

# Local identities, memories and experiences as inspirers of urban silviculture

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IUFRO 6.14.00 Urban Forestry  
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# My study approaches in UFOR

- Social value mapping →  
Forests as part of local culture and landscape
- To bring local and cultural knowledge into UFOR. Culture as a form of knowledge..
- Research colleague: **Eveliina Asikainen, University of Tampere**  
Supervisors:
  - Prof. Liisa Tyrväinen, Forest Research Institute,
  - Prof. Kirsi Saarikangas, Univ. Helsinki, Christina-InstituteFunding: Maj and Tor Nessling Foundation, Academy of Finland

# Urban forests in local context

A chosen context:

**Forest city – Forest suburb**

A common Finnish city form

An everyday landscape – home to suburban dwellers/ housing type mainly blocks of flats

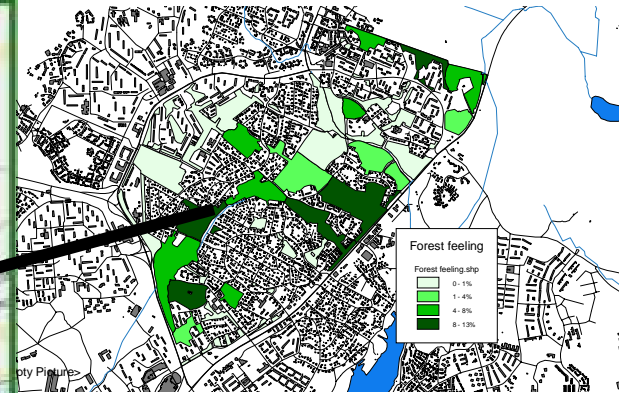
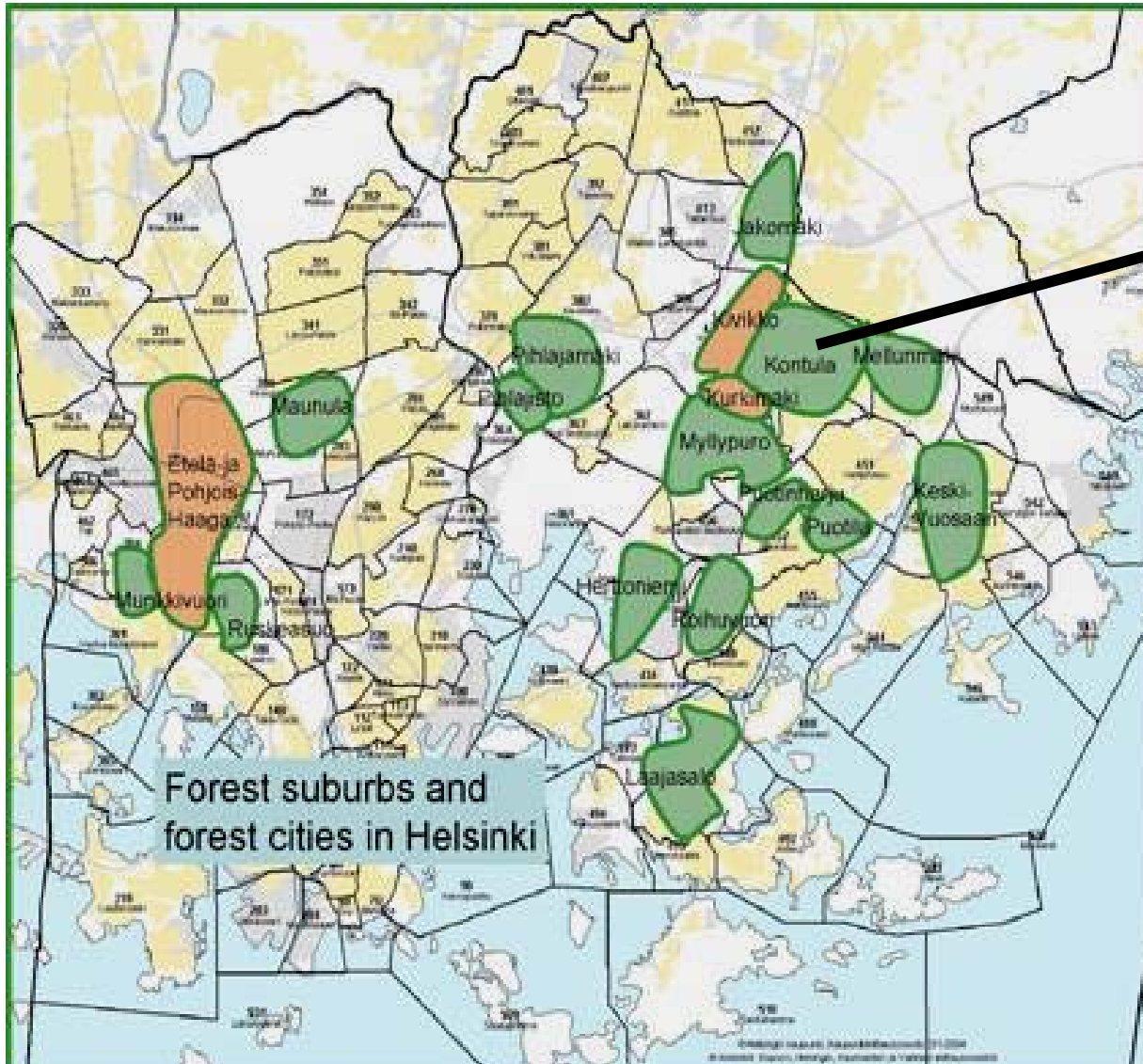
**> How the approach could enrich silvicultural approach ?**

Northern Haaga

# Main study questions

- How forest suburb environment is lived by residents?
- How local people use their areas, what kind of spatial practices they have, what kind of knowledge?
- How the method functioned?
  - To dwell the whole environment (Heidegger)
  - Spatial practices; a way of operating, a style of use, (de Certeau 1984, Léfèbvre 1991)

# Forest suburbs on the map of Helsinki



Local experiences of forest values captured in Kontula area (Tyrväinen et al. 2007)

Similar or different?

# Urban forestry – localised

## Silviculture

### Between planned and lived:

- After planning and building, the uses and experiences of space form new meanings to built environment.
- Meanings are formed in space and are not general, but always historical, bound to time and space. (de Certeau 1984, Saarikangas 2006)

# Lived space

Kivikko



A study of lived space opens possibility to examine bodily and sensorial meanings of space, and moreover, a materiality of space.

A lived space is formed and re-formed by all senses: By acting, moving, being and dwelling.  
(Saarikangas 2006)



Kurkimäki

# Materials and method

## **WALKING INTERVIEWS/GUIDED WALKS by residents**

- The interviewees mainly from local associations.
- One hour walking route, which would represent meaningful places and familiar routes and to show how they experience their home environment.
- The interviews had open form: own perspectives to the environment. Meanings are situated.
- The interviews were recorded and route was photographed. Route maps were drawn afterwards.

### **Number of interviews:**

Southern and Northern Haaga: **12** interviews

Kurkimäki and Kivikko: **8** interviews

Hervanta: **8** interviews

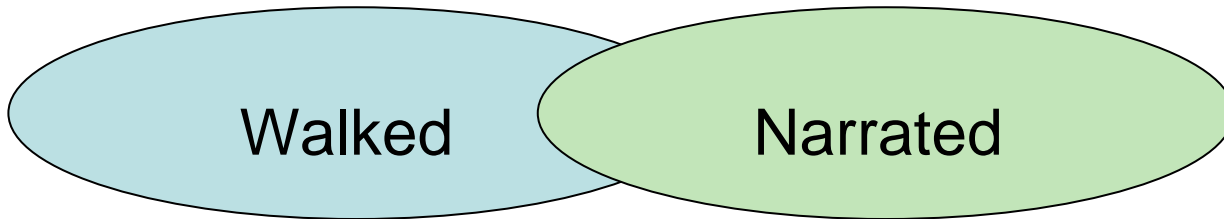
Dwelling the whole environment



Lived space;

*Theory structure*

Spatial practices  
Spaces of representations



*Analysis*



# Case study areas

## Number of inhabitants (2005)

Northern Haaga

**8466**

Southern Haaga

**12035**

Kivikko

**5006**

Kurkimäki

**2825**

Hervanta

appr. **25000**



**Kivikko, 1990-2000->**



**Hervanta, Tampere, 1972 ->**



**Kurkimäki, 1980->**

# First results



Northern Haaga  
Photo by interviewee



Northern Haaga



Southern Haaga

# First codings

**Walked:** Routes (route types), places, ways of walking (style, rhythm, decisions..)

**Narrated:** Frames and themes (e.g. home area, activities (how used), personal history, relationship to area, area characteristics)

How these two overlap together?

# How interviewees framed the route selection and their relationship to Haaga?

1. Active participation to Haaga issues, lot of knowledge of the history of the areas, the dwellers and dwelling.
2. "Forest people", selection of housing area, "dependancy of forests"
3. Childhood in Haaga; partly reminiscent walks, nostalgic feelings, playgrounds, activities
4. Haaga as a chosen housing area, a sense of belonging, lots of favourite places and routes

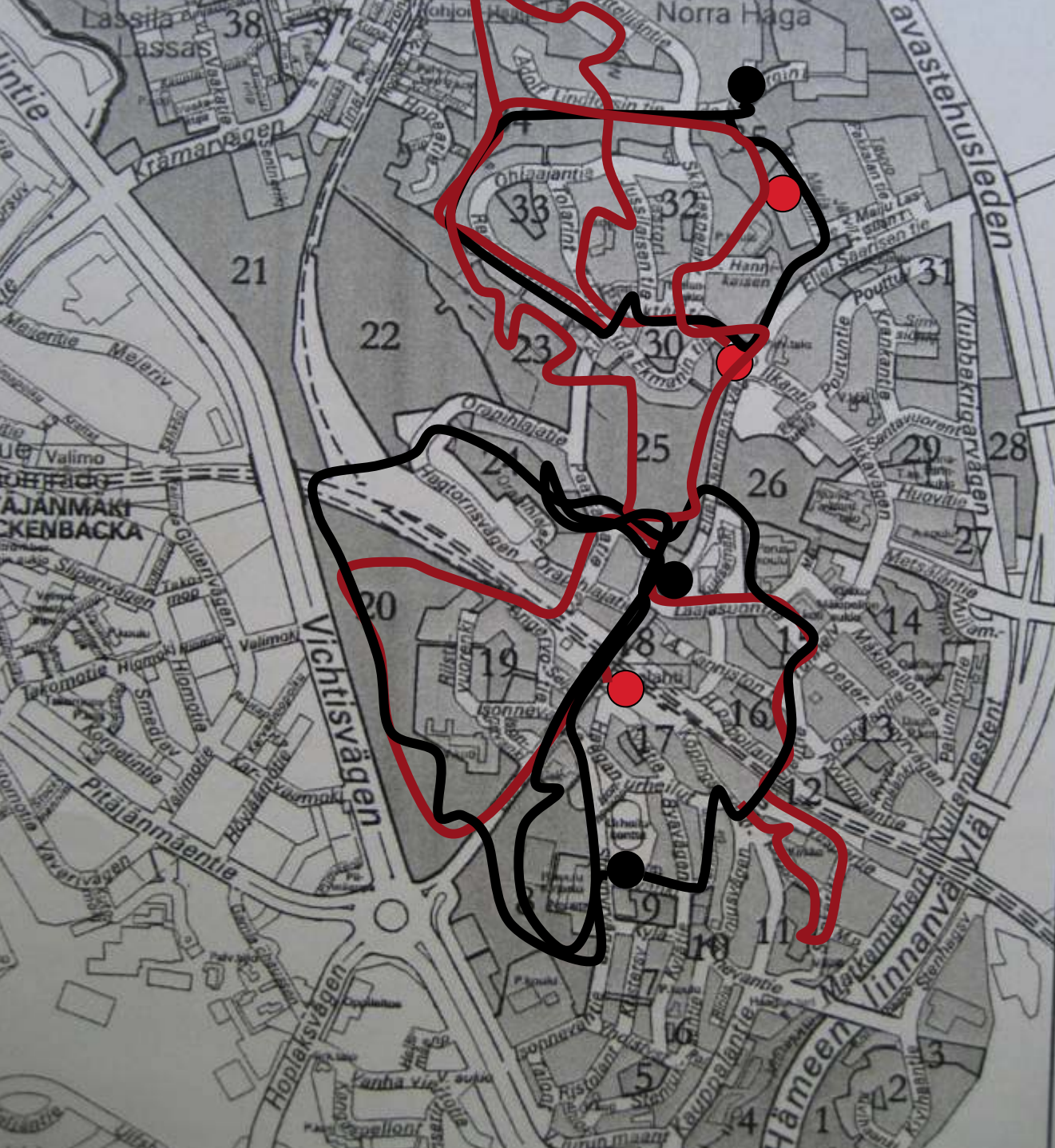
In parallel:

Own spatial practices presented (free time, daily practices), geography of Haaga, "own territory", the traffic, the community and the dwelling (family and apartment types)

# What kind the walks were?

## Different styles of walking


- 1. **during the interview** (daily exercise style, wandering (making curves, slow pace), flaneur style suitable for discussion, making improvisations (for the interview))
- 2a. **narrated styles/walking**: explorations (to find something), to go "bush-walking" (deep in woods), to go footpaths (avoiding artificial routes) - Linked to nature contacts, berry/mushroom picking, etc.
- 2b. **Narrated styles of running**: an effective run via same route for quick relaxation (heavy working day), a run with MP3 without noticing the surroundings, quick run through the woods in late evening (school-girl memory)



## Walking routes

-Often 2-3 kilometers long

-Starting point

- Woman 
- Man 

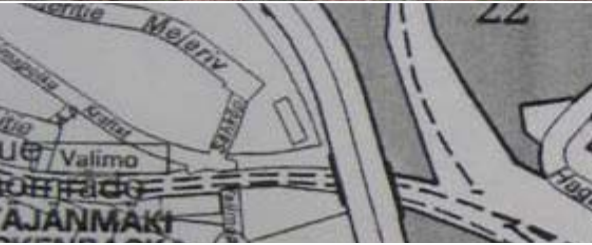


An interview from Maria Jotuni road (woman in 50s, NH)

"7 years I thought this place was hopeless, so much broken glass, but this spring we started to clean it up.."

"This small footpath I like very much.. When I enter here, somehow feel relieved.. If somebody measured my blood pressure right now...

"We go there, it is also one of my favourite routes.. It is somehow a very relaxing environment.





Other place meanings by different interviewees:  
 Outdoors class-room (biology)  
 Awkward memories of antisocial users  
 A long forest connection  
 A bit funny *forest*, with manholes  
 (sewer system) in it  
 A alternative route to train station

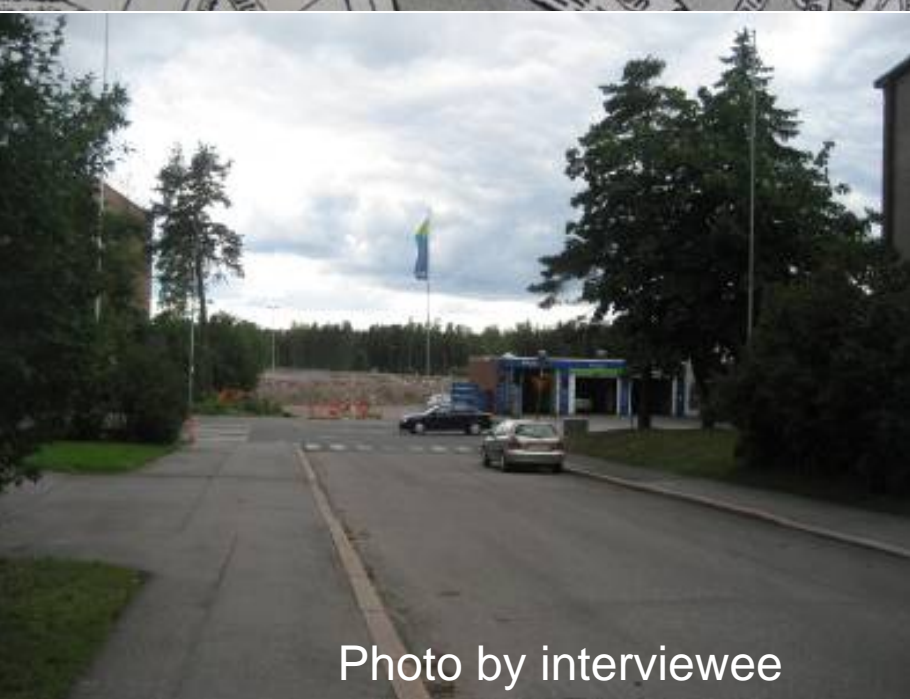


Photo by interviewee



**Laajasuo park,  
 Northern Haaga  
 (forest park)**

**Landscape change**

”When they started a clear-cut here, it was like: ”Oh, help us! Are they cutting still more..?”  
 (woman in 60’s, NH)

”Now we reach an interesting place. This area, during my time, has changed totally. A forest started there behind the gas station.. Well, not a *real*, real forest, because I am from countryside..”  
 (young man, NH)

# > Knowledge to silviculturist

Study of scales: the whole suburb; sub-areas, individual green areas, places, routes; *identity, image, spatial practices, users*

- A study of *green area cultures*.
- Participation in developing identity, image, spatial practices..