

THE TOWN SCALE MODEL AS AN ARTEFACT AND REPRESENTATION OF THE PAST

ABSTRAKT

MODELLSTADEN SOM EN ARTEFAKT OCH EN REPRESENTATION AV DET FÖRFLUTNA

Artikeln behandlar stadshistoriska modeller som används för att visa städers förflutna. Här granskas två modeller av Rovaniemi köping, som visas på Lapplands landskapsmuseum Arktikum i Rovaniemi. Modellerna i Rovaniemi byggdes på 1980-talet efter ett beslut från stadens förvaltning. Det var klart från början att det behövdes två modeller, en från 1939 före andra världskriget, och en som visade situationen efter kriget 1944.

En stadshistorisk modell är en artefakt som representerar stadens historia, och visar betraktaren en tolkning av denna. Vid första anblicken ser modellen ut att vara en rekonstruktion av ett försvunnet landskap i miniatyr. I vår analys ser vi modellen snarare som en presentation av historien. Vi använder Paul Ricoeurs teorier om historieskrivningens operationella faser för att analysera vad modellen och den tolkning den representerar bygger sin trovärdighet på, och under vilka villkor publiken kan omfatta modellen. Modellerna visar ett landskap som försvunnit. Vi undersöker hur trovärdiga historiska representationer dessa modeller är, varför de har byggts, hurdana kompromisser och val som gjorts under byggprocessen, och hur modellerna tagits med i museets utställning.

THE HISTORICAL ARTEFACT IS A TOOL OF IDENTITY WORK

This article is based on a case study concerning the two historical town scale models of Rovaniemi as representations of the town's past. Our study is an attempt to clarify the role of a miniature town, or a town scale model, in the cultural process of documenting, interpreting, explaining, and representing the local past. A historical town scale model is based on historical evidence,

and therefore it can be considered as an accurate representation of the past. In this article, the town scale model is analyzed from a historiographical point of view. We ask how the idea of a town scale model emerges, who makes the political and financial decisions, who chooses what parts or periods of the past town are represented, how the historical town scale models are used in a museum, and for whom the local past is documented, interpreted, explained, and represented in these town scale models.

The two town scale models of Rovaniemi, the capital of Finnish Lapland, were constructed in the 1980s. In her Master's thesis. Susanna Siro researched one example of the building process of a town scale model of Rovaniemi. The decision to build these models was made by the local municipality, almost by accident, as a response to the demand for some new presentations of the town's history. From the beginning, it was obvious that two town scale models should be made; One of the town before the Second World War (1939), and one to represent the town after the destruction wrought on the town during the Second World War (1944). The inhabitants of Rovaniemi were also consulted in the construction process in order to guarantee that the town scale models would create an authentic image of the lost townscape. After the completion of the two-town scale models, they had to be placed somewhere where an audience would be able to observe and study them. Today (2015) they are part of the permanent exhibition of the Provincial Museum of Lapland in Arktikum in Rovaniemi. Arktikum is a museum, science centre and conference venue right on the Arctic Circle.

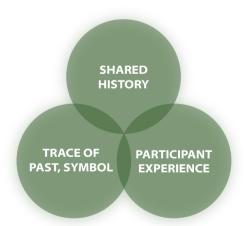
We analyze these models as historical cultural artefacts. In the analysis we apply Paul Ricoeurs' theory of historiographical operation² as a theoretical frame of reference.

The past is replaced in cultural consciousness by histories. As Maurice Habwachs emphasised in *La Mémoire Collective*, the historical memory is different from the collective memory. Histories are constructed in historiographical operations, along the methodological lines. The events of the past are selected, classified and interpreted, and presented as facts.³ According to, for example, Paul Ricoeur, Michel de Certeau and François Dosse, a history replaces the absent past when the content of a historical narrative is appropriated by the reader. As many historiographers and philosophers of history have suggested, the final interpretation of the past comes about in the dialogue between the reader and the text. Appropriation is individual, but, for example, the interpretation of local history guides, at least to some extent, is dependent on how the individual who appropriates the interpretation identifies, understands, and explains both the intangible and tangible traces of the past from their surroundings. According to the Finnish cultural historian

Hannu Salmi, history is present in the multiple dimensions of historical culture. The presence of history can be observed in memories, experiences, artefacts and e.g. consumer goods.⁴ Perceptions of the past provide a foundation for the actions of people and their plans for future works⁵.

In local communities, municipalities tend to seek to leave some traces of themselves in the landscapes of national memories.⁶ Authorized, authority-approved local histories often legitimate and naturalize the state's authority over the local communities. The municipalities and local government of the Finnish town of Rovaniemi are not an exception to this common *governmentality*.⁷ The aim of securing a place in national history evokes the question about what kind of tangible representation or intangible interpretation should be attached to the national master narrative.⁸

Historical artefacts, as representations of the past, are often used to govern people. In the discourse on the cultural heritage of the indigenous politics, "the issue is control," as Laurajane Smith asserts in her critical approach of cultural heritage studies. However, when it comes to a non-indigenous community, where membership of the heritage community exists on a voluntary basis, these artefacts are used by the members of a heritage community for strengthening the personal sense of belonging to the group. They are also further used for strengthening the historical identity of groups and communities. The latter type of the use of a historical artefact, as a symbol or as a place of memory, is referred to as an *identity work*. 11



A cultural heritage community requires three tools: A symbol or a trace of the past, a participant experience, and a shared history. The cultural heritage community is held together by the three types of individual and collective identity work: the monumental identity work adds value to the trace or symbol of the past using their shared history; possessional identity work strengthens the experienced ownership of the heritage object; and historicizing identity work produces the understanding and explanation to the inner cohesion of the heritage community.

REPRESENTATION IS A PRODUCT OF HISTORIOGRAPHICAL OPERATIONS

Historiography is a meta-analysis of descriptions of the past. It examines historical narratives and interpretations of worldviews, using evidence, and presentation methodologies. A historiographical operation, for its part, can be defined as the actions and the results that form history. In 2000 Paul Ricoeur introduced his model for the operational phases of historiography on which a history producer operates; which according to Ricoeur, consist of three phases that complete three types of operations whose results form historical representation.

Historical representation requires first, documentary historiographical operations. In this phase, methodological problems and weaknesses are related to problems with remembrance. On the documentary level, we generate information related to a historic event, or historical fact, by answering a what, where and when - type of question. A claim to factualness is attached as evidence towards traces of the past.¹³ The second phase of historiographical operations is the explanation and understanding phase. 14 In this phase we provide a complex this is why answer to any why questions. This phase works as the moderator between the documentary evidence and representative stages. 15 The third phase of a historiographical operation is what Ricoeur called the representative phase. 16 In this phase the goals of the history producer or narrator are exposed and a historical plot is constructed. In the third phase of a historiographical operation, the range of the documentary phase's evidence and the phenomenology of memories and related vulnerabilities arise and take, according to Ricouer, front stage. A historical narrative does not represent its referent, if the factual assertions if makes are based on, for example, false memories.

A historiographer's operations do not need to be chronological; they may also overlap each other. A historiographical operation usually begins to go forward (while drifting away from) stored memories, and from there moves towards the explicative-understanding and representation phases where it, once again, produces memory-like knowledge forms. According to Ricoeur, the historiographical operation involves, from its conception to conclusion: reading, interpretation, and writing. In the documentary phase, meanings are produced by the researcher reading the sources, while in the explanation and understanding phase, meanings, for their part, based on the historical understanding and explanation that is constructed in the negotiations between the reader and the historiographer.¹⁷ The historiographical operation expands, corrects and criticizes the stored memories and compensates for the

vulnerabilities of memories on a cognitive and pragmatic level.¹⁸ The historian's methods for seeking a true picture of the past are, as Ricoeur reminds us, an attempt to create accurate recollection¹⁹.

The historiographical operation's explanatory and understanding phase emphasizes the operator's awareness that the past was, in its own time, the present. In this stage we produce information that describes how the event, the situation or the process was possible and why it was formed into a description that fits its certain likeness.²⁰

According to Ricoeur, explanation and understanding are combined in a reading event, thus creating a polarizing relationship. Understanding and explanation are, according Ricoeur, the discursive features of history's representation, which are only definitely actualized in the reading event. Understanding relates to a concrete occurrence or action, while explanation, for its part, addresses its cause. A circular reading process at the beginning of comprehension is the conjecture and adoption of the final process. Explanation works as a bridge between conjecture and appropriation. Ricoeur notes that the loose explanation of understanding is only an abstract, methodological artefact.²¹

A representative historiographical operation combines itself with documentary, understanding, and explanatory operational results and creates a scenario for creating history's meaningfulness.²² The past can be represented as some type of narrative report or as, for example, some type of representative model of the past.²³ At the end of a historiographical operation, the appropriators will finalize the representation and espouse the interpretation in their own way. The end-user of a historical presentation can be, for example, a museum guest who visits at an exhibition in order to examine a small scale model and then thus assimilates an idea about how the townscape has changed.

A characteristic of historiographical discourse is, as Ricoeur maintains, that it determines the referent in relation to the historiographical operation's practice. Historical presentation (as construed by a historiographical operation) is, according to Ricoeur, by its very nature propositional. It is in essence a form of argument.²⁴ An argument of that is produced through documentary, understanding and explanatory operations.

Historiography's operational phases are features of historical discourse. Histories speak of the past documentarily, by understanding and explaining the past, and by its representations of a past series of events.²⁵ Jorma Kalela maintains that the rules of historical discourse demand that it both defines what things are part of the discourse, as well as how is the past presented in said discourse.²⁶

Ricouer's model of historiographical operation provides a suitable starting point for examining representations of the past produced as narrative representations or models such as what Anna Sivula developed historiographical analysis in her dissertation.²⁷ According to Sivula, historiographical operations can be traced back to some relatively simple questions: upon what kind of documentation is interpretation constructed? What kinds of difficulties related to acts of remembering and recollection can be encountered in documentary operations? How are past events and situations understood and explained? What is demonstrated to have occurred in the past event or situation that the presentation interprets? And finally: how are memories and a researcher's or researchers' own objectives present in representations of the past in the interpretations they provide.

We examine the Rovaniemi scale model presented as history and we analyze those models' constructor, the materials and the presentation in the museum, as well as the observer's point of view. The choices made by the constructor, the materials and presentation had the most effect on the physical appearance of the model and its essence. The final content, however, is produced by the individual appropriation of the museum guest.

The appropriation of representation evolves into a part of historical consciousness and said appropriation is both individual and creative. Historical consciousnesses, are integrated into individual and collective memories. It is a hermeneutical process, which is in a continual state of rebirth between the producer and the sources, due to changes that occur in a distancing operation.²⁸ In time, the past receives a new context.

THE HISTORY OF ROVANIEMI AS PRESENTED IN THE SCALE MODELS

Our case study looks into the construction process of two town scale models of Rovaniemi. During the time of the Second World War, Rovaniemi was more or less destroyed due to an intentionally set fire. The Lappland War (9/1944 – 4/1945) left remarkable remains in Rovaniemi and its surroundings. The war was a major historical event, and the memory of the war is still present in the local culture and in people's memories. Rovaniemi has many other dates in its history that can be seen as significant from a modern point of view, but none, however, that have been remarkable enough to be turned into scale models or comparable artefacts.

The Rovaniemi scale model construction project started from the Mayor's reaction to an advertisement letter. The Rovaniemi mayor received a letter

from a Lahti-based scale model company. "During the current wide-spread town renovation, the cities now have an opportune time to save the town-scape for posterity." The letter awoke the Mayor's interest and, in January 1982, he gathered the staff from the Provincial Museum of Lapland, the town's construction office, as well as the deputy mayor, together to listen to the Lahti-based Scale Model Office's head of sales, Lasse Andersson's presentation about town scale models. 30

There were no records from the meeting about the scale models, although it is clear that the issue had been discussed in the corridors and at the office coffee tables. Managers and officials became interested in the idea, and preparations for the matter began after the presentation. The proposals for the scale models generated some debate, but from the very beginning, the original offer entailed the building of two scale models, one of which would be of Rovaniemi's business district in 1939 and another that would capture the scale of destruction in the fall of 1944.

The town council, in particular, emphasized that they wanted to preserve the contemporary townscape (1984) for posterity with the scale model.³¹ In order to justify the choice of dates, it had been proposed that observes would be able to compare the so-called "old Rovaniemi" captured as authentically as possible, with the town after the destruction of World War II.³² Rovaniemi, it should be noted, was not restored, rather it was re-built, and additionally the town center was moved to another location. Essentially, the town council wanted to make people aware of the town's history and its war losses. On the other hand, this was also something that Rovaniemi's locals wanted to present to tourists.

The construction of the scale models came down to a competitive tendering, in which various model firms sent their proposals. The final tender that was accepted came from Malliakopio Ltd (Oy) of Mikkeli, Finland. In the spring of 1984, the Rovaniemi town council decided that the construction project would include two scale models that represented the current town center, the third district of the town, and the area south of the town up to Harjulampi. In the 1930's these areas contained 530 residential structures and almost 800 other buildings.

At this same meeting, it was decided that a press release should be written. In the release, the local public was informed about the building project and was also asked to provide more information about "old Rovaniemi." The committee wanted information of the coloring and construction materials of the buildings. Photos, paintings, drawings and all kinds of information were wanted.³³ The town hired Pertti Kangas to complete the ground work, to gather the scale model committee whose task was to solve any conflicts

and give final approval, as well as to provide a cost estimate about the building costs before any construction took place. The committee consisted of an architect, a museum employee and several long term residents of Rovaniemi who were familiar with the locality. Kangas went through various archives and old photos of Rovaniemi in the 1930s. He also made interviews with old citizens about their memories of Rovaniemi before the Second World War.

The scale model was to be completed by the end of 1985. The final proposal proceeded schematically and was definitely well planned as the interested parties had written down the fine details very carefully. The funding for the scale model came of the town budget. The estimated costs were 875,000 Finnish Marks $(148\ 000\ \mbox{e})^{34}$. The first scale model, which contained many structures and different features, was assembled from four different parts in order to create a complete picture of Rovaniemi. The "destruction model", however, consisted of only one part.

The models were required to show a realistic landscape with a natural-looking topography, but people and phone lines were not wanted in the model. The scale model was constructed on 22 millimeter thick block board on which the models were formed with a mixture of cardboard, plaster, and plastic. The buildings' construction materials were polystyrene and the colors of the buildings and the natural features were supposed to be to be as realistic and natural as possible. Soft lichen was chosen for the trees and plants.

Pertti Kangas made a proposal for all the buildings in which he also makes notes to the scale model committee regarding the future fate of the buildings:

<u>1/ Pitkäniemi sawmill</u>: there are two red structures and two brick buildings. The buildings have dark bitumen roofs. All the buildings are accepted. All buildings destroyed in the war.

1/.: in the area there are two residential buildings and two outbuildings. All the structures are left "dark." Destroyed in the war.

<u>Plot: 2/1:</u> the plot contains a residential building and a residential/outbuilding. The residential building is sided with light colored planks and has a light colored metal roof. The living section of the residential/outbuilding and its other wing are light, while the other one has a log surface. The roofs are dark felt. The outbuilding and the residential/outbuilding's living quarters are accepted. The residential building is accepted so that the northeast and the northwest sides are left "dark." The residential structure was preserved and the others destroyed.³⁵





Figures 1. and 2. Details of both of the town scale models. The models were built on a 1:500 scale and the final models are 3.5 x 4 meters. Picture: The Provincial Museum of Lapland.

The scale model committee was provided with such descriptions, and also some documents and other background material, which Kangas had used to make the proposals for the buildings. The scale model committees made the final decision of the appearance of the buildings.

The model was shown to the town's residents before it was finally completed. The 1939 model was made in four parts and every piece was exhibited to the public during two weeks in the museum. There were also questionnaire papers, in order to gather feedback and comments. The scale model committee and model builder requested information from residents, specifically, about the "dark" buildings. Because the buildings were supposed to be as authentic as possible, the darkened buildings could therefore not be left out of the models. On the whole it was regarded important to concider the buildings' overall color scheme, in order to prevent the model from becoming too mottled. Nor was it wanted that any of the buildings should stand out too much. After the citizens' comments and memories were taken into account, only few secondary buildings were left "dark". The model builder Heikki Oikkonen was satisfied with the final result. Oikkonen was an experienced model builder, and asthe process and working habits were familiar to him, the process was completed in time (Figs. 1 and 2).

When the decision to build the scale model was mad, the final location of the model itself had not been thoroughly considered. This turned out to be problematic, since the models could only be properly assembled at their final location. However, it was clear that the completed models should be accessible to the public, and the logical place to put them on display was considered to be the Provincial Museum of Lapland. However, they could not fit in the permanent exhibition at that time. The museum did want a new permanent exhibition, but to rebuild it would have required both time and planning. ⁴⁰ In January 1986, the decision was made to place the exhibition in the exhibition

hall of the library. The Provincial Museum of Lapland then built an exhibition about the town's history around the models.

The Provincial Museum of Lapland began renewing their permanent exhibit quickly after the completion of the town scale model, which then opened up at the Lappia-house in May of 1987. In those times the Lappia-house was a library and exhibition hall. The new exhibition: "Rovaniemi: From a Village to a Town," particularly presented Rovaniemi as a sales and business center in which the scale models received a marked role. 41 After this, the Provincial Museum of Lapland moved to the Arktikum house upon its opening in 1992. The town scale models were also moved to the new venue, and exhibited as a part of the Royaniemi town culture exhibition area, which included the "Survivors," an exhibition about the resilience of northern people. However, at the beginning of the 2000's the exhibit was outdated and needed to be renewed. The town scale models were not, however, given up on, rather they were reused as a main attraction. 42 The new exhibition: "Northern Way," continued the "Survivors" - exhibit's story of the stages of northern people and nature. A database called "Home Stories," was linked with the 1939 town scale model. The exhibition opened to the public in 2003, and is still on display (Fig. 3).

THE TOWN SCALE MODEL AS A HISTORICAL CULTURE ARTEFACT

It is difficult to substantiate the accuracy of the Rovaniemi town scale models in any history presentation research. The construction of the scale models has been put forward as a historiographical operation, but the documentary operation phase is not traceable, nor can it be observed. The construction of the scale models was not documented with possible future research interests or the factual assertions made by the models in mind. The only documents that leave some information about the building process are those that were made for the model builder.

On the other hand, neither is the interpretation of the buildings and their surroundings systemically documented in the town's history. It is therefore difficult to trace both documentation of the models' presentation and production. Documents and other evidence is scattered, some has disappeared, and there are no sources that prove what foundations the history presented is the scale models is based upon. The claims of the proposed past in the scale models in a documentary historiographical operation are weakened by the low level of transparency in the written historical assertions. In our opinion, in scale models, one should always be able to produce documenta-



Figure 3. A view from the entrance to the exhibition hall. On the left is the 1939 scale model, in which the interactive "Home Stories," program plays in the background. On the right appears the "Destroyed Model." Photographer, Jukka Suvilehti. The Provincial Museum of Lapland.

tion about what both the models and the evidentiary claims in the models present.

It is important to note that there was at no stage archived or photographed evidence for the thoughts behind the scale models in Pertti Kangas' presented materials. Thus, the initial materials and photographs used for the construction project were selected and based on Pertti Kangas' own interpretation.

The problem is simply that there is a lack of documentation on the town's buildings and surroundings. Although the buildings' exterior relied on people's memories, it is worth noting that people remember, for example, a building's color differently. People's conceptions of the past are sometimes difficult to place it an actual time, particularly when there is four decades of time between memories. Memory lives, but memories change in the course of time.⁴³

The illusion relating to town scale models is that they demonstrate a known, specific time in the past. As such, it is set to create an understanding of the current town structure, the remnants of the past, and explain differences between the past and present town.

In reality, a model does not, however, trace one moment in the past. It does not even represent one year that coincides with reality as its construction is forced to utilize significantly more long term data.

The destroyed town model is drawn up to present total destruction. However, even that does not fully correspond to what really happened, as all of the destruction did not occur in one single moment. The model in fact represents all of the damage that Rovaniemi suffered in the Second World War. These two town scale models, together, represent the change between two moments in history. Because the connection between the town scale models to written literature is not established, the credibility of their evidentiary claims is suspect, and thus adding to one's knowledge is left to the public. Observers are offered a tale with a beginning and an end, and they are left to create their interpretation dependent on their own knowledge and prejudices.

Town scale models are popular museum attractions. Many museum visitors use these objects as shared history in their monumental and historicizing identity work. Therefore, it would be beneficial to present how the interpretation of the past used in the display is constructed, on what kind of evidence are the interpretation based, and how concise are the time frames of the past represented in the model. Further, scale model types of historical presentation should also be subject to source criticism. The public who uses scale models as an information source have the right to known to what degree the historical presentation upholds the methodological rules of historical research.

NOTES

- ¹ Siro 2013.
- Ricoeur 2000, 169–171.
- ³ Halbwachs 1950, 53.
- ⁴ Ricoeur 2000, 319–320 and 648; De Certeau 1988, 56–82; Dosse 1999, 219–240. See also Kift 2011, 388; Salmi 2001, 137.
- Koselleck 2004, 255 ja 258; Einonen, Pia: The Past as an Argument in the Premodern City. (*Menneisyys argumenttina esimodernissa kaupungissa*). Historiallinen Aikakauskirja 3/2009, 289.
- ⁶ Schama 1996, 6–7, 9.
- On the verticality and encompassment of the state in relation to its localities, see: Ferguson, James and Gupta Akhil: Spatializing states: Toward an Ethnography of Neoliberal Governmentality. American Ethnologist 29(4): 981–1002. American Anthropological Association 2002.
- On frame narratives of Cultural Heritage, see e.g. Beranek 2011, 103; Delle 2008, 65; On the role of narrativity in the heritageisation see Immonen 2012, 157.
- ⁹ Smith 2006, 276–277.
- Heritage community is the group who maintains the "process of heritageisation", Immonen 2012, or "heritage process", Sivula 2015.
- 11 Sivula 2015.
- Furay, Conal & Salevouris, Michael J 1988, 223.

- Ricoeur 2000, 169, On the phenomenology of memory, 3–162.
- Explication / comprehension.
- ¹⁵ Ricoeur2000, 169.
- ¹⁶ Ricoeur 2000, 169–170, 302.
- ¹⁷ Ricoeur 2000, 111, 171, 234–235.
- ¹⁸ Ricoeur 2000, 182–184.
- ¹⁹ Ricoeur 2000, 296; Kalela 2000, 164–166.
- ²⁰ Ricoeur 2000 (1976), 38.
- ²¹ Ricoeur 2000 (1976), 118–119.
- ²² Ricoeur 2000, 170.
- Veyne 1979, 35–38, 43–49, 54. Paul Veyne considers the primary task of historiography to outline a freely chosen research field's events consisting of the narrative. The narrative is not a deterministic historical ordering of unit, nor does it determine any other, more important historical areas. According Veyne, a narrative is a historian's subjective choice of events in the field for constructing meaningfulness.
- ²⁴ Ricoeur 2000, 228–229.
- ²⁵ Ricoeur 2000, 234–235.
- ²⁶ Kalela 2000, 43.
- ²⁷ Sivula 2006, 42–49.
- ²⁸ Ricoeur 2000, 115, 167–168, 171–172.
- Extract from Lasse Andersson's letter to the town of Rovaniemi, 14.9.1981, LMM.
- Letter from the mayor to the provincial museum's acting direction and curator, town's planning division, architectural office, building manager, civil engineer, and deputy mayor, 4.1.1982, LMM.
- Rovaniemi: Minutes of the Town Council 29.3.1982, LMM.
- Royaniemi: Minutes of the Town Council 29.3.1982, LMM.
- Royaniemi: Minutes of the Town Council 5.3.1984, LMM.
- Town scale model contract, 4, LMM.
- Minutes from the town scale model committee, 5.7.1984, LMM.
- Minutes from the town scale model committee, 5.7.1984, LMM.
- The "dark" buildings were such that there had not been any information regarding colors, styles and roof material available.
- Heikki Oikkonen, interview 16.3.2011.
- ³⁹ Heikki Oikkonen, interview 16.3.2011.
- Minutes from the town scale model 7, section 25%, LMM.
- Board of Directors of Museum 1987, LMM.
- ⁴² Memo from Survivors II meeting 2002, LMM.
- 43 Ricoeur 2000, 5–7, 67–111.

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