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MUNDANE MOBILITIES IN MUNDANE PLACES?

The role of proximity tourism in place attachment in the rural north

University of Lapland

Master's Thesis

Tourism Research / Northern Tourism

2022

University of Lapland, Faculty of Social Sciences
Title: Mundane mobilities in mundane places? The role of proximity tourism in place attachment in the rural north
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Degree programme / field of study: Tourism research, Northern Tourism
The type of the work: Master's Thesis
Number of pages: 68 + 2 appendices
Year: 2022

Abstract

Contemporary times are defined by layers of interconnected local and global mobilities and constant flow of people, ideas, things and commodities. Consequently, life consists of different kind of mobile practises that are blurring the boundaries between the ordinary everyday life and more exotic "other". In doing so, mobilities change the ways in which we create relationships with different places. Thus, the mobility turn has also direct impacts to tourism and distinct tourist spaces and calls for alternative ways of negotiating tourism mobilities and practices. Proximity tourism has become an increasing trend in tourism. As a low-carbon mode of travel it has been seen as an alternative for international mass tourism, on the one hand, and a way to tackle some of the economic challenges of the industry, such as seasonality, on the other. At the same time, it presents a new understanding of tourism mobilities as an interplay with the landscape that is simultaneously ordinary and extraordinary. However, studies on the meanings of proximity tourism in local communities are still relatively scarce.

This thesis aims to explore how proximity tourism contributes to place attachment of local people in the rural north. In doing so, it also seeks to increase the understanding of proximity tourism as a phenomenon and the meanings allocated to proximity tourism experiences. The theoretical framework of the study is based on the perceptions of place in the new mobilities paradigm (Sheller & Urry, 2006). The study was conducted by interviewing local people in Pello, Finnish Lapland. The data consists of six interviews with nine interviewees of different ages and resident times in Pello. The data was analysed using qualitative content analysis.

The findings of the study demonstrate that proximity tourism contributes significantly to the place attachment of the interviewees by offering meaningful experiences and interactions with the landscape. The participants make sense of their proximity tourism experiences through moments of recovery in the everyday, aesthetic enjoyment of the ordinary and through stories of the proximate surroundings. The experiences gained through proximity tourism allow them to develop the more customary functional bonds with the ordinary and mundane world into emotional bonds enhancing also the shift in values of the home place. This way they also renegotiate their relationship with home by allocating new meanings to the everyday surroundings, providing stronger and more varied attachment to these places. The study also reveals that the significance of proximity tourism experiences is similar to any other travels for more distant destinations. Thus, it implies that the meaning of physical distance in tourism experiences has become less significant than earlier assumed and encourages to further explore the potential of near home experiences in the development of more sustainable tourism futures.

Key words: proximity tourism, place attachment, mobilities, new mobilities paradigm, rural north, content analysis

TABLE OF CONTENTS

List of Figures

List of Tables

1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of the study

"You must go on a long journey before you can really find out
how wonderful home is."
Tove Jansson, Comet in Moominland

I spent my childhood in rural north in the village of Pello, Finnish Lapland. When I was a child we used to make different kind of trips nearby. Forests not too far away became familiar "destinations" as well as the summer cottages of friends and relatives around Lapland. Shopping trips were made to nearby towns and during longer holidays we sometimes travelled further within Finland or to the neighbouring countries. As soon as I was able to travel on my own, destinations started to become further and further away. I was ready to explore what the world had to offer. "So many places, so little time", I thought.

It wasn't too long before I found myself living in another country, in a big city. During those years in Riga, Latvia, I explored every inch of my new home. There was not a neighbourhood in the city or a corner of the country that I didn't visit. Suddenly, travelling far was not that important because I rather wanted to learn more about my new home and explore the more proximate surroundings around it. The more I explored, the more settled I became. At that time, I also found myself in a new position; not completely a local, but definitely not a tourist, although just as curious and eager to discover new things in my new everyday life.

After years of being away from Lapland, I returned home and realised that something had changed my relationship with it. The place was not the same, the people were not the same, I was not the same. I started to re-establish my relationship with childhood forests, rivers, cottages and nearby villages finding something new all the time. These places were just as important as before but accompanied with a new layer of experiences from being away. This provoked my curiosity for the meaning of places and the relationships we have with them. If travelling far clearly changes my relationship with home place, then why did I never stop to reflect on the impacts of near-home experiences the same way? For me as for so many others, being away had opened my eyes to see the familiar surroundings in a new light with

a newly found curiosity. Over the years I realised that no matter how many times I visit the same place, it's never really the same.

The quote in the beginning of the chapter is from the famous Finnish children's book by Tove Jansson and captures the starting point of this thesis in a vivid way. Travelling afar may change our relationship with home as we bring the experiences of new places, new people and new ideas back with us. Yet, at the same time they become entangled with the layers of local practices and mobilities we are accustomed to. Places are thus, as described by Massey (1994, p. 121), in constant movement and expand beyond their physical borders through different kind of networks. Massey (2005) refers to this multilayered concept of place as "throwntogetherness", a coming together of trajectories, emphasizing the relational qualities and elusiveness of places (pp. 140-141).

Until recently tourism has been mainly seen as a driver for economic growth. It's value in the regional development has been recognized mostly in terms of investments, employment and more diverse livelihoods in the regions. Tourism development is often presented as a solution to enhance economic activities, as a way forward (e.g. Lundmark & Åberg, 2019; Maher et al., 2014), especially in northern peripheral and rural areas. On the other hand, tourism development in these areas is often based on nature-based experiences, which can be challenging to commercialise especially in places lacking services and businesses (Carson & Koster, 2019, p. 250). As such, the development of economically beneficial tourism activities becomes difficult.

During the past decade proximity tourism or staycation as a phenomenon has become an increasing trend in tourism. The emergence of the trend can be clearly connected with various contemporary global phenomena. Environmental and economic crises, natural disasters as well as other surprising events shaking the world, e.g. terrorist attacks and global pandemics, have affected our ways of being, seeing and feeling the world. This thesis, for example, started to take shape during a very exceptional time on a global level. In spring 2020 covid-19 pandemic had closed down many societies and our regular everyday practices were restricted in various ways. Tourism is considered to be one of the most severely hit industries by the coronavirus outbreak. The immediate impacts of restrictions to travel have reflected in demand, jobs and businesses as well as in travel behaviour and values as people become more aware and cautious about how, why and where to travel. The exceptional time

has also returned our attention closer to home. Furthermore, current public discussion on sustainable development and climate change have also raised increasing critical voices about the impacts of mass tourism, which is considered as one of the major contributors to environmental change (e.g. Tervo-Kankare et al., 2018, p. 2). Increasing awareness of the implications of air travel reflects in the volume of environmentally conscious travellers and has resulted in social movements, such as flight shame, trying to restrict carbon-intensive forms of consumption and travelling (The Guardian, 2020). All this leads to conclude that the way we approach tourism needs to change.

At the time of challenges facing international mass tourism, proximity tourism has become all the more significant alternative for many and urges the tourism industry to look for alternative ways of practicing tourism. The idea of sustainability has been welcomed in tourism development already some time ago, but as Saarinen (2014, p. 10) underlines rather than emphasising the negative impacts of tourism, there is a need to see the potential of tourism and its positive effects to sustainable development. This includes finding alternative ways of understanding tourism. What kind of value — other than economic — could proximity tourism have for the regeneration of the peripheral rural areas in the north, such as Pello?

1.2 Previous research on proximity tourism[1]

Proximity tourism provides a context for the research at hand. Near-home travels have always been part of our everyday lives, but it is only recently that proximity tourism has been gaining academic interest within the tourism and hospitality literature. Although proximity tourism can be connected with some well-established strands of research, such as second home tourism or cross-border tourism, research focusing particularly on proximity tourism is still relatively few and scattered under variety of conceptualisations reflecting the lack of established use of terminology. This illustrates also the challenge of defining what is actually considered proximate.

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[1] Subchapter 1.2 draws upon the previously published article, where the author of the thesis has been one of the co-authors. See Salmela, T., Nevala, H., Nousiainen, M., & Rantala, O. (2021). Proximity tourism: A thematic literature review. Matkailututkimus, 17(1), 46–63. https://doi.org/10.33351/mt.107997

Generally, proximity tourism has been referred to as a particular form of tourism that emphasises local destinations, short distances and lower-carbon modes of transportation (Jeuring & Diaz-Soria, 2017). As such the emergence of proximity tourism trend has been closely connected with the increasing awareness of climate change and its impacts to our surrounding nature. Most recently proximity tourism has gained special attention during the covid-19 pandemic, which reflected heavily on international tourism mobilities. However, proximity tourism is not only about geographical distance, but it is also a form of tourism that is built upon the idea of seeing proximate, everyday surroundings from a new perspective (Rantala et al., 2020). According to our thematic literature review on proximity tourism (Salmela et al., 2021), the existing literature appears to challenge the prevailing traditional dichotomies often found in tourism, such as familiar — unfamiliar, near — far, mundane — exotic, host — guest, local — tourist (see also Jeuring & Diaz-Soria 2017, p. 6). In doing so, it invites us to approach proximity tourism as a phenomenon that provides new perspectives for discussing, for example, questions of otherness and aesthetics in tourism as well as for redefining mobilities, services and marketing in tourism.

Based on our review (Salmela et al., 2021) it can be said that research on proximity tourism disrupts the traditional approach to tourism mobilities, which is usually defined by physical distance or mobilities outside our usual surroundings. In doing so, it impacts our perception of distance and examines tourism mobilities as part of the mundane environments and practices blurring the boundaries between the everyday and distinct tourism sites. In their study Chen and Chen (2017), for example, demonstrate how meanings of tourist sites are constantly renegotiated and communicated in the daily lives of the visitors. In the same way, tourism practices are increasingly performed in the everyday environments as a result of accelerated global mobility (Griffin, 2017; Richards, 2016). Thus, contemporary tourism mobilities are diminishing the perception of distinct tourist sites often highlighted in tourism marketing narratives. Furthermore, the literature on proximity tourism introduces alternative approaches for understanding distance. The studies of Jeuring and Haartsen (2017) as well as Larsen and Guiver (2013) indicate that people tend to perceive distance as a relative dimension emphasising experience over physical distance. Differences in landscapes or culture as well as, for example, pace or inconvenience of travel may evoke similar feelings of escapism and contrast as travels to more distant places (Canavan, 2013; de Bloom et al., 2017; Germann Molz, 2009).

The review (Salmela et al., 2021) also points out that proximity tourism can be approached from the perspective of touristic otherness in the everyday surroundings. Tourism sites become entangled with the mundane life as holiday practices and tourist strategies are applied at home or vice versa. This approach invites us to re-evaluate the role of residents in touristic production and consumption (Jeuring, 2018; Räikkönen et al., 2018) as well as the ways in which home environments may turn into tourism sites (Diaz-Soria, 2017; Hoogendorn & Hammet, 2020) or, alternatively, tourist places into a "home away from home" (Chen & Chen, 2017, p. 16). In doing so, we need to redefine who can be considered a tourist and what is "the usual environment" outside of which tourism in a traditional sense takes place, especially when the normal environment is also constantly changing (Richards, 2016, p. 9). Thus, in addition to escapes from one's usual environment, otherness can also stem from the experience of being the other or positioning oneself as an observer of the other in the proximate. This process of othering is enhanced by curiosity and encounters with something new or surprising that can also be found in the everyday surroundings.

According to the literature review (Salmela et al., 2021), experiences of otherness and the ways people come to perceive their familiar and proximate environments as attractive (Jeuring & Haartsen, 2017) are also related to everyday aesthetics. Applying Tuan's (1990) theory, Diaz-Soria (2017) notes that engagement with everyday surroundings through touristic practices, with a tourist's gaze, can also bring increased awareness to the aesthetic elements around us. Thus, taking pictures, enjoying culinary experiences and tuning into landscapes or details are strategies that provide us with opportunities to enhance aesthetic experiences of both mundane tasks and ordinary environments (Richards, 2016; Kaaristo & Rhoden, 2017). Furthermore, as suggested by Besson (2017, p. 46) proximity tourism appears to enhance aesthetic sensitivity while engaging with activities, objects or environment that are perceived as aesthetic. This aesthetic sensitivity may also impact tourism practices and mobilities by emphasising slower modes of travel that are often perceived as aesthetic (Germann Molz, 2009, p. 280). In doing so, it also appeals to concerns of environmental sustainability and allows us to sensitise toward the ordinary more-than-human world around us (Hollenhorst et al., 2014; Rantala et al., 2020).

The potential of proximity tourism is slowly starting to reflect also in the literature discussing tourism services and marketing strategies (Salmela et al., 2019). In many areas a majority of visitors come from the region generating a more long-term income than tourists from abroad

(see e.g. Jeuring, 2016), yet most of the marketing efforts are targeted for the international tourists. Understanding the potential of regional tourists could provide opportunities to solve some of the challenging issues in the field of tourism, e.g. seasonality and rediscovery of local heritage (Diaz-Soria & Llurdés-Coit, 2013). Thus, studies discussing the motives and behaviour of local tourists provide valuable information also for the development of tourism services and marketing strategies and emphasise the need for more diverse experiences in destinations (Bertacchini et al., 2021).

As mentioned previously, proximity tourism as a phenomenon lacks of established use of terminology. Nevertheless, conceptualisation of the phenomenon at hand is not the focus of this study either. Rather, the study seeks to describe proximity tourism through individual experiences and meanings ascribed to these experiences for increased understanding of the phenomenon.

1.3 Purpose of the study

The current era of mobility brings the world closer wherever we are as new innovations both in transport and communication technologies reduce the meaning of physical distance. However, at the same time many of our close connections are dispersed in distant places (Larsen & Urry, 2008, p. 89) and thus, despite the advances in technology, may also increase the feeling of distance. Both sides of the coin may have implications for our experiences of places, which reflects, for example, in arguments claiming that mobilities decrease the meanings we attribute to places and the bonds we create with them (see e.g. Gustafson, 2014). The constant movement of people, goods, commodities and information also challenges the traditional characteristics of tourism by blurring the boundaries between the exotic and the mundane or home and away (Mavrič & Urry, 2009, p. 655). As such, it also gives us an opportunity to pause and evaluate the ways we address tourism practices in contemporary times.

While proximity tourism is often approached as an alternative for international mass tourism in order to respond to the problems of global environmental crisis or to tackle the challenges of, for example, seasonality, the starting point of this study emphasises the individual experiences of locals in proximity tourism. I will discuss the topic within the framework of

the new mobilities paradigm, especially with regard to place attachment, and focus on the ways in which proximity tourism as a form of tourism mobility influences the locals' perception of home place. In doing so, the purpose of the study is to also contribute to the emerging discussion on deconstructing and redefining tourism (see e.g. Cave & Dredge, 2020; Hollenhurst et al., 2014; Rantala et al., 2020). It seeks to examine the value of tourism beyond the production and consumption of goods and services by disrupting the prevailing and relatively narrow narratives that support the dichotomy between tourism destinations and the mundane world (see also Jeuring & Diaz-Soria, 2017, pp. 4-5). Furthermore, the thesis aims to contribute to the growing strand of research on proximity tourism by increasing the understanding of proximity tourism as a contemporary phenomenon especially in the less studied context of rural north typically defined by more limited availability of services. The study examines proximity tourism by interviewing locals and analysing the meanings they allocate to their experiences.

The main research question in the thesis is as follows: *How does place attachment appear in the context of proximity tourism in a rural setting?*

The main research question is elaborated with the help of both theoretical and empirical explorations through the following sub-questions: *1) How is place attachment perceived in the era of mobility 2) What is proximity tourism in the rural village context of Finnish Lapland 3) What kind of meanings do locals attribute to their proximity tourism experiences? and 4) How does proximity tourism contribute to locals' perceptions of home place?*

As the main focus of the study is on describing individual experiences and meanings attributed to them, the research questions are approached with the qualitative approach using qualitative content analysis as a method. Consequently, the purpose of the study is not to produce generalisable research findings but to provide an interpretative description of the phenomenon from the point of view of research participants in the specific research context (Slevitch, 2011, pp. 76-77). The data of the study consists of six semi-structured interviews with nine interviewees conducted during spring 2021.

1.4 Pello as an empirical research context

The empirical context of the study is the place where I have lived for the first 20 years of my life. Pello is a small municipality that is located just above the Arctic Circle in western part of Finnish Lapland in the heart of Tornio River Valley region on the Swedish border (Figure 1). The population of Pello is 3,440 (House of Lapland, 2021) and spread over several smaller villages within the municipality area. As in many other peripheral rural areas, the population has been significantly decreasing and ageing over the past decades. Logistically, Pello is located at the crossroads in the Torne River Valley and is easily accessible by major roads and railway. It is also a traditional waypoint on the way to the ski resorts further north for many people travelling from the southern parts of Finland.

Figure 1. Location of Pello on the map. Source: Travel Pello website.

Unlike its neighbouring municipalities Kolari, Rovaniemi and Ylitornio, Pello does not have a distinct tourist attraction that would distinguish itself from its close neighbours. Pello cannot build on attractions such as fells, major ski resorts and national parks of Fell Lapland, lively cultural life and urban Arctic attractions of Rovaniemi or the renowned cultural landscape of Aavasaksa in Ylitornio. In that sense it could be described as "a place in-between"; between larger population centres and between the more exotic peripheral places (Lundmark & Åberg, 2019, p. 237). Such places are rarely in the centre of attention to politics, researchers, media or tourism marketers (Koster, 2019, p. 2). However, like in many

other rural places in the north, tourism development is seen as a possibility to enhance economic opportunities in the area as well as attract both visitors and new residents to Pello. Tourism development relies on the possibilities of the surrounding nature and nature-based activities as well as the distinct cultural heritage of the cross-border region. Currently, Pello promotes itself as an official Fishing Capital of Finland and welcomes many enthusiasts to experience the traditional salmon fishing in Tornio River every summer. The municipality is also engaged with a new initiative for establishing a natural park together with the neighbouring Ylitornio municipality.

My choice of empirical research context could be described as two-fold. On the one hand, it stems from my personal relationship with the place that I hope will help me in understanding the research context better and in relating to the perceptions, stories and places of the interviewees. At the same time, I am aware of the challenges that my personal relationship with the place may bring through my own experiences and assumptions stemming from them. Thus, it requires careful considerations on my interpretations throughout the process. On the other hand, I wanted to approach the question of proximity tourism from the perspective of locals' in rural areas outside major tourist centres in Lapland in order to gain insights of proximity tourism as a phenomenon in a less studied context. Furthermore, it provides an interesting setting to the study of place and place attachment in a small, peripheral region typically defined by out-migration and immobilities (see e.g. Milbourne & Kitchen, 2014).

1.5 Structure of the study

After presenting the empirical phenomenon and the research setting in the introduction, the thesis builds on four main chapters introducing the theoretical framework of the study, methodology of the study, analysis of and discussion on the data as well as conclusions.

The second chapter on theoretical framework elaborates the key concepts and approaches used in the study. First, I will discuss the concept and ontology of place from the perspective of relationality and mobilities of different types; movement of people, ideas and things as well as the implications they have to our understanding of place. I will then continue

discussing place attachment in the context of the new mobilities paradigm and finally reflect on the impacts of this mobility turn to tourism mobilities.

The third chapter introduces the methodology and data of the study. I will start by reflecting on my ontological and epistemological standpoints and continue with elaborating on semi-structured interviews as my main data collection method. I will then continue with content analysis on my empirical data by introducing the themes drawn from it and finally discuss the ethical considerations of the study.

Chapter 4 introduces the analysis and findings of my data analysis process. I will first discuss each theme in their respective subchapters and finally draw together a discussion on those findings. In the final chapter I will conclude my thesis reflecting on my research questions and limitations of the study. I will summarise the findings as well as make suggestions for further studies. Implications of the study for practice as well as evaluation of its contribution to the academic discussion will also be presented in the conclusions.

2 THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

2.1 Defining place through mobilities

The concept of place as well as people's understanding of and relationships with places have been the focus of research for decades. Originating from geography, which Cresswell (2014, p.1) calls essentially the study of places, the concept has been applied across various disciplinary fields interested in people-place relationships. Tourism, for example, has always been about producing places, i.e., destinations, that can offer something exotic, out of the ordinary and different from the everyday environments and practices.

The studies of the two geographers, Relph (1976) and Tuan (1977), about the relationship between space and place are often considered as cornerstones of place-related research. In their studies based on phenomenological foundations both Relph and Tuan define place as a construct that emphasises the importance of experiences and meanings in comparison with the more abstract considerations of space. Their ideas focus on lived experiences that are produced by rootedness, the feeling of belonging, familiarity and authenticity as drivers for the meaningful experience of place. In that framework mobility is considered as an opposing factor increasing the feelings of placelessness (Relph, 1976) and contributing to the weakened sense of place (Tuan, 1977). Thus, mobility according to Relph and Tuan would challenge commitment and attachment, which they consider as key elements in production of place meanings. As such their ideas suggest a static understanding of place (see e.g. Mavrič & Urry, 2009, p. 647).

Although it has been argued that mobility diminishes the significance of places in our lives, we can also approach it from the opposite angle — it is exactly the interdependence and unique connections of places created through multiple mobilities that make them authentic and meaningful. Seamon (1979) approaches the idea of mobility in the production of place meanings through movements and encounters within a place. He discusses the role of everyday movements, routes, routines and practices as well as the ways in which we observe and notice our everyday surroundings as essential factors in experiencing place. According to Seamon (1979, pp. 54-57), the production of place or a sense of place develops as a combination of integrated gestures and movement with habitual bodily behaviours in a specific time-space routine. He refers to these regularly intersecting routines of individuals

in space and time as place ballet (Seamon, 1979). Similar ideas about the significance of everyday mobilities have been also presented by Lefebvre (1991) who names spatial practices, i.e., patterns and places of social activity in everyday surroundings and movements, as one element of social production of space.

While Seamon approaches the relations of place and mobility from within a place, Massey (1991) discusses the more global dimensions of place. We live in a mobile world where also places are in constant motion. People, things, ideas and images move either physically or virtually with the help of modern technology creating linkages and networks between places. Rather than seeing places as static and bounded local entities Massey (e.g. 1991; 2005) emphasises the role of time-space compression and global connectedness in the production of place. According to Massey (1991) places are constructed in spaces through movements, interactions and social relationships reflecting different realities and identities of a place. As such places are not merely distinct and rooted in everyday practices but rather open entities produced by the diversity of local and global networks they belong to (Massey et al., 2008, p. 15). Being part of these networks presupposes a constant movement both within and between places that keeps them in a dynamic process of shaping. The complexity of these movements and networks increases as we establish networks, routines and everyday practices in several places simultaneously moving regularly within and between places for work, services, hobbies and leisure or even for multiple places of dwelling (Hannam et al., 2006). The mobilities and routines we perform in different places will inevitably influence our relationship with them as well as enhance the linkages between them. Furthermore, we can be present and connected to places outside our given physical location with the help of technology, especially social media, allowing a different approach to proximity and connectivity (Hannam et al., 2006, p. 2).

The dynamic and relational notion of place coincides with the new mobilities paradigm (or the mobility turn) that emerged within social sciences during 2000s (Sheller & Urry, 2006). According to Sheller and Urry (2006, p. 208), the new mobilities paradigm is regarded as a critique for the previously prevailing contradictory approaches of sedentarism and nomadism presenting stability, meaning and place as normal and opposed to distance, change and placelessness — the abnormal. The new mobility paradigm started to acknowledge the importance of the systematic movement of people, things and ideas for various purposes in people's lives. Thus, as noted by Sheller and Urry (2006, pp. 212-213)

the mobility turn offers new insights about the interdependence of multiple mobilities as well as their role and implications in organising and structuring social life. It also presents places themselves as travelling and in so doing, argues against "the ontology of distinct places" (Sheller & Urry, 2006, p. 214).

Although the new mobilities paradigm encompasses both large-scale mobility as well as more local processes of everyday life (Hannam et al., 2006, p. 1), the focus still seems to be very much from the perspective of globalisation. As stated by Milbourne and Kitchen (2014, p. 326) the research has focused with "the urban constructed as the archetypal space of hyper-mobility", whereas rural places are often seen as more stable places of fixity and have received much less attention. However, mobility in rural places is more than just out-migration so often referred to. Rural places are also defined by arrivals of new residents, returns of ex-residents, visits of second-home owners as well as seasonal tourists to and through them. In addition, mobile everyday practices of local residents form a key component of contemporary rural mobilities. When work, retail facilities or services are distant, residents make journeys for their everyday practices that can require much lengthier and more complex mobilities compared to those living in urban areas (Milbourne & Kitchen, 2014, p. 331). From this perspective one can also argue that population in remote, small villages relying on other places as sources of services and capital is just as mobile as those living in more urban centres (Carson et al., 2014).

As becomes evident from the above time-space compression, or the mobility turn, has made the world smaller. At the same time as argued by Larsen and Urry (2008, p. 89) the spatially dispersed and often remote social networks connect us with more distant places making the world also larger. Consequently, much of the contemporary everyday life is organised around transport and different kinds of communication technology (Birkeland, 2008, p. 42). According to Mavrič and Urry (2009) tourism can be seen as one of the major aspects in these modern network societies stretching the interdependent mobilities and networks from local to global. The impacts of mobility to our understanding of place may thus have several implications for tourism by deconstructing the problematic dichotomies often found in tourism — e.g. local vs. global, people vs. place, exotic vs. mundane (Mavrič & Urry, 2009, p. 655). When the exotic becomes familiar and accessible, does it change our approach to travel, ideas of tourism "destinations" or respectively of mundane places closer to us? Could it shift the focus of travel from places in the external world to place-making in the internal

world (Birkeland, 2008, p. 39) by reconnecting us with our everyday environments? Although approaching mobility from different perspectives, both Seamon and Massey define place as an intersection of movements, networks and routines that keep changing in time and space. Integration of these approaches under the umbrella of the new mobilities paradigm provides an interesting framework for the study of connections between proximity tourism and its impacts on our relationships with places.

2.2 Place attachment in the new mobilities paradigm

Place attachment is generally understood as an affective bond between people and places (e.g. Scannell & Gifford, 2010). This seemingly simple definition encompasses a complex and multidimensional approach with several key elements the variation of which influences the process of place attachment. Based on the various analyses and studies conducted on place attachment over the years, Altman and Low (1992, p. 8) have summarised the key elements as

- *attachments* (affect, cognition and practice),
- *places* that vary in scale, specificity and tangibility,
- *actors* (individuals, groups, cultures),
- *social relationships* (individuals, groups, cultures) and
- *temporal aspects* (linear, cyclical).

First, the concept of place in this context covers a variety of different settings. It can be approached as a physical, symbolic or imaginative place, known or unknown, big or small (Altman & Low, 1992, p. 5). Attachment in this context refers to emotional bonds that we build with these places in our thoughts or through different kind of practices in these places (1992, p. 5). Second, attachment can be studied from the perspective of individuals but also as shared meanings of groups, e.g. families, communities or even cultures, to places. Consequently, attachment may develop not only for places as physical entities but also for social relationships defining these places (Altman & Low, 1992, pp. 6-7). Furthermore, Altman and Low define also temporal aspects, time and change, as part of bonding to places. Temporal aspects have been studied both in past and present settings, e.g. in relation to childhood homes and landscapes but also as linkages between past and present. Temporal

aspects may also manifest in the form of frequent or recurrent events in certain places enhancing the formation of place attachment to these places (Altman & Low, 1992, p. 8).

These different approaches for place attachment have been applied in variety of studies interested in people – place relationships. Originally, place attachment is considered to be one of the key concepts of environmental psychology, but it has multidisciplinary foundations and is widely studied also, for example, in anthropology, architecture, urban planning, psychology and in many environment-behaviour related research (Altman & Low, 1992, pp. 1 - 8). Furthermore, the concept has been applied in the study of increasingly diverse topics such as rootedness and belonging, placemaking and displacement, mobility and migration, community design and identity, management of natural resources, pro-environmental engagement as well as with respect to impacts of global climate change (see Manzo & Devine-Wright, 2014).

According to Lewicka (2011), much of the earlier research on place attachment has focused on questions of conceptual definitions as well as development of quantitative scales describing correlations of place attachment with different contexts and variables. Qualitative studies have focused more on the varied meanings and experiences people form to places. Thus, the concept has been applied from two different epistemological perspectives; either to measure the strength of attachment or to describe the lived experiences and meaning making related to attachment (Williams, 2014, p. 91). In addition to the key elements of place attachment, it has also been approached from the point of view of *processes* through which people create affective bonds with places. However, as stated by Lewicka (2011, p. 222) there is still much to learn about the mechanisms through which place attachment is developed and maintained.

One of the most recent theories on place attachment processes is presented by Cross (2015, p. 9) in her interactional framework of place attachment. Her theory proposes seven processes contributing to a person's place attachment through interaction with others and with places over time and across space. Cross (2015, p. 9) divides these processes as 1) sensory, 2) narrative, 3) historical, 4) spiritual 5) ideological 6) commodifying and 7) material dependence. According to the theory, an individual's place attachment is shaped by all of these dynamic processes as a series of interactions between a person's experience and

meaning making process highlighting the diversity of relationships to place (Cross, 2015, p. 22, see Table 1).

Processes	Nature of Process	Action (individual or interactional)	Meaning (individual or cultural)	Change over Time
Sensory	Experiencing the place through the five senses	Individual experience	Personal assessment and meaning: aesthetic value judgments based on personal preference, interpersonal interaction, and cultural values	Expands and develops over time, meanings shift with interaction and reinterpretation
Narrative	Practice of telling stories about the place, individuals in place, and cultural stories of place	Interpersonal story-telling, cultural stories of place	Individual, family, group, cultural	Continually evolving as people select which stories to retell and which to overlook and what personal and cultural meanings to emphasize
Historical (Biographical, Genealogical, Ancestral)	Personal life experience, family history, cultural history	Accumulation of life history and events in a place, family history, cultural history	Association of key life events with place, and association of place history to personal biography	Progressively expanding over time in place
Spiritual	Deep feeling or sense of belonging	Ongoing feeling of deep "oneness" with place	Deeply personal, difficult to share, often creates conflict over "authentic" attachment	Usually constant
Ideological	Moral, ethical, legal commitment to place	Individual, group or cultural commitment	Individual, interpersonal, cultural	Requires ongoing commitment/ adherence to code and related action
Commodifying	Cognitive act of assessing place based on a list desirable traits	Individual, interpersonal	Individual, interpersonal, cultural	Often diminishes as other processes develop
Material dependence	Reliance on a social resources, or features of place	Individual, interpersonal, cultural	Individual, interpersonal, cultural	Changes as material conditions change (e.g., life-course), and as personal requirements change (e.g., new attitudes, experience)

Table 1. Interactional processes of place attachment according to Cross. Source: Cross, 2015, p. 10.

The relationship between mobility and place attachment has been traditionally viewed as dichotomous and mutually exclusive or at least as the extreme ends of the scale. According to Gustafson (2014, p. 37) places and bonds with places are said to be less significant to mobile people, whereas studies measuring the strength of place attachment indicate stronger ties among those unwilling to move. Strong local roots and emotional bonds with one's home have been seen as the source of well-being, whereas mobility is said to increase the feelings of placelessness (see e.g. Relph, 1979). On the other hand, mobility has been linked with open-mindedness, development and growth, whereas place attachment in this dichotomy reflects narrow-mindedness and stagnation (Gustafson, 2014, p. 38). Also, the pace of mobility shares notions of similar dichotomies. Speed has often been coupled with success and growth, whereas slowness or staying still has been seen as something abnormal and undesirable (see e.g. Germann Molz, 2009).

However, as noted by Gustafson (2014) earlier research on place attachment has mainly studied mobility from the perspective of residential or migratory mobility. He argues that other types of mobilities such as commuting or other daily mobilities, mobility for tourism, leisure, recreation and occupational purposes or in a non-residential setting might have very different implications on place attachment (Gustafson, 2014, pp. 43-44). Frequency, distance and duration of mobility as well as different territorial levels are also significant factors enhancing different types of place attachment (Gustafson, 2009, p. 504). More recently studies on various forms of mobility have focused on place attachment to visited places, multiple places, settlement identities as well as on changes in individual's life-course (Di Masso et al., 2019, p. 127).

Despite the tension between place attachment and mobility, the recent mobility turn has disclosed a closer interdependence of the two. Rather than building on this tension, mobility turn invites us to approach place attachment and mobility as an "interplay between movement and fixity, spatial proximity and distance" (Di Masso et al., 2019, p. 126). It has been argued that instead of enhancing feelings of placelessness, physical or virtual mobility can actually bridge spatial distances and thus, support new forms of place attachments to multiple places even globally (Barcus & Brunn, 2010). In their conceptualisation of place attachment Di Masso et al. (2019, p. 128) introduce a mobility-driven approach to place attachment (fixity-flow framework) as an alternative to the earlier dichotomous approach. According to Di Masso et al. (2019, pp. 129 - 130) mobility and fixity can also be seen as

complementary or compensatory with each other in a way that reflects the willingness to travel while feeling connected to one's place of residence. This approach also recognises the resource opportunities of mobility that might be lacking with fixed place bonds. Furthermore, mobility can encourage integration and attachment to other places similar to one's place of residence or enhance formation of multi-centred place attachment by movement within a network of places (Di Masso et al., 2019, p. 131). In contemporary time, this reflects clearly also with our everyday environments, which are increasingly defined by routines and mobilities in and between several meaningful places.

The mobility-driven approach resonates well with the ideas of Barcus and Brunn (2010) who introduced the concept of place elasticity as a broadened understanding of place attachment. According to them, new forms of place attachments are formed through new innovations in communication and transportation technologies as well as social-familial networks that allow individuals to keep a physical bond as well as preserve permanence in the minds through connections with and visits to friends and family (2010, pp 284 -285). Place elasticity is also defined by portability allowing individuals living elsewhere return either physically or emotionally (Barcus & Brunn, 2010, p. 285). Thus, place attachment, much like places, is not a stable construct but rather a dynamic and constantly changing construct influenced by different kinds of mobilities across time and space.

According to Dwyer et al. (2019) the focus of place attachment studies in tourism research has been mostly on understanding visitors' attachment to destinations and, consequently, implementing more effective management and marketing of destinations. This is based on the idea that a positive experience creates positive affective bonds that can contribute to the destination competitiveness (Dwyer et al., 2019, p. 645). Some of the recent studies on place attachment within tourism indicate that place attachment could have significant contributions to the sustainable tourism development. This is based on the assumption that the stronger the place attachment, the less the likelihood to act in ways that would cause economic, social or environmental harm to the destination with tourism-related activity (Dwyer et al., 2019, p. 650). The paradox, however, is that at the same time the increasing and more accessible tourism mobility may also disrupt place attachment by giving priority to the more distant and exotic places while undermining the qualities of ordinary home (Hollenhurst et al., 2014, p. 312).

2.3 Tourism mobilities and the new mobilities paradigm

Tourism has always been about mobilities; travelling outside our usual environments and the everyday life from point A to point B. As such it has always also underlined the distinction between tourist spaces and the mundane world, between hosts and guests, between home and destinations. However, as argued by Hannam et al. (2013), the new mobilities paradigm has changed the ways tourism mobilities reflect in the society providing a more nuanced approach to tourism. Tourism is not only a form of mobility with an emphasis on exotic encounters, but it is also closely connected with everyday and mundane journeys (Hannam et al., 2013, p. 172). Furthermore, due to technological innovations in transport, travel has become more accessible to a larger group of people and can thus be considered as part of contemporary lifestyle (Kaaristo & Rhoden, 2017, p. 80).

Instead of focusing only on overnight visitors outside one's usual environment (UNWTO, 2021), the more complex relationship between tourism, leisure and recreation as well as work, migration and other temporary mobilities have been studied (see e.g. Bell & Ward, 2000; Hall & Page, 2006; Urry & Sheller, 2004). These studies showcase the interconnectedness of tourism mobilities with other journeys in the society and consequently, present a wider scale of journeys connected with tourism mobilities (Gale, 2008, p. 2; Hall, 2005, p.130). In doing so, they also present tourism as a temporary form of mobility, which can be compared with other temporal forms of mobilities, also e.g. travels to second homes and with other smaller scale mobilities (Hall, 2008, p. 15). This, in turn, widens the category of "tourists" to a larger group of individuals voluntarily on the move (Gale, 2008, p. 2) in different contexts, settings and distances.

As a result of the diversity of mobilities, activities and performances occurring both between places and within a place, travel is not only about getting to a destination (Hannam et al. 2006; Urry & Sheller, 2004). Instead, the increase of temporary and permanent mobilities makes tourism part of the society and everyday as a whole. Tourism no longer is an activity undertaken in distinct tourist spaces but rather, an activity that engages everyone in the process of meaning construction of tourism (Richards, 2016, p.9). Thus, tourist spaces are also stages for mundane practices that are performed by the hosts and guests alike (e.g. Edensor, 2007). It makes room also for everyday mobilities in tourism studies by highlighting the importance of everyday practices and mobilities as part of the tourist

experience and of how spaces in general are constructed (see Kaaristo & Rhoden, 2017, p. 79). Furthermore, while the new mobilities paradigm emphasises the role of mobilities, it also raises the notion of distance into the centre of the attention "challenging its common reference as an abstract, natural, and measurable object" (Handel, 2018, p. 474).

When approaching proximity tourism as form of contemporary tourism mobility, I rely on the definition of the new mobilities paradigm stating that the experiences of people are negotiated through different types of mobilities, practices and performances in a place. Furthermore, places are constantly shaping as a result of these movements. Parallels can be drawn with the study of Mazzullo and Ingold (2008) discussing the perceptions of place, time and movement among Sámi people. According to Mazzullo and Ingold places are formed through movement and engagement with one's surroundings, "through endless current of coming and going from and to places elsewhere" (2008, p. 32). Deriving from this idea, it is not only the places in between which we move but also the journeys and encounters along the way that we bond with. The focus, thus, becomes on the journey and the movement itself, rather than on the physical distance it embodies. This enhances also the significance of smaller scale and slower modes of travel on the ground drawing greater attention to local destinations near us.

The new understanding of distance in the era of mobilities allows us to explore different meanings of near and far also as a dimension of time and space. As demonstrated by Höckert et al. (2021), this provides new opportunities for discussing the spatial ordering of tourism practices, e.g. in the context of proximity tourism, through a closer engagement with our proximate surroundings as well as through encounters with more-than-human others in them. This draws the attention from mobilities between places to the embodied movements, practices and interaction with various others enabling proximity and connectivity also in space and time (Höckert et al., 2021). Thus, the encounters and experiences with more-than-human become associated with places and their history through the narratives that have the potential to make the experiences in seemingly mundane environments just as valuable and extraordinary as experiences in the geographically more distant tourism spaces (see also Hollenhurst et al., 2014).

3 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY AND DATA

3.1 Research design

As explained by Slevitch (2011, p. 74) scientific inquiry is always based on philosophical assumptions related to our ontological and epistemological standpoints, i.e., our understanding of the nature of reality and knowledge. The methodological framework of the study cannot be understood without explaining the researcher's ontological and epistemological approach as our understanding of the world, reality and knowledge reflects in our values and beliefs and, consequently, impacts the choices we make throughout the study including the choice of topic.

The research at hand is a study focusing on proximity tourism as a phenomenon — the subjective meanings of participants attributed to proximity tourism as well as its impacts on their perceptions of place and place attachment. As such, the study focuses strongly on empirical data and aims at understanding subjective experiences and meanings suggesting a qualitative approach to the inquiry (Denzin & Lincoln, 1994, p. 1). On the other hand, this approach to the topic and methodology was also supported by the literature review on studies of place attachment. It reveals a strong emphasis on quantitative studies related to the determinants and causal relationships of place attachment (e.g. Lewicka, 2011) encouraging me to engage with the less studied qualitative perspective.

The study stems from the constructivist paradigm and takes a standpoint of relativist ontology in understanding that people's life worlds and perceptions of realities are built on multiple socially and experimentally formed mental constructions (Hollinshead 2004, pp. 76-77). Thus, my ontological standpoint implies that realities are subjective constructions of the mind in relation to personal life histories and experiences. As such the realities are always contextual. Consequently, my epistemological perspective is intersubjective — the findings of the study are an interpretation co-created together with the participants of the study in a specific time and setting (Jennings, 2010, pp. 40-41). My approach aligns with my understanding of the key theoretical concepts of the study, place and place attachment. Analogously with the construction of place meanings as defined by Massey (2005), Seamon (1979) as well as Sheller and Urry (2006), the study emphasises the significance of previous

experiences, social relationships as well as interaction with the environment in the production of knowledge.

In choosing the topic for research, I agree with Hall's (2004, p. 149) notion about acknowledging "the personal subjectivities of our experiences" and their impact as a frame of reference. The choice of topic in this research stems first and foremost from my varied experiences on proximity tourism in different life situations as well as the curiosity for the meaning-making process of places near and far in contemporary mobile lives. The potential interrelatedness of the two attracts me to study it further. Also, the growing concern about the impacts of tourism, especially in terms of climate change, has influenced my orientation. The global environmental change urges us to rethink and restructure the current construction of tourism (e.g. Hollenhorst et al., 2014; Rantala et al., 2020), which is predominantly defined by physical displacement and consequent cyclical returns to everyday routines and responsibilities (Korstanje, 2010, pp. 100-102). Rather than seeing tourism as a physical displacement, the study approaches tourism as a practice of mundane environments with equal value. As such it aims at engaging with the discourse of rethinking tourism with different narrativities.

In the context of my study, I understand proximity tourism as an element in meaning-making process of places increasingly defined by different types of mobilities. I approach proximity tourism as a type of contemporary mobility that combines meanings attributed to travel for leisure and holiday, on the one hand, as well as to practices of everyday mobilities, on the other. Pello as a research setting was chosen from two different perspectives. First, out of interest to study a place familiar to me in order to gain a deeper understanding of the phenomenon in a context that I know and can relate to. Second, out of interest to study proximity tourism from the perspective of less studied environments, in this case the rural landscape further away from the urban amenities and major tourist attractions.

3.2 Collecting data through interviews with locals

The empirical material for the study was collected through semi structured thematic interviews with local residents of Pello. Semi-structured thematic interviews were chosen as a method of data collection because it is a flexible form of interviews that gives an

opportunity to collect information with a certain focus, i.e. a theme, but at the same time allows participants to express their understanding of the phenomenon in their own words (see e.g. Siedman, 1998). This approach is suitable in the context of this thesis especially considering that one of the main aims of the study is to gain a deeper understanding of people's perceptions on proximity tourism. Due to the conversational nature of interviews, the method provides both the researcher and the participants an opportunity to clarify issues where required, which also helps in the process of analysing the data. Thus, in addition to individuals' interpretations also the role of interaction in meaning-making process is emphasised (Hirsjärvi & Hurme, 2011, p. 48). In this sense, the chosen method of data collection supports the constructivist research approach of the study.

A general interview guideline (Appendix 1) was prepared based on the clarification of the research purpose with the help of literature review on both place studies and proximity tourism. Themes designed for the interviews were aligned with the research questions. The four key themes of the interviews were: 1) Pello as a home place, 2) Proximity tourism experiences, 3) Meanings attributed to proximity tourism and 4) Impact of proximity tourism for the relationship with home place. A test interview was conducted in order to evaluate the functionality of the interview guideline. An open-ended introductory question was asked from the participants for each theme but the main purpose was to encourage the participants to discuss the topic in their own terms and consequently, follow the paths chosen by them. In the Finnish context, the term *lähimatkailu* is widely used in the media as well as in the everyday discourse, but I decided to avoid a predetermined definition of the phenomenon to the participants in order to allow them approach the phenomenon through their own understanding and experiences. However, some more precise questions were planned to facilitate and support the interviews in case the participants found the introductory questions difficult.

Participants were also asked in advance to bring along a photo of any proximity tourism experience that they'd had and would like to share. Not all participants remembered to do that in advance but were enthusiastic to send something after the interviews. Although the photos were not analysed as data for the study, their role in generating the knowledge was important. They supported the discussion on the themes related to proximity tourism experiences and meanings ascribed to them by providing concrete examples to help describe the experience from different perspectives. Furthermore, the photos elaborated the

participants' ideas about proximity tourism in general. Thus, this method known as photo elicitation (e.g. Bignante, 2010; Glaw et al., 2017) enhanced the data collection process by evoking ideas that might not have been covered by interviews alone.

The empirical data was collected through six interviews with nine local residents in Pello during April - May 2021. Some of the interview sessions had two interviewees from the same family. Each interview was identified with numbers between I1 - I6 and each participant with numbers between P1 - P9 while transcribing. These identifiers are also applied in the quotes presented in the analysis in chapter 4. The participants are referred to first with the number of the interview followed by the number of the participant (e.g. I4, P7). The length of the interviews varied between 50 minutes to 2 hours. Half of the interviews were conducted face-to-face and the other half through an online platform (Microsoft Teams).

The main criterion for the recruitment of participants was the residency in Pello, but in order to collect a diversity of viewpoints also other influencing factors, e.g. different age groups, life circumstances and residence time in Pello, were considered in recruiting the interviewees. Considering the relatively small community as well as my personal connections with Pello, I decided to start recruiting the interviewees with the combination of network sampling and snowball sampling. This proved to be the right decision, although snowballing might have taken a bit more time in terms of scheduling the interviews and locating the people. However, practically each participant was able to suggest someone suitable for the next interview, which resulted in a diverse group of interviewees including young families, middle age working life people as well as recently retired people. The group of interviewees represented also residents who had stayed in Pello practically all their lives, residents who had returned back to their roots in Pello and residents with shorter experience of living in Pello without any prior engagement with the place. In addition, the interviewees lived in several different places and villages in Pello municipality. The age distribution of the interviewees was between 30 and 63.

All the interviews were audio recorded and transcribed. Observational notes were also written after each interview in order to track initial thoughts for the later stages of the process. These kinds of observations may provide valuable information and insights during the analysis process (Ruusuvuori et al., 2010, p. 13). The language of interviews was Finnish

and the extracts presented in this study are my translations with special attention paid to the interpretative act of translating and staying true to the meanings given (Ruusuvuori et al., 2010. p. 421). In doing so, I have also removed or generalised any potential identifiers from the extracts and understand the impacts it may have for the nuances of the text.

3.3 Content analysis of the data

Conventional qualitative content analysis was chosen as a method of analysing the data. According to Hsieh and Shannon (2005, p. 1279) conventional content analysis is generally used in studies focusing on descriptions of a phenomenon — in this case the perceptions of the interviewees about proximity tourism and its impacts. Content analysis is characterised with openness to the empirical material as well as with holistic interpretation of text and meanings through reflections with the real world setting and context (Jennings, 2010, p. 212). Thus, the chosen method of analysis aligns also with the method of data collection.

Analysis of the data was a process that started already during the interviews and while transcribing them. Reflections on the data during these early stages helped to gain "cognitive ownership" of the data (Saldana et al., 2011, p. 90), i.e., draw the big picture and get a sense of patterns emerging from it. The observations made at this stage reflected my initial interpretations on the data.

After the transcribing process, the data was read repeatedly taking notes and marking parts and thoughts of the participants with regard to home place and proximity tourism. This way of reducing the text served as the basis for coding. Following the principles of conventional content analysis, I approached the data without pre-established categories and derived the codes from the data during the analysis. However, I found it important that the method also allowed reflective interaction with the theoretical framework of the study the influence of which, in my opinion, cannot be ignored. Thus, the key concepts of the theoretical framework served as reference points to the study of data, but the data was not subject to it (Tuomi & Sarajärvi, 2018, pp. 109-110).

Data collection, transcription and data analysis proceeded hand in hand in the beginning. The thoughts and notes after each interview sensitised myself to paying attention for and

observing new elements in the following interviews. I made also notes throughout the transcribing process. Thus, it is quite impossible to draw the line between the data collection and data analysis stage. The actual analysis process can also be described as cyclical going back and forth and overlapping in different stages of the process including data collection (see e.g. Atkinson, 1992; Palmu, 2007). Although I do not consider it meaningful to clearly distinguish each step from another, I will describe the main steps of my analysis process briefly in the following.

After transcribing, numbering and printing the audio recorded interviews, I started to read them and make notes — first the full set of data to get an impression of it as a whole followed by a more careful reading of each interview. I also noticed that taking some time apart between the readings opened up new angles to the data, which is why I didn't want to rush through this stage. I started underlining relevant and interesting parts of the interviews in terms of the research topic. Here I looked for expressions that may have been repeated in the data, that seemed somehow surprising to me or felt intuitively significant in terms of the topic and formulated them into condensed meaning units. I approached the data openly without any pre-determined coding structure, but understanding that the choices I made were inevitably influenced by my previous knowledge in terms of theory, empirical context and own experiences. After a couple of readings, I also started to pay attention to the similarities in the data, comparing the differences between them and finally grouping and regrouping while refining and selecting the codes for categorisation. This led me to finally outline the three main themes in the data, each of which influencing the renegotiation of place meanings and, consequently, place attachment: places for everyday recovery, attending the aesthetics of the ordinary and stories of the proximate surroundings (see Figure 2).

Figure 2. Three identified themes through which the interviewees allocate meaning to proximity tourism experiences.

The identified themes are used as a basis for the analysis chapter, in which they will be discussed in detail. Although described as individual themes in the thesis, it is important to note that the themes are strongly interrelated and intertwined, which inevitably will also reflect in the analysis.

3.4 Research ethics

Research process involves numerous viewpoints, decisions and choices that reflect and are intertwined with research ethics, and as such require continuous reflexivity. These choices are made throughout the process in selecting and justifying the research topic, positioning the researcher, selecting the methods for data collection and analysis as well as the ways of communicating and disseminating the research outcomes. (e.g., Jennings, 2010; Ruusuvuori et al., 2010; Veijola, 2020). Many of these, e.g. reflections on justifying the research topic and positioning of the researcher, I have discussed in the previous parts of the thesis and continued reflecting on these also throughout the writing process in analyses and discussion as well as in conclusions.

Ethically acceptable, reliable and credible research must also follow the guidelines for responsible conduct of research (TENK, 2012, p. 30). This study is committed to follow the

guidelines of the Finnish National Board on Research Integrity (2012) as well as Ethical principles of research with human participants and ethical review in Finland (TENK, 2019).

The empirical data of the study consists of interviews, which requires informed consent of the participants. The participants were informed about the aims and content of the research as well as the ways of processing and using the data in advance. However, advance discussions about the central concepts, such as proximity tourism, were avoided in order to allow the participants share their experiences as they perceived the research phenomenon at hand. The value of describing their personal experiences in a way that they felt comfortable was emphasised stressing also the voluntary participation and the right to withdraw at any given time throughout the process. The participation was agreed upon in a written letter of consent (Appendix 2). Privacy, anonymity and confidentiality related to the participants and the use of data was secured both in transcribing, analysing and keeping the data. Recordings and transcriptions of the interviews were only handled by the researcher during the process. As Pello is a relatively small community, also the indirect identity information was carefully considered in transcripts and quotes presented in this thesis. The participants cannot be identified in the thesis. Furthermore, the impacts of the global pandemic (covid-19) were considered by paying special attention to the guidelines of national and local authorities for social distancing and interaction as well as the participant's rights to withdraw from the interview at any given time. A safe and comfortable environment (physical or virtual) was arranged according to the preferences of each interviewee.

Although the topic of my study is not extremely sensitive, the use of empirical material based on personal experiences and meanings deserves careful consideration. Especially in interview studies the role of the researcher becomes crucial both in terms of interaction as well as interpretation (Siedman, 1998, p.16). I have given due consideration to my pre-understandings related to both the phenomenon and the research setting in order to reflect their potential impacts for my interpretations. My connection to Pello was also explained to the participants before the interviews. While my personal relationship might be perceived as an ethical challenge, I consider that it gave me a useful perspective in capturing a better understanding of the places and activities discussed, the characteristics related to them and the community at large. In that sense, it can also be perceived as an asset that allows the participants to discuss the topic more openly and myself to immerse with their views in a more profound way. Nevertheless, as the influence of my relationship on the interpretation

cannot be avoided, I have paid special attention on not leading the participants with my own perceptions. During the analysis of the data I have continuously stopped reflecting on what I highlight from the data and why (Ronkainen, 2020). Furthermore, I have tried to present the principles, choices and limitations guiding my research process as carefully and transparently as possible in order to provide consistency and trustworthiness for the research findings (Alexandrova, 2018).

4 ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION

4.1 Places for everyday recovery

The narratives of the interviewed locals in Pello build a picture of proximity tourism experiences as recreational leisure time in nature. Examples in an urban context play only a minor role in the data. In the framework of this study proximity tourism experiences are most often described as a restorative activity, a means to find balance in the scheduled life of mundane mobilities, routines and responsibilities. Nearby places offer an easy, hassle-free and continuous possibility to slow down or brighten up the mundane as well as simply to spend quality time with family and friends. Also, the possibility to distance oneself from the constantly mobile and digitally oriented world is seen as a meaningful, vital element for recharging the batteries in the everyday.

The easily accessible places for recovery form an essence of proximity tourism experiences for the interviewees. The busy everyday life and its mundane routines need to be counterbalanced with regular breaks out of the ordinary. The participants connect these breaks with their proximity tourism experiences.

> *There is so much to do at home. We're always doing something and simply just not able to calm down [at home]. So, if you go away from home, even if it is just 10 kilometres away, it's just to relax and maybe experience something new, if possible. (I3, P5)*

> *It [proximity tourism] is really important for us, it balances this busy everyday life with small children. (...) It is mentally really important to take breaks from this [everyday] and just to go even somewhere near. If you just go out and close the door even for a moment, you notice immediately that you feel better. So, it is really important for us. (I6, P9)*

The described experiences vary from the moments in most familiar and frequently visited places starting from the back of one's own house to more adventurous searches for new places and landscapes in perceived proximity. Both are seen as meaningful ways of restoration in the everyday, but defined by different energy levels of the participants. The more familiar places provide a soothing and comforting environment to slow down and release stress while the adventures of discovering new places in the proximate surroundings are approached more as touristic practices in the ordinary. The common underlying factor in

all of these experiences is the easy and effortless way of benefitting from the restorative impacts of proximity tourism in the middle of everyday routines on a regular basis — something that cannot be compared with longer holidays further away.

> *It is an easy way to take a break from the everyday… you can go somewhere near. Is there really even a need to go that far in order to find it…. It is probably some sort of a break away from the everyday. And we do have places here that one could get to know better, to see them. (…) It is different from just being at home. (I2, P3)*

> *Those longer holidays further away… you cannot really rely on them for the recovery that you get here to counterbalance the everyday. It is only something extra, maybe then you can release a bigger burden off your shoulders. So, you cannot really count on those longer trips only… it's not the same. You relax in a different way in nature and nearby. Maybe those longer trips are more about new experiences and such. For example, if you go further in Finland, it's maybe not that restorative, but maybe more… I don't even know how to explain it. (I6, P9)*

> *Just to take a walk in the forest is refreshing and calming, maybe even better than, for example, traveling far on a plane. (I5, P8)*

These descriptions emphasising the easy, continuous and effortless possibilities of proximity tourism in more or less familiar surroundings seem to be characterised with the absence of performed tourism practices often linked with travels to more distant places (see, e.g. Edensor, 2007). This in particular is seen as a more effective way to counterbalance the demands of the everyday life in comparison with holidays in more extraordinary places. From this perspective the mundanity of the visited places can be considered as an asset rather enhancing the restorative effects of proximity tourism experiences than hindering the escape from the everyday. Familiarity and proximity of these places create a homely feeling without the need or pressure to perform tourism, and in doing so, enhances relaxation in an efficient way (Haapala, 2005). As described by one of the participants:

> *If you visit the same familiar place many times, it doesn't have that "wow-effect" anymore, but of course then it has really restorative impacts. (I6, P9)*

Although some environments of proximity tourism experiences may be familiar from mundane routines and practices, the interviewees tend to make a clear functional distinction between the two different purposes — rest and responsibilities. This indicates that the participants are both able and willing to make a conscious shift in values and meanings given

to these places (e.g. Edensor, 2007). Proximity tourism, then, becomes a "state of mind" as described by one of the participants emphasising the importance of mental detachment from the responsibilities in the experience over physical distance.

> *If you decide to go and pick 20 buckets of berries, it's a different thing. But if I want to bake a blueberry pie and pick berries just for that — that's another state of mind. (...) The pressure of achieving something, the "must" to do something, ruins proximity tourism experiences for me. (I3, P5)*

> *We may sit on a tree stump (...) we don't necessarily need to do any forest work, we can just sit there. (I1, P2)*

Although discussed very briefly by the participants, the same approach seems to apply also in the urban context. A nearby town is regularly visited for the purpose of work or for purchasing something that is not available at home. However, visits made for recreational purpose are considered different in nature. Interestingly, though, none of the interviewees mentioned shopping as a leisure activity or as an example of proximity tourism experience, but the focus seemed to be more on creating a special event and atmosphere for restorative purposes.

> *For example, [my boyfriend's] birthday [in a nearby town], you would not run errands while there. You just go directly to the hotel and get food, and you won't go to [the hardware store] to buy some pipes and tubes or shampoo from the [supermarket]. That's another trip. You want to keep the atmosphere (...) the state of mind. (I3, P5)*

> *If we attend a concert, for example, in Rovaniemi I consider it as proximity tourism. And we don't necessarily go shopping while there, we just go and attend the concert. (I1, P2)*

This distinction between recreational and functional motives of the visits may also reflect a broader change in the cultural dimensions of how we perceive these places and the ways we approach proximity tourism within the specific place framework. Proximate everyday nature has been traditionally seen as a resource, a place for purposeful activity, whereas visits to the nearby town have been mainly for running different kinds of errands, shopping seen as one of them. Although the participants mostly discuss the changes in their personal behaviour, the change in both contexts indicates the influence of different types of mobilities that enhance mixing of practices between different cultural contexts and spaces. The relaxing

escapes and the holiday mood are no longer dependent on the distance or an exotic environment, but rather these proximity tourism experiences deconstruct the often-problematic dichotomies found in tourism (Mavrič & Urry, 2009, p. 655). This blurring of contexts and spaces impacts also the ways in which we experience distance as an "interplay (…) between spatial proximity and distance" (Di Masso et al. 2019, p. 126).

> *When we were still working, we didn't really…. Well, we did go to pick berries, but we wouldn't go without a purpose (...) One has changed, I think, over time. You start to think about what makes you feel good. (I1, P1)*

> *My father came from the south of Finland and he was kind of a forerunner of recreational hiking here. No one really took walks in the forest here. What the heck, just go and wander without a purpose! Like picking mushrooms, all smoke and mirrors to pretend to be doing something. But he considered it as recreational hiking already [back then]. And also, my mom… she definitely had a need to go to a nearby fell in the spring time, just to grill sausages in nature. But then, of course, mom had studied elsewhere and seen also other ways [of living] with dad, so she may be appreciated it in a different way. (I4, P7)*

> *It has changed. 10 years ago, or so it felt just stupid to go to Rovaniemi to a hotel. It was like, it's an hour ride home — is it worth it? But now it is the greatest luxury that you don't need to drive more than an hour to go to a hotel, eat well and not think about being in Rovaniemi, but about being on holiday. So, the way of thinking has changed… that you don't need to go far and it still means a lot. (I3, P5)*

According to the study of de Bloom et al. (2017) domestic travels in particular are efficient stimulators of social activity enhancing removal of work strain and recovery. This aligns with the data of the study, which demonstrates that restorative effects of proximity tourism are also linked with quality time spent with family or friends, an opportunity to see and experience something together. The choice of destination is often connected with visiting relatives and friends or based on the suitability of the destination for the given companion, e.g. children. The visited places allow and enhance quality time spent together outside the mundane world and the busy, individual schedules of everyday mobilities between home, (sometimes more distant) work and other daily places of routines. In these moments the place meanings are interpreted through social interaction or as Massey (1991, p. 27) describes "moments in networks of social relations". Attachment to places are then not only to landscapes, but rather associated with the shared experiences of rest and leisure through engagement with other people in these landscapes that are part of the experience (Riley,

1992, p. 19). Furthermore, the data supports the ideas of Barcus and Brunn (2010, p. 284) about the new ways of place attachment enabled by connections to places through social-familial networks.

> *It [proximity tourism] is about spending time together, sharing an experience. That's our gift to each other. We'd rather be really present in the moment than get lost in material. It's something I want to make an effort for. (I3, P5)*

> *Generally, just to have time together, doing things together and possibly even sharing a new experience together. (...) It's about spending the day outdoors in a way that everyone enjoys. So that's really the reason. Of course, we always choose destinations that are first and foremost accessible with children. (I6, P9)*

> *And now that [my son] lives there [a village nearby], we have also become familiar with places there. (I2, P3)*

In addition to the impact for the choice of destination, social relationships also imply more regular visits enhancing the *feeling* of proximity and the ways in which the participants perceive distance to the visited places. For instance, one of the couples interviewed shared very different childhood memories related to travels to the city of Oulu, some 250 kilometres away from Pello. One with no connections to Oulu described the city as being "across the ocean", assuming a more bothersome journey that was not tempting for the purpose of restoration. The other with close family members in Oulu visited the city quite often enjoying the time well spent with grandparents and other relatives. This feeling of proximity becomes the main determinant in reflecting the participants' understanding of what is near and far.

Sometimes, the restorative effects of proximity tourism experiences in nature are made meaningful as places to disconnect and distance oneself from the increasingly mobile and connected digital world where one is as described by one of the interviewees "(…) constantly exposed to these stimuli, engaged with everything in real time" (I4, P7). Rewinding in nature enhances the sensibility to appreciate and focus on the immediate physical surroundings strengthening the relationship with it. In these narratives, nature perceived as ordinary becomes a central attraction of proximity tourism itself.

> *(...) the landscape and the feeling of being on a holiday. There [at a remote cabin] is no phone connection and you may not even see anyone during the stay. (I2, P3)*

(…) I'm not able to forget about work if I just lay on the sofa and watch some nonsense on tv. The only option for me [to recharge and gain energy] is to be in the forest. (I4, P7)

We have plenty of peace and quiet around here, but it [being in nature] is still some sort of grounding, connecting with nature. (I1, P2)

The participants expressed a longing for strengthening the contact with nature, which offers important balance in the everyday life defined by technology, demanding schedules and constant availability. Furthermore, nature is also perceived as a place to enhance contact with the more-than-human world. A need to stop, slow down and observe details around you are emphasised in the narratives as a counterbalance to speed and acceleration predominantly perceived as normal forms of mobility (e.g. Germann Molz, 2009) also in the mundane life of the participants. Some of the interviewees describe this connection with nature as grounding; finding a closer connection or "interaction" as described by one of the interviewees with the rhythms of the natural world around.

There is so much talk about the cliché that nature heals, but it is so. It is a cliché, but in nature you'll start to feel better. (…) One calms down and…. Nature at the same time, listening or watching the birds or following the traces on the snow… what kind of traces you'll notice. You can follow all that. (I2, P3)

Here I somehow become one with nature. You observe and notice things and live as a part of all this. So, all these little signs… you start to feel like you are part of something bigger. (I4, P7)

This grounding connection with nature, appreciation for the proximate surroundings and its restorative effects in the everyday were also seen as important elements to be passed on for the next generations. This implies not only the perceived importance of proximity tourism experiences in nature for the well-being of the participants (see e.g. Rantala & Puhakka, 2019), but also the intention to provide their children with opportunities to create special bonds with the places nearby; root them into the landscape or the landscape into them.

It's important for me that they learn and are with us… to take them with us, so that they get to see all these wonderful landscapes and learn to respect nature and grow into it. (I6, P9)

I wish that they would at least keep a little piece of it. My mother said to me that there is not much that I can leave for you, but I will leave this landscape. That's what I hope. (I4, P7)

Easily accessible places for recovery become dominant elements in the data. The moments of recovery provide an opportunity to approach the everyday environment and landscapes with different kind of mobility practices compared to those usually defining the daily life. Thus, the attachments are created through the elements of practice in a place (see Altman & Low, 1992). Rather than discussing proximity tourism as an alternative for holidays further away, the participants approach it as an essential mobility practice in the ordinary. The participants describe their experiences as necessary breaks from the daily life, as a prerequisite for recovery and restoration. Although it appears to require distancing from the mundane routines, practices and surroundings, the experience of distance is not defined by kilometres. Rather, it emphasises the ability to leave the everyday demands and schedules behind in order to find moments of mindfulness in the landscape or quality time spent with family and friends. Thus, interaction with proximate surroundings provide various opportunities for experiences that enhance effortless but essential recovery in the everyday. Consequently, these meaningful experiences become associated with designated places enhancing also a stronger attachment to them.

4.2 Attending to aesthetics of the ordinary

Appreciation for aesthetic qualities of the ordinary appeared as one of the main themes in the narratives of the interviewees. Aesthetics was emphasised both in the interviews as well as the supporting photos. Traditionally, aesthetic considerations are often connected with something special, strange or extraordinary; i.e. with features that are considered to make us more sensitive for aesthetic elements around us (Haapala, 2005, pp. 40, 44). The data, however, reveals that aesthetics is also one of the most significant determinants in the more ordinary context of proximity tourism. In this respect, the experiences do not differ from any other holiday experience, which are commonly characterised as aesthetic pastimes in aesthetically appealing locations (Besson, 2017, p. 35). Rather, the experiences of the participants imply that proximity tourism mobilities are practiced with similar intentions in order to enjoy the restorative impacts of aesthetics.

The experiences of the interviewees reflect a particular emphasis on the aesthetics with regard to landscape and nature. As such they represent the philosophy of environmental aesthetics (see e.g. Carlson, 1998), but emphasise also the intrinsic aesthetic value of the mobility itself. In the narratives of the interviewees nearby landscapes are seen as an important motive for proximity tourism mobilities. In doing so, the narratives suggest a conscious attempt by the participants to distance oneself from the practical considerations of the mundane world through aesthetic enjoyment. However, the interviews demonstrate that aesthetics of the landscape is appreciated and enjoyed also in the course of mundane mobilities. As described by one of the participants: "This river valley… every day when you go along the river to the village regardless of the season, it's just breath-taking. The landscape is absolutely beautiful here" (I1, P2). Yet, it appears that proximity tourism mobilities allow a closer, more focused and embodied engagement with the proximate; the time to really discover the aesthetics that is present in the proximate surroundings. In doing so, it implies a different, slower and aesthetic-driven approach to mobility practices compared to those everyday mobilities that are often defined by the intention to move from one place to another without focusing on the aesthetic landscapes in between (see Naukkarinen, 2011, p. 199). Consequently, the participants make a distinction between everyday aesthetic experiences and intentional aesthetic experiences, which are welcomed as "moments of celebration" (I4, P7).

> *For me it is the landscape. (…) I wouldn't go just like that, it has to be something that takes your breath away, something that makes you go "wow, how beautiful this is". (I1, P2)*

> *It takes quite a bit of packing and layering if you go on a top of the fell in January, for example. Sometimes I think to myself if it makes any sense, can we really make it, but in the end, you feel so good and happy that you did. (…) You get to be outdoors and exercise and then there's the landscape the makes it so rewarding! (I6, P9)*

The participants expressed a strong desire to revisit familiar places of aesthetic value or alternatively to search for new places in the proximate surroundings providing aesthetically appealing experiences; places for pausing, wondering and marvelling. In doing so, the narratives suggest two different, but at the same time intertwining approaches to the aesthetics of the proximate — one based on familiarity, i.e. feeling at home (Haapala, 2005) and the other on the "tourist gaze" (Diaz-Soria, 2017) representing an experience of

otherness; encounters defined by curiosity and surprises. In both cases, a closer engagement with the ordinary turns into something extraordinary and, further, increases the appreciation of its aesthetic values.

> *For example, this spring we sat there [on the top of the nearby fell] almost every evening. Sunset opens to the south and you see all the crown-snow loaded trees… It's a paradise just a stone's throw away! (I4, P7)*

> *It's definitely our favourite place. It's such a beautiful landscape [by the lake], the environment and those beaches. And kids will never run out of things to do there. (I6, P9)*

> *Sometimes on our berry-picking trips we've just taken different little forest roads to find something new "oh, there's these kinds of rocks and cliffs here". I didn't even know that we have such bedrock here. (I2, P3)*

According to Haapala (2005) we enjoy familiar landscapes and scenes because we know them well and are rooted into them; "the aesthetics of the familiar is an aesthetics of lacking, the quiet fascination of the absence of demands from one's surroundings" (p. 52). Thus, taking the distance from daily responsibilities and demands in the ordinary allows us to better enjoy the aesthetic features enhancing also the ability to rest and recover (Haapala, 2005, p. 50). The interviewees describe many of their aesthetic experiences in familiar and proximate environments, but appear to apply certain touristic strategies or the tourist gaze in order to enhance sensibility to aesthetic elements and detail in the surroundings, even if the landscapes themselves are not necessarily extremely dramatic or exceptional.

> *Probably I pay more attention [to the aesthetic qualities] when I purposely go there [to nature] to see… We practically live in the forest, so that could be also here, but I just want to go a bit further away [from home]. (I2, P3)*

> *The experience is right there when I open the door. All I need is my camera! (I4, P7)*

Although most of the participants describe their aesthetic experiences in unbuilt natural environments, the narratives and photos demonstrate that sometimes aesthetic practices of proximity tourism are inspired by other touristic experiences in urban places or designated tourist spaces. Even mundane routines are flavoured with practices familiar to other holiday experiences or transferred into more appealing settings in order to increase aesthetically rewarding experiences in the ordinary. Thus, the effect of increased contemporary mobilities

reflect in practices merging the tourist spaces and the mundane world (Griffin, 2017; Kaaristo & Rhoden, 2017) as holiday practices become part of the daily lives and vice versa. In so doing, aesthetic experiences in the ordinary imply a similar kind of "interplay between spaces and contexts" (Di Masso et al., 2019, p. 126) as described in the previous subchapter. At the same time, they become meaningful attachments in creating memories associated to the place.

> *I'll have my own birthday party there [nearby forest) and I like to make everything as… Even in the forest, I have all the lights, sparkling wine, champagne and try to make everything memorable. (I3, P5)*

> *You can also make it an experience. Pack something special to eat, cold water. Or if you're planning to do even a little longer trip, a small bottle of bubbly makes it [more special]. (I3, P5)*

> *Quite often we make a little boat trip [on a nearby lake] with the excuse that we can also have an evening snack there. (I6, P9)*

Aesthetic experiences especially in nature counterbalance the scheduled everyday life and its sensory overload. They bring a different type of slower, focused and embodied sensory experience to the centre of attention and enable us to interact more closely with our proximate surroundings. In this interaction both human and more-than-human elements influence the ways we perceive the surroundings and create its aesthetic value (see also Dewey, 1934 as cited in Breiby, 2015, p. 371). Also, in the stories of the interviewees aesthetics appears as a multi-sensory experience resulting from the interaction between nature and the individual. This interaction is the primary reason why aesthetics in the ordinary landscapes are never experienced the same way. The landscape changes according to seasons, amount of daylight and pace of nature, but it also reflects the internal landscape, the state of mind, of the individual creating an embodied aesthetic experience that presents the familiar landscape anew time after time.

> *It is a strong sensory engagement. And the landscape, it isn't even real! When you get to wake up in the morning and fish jump out of the water next to you… You immerse the senses [in nature] and you can smell the wonderful summer night. (I3, P5)*

> *You see a glimpse of sun that paints everything pink in the cold weather and all the trees are frosty. You simply don't get used to it. And skiing in the moonlight, the light of the moon even… there are so many elements that make the place…*

> *Even if you had visited it a hundred times, it always offers you something surprising. (I4, P7)*

> *When I came here I thought that everything here is peaceful and calm, but the pace of nature is not slow. (...) You don't really have to go anywhere and yet, the world around you changes! (I4, P7)*

Although aesthetic experiences in the proximate surroundings are valued as positive associations with places, they can also increase concerns related to the landscape. The data of the study demonstrates these two sides of the coin – while appreciating the proximity of beautiful landscapes, the participants also expressed care and concern for the future of these places and their aesthetic qualities. According to Naukkarinen (2011, p. 193) environmental aesthetics reflect also in behaviour and can, for example, enforce certain type of mobility practices that may have tangible impacts for these places. Similar findings have also been demonstrated in the study of Hartig et al. (2007) indicating that positive experiences in natural environments may motivate for more ecological behaviour. In the data of this study it reflects both as a desire to protect the landscape from harmful activities and practices, but also as a desire to maintain the infrastructure for recreational activities with aesthetic value in the places that have already been "revealed" for public.

> *If we'd now protect some clear-cutting area, there would be something to marvel also for future generations, but at the moment it almost seems as if there's nothing worth protecting. (I4, P6)*

> *It would be nice if it [track to a nearby waterfall] would be looked after a little better and also advertised. It is such a lovely place, but there are probably many, even locals, that don't know about it. That waterfall could be a perfect place for families to visit if there would be some kind of a place for a campfire. (I1, P2)*

The type of aesthetic experiences described in this subchapter have direct impacts for the ways in which we perceive our proximate surroundings. In the end, one of the first ways we relate to places is through senses and sensory experiences (Cross, 2015, p. 9). Thus, intentional practices for aesthetic experiences allow us to renegotiate place meanings through a closer sensory engagement with the ordinary and consequently, shift the customary stage of mundane practices into an aesthetic play. In so doing, it creates a new kind of attachment for these places. Rather than searching for magnificent landscapes, the interviewees engaged with the ordinary landscapes through deeper and more intentional interaction compared to that in the course of mundane practices and mobilities. Thus, "the

beauty of the proximate" as described by one of the participants was often found by applying similar tourist strategies as during holidays further away.

4.3 Stories of the proximate surroundings

The third theme identified from the data is stories and narratives that come alive through mobilities in the proximate surroundings. When describing and sharing their proximity tourism experiences, the interviewees mostly start with a good story related either to their own experiences or gathered from others. The stories are varied including mostly biographical, genealogical and spiritual elements (see also Cross, 2015) in them. It is through these stories that places become alive and meaningful. Studies (e.g. Cross, 2015; Low, 1992; Seamon, 2014) show that narratives and storytelling are also considered to be important mediators of place attachment enhancing the interaction between experience in a place and meaning making associated with the experience. Thus, as stated by Cross (2015, p. 12) bonds to places are developed through the telling and hearing of stories.

The desire to know and learn more about the seemingly familiar home environment was expressed by all the interviewees as a motive for proximity tourism experiences. This already indicates attachment to place and an intention to strengthen that attachment by engaging with stories that increase the feeling of belonging to both the landscape and the community. As mentioned by one of the participants, proximity tourism essentially is "about getting to know your own circumstances (…) well, also attractions and places" (I1, P1). Thus, it also indicates elements of enhancing both personal and cultural identity of the individuals. Most of the participants wanted to visit a variety of different places nearby in order to familiarize themselves with the cultural background through the stories of the home region. Many of the interviewees also questioned the need to travel further before actually knowing home. Furthermore, the places of interesting history were also seen as tools to enhance younger generation's relationship with the home place. In this context stories play an important role for associations with these places.

> *It feels that there is so much to see that I haven't seen yet. If you go somewhere distant, abroad, you wouldn't even understand anything… because you don't even understand all that we have here. (I1, P1)*

> *(...) We [parents' association] had proximity tourism as a theme. We collected money for proximity tourism and wanted that the children would get to know their home region, so we sponsored trips nearby. (...) I've always considered that you should know your own neighbourhoods before going further. (I2, P3)*

Many of the visited places were considered familiar as landscapes, but the narratives of these landscapes were often hidden underneath their ordinariness. In order to see beyond the landscapes, the participants tended to approach them from a perspective of a tourist. Paradoxically, it is this way of "othering" (see e.g. Diaz-Soria, 2017) that is applied as a tool to learn more about one's home region. In order to build a stronger attachment to one's home place, it occasionally turns into a "tourism site". Compared with the other two themes identified from the data, this one implies a more conscious choice of othering in the familiar context through participation to organised events and tours or active search for the stories connected to the places nearby.

> *Last summer I participated in "Tour de Juoksenki" where the locals told about different places in the village. It was really interesting. We gathered at the youth association building, biked around the village and the lake while the locals told us really interesting stories about the places there. (...) And even that locals in Pello would know their own village and municipality, there's a lot going on. (I2, P3)*

> *Jaipaljukka, for example, how many stories there are about that place being a meeting place of witches. There are surprisingly many stories about different places and why they are what they are. (I3, P5)*

The participants also expressed a strong willingness to find out about the special and unique features of home and share it also with others. In the era of new mobilities, when the unique sense of place is often said to be disrupted by accelerated global mobilities (see e.g. Massey, 1991), this can be seen as an attempt to rediscover the value and uniqueness of the ordinary. Perhaps in this context, proximity tourism can be seen as a resistance for overwhelming globalisation enabling to find that uniqueness and sense of place in the stories of the ordinary environment.

> *And history, here [in Pello] there are many places with very interesting history. (...) It is my dream to collect this information for friends and family about different places and their history as well as about things to take into account [when heading to these places]. (I3, P5)*

While sharing their proximity tourism experiences, the participants discuss also their interest and curiosity for the nearby places through family connections. The stories, myths and beliefs as well as the ways in which they coincide with personal or family life histories become important attachments to these places. While visiting the places, the stories take the participants also on a journey across time and space interweaving their own stories into the landscape. Many of the more mundane experiences, e.g. berry picking or forest work are often practiced in places of family traditions. Thus, they strengthen the emotional bonds not only with places and landscapes, but also with family life histories by sharing the same narratives that contribute to place meanings (see e.g. Cross, 2015, pp. 14-15). This way the stories related to these places make them more special than just a space for mundane routines.

Also, some of the more spiritual stories were connected to personal or family histories, places and events. Often these experiences were described as meaningful moments connecting those present in the moment with those from the past. Although these moments might have been experienced in very casual and mundane places, they may have turned into special ones by providing a stage for the encounters across time and space enhancing the feeling of proximity (see also Höckert et al., 2021). Sometimes these experiences were also interpreted as signs of belonging to the place.

> *The willow grouse was so tame that it pecked on my hand, although I had no food for it. So, I said, hello mom - you came to see us now that you heard that we are staying here.(...) And that was the day when I found out about the job. (I4, P7)*

> *Once we were sitting by the fire, when a couple of Siberian jays came there. I've never seen them that close before. (...) I kind of asked them to come because [my sister] had seen them there, not far from our [family's old] place. So, I asked them to come by. I was looking at the fire when [my husband] knocked on my shoulder and there they were, next to me in a birch tree. (I1, P2)*

Sometimes the reason for sharing and learning the stories of the proximate surroundings reflects also more intentional endeavours to raise wider interest for these places for specific reasons. It also reflects the participants' appreciation for the landscape and the wish to present the value of the supposedly peripheral, modest and sometimes even forgotten place from the perspective of locals by sharing the narrative with others. At the same time, it embodies the concern and care for the preservation of these places that are considered

meaningful. The stories in this case are stories of the landscape that are shared by the locals. In doing so, these seemingly static places turn into lived places connecting the past, present and future across time and space through various flows of human and more-than-human movements.

> *I think it's only reasonable that if there's a path that is hundreds of years old - a path that has been walked by people and animals - and it goes, for example, to the top of the fell…. So, when they are cutting the forest that they would leave at least some trees as signs. Or if there's a bigger path that they could even leave a little strip [of trees] along the path. Would that be unreasonable? The sides of brooks have been preserved, but paths are just as important. I hope that there would be a network of paths that would connect the fells, just like there's always been as people have been walking on them. (…) Those paths that have been walked by people and animals for hundreds of years, they are like our culture and heritage. (…) They've led to places that have been easily accessed and there is a reason why they are there. Most likely there is something beautiful, something worth looking at. (I4, P6)*

The data of the study demonstrates that while the meaning of stories manifests in different ways depending on the time that a person had lived in Pello, they were still considered important mediators for bonding with places. Knowing about the history and stories of the visited places as well as creating stories of one's own enhanced also the attachment to both the landscape and the community. Often the choice of visited places was based on the stories heard from the older residents, although sometimes the new residents appeared to be more adventurous to visit also new places than others, who tended to revisit their favourite or routine-like places more often. Through the explorations in the nearby surroundings, the new residents described an increased feeling of belonging and knowing as they started to create a network of own places and stories connected to them. Thus, for the new members of community, proximity tourism provides an opportunity to create meaningful associations with these places as they become part of the new life path.

> *Of course, it makes a big difference when you find your "own" places in the nearby. It becomes totally different compared to what it would be if you'd just spend time at home or at work or on your own yard. Yes, to have those places that you can easily visit … it is really important. (I5, P8).*

> *Sometimes I feel that people here don't know their proximate environment at all. Although I am not from here originally, I know this place better than almost anyone here in the village. They just always go to the same places for hunting or berry-picking. (I4, P6).*

Based on the data learning, sharing and creating stories related to places in the proximate surroundings appears to be a core element in both proximity tourism experiences as well as the process of place attachment. The participants process and share experiences and knowledge about different proximate places they have visited through the stories and thus, enhance the bonds they have created with these places. In doing so, they also strengthen their personal and cultural identities, which contributes to the feeling of belonging both in the landscape of the proximate surroundings as well as in the community. Through the stories the participants also make sense of their own situatedness in the place across history in time enhancing proximity not only to places but also to people and more-than-human companions sharing these places.

4.4 Discussion on the findings

As a result of the iterative, qualitative content analysis of six interviews with nine interviewees I have identified three main themes through which the participants make sense of their proximity tourism experiences: *places for everyday recovery, attending to aesthetics of the ordinary and stories of the proximate.* Although presented in this thesis as separate subchapters, they are also closely interwoven through the ways in which they provide insights into the participants' perceptions of both proximity tourism as a phenomenon as well as place attachment in the context of proximity tourism. In this subchapter I will discuss the findings from both perspectives. I will start by reflecting the findings on the current discourse on proximity tourism and then move on to discuss the impact of findings in the framework of place studies and mobilities.

Until recently tourism has been generally regarded as an alternative to diversify economic opportunities especially in peripheral local communities (see e.g. Maher et al., 2014). In addition, it has also been considered as an escape from one's usual environments and excesses of modernity (Hollenhurst et al., 2014, p. 305). However, the global climate change has forced us to face the impacts of tourism industry for the problem itself; tourism and mobility belong together inseparably. While tourism industry is highly vulnerable to climate change, it also contributes significantly to global carbon emissions because of the currently dominating carbon-intensive travel modes and distances. For this, proximity tourism has

been seen as a more sustainable alternative emphasising local destinations and low-carbon modes of travel.

Also, during the global pandemic and related travel restrictions, tourism industry has started to look for alternatives to compensate the absence of international tourism mobility. New services and packages are developed to meet the demands of domestic and local customers in the time when other alternatives are not available. Similar developments have also been observed in times of economic recession in order to enhance the circulation of capital (see e.g. Sharma, 2009). However, commercialisation of proximity tourism experiences has been generally found challenging especially in nature-based destinations (Carson & Koster, 2019, p. 250) represented also by the empirical context of this study. On the one hand, this may reflect the lack of need for organised tourism activities among those familiar with nature experiences, especially in their proximate surroundings (Carson & Koster, 2019, p. 250). On the other hand, the problem also reflects a deeper challenge within the tourism industry that is still deeply rooted in the practices of capitalist growth economy and activities of monetary exchange (see also Joutsenvirta et al., 2016). The question still remains whether this recently found interest for local markets and places both from the perspective of producers as well as customers will continue after the pandemic and whether the role and potential of alternative economies in the tourism industry will be acknowledged (see e.g. Cave & Dredge, 2021; Nevala, 2021).

As seen from the above, proximity tourism as an emerging trend has been largely connected with the increasing awareness of global climate change, the times of economic recession or global pandemics. However, in this study, the participants approached their proximity tourism experiences mostly in natural environments from another perspective; as a choice stemming from the personal desires instead of something necessitated by the given circumstances. In doing so, the interviewees also reflected their relationship with home place through the interaction with their proximate surroundings. Surprisingly, connections to climate change, the current global pandemic or economic reasons were not referred to as motives for proximity tourism mobilities in one way or another. Rather, the experiences were defined with very similar motives to those defining any other holiday experience. As such the findings suggest that the participants' approach for proximity tourism is something more than a response to external factors influencing their travel behaviour. Based on the data of this study, it also appears that proximity tourism can be approached as a form of tourism

mobility that still provides opportunities for "holiday escapism" from the mundane life but also mediates a closer relationship with our everyday surroundings. Paradoxically, in so doing, it disrupts the dominant idea of tourism as travels outside one's usual environment simultaneously emphasising what I argue to be the very essence of tourism - a state of mind and an inner journey. This could also take place in one's proximate surroundings and, potentially, even be enhanced by it providing a secure and hassle-free place of "letting go". Thus, as suggested by Birkeland (2008, p. 39) places exist also in the internal world implying that place-making in travels is just as much an internal as an external process.

Hollenhurst et al. (2014) discuss the potentiality of locavism as an alternative for travels in search of something exotic and distant. By locavism they refer to bioregional tourism that takes place close to home and implies commitment to local destinations, economies and ecologies. Although they see this as an opportunity especially in amenity-rich areas, they suggest that a key element in shifting from tourism to locavism is a realisation that "a simple connection to one's human and ecological community is just as valuable and rewarding as distant tourism experiences" (2014, p. 314). This aligns strongly with the data of the study that was conducted in the rural area with fewer amenities compared to its urban counterparts. The participants of the study formed meaningful attachments to the place through their proximity tourism experiences mediating memorable moments in the everyday. Interestingly, the emphasis was in the natural landscapes of the everyday rather than changing the scenery for more urban setting. Thus, attachment to places were formed through diversity of rewarding experiences in the everyday surroundings creating values beyond their functional meanings. In doing so, proximity tourism experiences appear to enable a closer engagement with the landscape compared to other activities practised in the course of everyday mobilities. Moments of recovery, aesthetic enjoyment as well as stories of the proximate foster the inner landscape of the individual enhancing the interaction with places and landscapes around us. Thus, the study indicates that proximity tourism can indeed strengthen this connection to one's human and ecological community, also place attachment, while providing similar kind of tourism experiences as travels to more distant places.

The data of the study demonstrates how the landscape is experienced through different kinds of practices varying from mundane to touristic and how place attachment is enhanced by these practices (Altman & Low, 1992). These practices are also influenced by different types of global and local mobilities that enhance the mixing of different cultural contexts and

spaces (Di Masso et al., 2019). The findings imply that the participants are able to shift values allocated to places through these different practices in them and thus, create more varied attachments to their home environment. Thus, it also indicates that places indeed are constantly in dynamic processes of becoming even in the rural and more peripheral areas often described as immobile and fixed.

Furthermore, the study indicates that the perception of place is defined by mobilities of the landscape itself; the changing seasons, weather conditions and encounters with more-than-human companions. The perception of place is also dependent on the inner landscape of the person, which might be influenced by very mundane materialities, for instance, wet shoes as mentioned by one of the participants, or the state of mind in a given experience. However, the deliberate process of othering commonly referred to in the studies dealing with proximity tourism, applies only partly in the data of this study. Instead the interviewees appear to strive for deliberate proximity; closer and deeper connection with their everyday landscape. This can be also seen as a clear indicator of place attachment. Thus, the study implies that seeing the familiar landscape from a touristic point of view does not necessarily entail construction of otherness, but is rather enhanced by simply finding a deeper way of engaging with it.

Although it has been argued that places become less important to mobile people living in a world where everything from people, things, ideas and images are on the constant move, the data of the study implies the opposite, even if it is in the context of rural places that are often described as immobile. Rather the data of the study agrees with Milbourne and Kitchen (2014, p. 331) stating that in reality complexity of mobile everyday practices for work, services and other facilities form a key component of contemporary rural mobilities. Proximity tourism in this context is seen as a balancing mobility practice that allows closer interaction with the home place. Based on the findings of this study the relational understanding of distance becomes the common denominator between the new mobilities paradigm as well as in proximity tourism and influences also our perception of places. When the exotic elements so often defining tourism experiences have become more accessible either through a quick mode of transport or a quick click on the screen, they may have also become more ordinary and for some less attractive. Distance in this study was seen mostly as a mental or psychological distance. Proximity to home was not seen as an obstacle, but rather as an asset enhancing mental detachment in a more hassle-free way. As mentioned by

one of the interviewees: "It's really kind of sad that you need to fly somewhere in order to distance yourself from your home environment" (I4, P7).

Furthermore, the earlier mentioned mixing cultural contexts and spaces have brought tourist practices also part of the everyday life and surroundings. However, instead of diminishing the significance of places in our lives, it appears to enhance new ways of finding attachment even to multiple places simultaneously. The experiences of the interviewees demonstrate that physical distance loses its significance in the tourism experience to a certain extent, but places visited are still meaningful parts of the experience. In the data, distance manifests as detachment from the mundane routines and responsibilities, which enhances the experiences of recovery and aesthetic enjoyment also in the familiar surroundings. Furthermore, the experience of distance or proximity is defined by social contacts and networks that strengthen the bonds also with more unfamiliar and sometimes more distant places. In the interviews, distance was also discussed as a dimension across time and space, which was influenced by the myriad of stories that connect us with past and future generations as well as with our more-than-human companions. Thus, the findings suggest that distance no longer refers to only mobilities between spaces, e.g. home and the destination, but rather to something that occurs also within a place, in time and in the minds. In this sense, one could also argue that instead of disrupting place attachment, the mobilities turn has actually enhanced our understanding of the relationality of distance and as such, encouraged us to find new approaches to place attachment.

The findings of the study provide useful information on the relational perceptions of distance that could be applied in sustainable tourism development strategies and practises. However, although proximity tourism experiences and their benefits appear to be valued just as much, if not even more, than other tourism experiences, the shift from tourism to, for example, locavism as proposed by Hollenhorst et al. (2014) requires also a change in discourse. The discussions with the participants of the study reflect the challenge related to the current understandings of tourism. In the interviews the Finnish concept "lähimatkailu" was used to introduce the topic to the participants, but it is important to note that they were not given any definition of proximity tourism prior to the interviews nor was it discussed in the beginning of the interview. This was a conscious choice in order not to lead their understanding of the phenomenon in any specific direction. As a result, the interviews covered a variety of

examples from enjoying an evening bike ride in a nearby forest to a visit to the neighbouring country with approximately 500km of distance.

At the end of the interviews I asked each participant to define proximity tourism in their own words. Interestingly, everyone struggled with it, some starting to second-guess whether what they had been discussing earlier in the interview was indeed proximity tourism at all. As one of the participants expressed: "It's almost like they are two opposite terms — proximity and tourism — and yet they are the same" (I3, P4). Later, the same participant tried to define proximity tourism through an example of renting a cabin and a snowmobile nearby explaining that "I connect [the word] tourism somehow with money, even though for me it is everything but money". This struggle of defining proximity tourism was shared also by other interviewees for the same reasons. The notion of tourism for them leads to think about travel, overnight stays and commercial use of services, whereas most of their experiences shared were connected with simple recreational outdoor activities in their more or less everyday forests, fells and lakes. Yet, the reasons for proximity tourism experiences were similar to any other holiday experience apart from the easiness and constant availability compared to travels further away. However, the meanings allocated to these experiences ran deeper reflecting a closer interaction not only with the landscape around, but also with oneself, as well as family and friends. The visited places are, thus, defined by the relationships with other people, different types of mobilities and practices in them as well as mobilities of and in the landscape.

With their pondering of the definition, the participants demonstrate clearly the need that has been identified also by researchers (see e.g. Hollenhorst et al., 2014; Rantala et al., 2020; Romagosa, 2020); the need to deconstruct some of the current understandings of tourism in order to create more alternative ways of practising tourism in more sustainable ways. This includes also tourism experiences that are not driven by the consumption models of the current industry. This study hopefully sheds light on the potential of proximity tourism in renegotiating the essence of tourism experiences.

5 CONCLUSIONS

The focus of this study has been to describe the ways in which proximity tourism experiences contribute to the place attachment of locals in the rural north. I have approached the study from the perspective of relational ontology of place in the era of new mobilities, where proximity tourism was seen as an example of contemporary mobility practice. In this framework, place making is based on multiple interconnected mobilities that keep the place in dynamic process of becoming rather than a fixed entity (e.g. Massey, 1991; Seamon, 1979, Di Masso et al., 2019). My main research question was how does place attachment appear in the context of proximity tourism in a rural setting? In order to answer my main research question, I also examined how place attachment is perceived in the era of mobility, what is proximity tourism in the rural village context of Finnish Lapland and what kind of meanings do the participants attribute to their proximity tourism experiences in relation with home place. With this, my aim was also to increase the understanding of proximity tourism as a phenomenon of contemporary discourse regarding alternative tourism futures. As such, it also contributes to the discussion on more sustainable tourism development in the times of global environmental crisis. The study was conducted using the method of qualitative content analysis of interviews with the local residents of Pello in Finnish Lapland. The data consists of six interviews with nine interviewees between the ages of 30 - 63.

Mobility and place attachment have been often considered as mutually exclusive (Gustafson, 2014). Many studies discussing the relationship of mobility and place have demonstrated that mobilities disrupt our ability to create bonds with places that much as people on a constant move. At the same time, the accelerated global mobility through the advancements in communication and transport has made places across the world more accessible either physically or virtually and increased the global availability of, for example, commodities previously characteristic to distinct places. As a result, the uniqueness of places is said to decrease. However, mobilities have also opposite impacts implying a closer interdependence between mobility and place. In this context, mobility is seen as a bridge between spatial distances (see e.g. Di Masso et al., 2019). Some of our close social connections are dispersed around the world and while the new innovations enable us to keep a closer contact also with them, we may indeed create attachments to multiple and also more distant places than before. Furthermore, the focus emphasising the role of mobilities has also paid attention to the variety of different types of mobilities defining the everyday life. These repeated mobilities

are part of the performances and practices in a place that make us rooted in them strengthening the bonds we have with them (Seamon, 1979). Thus, instead of decreasing place attachment the era of mobilities, may indeed provide new ways to create bonds with multiple places at the same time.

According to the findings of the study proximity tourism contributes significantly to the place attachment of the interviewees by offering meaningful experiences and interactions with the proximate surroundings. The participants make sense of their proximity tourism experiences through moments of recovery in the everyday, aesthetic enjoyment of the ordinary and through sharing and hearing of stories of the proximate surroundings. All of these elements are seen as mediators of place attachment (Altman & Low, 1992; Cross, 2015); as practices, mobilities and emotions strengthening the bonds with network of places and rooting the participants in their home environment. The experiences gained through proximity tourism allow them to develop the more customary functional bonds of the ordinary and mundane world into emotional bonds enhancing also the shift in values of the home place. Thus, it also demonstrates the dynamic processes of place making enhanced by different mobility practices. It allows the interviewees to renegotiate their relationship with home environment by allocating new meanings to the everyday surroundings providing stronger bodily and emotional attachment to these places. It is through these meanings that the interviewees distinguish their proximity tourism experiences from the mundane life. As such, proximity tourism is valued as something more than mundane mobilities in mundane places.

The interviews build a picture of proximity tourism in the rural north as a form of mobility and practice that is closely connected with nature and interaction with the landscape. Urban setting played only a minor role in the data and was mostly referred to as a place for running errands than a place for having relaxing breaks from the mundane. Social and familial contacts played also a significant role in choosing the destinations for proximity tourism experiences. Easy and accessible breaks from the demands of everyday routines and responsibilities was seen as the main motive for the participants to engage with proximity tourism activities. As such, it was seen as an important factor in contributing to the overall well-being in the mundane (see also Jeuring, 2017). At the same time, the experiences were also seen as a tool to learn more about the home environment. Thus, the study implies that the motives and impacts of proximity tourism are similar to any other travels for more distant

destinations. As such it also suggests that physical distance in the experience has become less significant than earlier assumed.

The study demonstrates that the potential of proximity tourism in tourism development expands beyond the current global pandemic and its restrictions through the meanings ascribed to these experiences. It challenges the tourism planners to renegotiate the starting points of developing products and services from the new perspectives. The findings also highlight the experiences and knowledge of local people about places of interest as well as local mobility practices that could be applied in tourism planning especially in the small rural communities, but also in other contexts.

Place attachment has been widely studied with quantitative methods measuring the strength and causal relationships of attachment in different contexts (see e.g. Lewicka, 2011). In this study I set a goal to contribute to the qualitative research on place attachment in order to participate to the theoretical discussion on lived experiences of place attachment. Through the qualitative approach the study was able to gain more unique insights on how the participants construct meanings through proximity tourism experiences allowing them to describe these experiences in their own words. As such the results of the study are not generalisable, but should be considered as contextual encouraging to engage with further studies of qualitative nature on place attachment. As the global pandemic was limiting some of the methodological options considered, qualitative approach in further studies, for example, with an ethnographic approach or applying walking methods would allow a closer examination of the embodied experiences in the landscape. Furthermore, based on the supporting role of photos in the data collection of this study, a more systematic use of photo-elicitation as a way of collecting and analysing data could be encouraged, especially with regard to place attachment studies.

Although the interviews were conducted during a time of global pandemic, the effect of pandemic was not in the focus of the thesis. Thus, questions concerning the pandemic were deliberately left out of the scope of this study. However, it is important to underline that the results of the study might be influenced by the state of the world and the increased interest from the media towards proximity tourism as a phenomenon enabling people to continue practicing tourism at a time when international travels were restricted. The media attention created newly found interest to places near home also in regions that aren't traditionally seen

as amenity-rich places. Thus, the current discourse may have influenced the participants' perceptions of the topic. While the interviewees made no references to the pandemic, repeating a study of similar kind in another time would be an interesting continuation of the theme. Furthermore, empirical studies in other rural areas, for example in southern parts of Finland closer to bigger urban centres might result in different results and reflect different understandings of distance between places. Further studies on motives and meanings allocated to proximity tourism from the perspective of locals can also provide valuable insights for the tourism development in the respective regions by offering local knowledge about practices in the landscape, places of interest and their potential development (or vice versa) for tourism purposes.

The study has helped me to better understand how through various mobility practices the interaction with the landscape can be both ordinary and extraordinary at the same time. In doing so, it also implies that the benefits of tourism development in the peripheral rural region lie beyond the economic values so often referred to. At the moment media attention seems to go back to international tourism mobilities and recovery from the pandemic, but I hope that there will still be room for smaller stories with our proximate companions in the seemingly peripheral regions.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

This thesis has been a journey - just as much a journey in the proximate surroundings of my home place as a journey within myself. It has also been a journey that was accompanied with a group of wonderful people and places that have helped me in various ways along this path.

First, I would like to thank my supervisor Professor Outi Rantala, whose work and example keeps inspiring me in many different ways. Thank you for the support, guidance and valuable insights that have kept me on track and put things into perspective. Thank you also for taking us on the journey of Intra-living in the Anthropocene!

I would also like to thank Tarja Salmela and the wonderful ILA-group for our group meetings during the process - you all were such an inspiration to learn and work with!

Thank you for the brilliant group of academics in the Mobilities in the Margins project (led by University of Iceland). It was such a privilege to participate with you in the workshop in Melrakkaslétta as well as to listen and share the stories of the seemingly marginal places that have so much to offer.

I am grateful to all my interviewees for sharing your special stories, experiences and places with me. Without your valuable reflections, this thesis would have taken a very different turn. I cannot even begin to describe how much I learnt from you. Kiitos!

And last but not least, thank you to my family and friends for encouraging me to take this journey, lending your ears, sharing your thoughts and bearing with me whenever needed.

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APPENDIX 1: The interview guideline

Haastattelurunko (teemat, avaukset ja tukikysymykset)

Esittäytyminen
- tutkimuksen tekijän esittäytyminen ja oman taustan esittely
- tutkimuksen tarkoitus ja aiheen esittely (haastateltavien valintaan liittyvä ajatus)
- kertaus haastateltavan suostumukseen liittyvistä asioista (vapaaehtoisuus läpi prosessin, tietosuoja, anonymiteetti, luottamuksellisuus, tallennus + lupa että voi nauhoittaa)
- haluaako haastateltava tarkistaa vielä jotain ennen haastattelua

Taustatiedot
- Kerro vähän itsestäsi (nimi, syntymäaika, perhesuhteet, elämäntilanne: perhe, työ)
- Kuinka pitkään olet asunut Pellossa?
- Oletko asunut muualla? Jos, niin missä?
- Koska olet muuttanut Pelloon? Miksi?

Teema 1: Pello kotipaikkana
- Keskustellaan ensin Pellosta kotipaikkana.
- Miten kuvailisit Pelloa asuinpaikkana/millaista on asua Pellossa?
- Tukikysymykset:
- Millaista on arki, vapaa-aika, yhteisö, ympäristö, aktiviteetit, sijainti?
- Tärkeimmät syyt asua Pellossa?

Teema 2: Kokemukset lähimatkailusta
(Pyysin ennakkoon ottamaan mukaan kuvan lähimatkailukokemuksesta.)
- Kerro kuvan tapahtumasta TAI (jos kuvaa ei ole) Minkälaisia kokemuksia sinulla on lähimatkailusta? Muistele vaikka jotain reissua.
  Tukikysymykset:
- Miksi valitsit juuri tämän kuvan/tapahtuman?
- Mitä (kuvassa) tapahtuu?
- Missä tapahtuu?
- Ketä mukana?
- (Mitä tapahtunut ennen kuvanottohetkeä ja sen jälkeen?)

- Minkälaisia tunteita/ajatuksia/muistoja kuva/tapahtuma herättää?
- Missä muualla olet matkustanut: minne /millaisiin paikkoihin (sekä lähimatkailu näkökulma että muu matkailutausta?)
- Miksi juuri näihin paikkoihin?
- Kuinka usein?
- Mitä tehdään?
- Millä liikutaan?

Teema 3: Lähimatkailun merkitykset

- Mitä lähimatkailu sinulle merkitsee?
  Tukikysymykset:
- Miksi lähimatkailet?
- Miten valitset paikan/kohteen?
- Millainen merkitys luonnolla on sinulle lähimatkailussa?
- Tarjoaako lähimatkailu sinulle erityisiä elämyksiä? Millaisia?
- Oletko huomannut muutoksia lähimatkailutottumuksissasi? Millaisia?

Teema 4: Lähimatkailun vaikutukset kotipaikkasuhteeseen

Miten kuvailisit lähimatkailun roolia suhteessasi Pelloon?

Tukikysymykset:

Minkälaisia vaikutuksia lähimatkailulla on arjessasi/arkeesi Pellossa?

Onko lähimatkailulla merkitystä siihen miten viihdyt Pellossa?

Onko lähimatkailu muuttanut suhdettasi Pelloon? Miten, minkälaisia vaikutuksia sillä on ollut (esim. suhteessa lähiympäristöön, yhteisöön)?

Loppukysymykset:

Olemme keskustelleet lähimatkailusta ja kokemuksistasi lähimatkailusta. Miten määrittelisit lopuksi lähimatkailun omin sanoin? Mitä sinusta on lähimatkailu?

Haluaisitko vielä sanoa jotain mikä ei ole tullut esille?

KIITOS HAASTATTELUSTA 😊

APPENDIX 2: The letter of consent

SUOSTUMUS

Teen matkailututkimuksen pro gradu -tutkielmaa Lapin yliopiston yhteiskuntatieteiden tiedekunnassa. Ohjaajanani on apulaisprofessori Outi Rantala (outi.rantala@ulapland.fi, p. 040 484 4202).

Tutkimukseni keskittyy lähimatkailuun pohjoisen kyläkontekstissa. Tutkimuksen tavoitteena on kerätä tietoa lähimatkailusta ilmiönä ja selvittää millaisia merkityksiä haastateltavat antavat lähimatkailukokemuksilleen erityisesti suhteessa kotipaikkaansa.

Kerään aineistoni haastattelemalla. Käytän haastatteluaineistoa ainoastaan tutkimuksessani ja käsittelen sitä luottamuksellisesti haastateltavien anonymiteetin säilyttäen. Tutkimustulokset julkaistaan osana tutkielmaani Northern Tourism -maisteriohjelmassa.

Allekirjoittamalla tämän sopimuksen annat suostumuksesi aineiston käyttämiseen tutkimuksessani. Tutkimus noudattaa Suomen tutkimuseettisen neuvottelukunnan hyvän tieteellisen käytännön periaatteita. Osallistumisesi on vapaaehtoista ja voit perua sen missä vaiheessa tahansa myös haastattelun jälkeen ilmoittamalla asiasta minulle. Tutkimukseeni ja aineiston käyttöön liittyvien mahdollisten lisätietojen osalta voit olla yhteydessä minuun tai ohjaajaani.

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Annan suostumukseni käyttää haastattelua aineistona yllä kuvatulla tavalla.

_____   _____
    Allekirjoitus ja nimenselvennys   Pvm