

From Prehistory to Futures***Pauliina Latvala-Harvilahti & Sanna Lillbroända-Annala***

Mäki, Maija 2020. *Polkuja esihistoriasta tulevaisuuksiin*. [Pathways from Prehistory to Futures – Futures of Tourism at Archaeological Sites in Finland.] University of Turku, The Finnish Antiquarian Society, Kansatieteellinen Arkisto 61, Helsinki 2020. 324 pp. III. Diss. English summary. ISBN 978-951-6655-20-8.

Maija Mäki defended her doctoral thesis in ethnology at the University of Turku in November 2020. Mäki's research focuses on the possible futures of tourism at Finnish archaeological sites from multiple perspectives, the one of future studies being at the core of the work.

The sites are located mainly in south-western Finland, and therefore are not representative of the whole country. Among others, the sites in focus include the Rosala Viking Centre and the Untamala Archaeology Centre (2000–2010). The archaeological sites serve as examples in the study, and Mäki, who has a master's degree in archaeology, includes the experiences of site actors as a focal point in her study. However, since Mäki seeks keys to developing tourism, understanding the work of archaeologists and heritagising archaeological sites, the futures thinking of each or some of the site developers could have been analysed in depth.

Mäki emphasises the importance of reflecting on the future of tourism issues when it comes to archaeological heritage. The voices of archaeologists working in the tourism industry have an important role in the research. Mäki's aim has been to distinguish different perspectives on the future in the interviews she has conducted.

The main research question in Mäki's thesis is: 'What might tourism connected to archaeological heritage be like in the future?' Mäki also investigates the different kinds of futures thinking, including 'living futures', of various actors involved in archaeological heritage and the tourism sector. In practice, the future here means the period 2030–2050.

Mäki's multidisciplinary study deals with different concepts (e.g. *cultural tourism*, *historical tourism*, *heritage tourism*, *nature-based tourism*, *alternative tourism* and *sustainable tourism*) that challenge the reader to understand their meaning for the study. The aims of the research tasks are ambitious and extensive, and the dissertation provides an excellent basis for embarking on further research on the subject if Mäki so wishes.

Mäki describes the methods and different phases of her fieldwork thoroughly, and reflects upon the conditions of producing knowledge. The study includes appendices that explain the starting points and ambitions of the interviews and the survey. The research material consists of 35 future-oriented thematic interviews in the field. As an addition to the interviews, a specific graphic visualisation method called the future wheel method was also used during the interviews to stimulate the interviewees' future-oriented thinking. The interviewees were professional archaeologists, experts on travel and hobby archaeologists. Mäki also conducted an eDelphi survey in which questions about themes such as technology, marketing and services were asked. The survey was done after the interviews as a complement to them. In addition, Mäki used material from one future workshop to complement the other research methods and data. Mäki analysed the research material using cultural analysis. Observation is often used as a method alongside interviews, but Mäki did not perform observations as part of her fieldwork, nor did she include an observation report in her thesis.

Despite the lack of an observation report, Mäki has visited the sites, and therefore the dissertation includes a set of photographs of the sites. The visits could have enabled more active observational work, which would have concretised the theoretical discussions in the thesis and strengthened the ethnological and cultural analysis. Had observations been performed, the affective and multi-sensorial phenomena of the living heritage of the sites could have been introduced and analysed. Furthermore, the visitors' need for and ways of experiencing the place, and spending time in the area and its heritage landscape could have given a better view of the complex cultural meanings of the sites.

Due to the multidisciplinary nature of the thesis, it would have benefitted from a clearer positioning in the field of ethnological research. Some of the discussion of the positioning is found in the footnotes. It would have been more suitable to discuss previous research in the text itself to give the reader a better overview of Mäki's research in relation to other ethnological research.

The theoretical framework of Mäki's study is based on the concept of futures thinking, which is represented by four avatars of future thinkers devised as part of this study. *The realistic developer-actor's* futures thinking is directed at the near future, and she perceives herself as being able to affect it. *The visionary* takes her own futures thinking path, which is aimed far ahead into the future. *The determined leader* is a strategic thinker who orients herself towards the future across multiple generations. *The pessimistic mourner's* thinking is more oriented towards the past than the future.

In addition to the four avatars of future thinkers, Mäki formulated four images of future tourism at archaeological sites based upon her findings. Fur-

thermore, several good practices and procedures for futures thinking were identified with the help of case studies. Therefore, the theoretical framework of Mäki's study is based on the concept of futures thinking, as represented by images of the future.

The four images of future tourism are the main research result of this study. Firstly, in the future image titled 'Small is beautiful', Mäki links archaeological heritage strongly to local tourism and a positive environment. In the second image, 'Let's combine the scarce resources', she emphasises the growing professionalism of archaeological tourism. Thirdly, in the 'When the last one turns off the lights' image, Mäki points out some issues that need special attention, such as the neglect of archaeological sites and artefacts, changing values and respect for archaeological sites, and the lack of funding. In the fourth and last one, 'Internet addicts and the digitally resistant', Mäki highlights the possibilities of bringing prehistory to life in the future through novel technologies.

The strength of the dissertation lies in its consideration of current international and national cultural heritage policies and legislation. Analytically, the dissertation provides the necessary ethnological gaze that is to be expected when cultural analysis is performed. However, the analysis would have offered more insight if the different futures related to the services and activities of a certain municipal or entrepreneurial site had been presented with ideas for development – especially when alternative nature and cultural tourism is on the rise, and we have already seen an interest in local tourism. In Mäki's dissertation, the sites are mentioned as examples, but they are explicitly missing from the future images of the study.

Mäki's study strengthens the idea of tourism as a strongly cultural phenomenon. The framework of Mäki's multidisciplinary thesis, with its many merits, brings to light aspects of sustainable development. These aspects could have been incorporated in the research, especially in terms of cultural sustainability and economic sustainability associated with the growing exploitation of cultural heritage. In addition, Mäki often presents her arguments by referring to features and concepts related to cultural sustainability.

The message of the thesis is that, ideally, the future developers of archaeological heritage tourism will be forward-looking and will move smoothly between the past, the present and the future. They will understand cultural heritage and cultural heritage work as a link between these time levels.

This book will appeal to practitioners working in the tourism sector, as well as to scholars from various fields. From the point of view of tourism, and for professionals working at archaeological sites today, the dissertation lists the desired operating models and best practices, which emphasise the democra-

tised heritage discourse, such as cooperation with archaeological enthusiasts and prehistoric animators, as well as resourcing volunteering and communicating its importance.

AUTHORS

Adjunct Professor Pauliina Latvala-Harvilahti is a Senior Researcher Fellow at the Finland Futures Research Centre in the Turku School of Economics, University of Turku. Her areas of expertise cover, among others, cultural heritage politics, cultural sustainability and fieldwork with communities.

Adjunct Professor Sanna Lillbroända-Annala is a Senior Researcher and University Teacher at Åbo Akademi University in Turku, Finland. She is currently working within a project funded by the Academy of Finland. Her research interests include urban development, cultural heritage and human animal relations.