is evolutionarily older than the parts that process verbal information. It doesn’t evoke more information per se but rather different one. Multi-modal work combines visual and verbal data and creates a richer picture of a certain topic (Reavey 2011). This is also a strong argument for considering

various visual techniques such as photo-elicitation, mental mapping and other visual methods when trying to understand place attachment in different contexts and with different populations.

## Visual methods

The use of photographs draws on the methodological tradition visual methods. They can display what the participants truly think or feel of the research subject while helping the researcher ignore or alter their own initial understanding. Pictures can only be interpreted as they do not provide any truths to any questions researchers might have. The way we look upon pictures is affected by what we already know, past experiences, past knowledge and as the object in a picture ages and vanishes the photograph never will (Berger 1972). An image reveals what a place or person once looked like and can reveal how it was looked upon by other people. People can look at pictures of themselves as young and realise how they aged or share similarities with their parents. Images can display old world views or that some world views are still present within participants.

When using images, whether it be photography or painting it's important to remember that an image is never just looked at. The spectator is looking at it in relation to themselves (Berger 1972). In interpretation of images we must question the meaning of power and cultural meanings. In contemporary western societies the visuals are ways of culturally constructing and representing social life. What is important about the image is not just what it displays but how it is looked at by the spectator in different ways. Visual culture is a process and not just a static entity; it is both what is being looked at, how it is perceived and how these change over time in relation to cultural changes (Rose, 2001). Certain objects can trigger certain ways of seeing and there is a negotiation in the relationship between object and spectator. When considering images in research one must consider three different "sites" at which the meaning of the image is produced as argued by Rose (2001): The site of production, the site of the image itself and the site where it is seen by different audiences. There are different aspects to each of the processes at the different sites, these aspects can be called modalities (Rose 2001). As well as different sights there are also different methods; the technological one (paintings, television and internet), compositional— so when an image is made (can be seen in content, colour and spatial organization), and the social methods which are the range of economic, social, institutional and political relations that

surround an image and through which an image is seen (Rose 2001). This tells us that photos are more than just pictures, they are also resources of information of what the world is, what it has been and what the future might be like. They are mediating forces that can shape ideas or show the ideas and meanings when connected to context. They reveal things about circumstances, who took the picture and who couldn't, why was it taken, what is shown and what is not. All these questions can suggest to us the meaning behind a photo (Radley 2010; Rose 2001; Reavy 2011). Participant generated images used in research can also give voice to populations who are otherwise overlooked in research; it can be indigenous, elderly and homeless people and if represented correctly in research the voice might be heard. Visual research methods allow people to shape the contexts from which their experiences are told, and people already use them and consume them. This could be mourning responses to loss of places and environment or they can be mediated through news clips, stories from others, photographs, works of art, texts, video, or social media (Reser and Swim 2011). Photographs can play a role in minimising or decreasing the distance between past and present events and places that to participants may seem far away from each other. In interview situations, visual methods can aid the memory of how a specific situation, relationship, place or experience once felt, what it feels like now and how it is remembered. They can represent what the world once was, what a place once was and what it has become, giving nuance and richness to an interview that might not be attained in other ways.

### Method of analysis

IPA analysis means taking on the task of navigating between the different layers of interpretation there can be present in one's interview transcript. My method of analysis was inspired by Langdridge (2007) and Smith, Flowers and Larkin (2009) and it is their steps that I have followed. The process often consists of multiple read throughs of the transcript and trying to get familiar with the overall "tone" of the interview. Here it is also very helpful to take notes and get a feeling of what might come off as the most important to the participant at a first read. This is done by using *descriptive* comments or underlying sentences that seem important to the participant. It could be subjects, sentences or words that appear often (Smith, Flowers and Larkin 2009). Another element could be *linguistic* comments that look at the language being used; this can both be metaphors, laughter,

repetitions, pronouns etc. With *conceptual* comments the interpreter moves away a bit from the claims of the participant and the interpretations can draw on both personal and professional knowledge (Smith, Flowers and Larkin 2009). It might shift the focus a bit from the pre-understanding of the participant and their life worlds and towards the new emerging understanding. This means that it's not necessarily about finding answers in the transcript as much as asking questions that arise from the claims of the participant. In this way there is an opening and introduction of new meanings to the transcript and the general data overall.

From these different levels of comments, it is slowly possible to look at the themes emerging from the now expanded data set. Now it's time to reduce the amount of detail but still staying true to the complexity of the data material when displaying patterns in the transcript. To figure out what themes emerge it is necessary to break up the narrative linear flow of the transcript and in this manner re-organize the data. This is where the hermeneutic circle proves as a useful tool or inspiration as to how one can work through the analysis. By dissecting the whole transcript into parts and discovering themes the transcript can be put together later with a new and more nuanced understanding of the material. This is where there is a collaboration between the participant and the researcher's contribution to understanding the experienced phenomenon and what is important in the transcript. The themes then do not only represent what the participant has said and has not simply been taken at face-value but also the researcher's interpretation. As the themes come up chronically the researcher can then categorize the different parts of the transcripts so that they fit together (Smith, Flowers and Larkin 2009). Here it is important to remember the research question and that some themes might not be relevant in line with what the researcher wishes to examine. From this one may discover sub-themes that can be categorized under a more relevant and broader theme and that some themes actually draw in other themes and need to be in their own cluster.

This approach inspired the practical selection of themes in this thesis. First the transcript was read through multiple times and parts of the transcript were selected chronologically. They were rewritten in English with the most essential sentences and then under each selected quote the different possible themes were written out, such as "**emotional attachment+being away**" or "**place attachment+marriage**". They were written out

chronically so that in the same quote there could be both elements that would apply to “place attachment” and “marriage”. Afterwards parts of the transcript were put under theme headlines thus breaking with the chronological order. Some themes showed to have sub-themes such as *Place attachment* which is an overall theme but under which sub-themes such as “*place attachment through community*” or “*place attachment through work*” also belonged. Some of the sub-themes are included and spelled out as they are parts that help comprehend the general theme of place attachment. The final task is to find themes across the two transcripts and where a red thread could be drawn between different participants’ experiences and the place attachment phenomenon.

## Interview Synthesis

### Mette

Married for 37 years and with two, now adult, children, Mette has lived with her husband in the same area for 25 years. First residing at Bøgebjerg they since moving 6 km away to one of the small villages in the area, Måle. They both work in Kerteminde about 8 km away. Mette has many ties to her local community, and she participates in activities that help sustain the identity of her individual self but also herself as an invested local. The important factors that play into Mette’s place attachment are the overall relationships she has built with the people living on her street and her family life. She is an active member of the local congregation and it is from this she refers to the most important things in life: other people. The essence: Mette’s place attachment is made up by her relationships with other people.

### Ella and Verner

Married for 60 years and they resided in the same place, Bøgebjerg Estate, for 43 years where they also worked. Before living at Bøgebjerg they moved around to different estates looking for work until ending up at Bøgebjerg and remaining almost their entire adult lives raising 3 children there. They moved away from Bøgebjerg to Munkebo (ca 15 km away) circa 5 years ago as they no longer felt safe living there due to their age. They still go on drives and visit the area they used to live in. As a place Bøgebjerg served as both a home and a workplace. The essence: Much of their place attachment is made up by relationships with other people but in a different way than with Mette. Much of it is referred via stories of work life. It is clear that their motive of living there was work and took up most of their time. It is through this perspective that their pathways to place attachment come to light.

## Analysis

The analysis will identify pathways of place attachment for the participants in this study. First the two transcripts were analysed separately but common themes were identified and those will be presented here. The analysis will present the overall common themes but situated in the separate experiences of the participants. The themes can have sub-themes and these will also be outlined; such as “community” which has sub-themes “church community” or “work community”. The final paragraph will touch on a non-common theme, only experienced by one of the participants.

## Community

Mette

### *Local community*

One of the main components in place attachment theory which also appears as a significant factor in how Mette relates to her environment is the social ties in her local community. She is involved and regularly engages in community activities and rituals. She identifies as partaking in local activities that maintains and strengthens the identity of the community. Indirectly this maintains her own identity as selfless and interested in relationships that she has with people around her and she has developed a body-mind-community relationship. This engagement was applied to her previous home where she maintained and practiced close ties to Ella and Verner who make up the other participants of this thesis. She would bring her children and find comfort in the relationship, security of visiting them and having them within proximity gave her a sense of stability in her life: *“I also remember when Jens was little and we also just walked up to Verner and Ella (...) and you could just come up to Verner and Ella and it was like entering a pocket and that’s how we felt as adults the thing that there were someone who kind of took over a little bit cause when you are new or you become a family it’s not something you have tried before and you don’t have any experience with it so it’s so nice that there sometimes are someone who kind of take over”*. It becomes an emotional and symbolic connection to her place through close interactions with locals within the same geographical location.

She associates Ella and Verner with continuity on an interpersonal and a communal level. Mette’s cognitive processes such as memory and schemas link her experiences with Ella and Verner to her present community. She applies previous experiences in her previous



community and mirror the same experiences she had of a happy and safe relationship with the elderly couple across the street: *“we have it on the street here, we are well eh but now eh (.) Tage and Erna who lived over there, they are dead now but they died in the beginning and they were these elderly people where it was so nice to come over to them it was just like coming over to Ella to come over to Erna it was so nice”* (LI 810-813). Her previous and current experience of place attachment were built upon positive emotions, memory and schema which contributes to a sense of happiness and safety in both environments and relationships.

Mette experiences a close connection to her community in her local environment and she feels attached through the close relations she has created. She explains it as something they do *“on this street”*. She experiences it as common sense behaviour but also as applying specifically to her street and the people who live there. She is engaging in strong community maintenance and is intimately engaged in her local environment on a local, social and personal level and maintain an order and continuity. It is important to note that her place attachment is closely connected to her community and it is within this community she has many positive psychological interactions which supports and encourages her place attachment behaviour: *“that is what we do on this street (...) we started having this collective eating and new people got here, young people live here with smaller children (...) and they join the local association and it’s so good that new forces have come here (...) we made this nice magazine called “Hindsholm magazine” which is also an outlet of this local council with those who live on Hindsholm and churches and that stuff and that is also really a unifying thing(...)* (LI 836-849). This is a state of mind which Seamon (2013) refers to as *existential insideness*. The preservation of Mette’s identity and the identity of her environment seem in some paragraphs as mutually dependent to a certain degree. The joint responsibility of both community and individuals is reported on a local interpersonal level but it is ultimately risen from living in the same area: *“but you know then it’s one person’s birthday and then another one has something and then we entertain a bit and then we just invited here and there”* (LI 852-852).

Mette presents the narrative of her local community which upholds and sustains traditions, characters and behaviours that distinct them from other groups that exist within the same community: *“that is stuff we have on the streets, Erna had her 80 year old birthday and we*

*collected some money for her but we are not with the people from the other end of the town even though we are right here*" (LI 835-837). This can be understood through Wertsch' (2002) narrative templates where a groups identity and understanding of events are shaped continuously over time and can both happen on a global- and local level as well as in different contexts. Here it could be relevant to look at the other narratives that Mette is presenting, not only about her community but also about herself and the way in which the two intertwine and affect one another. Her place attachment is primarily social, and Mette's close social connections could also be called "sense of community" as she is connected to this particular community through place (Macmillan and Chavis 1986; Nasar & Julian 1995). The spatial bonds are important because they come to symbolize the social bonds and the social interactions that were primed and sustained by the place: *"then we have with Claus over there and Poul and Mia up in the next house and Claus' something family some fishing thing in Kerteminde so Claus he brings fjord shrimp and Morten bakes bread and then he so so we went to Poul and Mia and we sit in their they have this eh a conservatory(...) so we sit there and eat fjord shrimp and that is super cozy"* (LI 855-864).

She also experiences the grief, pain, illness and death. When engaging with long term residency it is also engaging with the sorrows that hits communities on a local and personal level. It also challenges Mette's way of interacting with people in the way she normally would and what the appropriate behaviour is in situations where the normal recipe or behaving is unavailable to her: *"we actually have one of our, someone Jens went to school with, who was killed on Fynshovedvej, Jacob (...) his parents are now 2 a day still on the cemetery, it's in Drigstrup (...) but it's so difficult to act in it, well what do you say what do you do, it's not their job to tell us when there is this human grief"* (LI 580-588). Mette seems to be struggling with what kinds of grief behaviour that are locally accepted and how she can accommodate the needs of the grieving parents while not knowing how to act in this situation. It encourages her to realize the vulnerability as well as experiencing that in her interpersonal relationships: *"the mom came I Jacob's old eh tracksuit and you know "yes she says this is because I just wore this because then I think he is close" and you know you just don't know how to respond to that and it's so difficult that you know do we talk about it do we not talk about him and that"* (LI 592-596). Grief creates connections and adds another layer of emotional attachment to the community and place. In this particular situation it is a

source for strengthening the community identity by collectively coming together and comforting the grieving parents as a local group.

#### *Church community*

This takes us to another dimension that is very prominent in Mette's place attachment; her relationship with church and how that influences her experience of being in place. She describes the parochial church council, the relations and the act of going to church as a continuous learning process. She experiences it as a teaching practice in an environment where lessons are community focused and human relationships are more important than individual and materialistic goods. Neither place specific behaviours and practices are innate but rather culturally appropriated over time and this is also how Mette reflects upon church going: *"it's not something you're born to do (...) it's actually a good message there (...) you're not born to go to church it's like a marathon you have to practice and practice and you also do that when going to church (...)".*

The cognitive elements of her place attachment such as values, knowledge, beliefs, meaning and memories are constructed through many of her church experiences. Mette associates the learning process from the church community to the local community. She participates in activities and generates messages from the different places and find a way to make a meaningful connection to her close relations. Mette's religion gives a perspective on the relationship between herself as in individual, place and cognitive processes as a three-legged stool on which her place attachment is resting. It appears that it is through a spiritual lens that Mette tries to understand *how* and *why* she engages with the environment and people around and her relationship with religion in this context: *"after a while when you've been there and gone there so much then then you start to listen (...) and there was the thing with enlightenment that the more you know the darker it is around because everything is standing there and it becomes more and more, the list of course but there is almost a bigger and bigger ring that get dark outside"* (LI 905-931). Mette has meaningful experiences and memories of participating in a process of enlightenment and feeling connected to something bigger like a community. The act of going to church for Mette could be compared to the inner peace and connection to nature amongst Canadian Inuits: *"Being out on the land means... I don't know, but it gives me some form of peace with myself. (...) I can take myself wherever and that's where I feel mostly connected... to what I don't know?"* (Cunsolo,

Harper et al. 2013). Church can become a replacement for practices that were previously situated and linked to the natural environment as mentioned in Tscharkert & Tutu (2011). Here they describe how religious infrastructure becomes a connecting force in the community and through which the locals understand themselves in replacement of the connection to a natural environment. Through participating in a church community she transfers the lessons to her local place based community and engages in strengthening the social ties: *“after a while you start to listen more and more and you become more and more awake and then it come this which I think has been there that it doesn’t matter it’s not about you in this church it’s not about you it’s about the community and that experience that you’re a part of something I think that has been good cause you become less selfish”* (LI 933-943). The unifying behaviours in her neighbourhood are not only situated around the physical states or surroundings but their meaningful relationships. To Mette the messages of the church is present in multiple aspects of her life. Through her religious lens she elevates her own place attachment to become a symbol of selflessness and community orientation.

#### *Family and Marriage*

Mette’s places and emphasis on her family ties when talking of place attachment. Her family life and marriage are stressed as the most treasured elements of her life. It is also from this standpoint that she connects abstract thoughts to very concrete experiences in her family life: *“and it’s actually Mille who did the windows and then when the sun is shining you actually don’t see it so I have to do it over but when you’re from the countryside you don’t care (...) you just see the person.”* (LI 945-950). As Mette was asked to find pictures that said something about her place attachment, she noticed it was mainly pictures of her children (figure 4 and 5). Her schemas applied to place attachment are continuously intertwined with wellbeing of her family life and marriage. It suggests that factors such as family and marriage highly affect the emotional bonds to places and family history is to some degree related to their location of long-term residency.



Figure 4 Mette's son on the street of their first home

Mette states herself that children is what *"life is about"* (LI 206-212) and often by flipping through pictures of her children Mette tries to make sense of places and what they mean to her: *"this is actually a picture from Vesterhavet(.) they've always been very friendly with each other our children (...) they haven't fought and argued and stuff like that, it's like we have often talked about it if it's because we don't remember it properly (...) we think it's because it was like that we agreed on that"* (LI 219-224). Her schema's for place contains information about the features of place and home that are suitable for family and children.



Figure 5 Mette and her son by their first home

Marriage was a recurring theme as well as the dilemma of staying or moving. Mette often attributes this as the main reason fights or disagreements happen. There is a double gain for Mette in her proximity maintaining behaviour of both place and interpersonal relationships in her family. To Mette the idea of not living together but rather having separate homes could maintain the relationship but also make room for different needs to be met in different physical places: *"Morten could also move somewhere, not that we would get a divorce or anything but then he could live you know on his own and he could get the peace he needs."* (LI 5-7). Most of the conflicts she refers to that appear in her marriage is related to the different place-rooted needs of herself and her husband. Mette's accounts of Morten behaviour and experiences of their home could be related to a feeling of "out-of-place-ness". It is a discomfort felt by the experiencer that the place no longer provides a sense of joy and becomes unsettling (Seamon 2013). This is in contrast to the otherwise significant experience of being unconsciously immersed in one's places and experiencing a sense of getting closer to oneself through experiencing and doing activities connected to a place. Their marital conflicts exhibit different processes of place creation; where Mette is very immersed in local community and expresses that she tries to make their house homey she also experiences her husband as being very negative towards their house. The state of their home seems to be some of the factors that according to Mette trigger her husband's negative construction and understanding of their home: *"Morten has this with this house that he just, you know he hasn't done anything about it, he thinks the kitchen is old and disgusting and that it's just disgusting to be here and it's not nice, he has these expectations to himself and things."* (LI 787-792).

Parts of her place attachment is grounded in how Mette experiences her marital situation. It is in these conflicts that it is both challenged and sustained. The experienced continuing conflicts is regular discussion on her marriage and a very emotional to her: *"sometimes we talk about it but before we get that far we are arguing a thousand times right and it's so emotional (.) this stuff 'ahhhh'"* (LI 37-40). Where Morten might feel alienated and ambivalent towards their home and the immediate surroundings based negative experiences, Mette's place-based positive emotions and experiences sustains her attachment.

## Ella and Verner

### *Work community*

Ella and Verner represent the old farming tradition in Denmark, where work and private life coexisted and farming made up the majority of Danish economy. Up until the 1960's it was custom for Danish estates to hire outside people to come live and work on the farms. After second world war the mechanisation of farming contributed to the dismantling or privatisation of many farms. Ella and Verner's primary factor in determining their place of residence was the ability to find a job at an estate where they could both find work. Verner was estate manager and Ella was a maid. Their place attachment is dependent and based on work opportunities: *"we moved back to Bøgebjerg or Hindsholm and lived for some time in something called Degerhuset but then we moved to the farm and lived in the south wing and we lived there for 43 years"* (LI 10-19). Their work life and private life is intertwined and continued to be so until they decided to move into their current apartment in elderly protected housing. Right up until their move they kept in contact with their employer's wife (the countess) and remained retired in the same house on the same estate that had served as their workplace for the majority of their adult lives. It displays how occupational roles and identities in this case are interlaced with location.

The psychological affective processes of being in place are not as outspoken in the interview with Ella and Verner as with Mette. Positive affect is expressed indirectly through descriptions of their place's physical features: *"(E) well we needed some work so eh well what did we like I just don't know yes we did have a big what is it called house with 12 windows no yes with 20 casement windows so casement windows with 20 windows in each and that wasn't always exciting but eh but eh"* (LI 34-37). Place attachment overlap with work relationship as their choices of residency was dictated by work opportunities. Verner's work schema is different than Ella's as his work and search for jobs seems to stem from an ambition in farming. Ella is more concerned with family and is in charge of combining both work and family life structure. Where it could have been interesting and also relevant to look at place attachment separated from work life, this was not a distinction I found necessary or that in any way minimises the legitimacy of Ella and Verner's experience of being in place. Similarly, to farmers in the Western Australian Wheatbelt (Ellis & Albrecht 2017) Ella and Verner had overlaps of work and home environments. They connect to their place and build place attachment through work but also from a necessity standpoint. They

needed to do what they did in order to live where they did: *“(E) When I was at Nakbøl I was there when we went to the beets at 4 in the morning and chopped beets and then home and get two kids to school and then eh over and making food and coffee to bring to the fields to Verner and did shrimp cleaning(xxx) and there eh then (.) when it was 2 then I went home and put my legs in a bucket of water and then I went to work down at Nakbøl which(xxx) yes so that was pretty hard and I had Jørgen-Peter and he was going with us to since he wasn’t in school at the time (...) he was sick of being out there”* (LI 23-28). The example from their previous workplace, Nakbøl, depicts a pattern of Ella balancing the work-home separation. It also shows that she through memories organize schemas of her time on Nakbøl as physically hard and affecting her family life. Despite being so intrinsically based and engaged according to Ella it didn’t feel like they had any kind of ownership of the place which could be understood in the context of their employment status: *“(E) No I wouldn’t say that we had an inspector, Møller, at Hverringe who was in charge, no I don’t really know it was hard sometimes”* (LI 59-60). Similarly, to her time at Nakbøl Ella accounts for her time at Bøgebjerg as hard.

The physical and time-consuming investment Ella and Verner put into Bøgebjerg estate have given them an intimate knowledge and care for the place. They know when a field has been over sowed and they feel sense of deprivation and outrage when talking about their former home and how it looks: *“(E) Sometimes I do a lot (miss Bøgebjerg) I do (...) (V) Yes and no the way it’s looking at the moment I don’t miss it (...) It looks terrible out there the windows are broken and the paint is peeling at the gate and whew it looks like hell, it almost looks like a deserted farm.”* (LI 67-80). There could be drawn some self-definitions that have arrived from being in the same place for a long time. They incorporate cognitions about the physical environment into their definitions of themselves and their affective experiences of place-attachment. In this case it is memories, preferences and thoughts on their previous home’s current condition which doesn’t comply with their memories and schemas of the place. This plays into their present feelings of longing.

#### *Local community*

They might not have felt the need to call it community as they were just living and doing their lives and not necessarily reflecting upon it: *“(E) There wasn’t much (community), yes I looked after the neighbour lady’s children when she went out to pluck apples and then I*



*watched her children and her husband was taking care of chickens and eh then what then what then I started taking care of children different places and that was very hard yes"* (42-45). Their stories however suggest strong ties to the local community before and after moving away. Their place attachment consists of the same sense of community as reported by Mette. Their community is a system made up of friendships, kinship, networks of formal and informal bonds and family ties.

Similarly, they continue to maintain relationships with locals who shared the same line of work as them at Hindsholm. Verner accounts for a shared experience with the local sheep breeder Tony who had an encounter with the woman who now lives in Ella and Verner's previous home. This encounter exhibits how the collective culture and shared meanings of farmers and locals in this particular area clash with an outsider who doesn't know the social norms: *"(V) A crazy bitch lives in our old house, sadly I haven't \*run into her\* (...) she lives in the white house and she has an Alsatian right? (...) he also told her that, what is his name Tony to her at the fold, "but it's not harming the sheep" well "I don't bloody know that" he said (E) no the sheep doesn't know that (V) "no the sheep doesn't know that" that's how he said it, so she better get out of there, he got mad at her then"* (LI 127-145). Certain areas are expected to be met with specific behaviours from the community. Behaviours that Ella, Verner and their peers have spent many years internalising and are not only separated by real physical markers, such as fences or enclosures but also symbolic ones. Place becomes both a social and symbolic area to mostly homogenous communities where neighbourhood and interpersonal attachments spring from the same place of residency.

Ella and Verner give insight into the communal knowledge of behaviours but also attitudes towards local tragedies and the psychological processes behind their own experiences. Belongingness and membership of place community includes an emotional connection stemming from a shared history. Ella and Verner accounts for some of this history via community tragedies, such as the suicides that happened in their community. For the most part it is Verner who found the victims, but Ella plays a crucial role in telling the story "the right way" so that it is exactly as it was when Verner found them: *"(V) what could that be Ella? (E) Did something happen? (...) (V) luckily nothing happened, otherwise I don't know they craziest, yes there was drama, we had a smallholder who hung in the attic (E) Oh right Marius (V) Marius yes, I guess he was tired of life, and I found him and he hung there*

*dangling, that is a shock*" (LI 339-358). The events are individual experiences happening in a collectively shared place. They are processed affectively with humour and shock by Verner and also cognitively by fitting the suicides into schemas he has of mental health. To Verner it later appears as a way he constructs his own life story as being a man who is able to handle such events that could otherwise be traumatizing. The tragedies bring together the communities and are by Verner always remembered in detailed relation to the places where they happened.

Since Ella and Verner prior to residing at Bøgebjerg had moved around to many different estates, it must be assumed that remaining was an active choice which helped preserve the place bond. One of the main factors in this could be assumed to be the roots they developed to the community around them. They took part of a shared place attachment with other locals over a long period of time, one of them the countess, the widow of their previous employer. Despite the employer/employee relationship and differences in socio-economic status they maintained a relationship with her right up to the point of moving: *"(V) as long as the count gets his rent he doesn't care and I don't know about the countess, I don't know \*how she\*, I don't know if she talks to her (E) she doesn't have her dog anymore so I don't know how it's going with that (V) I don't know if she talks to her, I don't dare to say, it's been a long time since I've talked to her, the old one out there (E) Is she 90? (V) Yes she turned 90 now (E) In October (V) Yes (E) In October last year, the 28<sup>th</sup>-29<sup>th</sup> October right?"* (LI 147-156). Ella and Verner were employees of Hverringe estate over 3 different generations of counts and they maintained their responsibility towards the previous count by looking after his wife when he passed. As long as they resided at Bøgebjerg estate they continued to act out the relationships with their employer in the same manner they had for 43 years. It's worth speculating that despite their differences in status they share a sense of connection to place, local knowledge, history and memories embedded in place and this is another factor which maintains their relationship.

Time will be the focus of the following theme which has the overall title "Temporality". Both interviews presented different versions of temporality. As the theme of community showed temporality is essential in understanding place attachment in long term residents. To Mette it is the experience of time passing and to Ella and Verner the experience of aging and creating life stories.

## Temporality

Mette

### *Passing of time*

Throughout the interview with Mette there is a general appreciation and emphasis on the passing of time that is an underlying condition in all aspects of how she relates to herself as an individual and how she experiences place attachment.

Place attachment provide a continuity for Mette in maintaining a continuous self and linking present and past behaviours with the place she was at the time. It is both the house and place she used to live in when her children were small and this time is remembered by her with positive emotions: *“Well I think it was a good time, we thought that, we often talk about it when we drive by out there that there were just peace but that time was when we had maternity leave”* (LI 153-155). She also recalls the state of their physical surroundings in the house they lived in as not complying with what they needed as a family and why they eventually moved away. It is a cognitive based attachment where Mette feels attached to places that match her values and can represent them.

Passing of time is an indicator of strong place attachment and that place attachment is built through long-term residency. It also shows that the role of temporality in relation to other factors indirectly influence place attachment. It is necessary to consider what elements effect how and why people feel connected to places. The physical condition in her previous home ultimately dictated their move, despite having strong social ties in their previous community. Mette also experiences the time spent in the area as a life happening moment, where remaining in place wasn't so much an active choice but rather something that randomly happened; *“It's random that we kind of got here well I got a job and landed here and then there was that I was also only going to be here a few years that is what my colleagues often tell me it was two years ago I had 25 years anniversary (...) we had children and then well they only go to kindergarten you can easily move somewhere else and a different kindergarten and then suddenly and school and suddenly you've just been in a place for many years”* (LI 777-783).

It displays an element of how as time goes by elements in the participant's life also evolves and connects her on an emotional level to the place. The emplaced experiences support the temporal dimension of place attachment as the continuous relationship with a place

connects one's past with the present. It's not just applicable to long term residents but can also be shaped via symbolic means where one's own history and self-biography become intertwined with a place. The marriage is a big part of her life-story where the temporal aspect is part of what makes the marriage so significant: *"Sometimes you get some memories going (...) there was a reason we got together or are together or you know you get back to that because you're inclined to(.) forget (.) things (...) we often talked about "well then we should, we should get divorced since we can agree on things" (...) you get a stomach ache over it because it's that with we have a lot=we have been together for(.) I can't even say it, well, \*37 years\* so that is a really long time and and I haven't been with anyone (.) in such a long time in my life"* (LI 168-178). Her husband is the person who has known her in the unique way and knows of her life course throughout the majority of her adult life. Place bonds create a continuity over time as she creates meaningful memories and connections from her past with her place. With her husband she created habitual routines that constructs and sustains her identity and involvement in local community and gives her a sense of coherence in her own self-identity.

## Ella and Verner

### *Aging and life story*

All of Verner and Ella's meaning-making processes are situated in the flow of time. Their experiences of being in place is accumulated through 43 years of residency and a majority of their lives as employed by Hverringe estate: *"(V) No it's only been three, we were under her dad, the old count, it's was the first time me and Ella were there, then we were under Claus her husband and we were under Niels, so now it's the third or fourth on the way, no were weren't under (.) the fourth is coming now and it's so funny he wasn't anything but a kid when we came to Hverringe"* (LI 159-165). Most of the photographs took them back to before their life at Bøgebjerg, the way they used to look and with people who used to be alive and shared experiences. Their private and self-selected photographs for the interview were always in situations with other people. If photos were selected from the present it was never of themselves but rather of their family such as parents, friends, children and greatgrandchildren. The photos they chose of themselves showed them engaging in work, being mobile, with others and often not at Bøgebjerg. The most significant element in many photos was the social aspect followed by an explanation of where they were. The places become symbolically meaningful because of memories attached to them.

The pictures that spiked the richest accounts and most reflections seemed to be the oldest photographs. For both of them it fostered reflection upon how time had passed: “(E) *We miss being younger, we’re getting so old now* (V) *yes that is alright*” (LI 85-86) as well as how their physical features had changed over the years. Especially Verner was interested and excited about the pictures from his childhood and they both with eager and engagement debated his changing looks: “(V) *You don’t recognize me there, those were my young days* (...) (E) *No Verner is toothless he looks terrible*” (LI 212-214) but also the true resemblance between him and his mother: “(V) *And these are my parents in their youth* (E) *Do you see how Verner looked like his mother* (V) *I do, I have a picture, you see I look like her, yes that is my mom* (...) (E) *it’s a confirmation picture* (...) (E) *Yes there he looks like his mom and Verner didn’t have a neck and he still doesn’t* (V) *no what do I need that for, I look a lot like her* (...) (E) *And he has glaucoma like his mother* (V) *I have a lot from my mom* (...) *I have the round and my dad is more narrow in his face* (...) *Yes his nose and ears \*look at my dad\** (E) *Big ears*” (LI 252-273). Interestingly the photos they talk of here and not situated in any specific place other than a room with a chair. These accounts were still included as the recognition of his resemblance is a perfect example of how photo-elicitation triggers memories and recognition of change over time within the participants.

They do not only account for temporal changes in their looks. With excitement Verner describes a picture of himself in front of a canon and specifically points out the location of the photograph: “(...) *do you know where this was taken?* (...) *Christiania* (...) *Bådsmandsstræde barracks was it called back then, it became Christiania*” (LI 303-307). The picture symbolises his youth and treasured time as a soldier but also the development of a now very famous neighbourhood in Copenhagen. Today the meanings ascribed Christiania are very different from those of military barracks and Verner recognises this as he questions my knowledge on the place. He is aware of the generational gap since I will never be able to recognise the place, it exhibits two different generational schemas of what this particular place stands for. To Verner it is both a military barracks and Christiania which could be said to be each other’s opposites, and this might be the reason he challenges me to identify the location. Their joint experience of being place based in the world is defined by its temporality. Not only do they internally and externally change over time, but they are aware that so do places and the relationships they have with them.

Verner especially finds a connection with his past through the photographs, especially one from his childhood (figure 6): *“(V) This is me and the twins that I played with, I have another picture of him, the other twin died when he was, yes what was he (.) yes this one, the twins(.) there they are (.) they are identical twins (...) I used to play with them, they were my best friends (.) yes yes but eh Erik the oldest one still comes by (E) he crawls up (V) he had polio when he was 18(...) the picture is taken from the garden at my mom and dad’s (...) at Juelsbjerg (.) that’s also me and the cat (.) the cat and me haha (E) He was a faggot (V) Yes the twin (.) he died from AIDS or some shit (.) but he was at the Queens Guard (...) (E) Don’t you have a picture of him? (V) I would think so yes” (LI 275-298).*



*Figure 6 Verner on his childhood farm with friends*

This picture elicits memories with Verner about his childhood’s best friends depicted on his childhood farm as are many of the pictures Verner includes. This picture brings Ella and Verner to the present as they reflect on the continuous contact with one of the twins. Verner situates the significance of their friendship in the long period of time they have kept in contact: *(E) He can barely walk (V) No it’s not much, he just turned, he will turn the 11<sup>th</sup> of march, he will be 88 and I will be 89 the 14<sup>th</sup> of march 2020 (E) it’s a year (V) Yes a small year between us but we’ve been playing since we were sitting in a sand box (...) that is what we call friendship”. The quality of friendship is here (in part) measured by the relation’s development which is situated specifically in a sandbox. In this case the remembered places of their friendship are both symbolising how young they were at the time; sandbox and*

childhood farm. In the picture his childhood farm is a physical representation of a life-long friendship and the place reminds Verner of important events that happened in the past. It shows how this specific time of his life has left an impact on him and how significant the passage of time feels in the body of a child (James 2000) and leaves a lasting impact on him as an adult.

By the end of the interview Verner's thoughts went to his life story and evaluation. Ella and Verner have been together for the majority of life phases in the same place but where Ella looks back and regrets moving around so much as a family, Verner's evaluation is more focused on his own personal goals: *"(V) Had I known today (.) what I would end up with (.) I didn't get to be so much within agriculture (.) which is what I wanted but had I known I would have stayed in the military, yes I had (...) in a way I'm (sad) but then we had a child and we couldn't get a spot at a manor without a big household and Ella shouldn't be bothered with that, making sure there was food for 12-13 students and then I stopped applying but with the military I regretted that I didn't stay (.)"* (LI 463-472) Elderly do evaluate their lives retrospectively (Watzlawik 2015) if done so positively they accept their life course and the significant people they shared it with. This is not to indicate that Verner doesn't accept his life course. Verner accounts for experiences that happened when he was young that still remain with him, such as finding victims of suicide but he also sustains a story of himself that it is not something he took with him throughout his life: *"I wasn't on the team that found him he was hanging in the thicket but that is not something I take with me, I have the stomach for it"* (LI 437-439). The different places in which the suicides happen provide Verner with a continuity of self as the episodes that happened in different places allow him to compare his present and past and create a coherent sense of self. The places are both arenas where he remembered suicides but also where he was working and educating himself as a farmer. This is to say that places are both attributed positive and negative emotions, memories, schemas etc. and that over a life course they are evaluated as parts of a larger whole. In this case construction of a coherent sense of self.

Verner also reflects on their long-term place attachment with more critical eyes than Ella. Verner has through affective, cognitive and behavioural processes formed a place attachment and it is with those same processes that he imagines visiting other places as it coheres with his sense of self. Ella does not mirror his desire to go abroad which suggests

that her schemas on traveling are not similar to Verner's: *"(V) Jørn-Peter and Jonna and the children went to Toscana few years ago and Peter says it's so lovely down there (...) we've only been to Germany, Sweden, Norway and Denmark that is not what it could have become (E) My grandmother has never been in Copenhagen (V) No but we shouldn't take after that, they didn't have the possibilities that we had to get out and I regret not having money to go abroad (E) I once ice skated on that water up there (.) it's from Viby (V) I would have liked to go to USA in my youth (.) there was this German who wanted me to go with him to USA a few years ago (E) Who? (V) Erik Tvesgaard, he would have like me to go on a trip to the USA"* (LI 498-512). Verner is living out possible trajectories and regrets not going abroad despite having the opportunities. On the other hand, Ella is not sharing this desire and instead situates herself familiar place thus staying close to the place she grew up in through her memories. The painting depicted below (figure 7) is hanging in their kitchen and depicts the lake that Ella talks about but is also a very accurate depiction of how the area still looks today.



Figure 7 Painting of Viby

The interview with Ella and Verner supports the idea that living in the same place over a significant and extended period of time introduces a temporal depth in how a place is experienced. It unveils how repetitive, ritualistic, habitualities and patterns collect layers of emotional attachment to places.



## Embodiment

### Mette

The final theme that presented itself in the interview with Mette was the embodied dimension of her place attachment. She is experiencing the passing of time, family life, community and being in place with and in her body. The embodied dimension is an intrinsic element when looking at place attachment. She reflects upon the role of the body when *doing* or acting in situations that is not necessarily natural to her mind or thoughts, she has about a given situations. The place attachment is also built upon repeated choices of embodied participation and engagement with the environment. Place attachment stems from the interplay of bodily practices, cultural mediation and language that makes up the affective experiences of being in place (Masso, Dixon & Durheim 2013). Mette herself talks of the bodily knowledge and the role the body plays in guiding her. She reject the dichotomy between body and mind and also understands her own experiences and a dialogically negotiating relationship: *“you always want the things up here in the head, you know, you want everything up here where you could really say there are many places that remember or many other places on the body that (.) or you do some things because something that are irrational to the head but are sensible enough for the body to do(...) you should listen to the body (xxx) the body wants it”* (LI 708-714). She also connects the temporal and embodied baselines of experience. To her there is a personal knowledge on how she responds with her body to environments and how the environments influence and foster certain experiences. They do not just become memories that she keeps in her mind separated from her physical experiences, but they transfer and take on a holistic meaning to her.

The embodied perspective on place attachment help theoretically frame the experience of Mette’s husband and his at times problematic relationship with their home: *“when he was a child he had to be aware and then all his defence mechanisms started listening in case a car came if his dad came home drunk and would start fighting with his mom and hit (...) he lay there as a little boy and then when he heard that car and there is something that triggers him now (...) that is when his autonomic nervous system starts producing (.) cortisol (...) but he doesn’t have to anymore and he has to tell the autonomic nervous system”* (LI 1012-1020) Mette makes the connection between her husband’s emotional and embodied experiences as a child and now as an adult but also the difference in physical and emotional

circumstances. The memories her husband attributes his childhood home do not apply to his present home or the present circumstances of his life. Mette's description of her husband's experience can serve as an example of how past traumatic embodied experiences affects relationship with and might influence level of place attachment. His sense of safety and living in a non-threatening environment are challenged and get triggered when cars drive by their house but because of the trauma it affects his way of relating to his home and environment (Askland & Bunn 2017). This could foster an insecure attachment as there is a continuous disruption in his emotional bond with his current home and the reciprocal bonds that tie him to their place and home.

It is very clear that it is not only place based traumas or insecurities that make up the quality or degree of place attachment but just as important are the interpersonal relationships. Their children express to Mette that they had a good childhood, her husband has enjoyable and calming activities to do in the area and they have been married and resided in the same place for many years. This is also the habitual practices where bodies are engaged and situated when they are with other people. Mette refers to her running club and connecting this to both the running community, the place in which they run and the physical and emotional positive sensations she gets from this. Just like her husband enjoys canoeing and fishing: *"yet it will in late march now it's light enough just getting up in the forest and then every year when we when the leaves start to bloom it's like sending cows on, no now we are not comparing you know but you go completely insane=it's so great to run in there and then there is the roof that just gets more and more densified the week we come there it's so amazing you know you are really privileged that you don't have to run on some track(.)"* (LI 479-492). The joy Mette reports when running in a forest as it with time, moving closer towards summer, becomes more and more densified. She also described her and her running club as cows being put in grass. It is not difficult to replay images of joyful animals being put out in nature after a long winter inside staples. Where Mette almost excuses this comparison, it speaks to the immediate sensation of freedom and pleasure that they now can finally run where they are meant to run and witness the seasons change. Mette incorporates both schemas of running on a tracks and positive emotions about her physical environment to her embodied experience of running.

## Ella and Verner

The body mediates the relationship between the individual and society and the meaning of one's body is realised through social relations. Embodied experiences realise the socio-cultural, temporal and environmental setting of both individual lives and social relations. Through our embodied practices certain parts of our identities and lifestyles can be maintained or changed as time passes and this can also be a turning point in realising that we age. The physical capabilities of our bodies will change and so will our experiences of being in and with our bodies, experiencing social relations and how we relate to place. Our interaction with environment shows how issues such as identity, embodiment, sense of belonging, communal ties can make the environment more or less enabling with our age. The elderly couple represents a group of elderly people that are still mobile to some degree. They can still drive a car and climb up the stairs to their home. They decided to move away from their long-term home due to aging and problems with walking. They were also farther away from their doctor and family, which made them, and their family feel less secure about their living situation.

The change of their bodies trigger reflections on their life and what they experienced: *"(E) I have so bad eyes, they are dry, I drip them (V) Ella has them dripped (E) It's terrible (V) But they saw a lot of different things over the years, what a movie that could come of that, bloody hell"* (LI 329-333) But it is not only through their own physical changes but also the development of their friend's physical state over the years. Grounded in this they reflect on their own age and the quality of their own aging bodies: *"(V) as long as the rest of us can just fall over, done over and we don't have to be tormented with something (...) (E) we don't remember too well (V) what? Ah (...) but with how old it's always something, Ella remembers a lot better than me she can remember a long long time back (E) do you know why one can that? It's because you're about to get dementia (V) bloody no it's not"* (LI 440-453). Here they both mirror their own health in that of their peers but also refer to a disease known to hit elderly people where time and memory would disappear to them. Where Ella refers to her ability to remember details with having dementia Verner disagrees. It seems that they have different concerns as to what health difficulty would trouble them the most. To Verner it is his physical health which isn't surprising. In their relationship Verner is the one who continues to be mobile and drive them to their previous home and surrounding area

whereas Ella has physical health issues and her mobility is challenged. Both of them seem to have perfect memory and wit and Ella especially seems to care for the details of their stories. This could suggest why she made the comment on dementia and that this illness might scare her more than physical immobility.

Presently living in their apartment and not having the same space or access to outdoors as previously I decided to do a follow-up phone call in the midst of corona. *“I: Hi, I just wanted to check up on you and hear how you’re doing in these corona times? And thank you for talking to me it was really useful V: Hello little girl(.) we are doing good luckily, we are close to Jørgen-Peter so he drives for us and does some grocery shopping and we have our car so we can go on drives without meeting anybody but now we miss Bøgebjerg and being out there yes we do, but we are doing fine”*. Often, for people who move into their nineties, most of their time spent are inside their homes or in specific rooms with set-ups that help them move around as freely and independently as possible and often with help from relatives. Similarly, as people age within a community they come to rely on support from neighbours and friends, where relationships are cultivated by the help that elderly needs and that others can provide. This mainly happens in communities where the social bonds have already been made, are strong and where relationships have been built on something beyond the need for help (Rowles & Bernard 2013). Ella and Verner manage to extend their missing mobility and freedom via car-rides and find an alternative way be at Bøgebjerg when they miss it. For a long time, they related to their home through their bodies and physically interacting with their environment. As Verner explained his knowledge of soil and farming *“it’s in the body”*. With aging their physical capabilities of moving around as before became impaired yet they managed to simulate physically being in their long-term environment by driving there. They were forced to move due to their age and in some ways, there could be talk of displacement as they long for their previous home and nature rich area and find ways to reconstruct the embodied experience of being in place by taking drives.

## Non-common themes

### Living in the countryside

Where temporality and embodiment serve as baselines for understanding all the themes that came up in the interview with Mette, the overall natural surroundings could also have

been an element that simply belongs in all aspects of how different pathways of place attachment are experienced by Mette and other participants. However, Mette often brings up “living in the countryside” as both a lifestyle but also as an element in being a good person. To Mette it is both the external characteristics of her home and local environment but also what in some way highly influences what inner characteristics and values herself and her children are relying on: *“You have both roots and feet when you grow up in the countryside”* (LI 444) and *“This is what you do in the countryside (figure 8) or you row a canoe”* (LI 257)



*Figure 8 Her children in a canoe*

Countryside place attachment becomes a synonym with certain behaviours and attitudes she also ascribes to church going. The countryside frames most of the embodied experiences that Mette talks of. Both countryside behaviour and church-going behaviour tells us something about how rituals and attachment to places or institutions are both affective, cognitive and behavioural in their nature. Mette ascribes specific behaviours to living in the countryside versus living in the city and what kind of values those behaviours bring with them. Here there is a distinction in what kind of bias Mette is connecting with certain environments: *“well I think that that is the good about living in the countryside is that you don’t have to like(...)you don’t have to perform anything you can just be in it and that is what’s important so maybe that’s why you have roots and feet because we have been there well we didn’t need four jobs to show that we also can afford PH lamps and sushi on Fridays and we have to do and go to all sorts of things and be seen at at least 4 receptions*

*and stuff like that we don't have that need I think when you live in the countryside"* (LI 716-724). Mette schema of countryside and values come to represent who she is, and she incorporates the cognitive connections to place into her own self-definition.

This is another example of values that Mette attributes to both church and countryside living; the materialistic and superficial needs are not existing in the same way when you live in the countryside and don't have to *be* something for other people. The physical features of the countryside are by Mette experienced as a valuable moral guide but also exists to be enjoyed, appreciated and to a certain extent consumed. She differs from much other research done on individuals' relationships and attachments to areas. They are also based on communities and family ties but here Mette and the rest of the locals are in a privileged position where the physical landscape is not in any direct harm of climate changes or could harm them in any way. She enjoys nature as she finds it at her disposal outside of her door. If she is in need of something more, she simply drives to either directions outside of her house. She can go to Bøgebjerg where she previously lived and had access to forest, fields and ocean, or she goes to Kerteminde to run in Lundsgård forest and find joy and appreciation for the nature there. In some way the nature is there to be consumed which other research has shown is a general way of looking at it to citizens who are not in danger of losing it. Mette shows that place attachment is both physical and social in its nature (Manzo & Devine-Wright 2014).

Similar to Ella and Verner, I wanted to follow up on her experience of living in a nature rich environment. A follow up text suggests that it is clearly the relations that matter to her and make up a big part of her place attachment. However, the opportunity to live "anywhere" is also with the reservation or condition that it is by own free choice. She writes that it will feel differently if she was forced to move away due to circumstances where she has no influence herself; such as climate change. Here she also provides the very point that she has the privilege to move freely and if she was in a climate sensitive area she would "*install technical assistive devices*" that might prevent "*water in the basement*". She also writes that a loss would be experienced as much more significant if her children's childhood landscape suddenly disappeared. Her attachment to place is primarily based on the community she takes part of and the well-being of her family and marriage, however this is all based on the opportunity and freedom that if she wants to, she can move. This is in sharp contrast to

participants in other studies where the climatic or socio-economic circumstances dictates a move out of necessity or prevents a move because they lack resources or like Ella and Verner due to lack of mobility. Living in the countryside to Mette and the other locals mean a very different thing than to the farmers in Ghana (Tscharkert & Tutu et al. 2011) where they are forced to move to the city as their livelihoods strictly rely on the condition of their natural environments. Mette can allow the enhancement of positive emotions and more cognitive freedom and through her place attachment she has the opportunity to self-regulate and find restoration in a secure and stable environment.

The analysis has presented three themes that were common to all participants. These themes will in the discussion be synthesised into three fundamental elements which support the making of place attachment. The themes do not speak of universal truths on the subject, but they give us an idea of which elements might be more crucial in the individual process of building and experiencing place attachment.

## Discussion

The aim of the thesis is to understand and depict the formation and elements of place attachment in participants living in non-climate sensitive areas in Denmark. Through photo-elicitation interviews the analysis showed that some of the major and recurring themes for participants were time passing, community and embodied experiences. These findings are likewise found in previous research done on the topic as presented in my theoretical introduction. The themes have been integrated into a model of place attachment that will be presented in this discussion. The model is inspired by current research on place attachment and the study findings of this thesis.

## Thesis Outcome

This thesis has shown that place frames our understanding of emotional and psychological health and is applicable beyond the context of indigenous and developing countries.

This discussion draws attention to some of the major themes that came from the research findings and inspired the construction of a model. The model is meant to highlight the interconnections between community, embodiment and temporality and the way they support people's construction of place attachment. Similar to other research in other

developed nation contexts (Gray 1999; Burton 2004) the participants value their places in a similar emotional and psychological connectedness despite different environmental, cultural and economic context. Steadman (2003) found that people are attached to their physical environments because they represent one's past through symbolic associations in the physical landscape. Attributes of the environment are associated with characteristic experiences and symbolic meanings which in turn underpin place attachment and satisfaction – also found in this study.

Low & Altman (1992) found that the affective quality of place attachment is accompanied by cognition and behaviors in reference to place. The analysis also shows that not only do the physical qualities of place contribute to strong place attachment, but equally important is the community. The meanings and experiences in place are often entangled with people and relationships. The relationships are not only human centered but can also be kinship connections with “animals, plants, landscapes, spiritual beings and other non-human entities” (Braun 2017). They are not just metaphorical or symbolic relationships as they are built upon obligation, rights and morality and it is “kinship that creates moral obligations and a social conscience that creates a community.” (Braun 2017). Places are archives and contexts for interpersonal, community and cultural relationships and it is via those connections that place attachment both to and via place occur (Low and Altman 1992). The place serves as a medium for a variety of life experiences and is central and inseparable from them. Also expressed by the participants place attachment contributes to the formation and preservation of persona, group and culture (Low and Altman 1992).

Several authors define place attachment in different terms (place dependence, place identity etc.), but the overall and main condition is the affective bond between individual and a specific place of which the main characteristic is the tendency of the individual to maintain closeness to such a place. This could be through memories, thoughts, behavior and community. A model of place attachment should not only be applicable to the residential concept but a variety of places within different proximities of the individual. This model is applicable to different locations, places with different proximity to the individual and different life-stages. The model suggests an emphasis on subjective individual experiences situated in a socio-cultural and historical context. With the increasing merge of cultures in different societies; from migration, refugees and open borders to psychological impact of



climate change, homelessness and displacement, place attachment is an integral component in identity construction and general psychological wellbeing of people.

### Other Models

Rubinstein & Parmelee (1992) suggests an integrative model of the structure and development of place attachment. Their focus however is the construction of place attachment in later life where geographic behavior, identity and interdependence is understood through two dimensions: collective (cultural) definition and personal (individual) definition. The premise of the model is that in late life place attachment is not only past and current bonds but also the relationship between past attachments and current day attachments. Other models have been constructed such as the *meaning-mediated model* (Steadman 2003) which introduces symbolic meanings as a mediating the relationship between sense of place and physical landscape. The focus here is that certain aspects of landscapes carry specific meanings which supports our sense of place. Steadman also suggests a cognitively mediated model where cognitions explain the connection between landscape characteristics and place satisfactions and/or attachment.

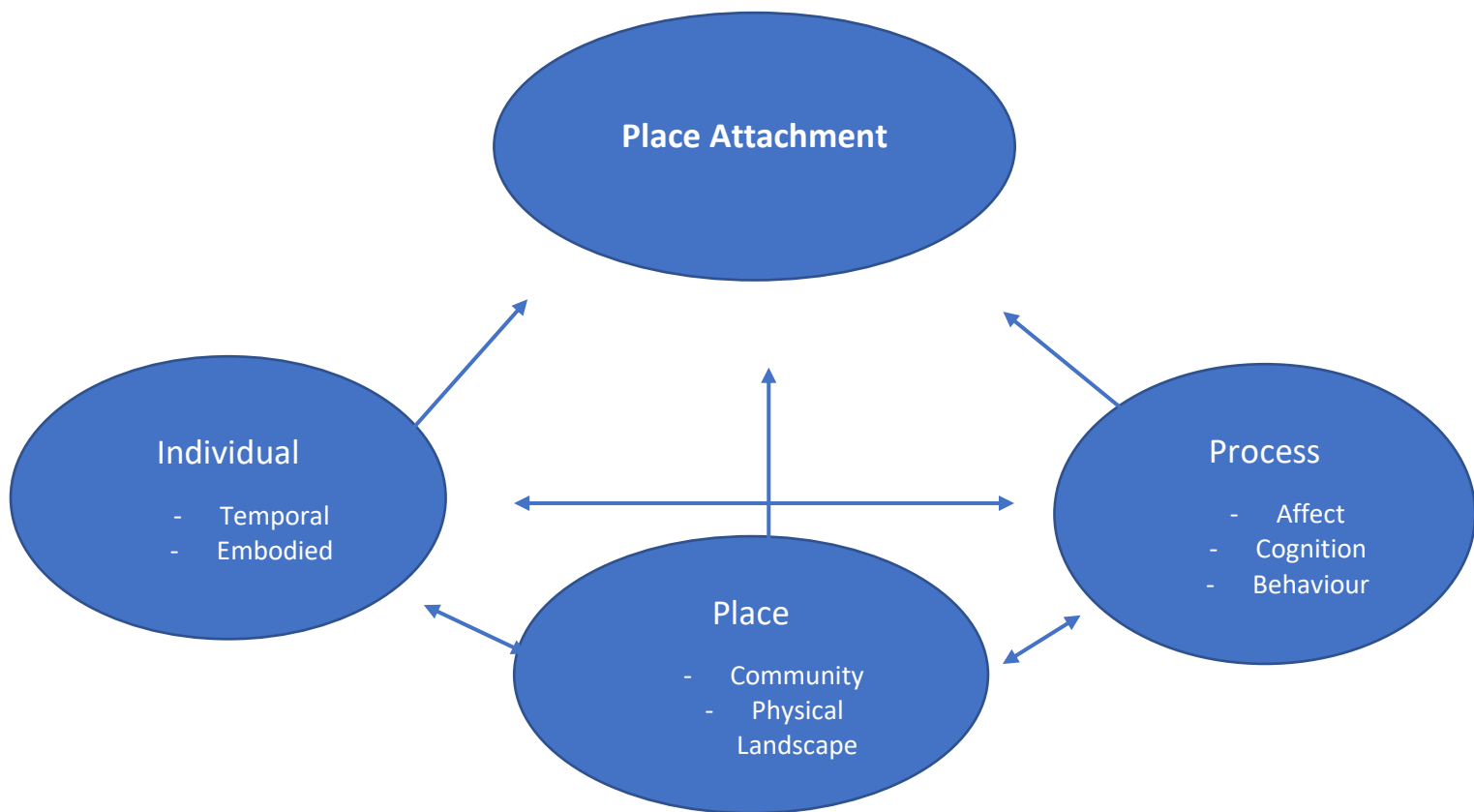
The interest of the model in this thesis is not to look at place attachment in any specific time of the life course, or focus solely on physical characteristics, cognition or symbolic meanings. Rather, there is room for all elements yet the degree to which they are used or applied in the construction and maintenance of place attachment will differ. The significance of these elements might change with the individual over time and grow or decrease in strength and relevance. However, individual, place and psychological processes are fundamental elements. What has not been conveyed is a spatial and cultural element such as home, neighborhood, city, region, country however this model is not intended to focus solely on one type of place but should be fluid and flexible in terms of spatial, temporal and cultural variations.

### Place Attachment Model

The development of a place attachment model was done with the aim of contributing to the place attachment framework. Based on the theory presented in the beginning of the thesis and the material in the analysis it became clear that certain pathways led to the development and preservation of place attachment. These pathways were identified as

temporality, community and embodiment. Identified in the analysis the embodied and temporal experiences are accompanied by psychological processes such as affect, cognition and behavior. These elements have been synthesized into three fundamental components; *Individual, place, and psychological processes*. The elements were arrived at to create a flexible model, where it doesn't have to be both embodied and temporal experiences, solely community based or only memory or values. These components were simply applicable to the participants in this study. The components are arranged so they are not independent of each other but overlap and contribute in different intensities. The model is useful as it will help researchers identify the most important elements in place attachment research. A literature review might benefit from applying this model as it becomes possible to categorize research or data collection depending on which elements were most important to participants.

As depicted in the model place attachment is a concept which integrates multiple elements of the individual's embodied and temporal experiences, a place with community and physical features, and psychological processes of affect, cognition and behavior. The research for this thesis depicts different elements from the model as the most important to participant such as community and was reported as a key feature in their sense of place attachment which was also found by Woldoff (2002). The physical characteristics of landscape and environments is also included as the participants reported affective, cognitive and behavioral responses to physical elements of their connection to place supported by Hidalgo and Hernandez (2001). Overall the model is inspired by statements from participants and previous models of place attachment with different foci on the main core of place attachment such as physical features (Stokols & Shumaker 1981), cultural orientation (Ujang & Zakariya 2015), or as a social phenomenon (Woldoff 2002). The main focus has also been psychological processes or economic motivation for other models. The model proposes a 3-stool approach to place attachment that consist of the individual level, the psychological processes connected to it and the place.



## Individual

The individual level is an umbrella of the personal connections between individuals and their environments through meaningful embodied and temporal experiences. The experiences transform otherwise “neutral” places into meaningful arenas but synchronously the place bestow specific meaning to experiences. The individual can both bring their own culture and religion to a place or they can share it with groups through which the individual can feel a sense of recognition and belonging. It is these experiences that become important to the individual that trigger a close relation to the place in which they happened. It can contribute to a coherent sense of self as reported by participants in the research *“I wasn’t on the team that found him he was hanging in the thicket but that is not something I take with me, I have the stomach for it”* (LI 437-439). It can also be attributed with big life events, such as birth of one’s children, marriage or important realizations; *“Well I think it was a good time, we thought that, we often talk about it when we drive by out there that there were just peace but that time was when we had maternity leave”* (LI 153-155). The individual can express themselves and mirror themselves in the physical environments through maintenance of one’s home or the use of the physical landscape surrounding them. The

individual dimensions display an embodied and temporal dimension which was introduced into the place attachment concept from the accounts of participant: *“they related to their home through their bodies and physically interacting with their environment. As Verner explained his knowledge of soil and farming “it’s in the body.”*

The individual element is of course not independent from both psychological processes and place. The three major dimensions presented are linked to each other as the individual experiences will be interlaced with affect, cognition and behavior and situated in place. The following paragraph will present the psychological processes of place attachment and give examples of how affect, cognition and behavior were present in the participants’ accounts of place attachment.

## Psychological processes

### Affect

The psychological processes of place attachment are by most authors highlighted as affect, cognition and behavior. Place attachment clearly has an affective element to it as both positive and negative emotional bonds have been reported by participants in this study. A place may evoke positive emotions due in part to positive experiences happening in place or it becomes the arena in which emotional experiences take place; *“you get a stomach ache over it because it’s that with we have a lot—we have been together for(.) I can’t even say it, well, \*37 years\*”* (LI 168-178). The positive feeling of belonging, feeling at home, connected and safe in place are reported as some of the main features in the construction of place attachment (Steadman 2003; Manzo & Devine-Wright 2014). In Manzo & Devine-Wright they attribute the affective dimension to the actual place attachment and cognitive dimension as place-identity. Here there is an affective bond to both natural and man-made environments and could also be tied to space-related social ties. The social ties cover neighbors or community with whom positive affective experiences are also formed and positive sense of place and bonding are confirmed. Affect can be expressed in many different ways by participants. Some may be very direct in their wording while others may express it indirectly. *“(E) Sometimes I do a lot (miss Bøgebjerg) I do (...) (V) Yes and no the way it’s looking at the moment I don’t miss it (...) It looks terrible out there the windows are broken and the paint is peeling at the gate and whew it looks like hell, it almost looks like a*

*deserted farm.*" (LI 67-80). This specific quote displays how not only affect but also cognitive schemas are present in place attachment. Schemas of their physical environment and how it is *not* supposed to look affect their feelings of longing towards their previous home. The cognitive piece of psychological processes will be situated in examples from the analysis below.

### *Cognition*

The cognitive aspects of place attachment such as memory of place, beliefs, memory and knowledge were reported by participants in this thesis as well and has also been found by Steadman (2003) and Seamon (2014) amongst others. Cognitive dimensions of place are attributed by Manzo & Devine-Wright (2014) as elements contributing to place identity here understood as the self-concepts or identity in relation place; *"we didn't need four jobs to show that we also can afford PH lamps and sushi on Fridays and we have to do and go to all sorts of things and be seen at at least 4 receptions and stuff like that we don't have that need I think when you live in the countryside"* (LI 716-724). The cognitions facilitate an attachment to place for instance via memory which manifests the connection and symbolic significance of place in relation to life events or identity coherence. Participants in the study looked back and referred to life changing events or realizations that were all related and situated in specific places; *"(V) Had I known today (.) what I would end up with (.) I didn't get to be so much within agriculture (.) which is what I wanted but had I known I would have stayed in the military, yes I had (...) in a way I'm (sad)."* (LI 463-472). This quote is both affective, cognitive and temporal as he expresses a realization that triggers sadness but also situated in irreversible time. The information we have of objects, people, areas are organized in parts of cognition such as schemas in which we include our knowledge and beliefs. We apply these different schemas to place attachment and might include these cognitions into our own concept of selves. To some individuals there might be constructed a parallel between the distinctive and significant features of a place and attach it to development self-concept (I am a "Holmer") or *"yes it doesn't look like a million and we don't have furniture for this and that and it doesn't matter because that is not why people come to visit you" so I can see past that, it doesn't matter.*" (LI 939-945). In people's connection to place it may come to represent who they are and through their interaction with environment they manifest and sustain beliefs and values. The affective and cognitive

processes are manifested in behavior which in place-attachment often exhibited through place-preserving actions. By preserving is meant both the physical preservation of environments but also preservation of attachment.

### *Behaviour*

Behavior covers the practice and actions-based element of place attachment. It has been linked with long-term residents who employ maintenance behavior both towards social ties and physical surroundings (Manzo & Devine-Wright 2014). This aspect was also part of the findings of this thesis along with distinguishing good and bad behavior and practices in specific areas; *“he also told her that, what is his name Tony to her at the fold, “but it’s not harming the sheep” well “I don’t bloody know that” he said (E) no the sheep doesn’t know that (V) “no the sheep doesn’t know that” that’s how he said it, so she better get out of there, he got mad at her then”* (LI 130-145). Residents in areas can both be seen as employing behavior from different social discursive positions and as practicing personal beliefs in their environment. It can be behavior that specifically and intentionally serve place attachment, such as collective celebrations, or unconscious everyday rituals which simply internalize place attachment. Place attachment behavior expresses a desire to remain in place or be close to significant places which could explain the need to restore lost homes or the practice of traveling out and returning which contributes to the construction of place meaning, significance and connection to self-concept. Place-behavior is also signified in recurring actions which maintain a positive affective connection to places; *“it’s so great to run in there and then there is the roof that just gets more and more densified the week we come there it’s so amazing you know you are really privileged that you don’t have to run on some track”* (LI 482-492). This quote shows how the embodied experience of running in a blooming forest is both an affective, cognitive and behavioral process. Cognitive as it also displays her schema for running in nature which is believed to be a privileged. The specific place which elicits the psychological processes are nature. The places can vary, and may all trigger different experiences to different individuals. The final section of the model is place which will be outlined below.

## Place

The dimensions of place attachment that seem most important must be the place itself. There have been different studies on the spatial scale of attachment strength (city, home, neighborhood) (Low & Altman 1992) and has also been divided into two categories: the social and physical attachment (Hidalgo & Hernandez 2001; Manzo & Devine-Wright 2014). Similar to this thesis' research the strongest dimension of place attachment was the social elements rather than the physical ones. However, the physical features of place were still important to the positive/negative emotions that were reported such as unhappiness with the state of a present and previous home. A physical home can also be a way of relating to self-concept either through its appearance or where it geographically resides; *"Morten has this with this house that he just, you know he hasn't done anything about it, he thinks the kitchen is old and disgusting and that it's just disgusting to be here and it's not nice, he has these expectations to himself and things."* (LI 787-792). The geographical placement can also influence the sense of connection to the physical landscape. Canadian Inuits (Cunsolo Willox et al. 2012) and farmers from Ghana (Askland & Bunn 2018) report a deep, innate connection and attachment to not only the communities built there but the physical state and development of their environments, also known as environmental identity (Clayton, 2003). The physical landscapes suffer under climate change in different ways, but the change of physical landscape happens rapidly and affects the place attachment of residents in similar negative ways. This is unlike the geographic location of participants for this thesis where the physical landscape is appreciated but social ties and community are the cores of place connection.

## Community

Being in a specific place will also mean engaging in the community that exists there. As previously mentioned, this can be both a person-based and other-than human community as found by Braun (2017). Through place relationships are facilitated and contribute to the community identity, social schemes of behavior, values, beliefs and specific place specific behaviors. The place cognitions are upheld by the community which share the place-based knowledge and verify it among each other which was also expressed by participants in this study; *"this is what we do on this street (...) we made this nice magazine called "Hindsholm*

*Magazine" (...) and that is also really a unifying thing."*

In these community-based activities, the participants carry out placemaking, often used when restoring a destroyed place (Manzo & Devine-Wright 2014) but in this case preserve the place-based community. The different spaces support different levels of social interaction, like a running club in a nature rich area or street celebrations and a place becomes a symbol and synonym for a regular social group with which one identifies. Both the physical features and community connection contributes to construction of place attachment even if this is recalled differently; *"(E) There wasn't much (community), yes I looked after the neighbour lady's children when she went out to pluck apples and then I watched her children and her husband was taking care of chickens"* (LI 42-42). It could be explained by the meaning-making model (Steadman 2003) which suggest that the physical climate comes to represent one's past. In this case it is suggested that physical environment is symbolically associated with one's community which is rooted in shared place.

### Place-Individual-Process and Their interplay

Place-Individual-Process dimensions are proposed as three defining elements of place attachment. The strength of each category may grow or decrease, intertwine with each other and some may be triggered differently in different places. Common to all of them is that they define and construct the quality of person-place connection but each to individual the process will be unique in its expression. The participants in this study have accounted for experiences where all three dimensions were present and actively contributing to the formation of place attachment. The model has been split in 3 parts to provide a clearer overview but also to show that the importance of each dimension will vary. Some experiences have been accounted for as more embodied and affectively experienced; *"it's so great to run in there and then there is the roof that just gets more and more densified the week we come there it's so amazing"* (LI 482-491) and some are both affective, cognitive and temporal; *"(V) Had I known today (.) what I would end up with (.) I didn't get to be so much within agriculture (.) which is what I wanted but had I known I would have stayed in the military, yes I had (...) in a way I'm (sad)."* (LI 463-472). Common for all participant experiences is that they are individual phenomenological experiences, intrinsically accompanied by psychological processes while situated in place. The essence of the model is



that in place attachment there is an interplay and mutually influential connection between place-individual-process and one experience of place attachment does not belong solely in one category or another. The model is attempted as a guideline or useful overview in the initial phases of doing research on the subject. It is meant to display the nuances of the place attachment concept and one must be open to integrate all three dimensions in the framework to discover gaps in the literature, expand on current models and to understand and categorize different attachment types.

### Contradiction and commonalities with other models

More recent models of place attachment expand the conceptualization of person-place bonds and introduce various aspects of psychological processes, spatial variables and applicability to different contexts. Morgan (2010) suggest a synchronous reinforcing relationship between person and environment and Vignoles et al. (2006) expanded identity process theory by incorporating sense of belonging as a motivating force in identity construction. From a quantitative approach Vignoles et al. (2010) suggests a model focused on psychological satisfaction from place with alternative routes leading to place identity; either through psychological needs satisfaction which leads to place identification or that social and symbolic links leads to place identification. Mihaylov & Perkins (2014) developed an ecological model with focus on the environmental domains of community place attachment where environmental disruption or change sparks different responses depending on place attachment style. A final example of a model will be Gustofson's (2001) model of self-other-environment concerned with self-others, others-environment, self-environment or all three.

The model in this thesis differs from other models which often have a focus on specific elements of place attachment or value some over others. This is not restricted to those mentioned above but can also be spatial, cultural, generational, economic elements amongst others. This model wishes to integrate multiple aspects of place attachment, not placing any above others, but rather letting each element play its role as to how place attachment is experienced by individuals. The model should allow flexibility in spatial and cultural variations, a flexible method use and the possibility for application over longer periods of time.

## Model Use

This section will come with suggestions as to how the model could be used in place attachment research.

## Organize and Theorize

The model help display different themes emerging in different geographic locations and proximities and foster different attachment styles and types of environmental behavior in residents. As mentioned in the theoretical introduction certain groups are dependent on their environments in different ways than the participants in this study. It suggests that individuals whose livelihoods, homes and community are intrinsically linked to the wellbeing of the environment have different place-preserving or pro-environmental behavior. To participants in this research the main place-preserving behavior was guided toward community, engaging and strengthening community identity and social ties. The model wants to integrate different individual experiences to help theorizing and identifying gaps in research. It could be relevant to look at different individual circumstances such as refugees', migrants', elderly, disabled and homeless people's place attachment experiences. Global conditions such as climate change or the coronavirus pandemic could also be expected to affect experiences of place attachment as people are forced to remain isolated in the same place. The model enables different relevance to each dimension as they present themselves as more cognitive or social in nature, embodied or affective or a multiplicity of several dimensions with different intensities.

## Methodology

The place attachment model will invite different methodological meaning-based approaches such as semi-structured interviews and photo-elicitation. Working from the model it is possible to prepare interview guides with questions fitting the three different dimensions. The model invites the researcher to introduce methods that capture the spatial and temporal dimensions of place attachment such as visual methods and still look at psychological processes and individual experiences through interviews. The model's aim is to be multidimensional, making it possible to theorize and categorize different aspects as they become highlighted in different data material. Different themes that will appear as

more significant can also depend on the choice of method. Photo-elicitation or participant produced material might trigger more embodied or temporal experiences or elicit memories with a more communal baseline. Different psychological processes can be present in the production of data material and again in an interview and the model is meant to enable and exhibit those differences.

## Generalize

This model is an attempt to conceptualize place attachment as a multidimensional concept both consisting of individual, place and psychological processes. Place attachment is not an entity, a naturally occurring phenomenon or a bi product of psychological processes. The model is meant to establish a relationship between the unique experience and construction of place attachment and also contribute to establishing general knowledge about the dimensions of place attachment. To achieve this place cannot be put aside as a variable in the meaning-making process but as context of experiences and generalized as a theoretical construct in the person-place setting. To generalize one must do an abstraction from phenomenology while taking on the perspective of an observer. This model suggests that place should be one of the main perspectives and that place is a fundamental theoretical concept in psychology. This is not to say that it will be possible to generalize experiences in the same location or all place experiences of the same individual. Rather it is to exhibit properties of place attachment which frequently occurs, might be differently experienced, but are identified as significant pathways in the construction of attachment.

## Limitations

The limitations of this thesis and development of a place attachment model lie in the restricted number of participants. 3 participants experiences limit to some degree the possibility of speaking in generalizations, despite it being from these generalizations a model was made. Where it might seem difficult to argue for objectivity it is important to remember the phenomenological standpoint from which the study was made. In the phenomenological interview knowledge is not seen as existing in a vacuum free of subjectivity (Kvale & Brinkmann 2015). The intent was not to remove subjectivity but through photo-elicitation

interviews find commonalities across two different generations residing in the same area. These commonalities are what inspired the making of a model.

Another limitation is the lack of homogeneity in participants. Where the research question did focus on long-term residents in countryside context the model's aim is to be applicable in various contexts and with various individuals. However, this study did not include other types of residencies, residents with different demographic background and in another type of area such as a city. A follow up study introducing different residency lengths, cultural variations in participants, different types of communities and different temporal realities would hugely benefit a theory on place attachment.

Finally, a more elaborate use of visual methodology would greatly benefit this study. A method considered for this thesis was participant drawn mental maps of the residential area. Mental maps are built on visual methodology, more specifically related to image-based methods. Where photographs are normally used, as they are also in this thesis with photo-elicitation, mental maps are used as another participant produced visual tool. Mental maps are considered mental representations of knowledge related to spatial and geographical aspects. The mental mapping approach is originally used by Kevin Lynch (1960) looking at how individuals perceive their cities. In his research Lynch (1960) includes meaning, subjective experience, and memory as fundamental elements in the person-city relation. Mental mapping of the area would show how the space is individually experienced, the mental representation the participants has of the area and has also been used by Tscharkert & Tutu (2011) where they used participatory mapping to point out spots in the landscape that had changed particularly over the course of the last 20-30 years. On a piece of paper Ghanaian farmers drew their village and home from which they then pin-pointed the markers that had undergone change. Mental mapping would also visualize the boundaries we create as humans between home and non-home (Valsiner 2017). Mental mapping would suggest how the borders at times are physical and at times symbolic and mentally made up by specific designs of the landscape. In combination with photo-elicitation and a semi-structured interview a theory and model of place attachment capture individual experience, space, psychological processes and the interplay between.

## Conclusion

The joint findings of this thesis will be stated below. First the research questions will be presented followed by the thesis' discoveries.

*How is place attachment formed in long-term countryside-based residents?*

This thesis has from photo-elicitation interviews with long-term residents in the area of Hindsholm found and extracted three common themes; community, temporality and embodiment. Place attachment is formed through meaningful experiences which contribute to the symbolic and meaningful relation between person and place. The thesis has through photographs and interviews showed that it is not a static condition but can develop over time as a person's spatially embedded lived experiences influence the dynamic of person-place bonds.

Place attachment is an individually experienced process which consists of embodied and temporal interactions with environment and affective, cognitive and behavioral processes. To the participants of this study the most defining pathway was the place-based community which has been formed over long periods of time and continual investment. Through community the participants engaged in place maintaining behavior and the experience of person-place connections. This had them both deeply imbedded and invested in the conditions of their immediate environment and social ties but also aided them in the creating coherent sense of self and display their values and beliefs. This was both related to their current environments but also those they were previously connected to as they with time had become arenas of important affective memories and contributed to the participants' schemas of place attachment.

The thesis has shown that place over time becomes an intrinsic part of human identity and psychological wellbeing. It is through place that people come to situate meaningful life events or bigger realizations which trigger both an affective and cognitive connection to significant places. The overall and main aspect is the affective bond between person and place and the main characteristic is the tendency of the individual to maintain closeness to such a place. This could be through memories, thoughts, behavior and community. The participants accounted for all components in varying ways and they ascribe meaning and

create connection to places through these processes, this was done e.g. through behavior such as running in the forest or going on drives to a previous home.

As pre-existing literature had similar discoveries it was decided that a model should be developed in order to create a better overview of pathways which could apply to the participants of this study but could also be identified in other types of place attachment. Finally, it is concluded in the thesis that three fundamental pathways of place attachment have been outlined; individual, place and psychological process and that these pathways are fundamental elements in a multidimensional concept. The pathways are not independent of one another, but each contribute to the construction, maintenance and development of attachment between place and individual. The model of place attachment is meant to be applicable to the residential concept but also a variety of places within different proximities of the individual. The wish is to contribute to the further exploration of place attachment as subjectively experienced situated in socio-historical contexts. Finally, the thesis has identified the need for further exploration on the subject through different visual research methods, different demographic and a more diverse geography.

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