In the beginning was muteness: approaching
an anonymous shipwreck via poetry

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Abstract: In this chapter, I present a poetic approach to examining meanings and verbalising affections in maritime cultural heritage. As an example, I explain the conduct of 'From wreck to poetry' workshops organised at the IKUWA7 Congress and how the poems and poetry can be analysed through a three-stage metaphor analysis and free association. My motivation was to explore how a structured-poetry exercise works when the subject of the poem is an old wreck. What would be the response to a mix of archaeology and poetry, and would a creative approach stimulate, inspire or change the descriptive vocabulary regarding a wreck? Can we use poetry to add meaningfulness to the extended biography of an archaeological object?

Workshop participants included experts of maritime and underwater cultural heritage management, maritime historians and underwater archaeologists. They found the method to be easy, useful and fun, and a great tool for bringing new insights on how the material culture can be approached and interpreted beyond the objective, academic tradition. A word analysis of the poems demonstrated that creativity increases the diversity of descriptive vocabulary and that metaphors allow the viewer to venture beyond the obvious materiality. This study suggests the structured-poetry method could facilitate a multilevel cultural heritage discourse among different stakeholders.

Introduction

My research object is a seventeenth-century shipwreck, the Hahtiperä wreck, discovered in Oulu, Northern Finland in August 2019. It is the oldest surviving wreck discovered in Northern Finland so far. Traditionally, the biography and storification of wrecks from a historical period are based on archaeological and multidisciplinary research and written sources. These processes sum up as a narrative, which can be told to other researchers and to the general public in a storytelling format. Such narratives traditionally justify the value, or lack thereof, of a relic.

The usual sources in wreck research for identifying and building up the biography of a vessel from a historical era include the physical remains and their context, typology, written documents such as customs declarations and interdisciplinary research such as dendrochronology for dating, as well as provenance and ethnography. Sometimes the wreck site includes artefacts or human and/or animal remains, which open up a whole range of interdisciplinary research methods (Muckelroy 1978; Rönnby 2014). A well-detailed, vivid and in some cases exciting background of a wreck profits the scientific field, adds to the object's value and helps in capturing the curiosity of the audience.

The Hahtiperä wreck is a mute, 'paperless' and anonymous passenger from the past. No cargo or written documents are related to it. In my research, I study whether creative methods can add substance to the extended object biography of the wreck, transfer knowledge and engage different stakeholders to express their subjective views on cultural heritage through personal encounters with the relic. In this chapter, my focus is on structured poetry generated through the image of this particular wreck, and on the literal or metaphorical meanings the workshop participants used to describe the wreck.

The combination of arts and creativity is an emerging transdisciplinary practice of experimental heritage work and museum pedagogy (*e.g.* Renfrew 2003; Van Dyke and Bernbeck 2015; Bailey 2017; Kavanagh 2019; Bailey *et al.* 2020; Petersson and Burke 2020). When I took on my dissertation work on the wreck of Hahtiperä in 2022, I wished to contribute to the 'afterlife'—the post-excavation period of the wreck's object biography—by engaging the general public in the creation of the wreck's narrative, its life story. I also hoped I could give the general public a chance to see authentic pieces of the wreck, interact with them through slow, sensory archaeology and add to the multivocality when assessing the values and meanings attached to the wreck.

'Slow archaeology' is a method for archaeological object observation (*e.g.* Caraher 2016; Mol 2021). The origin of the term is unknown, but the concept has emerged alongside a broader 'slow movement'—a cultural shift towards slowing down life's pace—and 'slow science', which is a counterreaction to the increasing requirement to produce scientific information faster (Caraher 2016: 422). Caraher calls for slowing down in archaeology, stating that modern digital appliances have changed how archaeologists document and explore excavation sites (Caraher 2016: 421).

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Slow science is thought to have roots in Asian and especially Japanese way of focussing on objects (Mol 2021: 80). In my research, the concept of slow, sensory archaeology means prolonged lingering with authentic cultural heritage, using all senses and non-curated approaches.

Creativity enables nonintrusive exploitation of cultural heritage and creates a common, equal arena for the consumers of archaeology—experts and non-experts—to share their views of cultural heritage, values and signification. In my work, the ethical thinking is guided by UNESCO's Faro convention, also ratified by Finland. Article 4 states that 'everyone, alone or collectively, has the right to benefit from the cultural heritage and to contribute towards its enrichment', and the public should be allowed to approach the cultural heritage work in a versatile manner (Council of Europe 2005).

In this chapter, I first look at the object through traditional disciplinary lenses, and then I take a glimpse at the academic discourse around arts, creativity and archaeology. After that, I explain the conduct of structured-poetry exercise used in the IKUWA7 Congress and give an example of how we can process poetry through a word analysis. I end with a discussion of the broader implementation of the poetry exercise and how we can use poems to approach past societies.

Background and research environment

Paperless from the past

The wreck of Hahtiperä (Figure 20.1) was discovered in the city centre area of Oulu, Northern Finland during a hotel renovation in August 2019. The hotel had been built in the beginning of the 1970s. Part of the renovation plan was the renewal of heating and sewerage pipes. The construction area was the backyard of the Radisson Blu hotel, situated at the street address Rantakatu 1 in Oulu. In the vicinity are the main library of Oulu, the city theatre for performing arts and the market place.

Due to previous archaeological excavations (Kallio and Lipponen 2005; Pesonen *et al.* 2015) conducted nearby, it was expected that remains of old piers and waterfront storerooms might be found. In the spring of 2019, before the hotel renovation, the Finnish Heritage Agency carried out test excavations at the construction site. Older cultural strata and log structures of old piers were indeed detected (Riutankoski 2019: 2). Therefore, two archaeologists from the Finnish Heritage Agency were tasked to observe the construction project from its very beginning. On the second day of the project, pier planking was revealed, and carved and curved timbers emerged underneath. The digging was interrupted once the timbers were identified as a ship's hull.

Based on the location, depth of the items discovered and technical features of the wreck such as the use of wooden pegs and clenched iron nails to fasten the timbers, the wreck was estimated to date from the seventeenth to the eighteenth centuries. The shape and width of the hull structure, along with the thickness of the planks, provided preliminary indications of the type of vessel. The vessel was classified as a barge, a type of a cargo ship. The cultural heritage authorities of the Finnish Heritage Agency subsequently issued a protection decision for the wreck (Riutankoski 2019: 14).

Figure 20.1. The Hahtiperä wreck (two views) was discovered from Rantakatu 1, downtown of Oulu. The excavation took place in the backyard of the Radisson Blu hotel. The wreck was embedded in an ancient seabed of an old harbour, the Hahtiperä harbour. Photos by: Matleena Riutankoski, Finnish Heritage Agency.

The wreck was embedded in an ancient seabed of an old harbour, the 'Hahtiperä harbour'. The port was already in use by the time the city of Oulu was founded in 1605, and until 1724, it was the main port of Oulu and the main logistic centre of tar export in Northern Finland (Lithovius 1878: 2; Murman 1914; Hautala 1975: 7). Over the decades, the harbour shallowed due to land uplift and sediment which was carried to the harbour basin along the river Oulujoki and other minor waterways. In the nineteenth century, the harbour area was landscaped to be a recreational park (Hautala 1975: 64; Hautala 1976: 286). Due to the post submerging processes, the excavation of the wreck could be carried out by using land archaeology methods.

During the two weeks of fieldwork, a 10.5 metres-long and 4.4 metres-wide section was excavated and documented (Riutankoski 2019: 7). No mast, mastfoot or rigging was detected. The only artefacts found during the excavation were two pieces of chalk pipe, but it is unclear whether they were related to the wreck. Samples of the wreck were sawn at the site for dendrochronological analyses. The date of construction of the wreck was specified as after 1684. The trees used to build the ship were identified as pines. Based on the annual tree ring chronology, their provenance is Northern Finland, possibly Ostrobothnia or Northern Ostrobothnia more specifically (Aakala and Wallenius 2019: 3).

After excavations, all visible parts of the wreck were removed from the site. A so-called 'block piece', which displays the complete, remaining structure of four arched beams, the hull planking, keelson and bilge, is currently undergoing conservation process at the Finnish Heritage Agency's Conservation and Collection Centre in Vantaa (Riutankoski 2019: 16). The block piece will be set on a display in the museum of Northern Ostrobothnia in Oulu in 2026. The rest of the wreck pieces, numbering over a hundred, are not preserved and are not intended to be displayed.

The wreck of Hahtiperä is an anonymous wreck, 'paperless from the past': no artefacts have been identified to the wreck's context, and no written sources have been connected to the wreck. Its pre-excavation biography can only be narrated by reflecting on the general knowledge of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries' Nordic clinker vessel building and seafaring history (see *e.g.* Kaila 1931; Greenhill 1976; Litwin 1991; Adams 2003; Eriksson 2010), together with information derived through archaeological and interdisciplinary research methods of the wreck's structure and building methods. In addition to on-site documentation, the wreck has undergone a thorough photographic, photogrammetry and scanning documentation and interdisciplinary research. Additional dendrochronological samples are to be taken to define the construction time more precisely. Additional information regarding the building techniques is expected to emerge through research lead by maritime archaeologist Minna Koivikko at the Finnish Heritage Agency.

Value-setting and narrative

What value does an anonymous, cargoless, mastless and humble barge hold in comparison to the 'treasure ships' and grand ships with interesting, well-detailed biographies? Traditionally, the value of an archaeological object largely depends on how well its history is known and whatever larger context it can be placed in. In wreck research and popularisation, the emphasis is frequently on large war or merchant ships with known historical background and/or valuable cargo. The most featured wreck in Finland—both in research articles and popular publications—is *Vrouw Maria* (Ilves and Marila 2021).

Many maritime related cultural resources are important to individuals or communities simply because of their existence (Claesson 2011: 68). Thus, maritime archaeological sites, shipwrecks, historic waterfronts, cultural landscapes and coastal and submerged prehistoric archaeological sites provide knowledge and understanding of socioeconomic and intercultural structures and processes. They also provide insights into the relationships between humans and the marine environment, to forest exploitation, trade, communication and shipbuilding techniques, as well as to relations between people and societies (Muckelroy 1978; Rönnby 2014; Lehtimäki *et al.* 2018).

Historic ships can be associated with symbolic significance and as embodiments of many of the qualities which modern societies want to project, such as entrepreneurship, inventiveness, technological knowhow, courage and globality. Nationally, maritime heritage can magnify the historical importance of a nation or a community (Wickler 2019: 435; Hickman 2020: 401–402, 411).

Economic value of cultural heritage can be counted in money: are there valuable metals or other goods involved? What is the economic value of cultural heritage when represented in a museum (Claesson 2011: 63)? Cultural heritage can also be valued through rarity, identity, its pedagogical possibilities or information produced by the object. Research can alter the nature of cultural heritage and its value classification, by either increasing or decreasing the value (Enqvist and Niukkanen 2007: 11–12; Mason 2008: 102, 104–105).

Cultural heritage can represent intangible, sentimental and long-term social and economic welfare benefits, as well as metaphorical and subjective values, interpretations and meanings. I attended the two-week excavation of the Hahtiperä wreck. For me the most memorable and striking feature of the wreck was the smell: the thick and smoky scent of tar oozing from the timbers. I thought I caught up something extraordinary from the past—namely, the very same scent experienced by those who applied the black gold some 300 years earlier.

Cultural resources retain a great deal of 'intrinsic historic, artistic, social, spiritual, and symbolic qualities valued

by society, which are not readily observed in markets' (Claesson 2011: 63). Nonmarket values can be determined in large part by consultation with stakeholders (Claesson 2011: 67). In regards to ownership, cultural resources may be seen as public goods (Navrud and Ready 2002). This shared ownership of different interest groups—experts, general public and the cultural heritage object—can require some balancing when defining, interpreting, valuing and dictating cultural resources and cultural heritage. In the centre of the debate is the question as to what extent the experts alone should decide the museum parameters (Whitcomb 2003; L. Smith 2006; Simon 2007).

One solution to softening the boundaries between experts and lay communities is acknowledging there might be different interpretations—multiple ways of seeing, valuing and consuming cultural heritage (Scott-Ireton 2007: 20–21; Friel 2014: 9). By integrating creative and scientific visions to museum narratives, we can create an inspiring environment to express cultural pluralism (Wickler 2019: 437).

The function and essence of cultural resources should be non-exclusion, meaning the general public and communities should not be excluded or prevented from receiving benefits provided by a cultural resource (Claesson 2011: 64). Combining traditional value-setting and inclusive processes, both top-down (expert values) and bottom-up (public's values), adds transparency to decision-making regarding common cultural heritage (Claesson 2011: 74).

Anthropologist Janet Hoskins suggests the 'life story'— the way an object's biography is narrated which can even be partially fictional—can increase the object's value (Hoskins 2006: 81). Minna Koivikko examined wreck biography and related perspectives in her dissertation. She suggests the life story of a ship or wreck can continue in diverse manners, even after its 'death', and the discovery of a shipwreck can open up a whole new chapter (Koivikko 2017: 37).

Over hundred pieces of the Hahtiperä wreck will not be preserved or curated in a museum. Claesson (2011: 67) states that 'maritime cultural resources have few direct or extractive uses'. I suggest that non-intrusive, creative and public-engaging methods could be an ethical conduct to enrich the extended object biography, especially in the case of non-curated, perishable, organic and waterlogged timber, which will not last for future generations. Giving the public and community a chance to mingle with authentic products from the past could give them a sense of a personal interaction with past peoples and societies.

Poetry and creativity in archaeological narrativisation

Minna Koivikko's (2017: 37) notion of a 'wreck's afterlife' and how its post-excavational events can enrich its biography gave me the impetus to study the Hahtiperä wreck with the aid of creativity and, in this chapter more

specifically, through structured poetry. Here, poetry and creativity have a dual role, first, as a facilitator and a form of expression when narrating cultural heritage, and second, as an output—narrative—for different stakeholders' thoughts and affects regarding cultural heritage, in this case, a nameless wreck.

It is impossible to benchmark the starting point of artists' getting inspiration from archaeology or when creative methods were used for the first time either in archaeologists' own research processes or as a bridge between the general public and cultural heritage. Stories have acted for thousands of years as vehicles for knowledge and beliefs, morality and both individual and collective identity (Kavanagh and Chodzinski 2004: 8).

Through art—in this case, word art—it is possible to strengthen and produce information which falls outside the traditional scientific discourse (Lehtimäki *et al.* 2018: 12). In poems and lyrical representations, we can express qualities of affect and complicated emotional experiences which are otherwise difficult or impossible to represent (Jones 2006: 789; Aitken 2014: 14, 21). In word art, the text is saturated through the life story of the writer. Poetics is a process of sensing 'who we are and where' (Rothenberg 1976: 10).

The functions and impacts of literature and writing— prose, poems, biographies, *etc.*—are related to selfhood, human and environmental relationships, consideration of ethical issues and the integration of previously learnt and experienced to new perceptions (Ihanus 2009: 20). Expressive writing and narrating help to process information that we receive through our senses. In words and sentences, we express our worldviews and compare our own perspectives to the perspectives of other people and society. When writing takes place in a group, the shared texts open up a platform for dialogue and a comparison of subjective experiences (Bamberg 2006; Ihanus 2009: 23, 25).

Archaeological research is often creative and has similarities with fictional narration: in the beginning, there is a mute object. Block by block, through research, a story starts to emerge. As archaeologist Rosemary A. Joyce (2008: 4) noted, 'Archaeology at its best is like storytelling'. Over the past decades, storytelling has gained awareness, especially in learning and education (Kavanagh and Chodzinski 2004: 8).

Collaboration and interchange between artists and archaeologists have proliferated from the beginning of the twenty-first century (Bailey 2017: 246–247, 249; see also Renfrew 2003; Van Dyke and Bernbeck 2015; Kavanagh 2019; Bailey *et al.* 2020; Petersson and Burke 2020). Bailey suggests that archaeologists themselves should also venture in their work past the discipline's boundaries, 'let-go beyond […] to find new places (both physical and conceptual) in which to work that were beyond the traditional limits, boundaries and discourses

of archaeology but also of art. That other space has been poorly peopled' (Bailey 2017: 249).

Bailey encourages the use of archaeological artefacts appropriated from museums or other cultural heritage institutions as the raw material for artistic processes such as exhibitions, performances and publications which take place in non-academic locations (Bailey 2017: 255). Already, the wreck of Hahtiperä has experienced an extraordinary post-excavation life. Non-curated pieces of the wreck were lent to Oulu-based Flow productions and repurposed in an immersive performance 'HYLKY' in 2020. This kind of artistic use of cultural heritage is unusual in Finland, and it was made possible with the courageous and venturesome attitude of the Finnish Heritage Agency, and especially, the aforementioned Hahtiperä wreck's research project manager, Minna Koivikko.

The wreck of Hahtiperä has also given inspiration to two other artistic ventures: '20×26' Twitter artwork (Vuori 2019–2020; see also Vuori 2024) and artist Susanna Sivonen's paintings for the Radisson Blu Oulu hotel, in whose backyard the wreck was discovered. '20×26' Twitter artwork was implemented as a collaboration between the Oulu Writers' Association and Oulu2026 European Capital of Culture Foundation. Artist Susanna Sivonen's 'Osa sesonkia' (2020) painting for the Presidential Suite of the Radisson Blu hotel and digitalised prints of her paintings 'Radisson Bloom' (2020), 'Radisson Aurora' (2020), 'Radisson Huurre' (2020) and 'Radisson Cold' for the standard hotel rooms all include visual elements inspired by the wreck.

Alternative representations such as storytelling, visual arts and drama are all used to support traditional archaeological methods in conveying information to the non-specialist public (Van Dyke and Bernbeck 2015: 2). Memory, individual and collective, shapes the frames of an arena for cultural participation (Brockmeier 2002: 23). By adding creativity to the process of explaining or interpreting the past, we could have a bigger impact on contemporary communities and audiences (Bailey *et al.* 2020: 5).

When experts utilise experimental narrative methods in their own work, they challenge the traditional academic demand for the pursuit of objectivity. With the parallel use of creativity, they can find new answers to questions and ways of thinking—and notice, perhaps, there might be more than one story which fits the archaeological evidence (Praetzellis and Praetzellis 2015; Van Dyke and Bernbeck 2015: 3–4).

Sherry-Ann Brown (2015: 1) writes that poetry improves 'critical skills in imagery, metaphor, analogy, analysis, observation, attentiveness, and clear communication', and she points out these skills also aid in learning, problem-solving, processing observations and making assumptions. For generations, there have been rhymes and versed stories for the intention to transfer knowledge. Dante's 'La Divina Commedia' (1320) is a masterpiece

of prose poem, but it is also flirtation between poetry and science: the afterlife described by Dante's verses is a representation of the Mediaeval worldview, the state of science in Dante's era.

The roots of scientific poetry are far reaching: the poems of the Roman philosopher Lucretius gravitate around the nature of the universe, and in the Romantic and Victorian eras, scientists frequently expressed scientific— also archaeological—observations in poetic form (see *e.g.* Midgley 2001; Jackson 2008; D. Brown 2013). In the twenty-first century, one can find poems on human anatomy, chemistry, astronomy or Earth science on the web (see *e.g.* Mr R.'s World of Science).

Poetry has been and is being used as a method—both in the research process and as an output: an abstract or an entire report can be formulated in the form of a poem (*e.g.* Langer and Furman 2004; Faulkner 2005; Neilsen 2008; Faulkner 2009; Illingworth 2016). In education and social work, poems have been used, for example, to express the emotions of a dead child (Jones 2006) or describe bicultural experiences (W.N. Smith 2002).

There are several neuroscience studies on the effects of poems in the brain (see Hough and Hough 2012; Vaughan-Evans *et al.* 2016). These studies reveal that poetry and the drama of poems not only benefit health, learning and personal growth, but also stimulate the right brain's area linked to autobiographical memory. Through poems, readers or listeners are able to reflect on their own experiences when reconstructing the knowledge gained from the poem.

Poetry workshops in IKUWA7

I organised five 'From wreck to poetry' workshops at the IKUWA7 International Congress for Underwater Archaeology. There were approximately 150 participants in the Congress, of whom 24 participated in the workshops (as discussed below). The workshops were part of the official congress schedule. Three of the workshops were organised in time slots between the main seminar programme, and two after the seminar sessions at the end of the day. The workshops were advertised in billboards of the venue site and in social media. The purpose of the workshops was to have a test run of the structured poetry method, to find out how it works when the focus is on a wreck, and how experts adapt to the poetic approach.

My professional background is in writing, poetry therapy and expressive arts, and I was therefore interested in exploring whether the combination of an anonymous wreck, creativity and expressive arts could open up new approaches and new ways to verbalise individual meanings and affects regarding the wreck. I think this is one way of preserving cultural heritage; 'verbal conservation'. In creative writing and poetry therapy, one of the goals is to verbalise feelings, life occurrences and life narratives, and reflect on the world around us. Writing is always a

personal output, a valuable subjective work. When people write, they document life. In expressive arts—unlike the fine arts—the outcome is not subjected to artistic critique. The 'beauty' of the outcome is not what matters; more important are the process and the meaning of the outcome, and the types of ideas and interpretations, both individual and shared, the text brings up.

I wanted to opt for a creative writing method which would be best suited for the repeatable workshop purpose and for stakeholder groups of various backgrounds and ages. Fictional narrative texts (*e.g.* short stories) more or less based on historical facts seemed too heterogenous and too time consuming. Such texts would also have been too demanding as a tool for use by small children or people with no experience in writing fiction. I therefore decided to use the structured-poetry exercise. It is a relatively quick method and suitable for comparative research, since all the poems are created within the same parameters. Structured poetry is also easy: the youngest participants I have used it with were two years old. (Naturally, an adult wrote down the children's words.)

The interest in structured poetry lies in the words which describe the object of the poem. The object can be the writer himself or herself, another person, landscape, *etc.* In this case, the object is the Hahtiperä wreck. The poetic result can be words with literal and semantic meanings ('it is a wreck'), figurative parables ('it is sleeping') or metaphors ('she is autumn'). Figurative and metaphorical verbalisation is especially useful when we study, express or deal with abstract and emotional matters (Glucksberg 2008: 69; Lakoff 2008: 33).

To ensure the participants were familiar with and focussed upon the poem's object, the wreck of Hahtiperä, a four-

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Verbal instructions:

The poem focuses on the wreck of Hahtiperä. The exercise starts with blank papers.

Writers are instructed to leave ca 10 cm marginal to the left side of the paper.

"I ask you to write down words that describe the wreck. Write down the first word that comes to your mind."

> 1. First line: write down **A NOUN** that describes the wreck.
>
> 2. Second line: Describe the wreck with **THREE ADJECTIVES**. Do not use a colour.
>
> 3. Third line: What does the wreck do? Write **TWO VERBS** with an -ing ending.
>
> 4. Fourth line: Write down **A COLOUR** that describes the wreck and **AN ANIMAL** it resembles.
>
> 5. Fifth line: Write down your **FAVOURITE SEASON** and your **FAVOURITE PLACE**.

When the five lines are ready, the participants are instructed to write **SHE/HE/IT IS** to the 10 cm blank marginal in the left side of the paper and **IN/ON/AT** on the fifth line between season and place.

(10 cm marginal)			
Line 1 (she/he/it IS)	A NOUN		
Line 2 (she/he/it IS)	1. ADJECTIVE	2. ADJECTIVE	3. ADJECTIVE
Line 3 (she/he/it IS)	1. VERB+ING	2. VERB+ING	
Line 4 (she/he/it IS)	1. COLOUR	2. ANIMAL	
Line 5 (she/he/it IS)	1. SEASON	(IN/ON/AT)	2. PLACE

Figure 20.2. Structured poetry exercise conducted in IKUWA7 Congress. Created by Katariina Vuori.

minute slideshow with details of the wreck and its discovery was shown at the beginning of the workshop. A timelapse video of the removal of the wreck (shot by Mika Friman from Museum and Science Centre Luuppi of Oulu) was part of the slideshow. This clip nicely showed the excavation site, as well as size, structure and condition of the wreck. To add a sensory dimension, the workshop room contained three authentic pieces of the wreck's planking with wooden pegs attached to them, as well as a bag with pitch and moss caulking from the wreck. Indeed, the pitchy caulking brought to the venue the scent of tar as was experienced in the excavation.

After the slideshow, the participants had a moment to study and interact with the authentic pieces of the wreck and smell the caulking before they were seated for the structured-poetry exercise. 'Privacy notice for scientific research' and 'Research participant consent' forms were distributed. The participants were instructed verbally through the exercise process.

There are many different structural-poem methods. The one I chose for this venue is a very simple one, in which words describing the wreck are written on lines. The last line is a personal one, adding a subjective dimension to the poem. When all the words have been written on the lines, a reference to the wreck ('she is', 'he is' or 'it is', depending on the participant's choice) is added to the beginning of each line. This addition changes the position of the object to the subject of the poem.

A total of 24 persons attended the workshop. Seventeen participants gave permission for their poems to be documented by photographing. The instructions were given in English. Six participants chose to write the poem in their native non-English language. When the poems were ready, the participants had the option of reading their poems aloud. Five declined to read. One participant asked me to video his performance of reading his poem aloud.

Analysing the poems

The poems are narrative data, which can be analysed and studied in diverse manners (Bengtsson 2016; Baranik *et al.* 2018; Bhatia 2020). Here, I will analyse the selected poems with two methods. First, I will focus on two poems and on one verse in each of them, and I will run them through Sam Glucksberg's metaphor analysis. Second, I will use free association on a selection of 17 poems. These methods are described below in greater detail.

The words the participants chose to describe the wreck could be analysed and processed further in various manners. In longer workshops, for example, the process could include discussion of the poems and the words, and their significance, themes and metaphors. A technique called
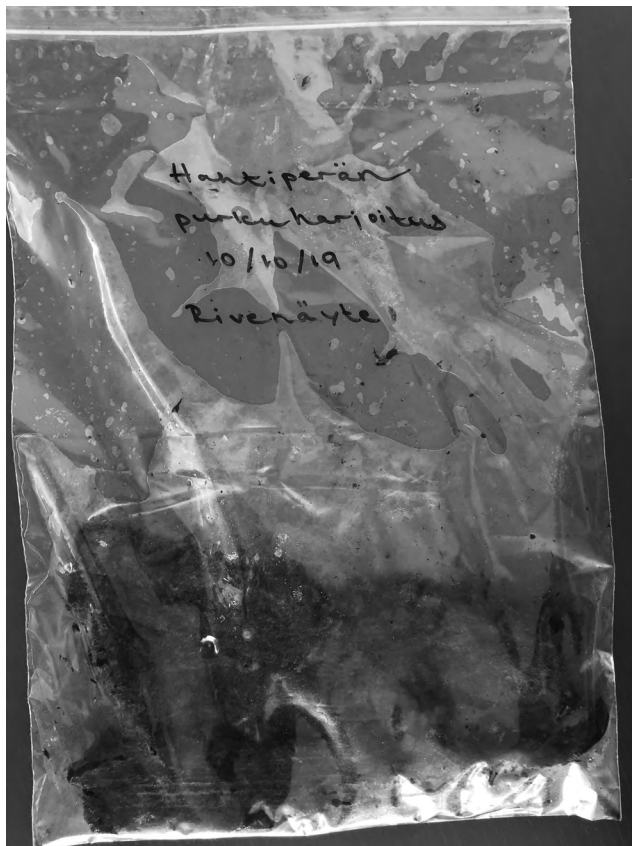

Figure 20.3. Three authentic plank pieces of Hahtiperä wreck and caulking material added a sensory dimension to the poetry workshop. Photos by Katariina Vuori.

Figure 20.4. Participants in the 'From wreck to poetry' workshop in IKUWA7. Twenty-four people attended the workshop. Photo by Katariina Vuori.

looping could also be included. In the looping technique, the written text is used as a material for successive texts. The writer could, for example, choose one verse from his or her poem, and then use it as a starting line for a new poem, short story, autobiography or even a novel.

Glucksberg's three-stage analysis

Since the process and sense of structured poems lie in the chosen words and what they represent or tell about the subject, I chose to analyse the poems with a three-stage word analysis formulated by Sam Glucksberg, a pioneer of psycholinguistics (Glucksberg 2008: 67–68). The three stages are: first, derive the literal meaning of the utterance; second, assess the interpretability of that meaning in the utterance context; and third, if the literal meaning does not make sense in context, search for a nonliteral meaning which does.

The following verses of two poems were used in this analysis:

Poem 1:

It is an assembly
It is waterlogged and fibrous
It is aging, floating, breathing
It is ocker [light brown] water dragon

Poem 2:

It is the sky
It is intense and profundo [deep]
It is sailing, swimming, living
It is a blue-green octopus

Let us focus on the first line of Poem 1: 'It is an assembly'. In the first stage (= derive the literal meaning of the utterance) of Glucksberg's three-stage analysis, we can agree the wreck is an assembly of carved timbers, planks, wooden pegs, wrought iron nails and caulking material. In the bigger picture, the wreck is an archaeological find, submerged in an old harbour, in the vicinity of the city centre of Oulu, situated in the shores of the Gulf of Bothnia.

We can go further and move towards a more holistic interpretation, even at a metaphorical level: the wreck could also be an assembly of knowledge, motivation and the knowhow of past humans, an assembly of cultural interaction, an assembly of old wood and modern archaeological interpretations, a manifestation of dreams, hopes and dormition, disappearance and forgetting.

When the words do not make literal sense, we can approach their meaning through a nominal metaphor survey (Glucksberg 2008: 68). We will focus on similes,

and run the words through a comparative test. If we pick up the verse 'it is a green-blue octopus' and run it through Glucksberg's three-stage analysis, we can see the comparison is not true in a semantic sense. The subject of the poem is a barge type, clinker-built vessel, not an octopus. We can then open up a dialogue: what does the writer mean when she or he calls the wreck an octopus?

We know that octopuses are ocean creatures. They have eight limbs, a bulbous head and three hearts. They tend to hide and camouflage. They are predators. They are a little bit shy and mysterious. They have the intelligence of a four-year-old. We could discuss the possible similarities between a wreck and an octopus. Is it the head, the hiding or the camouflaging to the ground? Octopuses squirt black ink—could that be an allegory of the smoky tar applied on the ship's timber? How about the eight limbs? Could this detail lead to a dialogue about the complicated webs of seafaring, trade, forest exploitation, technology, shipbuilding knowhow, motivation, everyday life and the people behind this chipped, carved, joined, clinkered, tarred sea creature which once floated in the harbour of Oulu?

Free-association analysis

Next, I will go through some selected poems using the free-association analysis. I will focus on word choice and general feeling or ambiance, looking for differences and similarities. I will focus on lines 1–4, leaving out the last stanza where the author connects the essence of the wreck to the author's own favourite place and time of year.

The participants were asked to choose which personal pronoun (he, she, it) they wanted to use for the wreck. The most commonly chosen were 'it' (6) and the feminine 'she' (6), the neutral and genderless Finnish word 'hän' (3) and the masculine 'he' (2).

Instead of or in addition to the metaphor analysis, poems can be processed through free association of the thoughts evoked by words and their combinations, both spontaneously and affectively. The poems can be thought of having been born through the metapoetic reflection described by Gaston Bachelard (1993): the object of the description—in this case the wreck of Hahtiperä—is the base, principal element from which the mental images are created. The text has picked up ideas not only from

She is a dream
she is gentle and deep
she is gazing, thinking, rising
she is blue lion
she is Spring in a Greek island

It is a plank
it is thick and squared
it is sailing, running, floating
it is brown oak
it is Spring on a rocky beach

She is a sail
She is bold and old
She is missing, singing, sleeping
She is green blackbird
She is November in archipelago

She is timber
She is broken and musty
She is disintegrating, wallowing, hiding
She is a brown wombat
She is Summer in Cyprus

She is wood
She is soft and old
She is hiding, sleeping, waiting
She is a brown cat
She is Summer under the water

It is a plank
It is rotten, decayed
It is lying, resting and analyzing
It is brownish fungus
It is Autumn at coast

It is a jigsaw
It is anticipating and hopeful
It is leaping up, embracing nervously
It is an orange crocodile
It is Autumn inside chessgame

She is swamp moss
She is slick, smooth
She is gliding, glistening, sihhing
She is rusty orange goose
She is Summer in pool.

Figure 20.5. Examples of IKUWA7 poems. Copyright by the authors.

the wreck, but also from the author. The words have been filtered through sight, experience, knowledge, olfactory senses, cultural meanings and the author's personality. In exactly the same way, the gaze, touch, experience, knowledge and purpose of the ship's builders have been recorded on the form of the wreck: its shape, material, purpose and the traces of work visible on the surface of the wood, both successes and failures.

In free-association analysis, words can still be interpreted concretely or, for example, intertextually and symbolically. In free association, the outcome is the reader's own; there is no right or wrong. Next, I will go through a selection of poems verse by verse using free-association analysis.

Verse 1: The noun that describes the wreck, an idea of what the object is

The nouns used in the poems are varied by nature. Some words have concrete meanings and arise from matter or form (log, plank, timber, wood, assembly). Others are more abstract, metaphorical or symbolic words (sky, dream). The wreck is described as 'a puzzle', 'a city', 'swampmoss', 'a tree', 'a barn', 'a surprise', 'a teacher', 'a collection', 'a bed', 'a cobblestone' or 'a rattan chair'. None of the nouns refer to the essence of the subject (wreck) as a mode of transport (for example, 'ship', 'boat' or 'barge').

With the exception of four words (sleep, sky, surprise, teacher), all the nouns used were descriptions of matter, many of which were very strong and sturdy (wood, barn, cobblestone, log, plank). Puzzle, barn, rattan chair, city and collection have an air of complexity, and they consist of multiple parts. In one verse, '*he is a teacher*', a professional title is attached to the wreck, and the wreck is given the role of an information distributor and a pedagogue. Thinking more deeply, 'teacher' can also embody a life guide, a guardian of sorts: the wreck knows something more than the watcher, the archaeologist or the audience does. In viewing the wreck as a teacher, there is something that is meant to be shared: perhaps new knowledge, wisdom, experience or awakening?

The poem 'He is a teacher' continues:

'He is friendly and fresh
He is breathing, diving and relaxing
He is a light yellow snake'

When the words friendly and fresh, breathing, diving and relaxing are considered together with 'teacher', the wreck takes the character of a calm guide and mentor, with positive pedagogy and a sense of newness.

Nine of the nouns used in the first verse refer to material. In terms of material, the wreck is compared to wood, rattan, stone, sedge, swamp moss. Viewed through Glucksberg's (2008) metaphor analysis, log, wood and plank are true in a literal meaning, as they are concrete terms and describe the realistic manufacturing material of a wreck. 'Swampmoss' could be connected to the visuality of the wreck: the planks in the water containers are covered with fine, furlike fluff. The moss may also be traced back to the caulking which was seen and smelled in the poetry room.

'Stone' creates a static, stationary and strong stamp on the wreck. A stone does not float, but it sinks. Cobblestone also refers to walking: cobblestones are used to pave roads, and in the city where the wreck was found, Oulu, there are many cobblestone streets, including near the discovery site. Cobblestones have a practical meaning in walking, or perhaps they might pave the passage from present to past.

The Finnish word 'lätty' can refer to a pancake-like fried product, or also to flatness. When the lätty poem is examined for the second and third stanzas, its connection to the form is strengthened:

'He's a pancake
He is flat and moist
He hangs out, waits, has time
He's a cloudy flounder'

'He's flat' and 'He's a cloudy flounder' give the idea of a flat, platform-like shape. This form also came out in the video about the wreck: the wreck has decayed, and it lost the shape of a pod-like or an oblique vase-like ship. Just like the flounder, the wreck also lies flat in the bottom of the excavation site, cloudy and covered with sand. Lätty, flat and flounder make the wreck passive and perhaps also lazy. Lätty can also refer to something which has gone wrong: the ship is no longer doing its job, but has sunk.

Among the nouns, 'city' opens up many options for interpretation: is the wreck a complex, functional and scenic, logistical and multi-functional centre? Administrative region? Or can the 'city' be the cause and consequence of the wreck's activity: the wreck was discovered at a waterfront town, and it was built approximately a hundred years after the founding of the city of Oulu (1605). Proximity to the sea gave birth to the city, maintained it, helped it grow, created movement away from the city and into the city. As an idea, 'the wreck is a city' makes the wreck a public, functional, dynamic and changing urban manifestation. It connects the city to the shore and the continent, the state and its various functions: the economy, technology, knowledge and skill, the polyphony of society and numerous different levels, language and culture, structures, laws, people and the environment.

'Sleep' and 'sky' are essentially light and floating, limitless, self-determined, changing, but still permanent. Their materiality is difficult to touch, smell or taste. As a metaphor, the sky can refer to, for example, freedom, infinity, death and the afterlife, eternity, the condition of life through the air we breathe, permanence, gliding, flying and possibilities ('the sky is the limit').

'Sleep' is the opposite of waking. Before being discovered, the wreck was in a dark, dreamlike, lightless state. A dream is made by images, it is movie-like and produced by the subconscious. Often, we cannot remember it, or it returns to the mind only in fragments. A dream has its own mind and will. Sleep is nocturnal, and opposite to wakefulness. It cannot go on forever, unless sleep is used as a metaphor for death ('eternal sleep'). A dream is a state which is not real. A dream emanates from the one who 'sees' it, the dreamer. Dream is associated with visuality, inaccessibility and a kind of innocence. Dream is spoken of as an omen, but it can also be a repetition of things which have already happened. As a nightmare, it is distressing, persecution and fear.

'He is a surprise'. 'Surprise' as a noun describes the wreck as something dynamic, and positive rather than negative. Experiencing surprise requires an event, and the 'surprised', an outsider who experiences surprise. Or perhaps the wreck is the one which is surprised: it had slept, dreamed, lain flat for 300 years, but all of a sudden, there is light, the roaming of machines, the noise of people talking, touching, ripping it apart.

Maybe 'surprise' refers to the unexpected archaeological discovery, revelation from within the soil. The wreck's existence was not known until the earth had been sufficiently excavated. The surprise of the wreck takes the reader's thoughts to the enigmatic nature of the poem's subject and also the object. The wreck can be a phenomenon, as long as there is someone to experience the phenomenon. The encounter between the author of the poem and the wreck as a surprise could indicate a birth of a new idea.

This poem continues:

'He is a surprise
He is fragmentary and sympathetic
He is inspiring, disturbing, educating
He is a light blue Baobab'

Here the wreck has many faces: an object, a phenomenon and, as a surprise revealed from under the ground, the wreck also seems to have dimensions of human existence and humanity: he is 'fragmentary and sympathetic'. The sympathy attached to the wreck may be related to its appearance, which none of the participants describe as magnificent, ship-like, frigate or other words referring to large warships and merchant ships. As a sympathetic ship has hardly travelled at sea with war-like intentions, it is not offensive.

Verse 2: Describe the wreck with three adjectives

The adjectives in the second line of the poems move ambivalently between the concrete and the abstract. The wreck gets character traits and temperament (gentle, inspiring, bold, friendly). As in the first line, the writers do not describe the wreck as wicked or evil. Does gentleness

and friendliness come from anonymity? Or from the fact the wreck is quite robust, very ordinary? Easy to relate to? But the wreck is not only sunken and failed: she is also 'bold'; she is still in one piece, heavy and sturdy.

'It is anticipating and hopeful.' What could an old wreck anticipate or hope for? That it will be fixed, that it will float, sail, swing and voyage again? Could this verse be interpreted through the allegory of the human being as a wreck? When we are hurt or broken or failed, we can be wrecked. When the healing starts, we are anticipating, slowly getting hopeful: it will be alright.

In the concrete allegory, the teeth of time gnaw the old wreck, just as has happened or is happening to it in real life: it is 'rotten and decayed', 'soft and old', 'waterlogged and fibrous', 'broken and musty', 'collapsed and heavy'. These lines describe the state of the wreck, its physical condition, perhaps its transience, organic weakness.

Verse 3: What does the wreck do?

Thus far, we have written and read aloud words up to the third verse. We have travelled through a city, planks, sleep, decay and inspiration. In the third verse, the wreck is resting, dreaming, lingering, decaying, hiding. The vessel's life has ended, the movement has ceased. The lack of urgency of the wreck is reflected in the verbs: it is no longer going anywhere, nor is it coming from anywhere. In one of the poems, it is diving; in another, sailing. In these two poems, it is associated with its own element, water. Water is one of the oldest cultural symbols, and water is tied to the flowing passage of time, rites, philosophy and world origin myths. Water is found in religions and in ethical and aesthetical allegories (Strang 2004; Lehtimäki *et al.* 2018).

Matt Edgeworth (2012) has pondered the idea of rhythm in archaeology, both as it relates to the archaeologist's working rhythm at an excavation, as well as the rhythm of the archaeological findings. Edgeworth argues that instead of tying archaeological interpretation too tightly to external theories, greater value should be 'accorded to interpretations made on the basis of engagements with archaeological evidence' (Edgeworth 2012: 91). In the third verse of the poems, the wreck of Hahtiperä gets its rhythm.

One of the poems—in which the wreck is also a city—presents the wreck as exceptionally active, highlighting the wreck's role in its past times:

'She is a city
She is strong and hard
She is transporting, connecting, travelling.'

In the poem, the themes of shipping and movement are connected to the wreck: transporting, connecting, travelling. It is seen as a vessel, not yet and no longer a wreck. It is part of the combination of land and sea,

logistics, a cultural enterprise. In the poem, it still fulfils the mission for which it was once built. It is a city, it is strong and resilient, it is mobile and carries something. This poem combines many elements which encapsulate the meaning of the wreck, the reason for its existence. On the other hand, maybe she transports knowledge, connects us to the past, takes us on a voyage through times?

Verse Four: choose a colour and an animal that represent the wreck

At the colour level, we move in broken tones, shades of brown and orange. Sea and water are present in shades of blue, teal and green. The strong prevalence of earthly colours—brown and orange—could originate from the colour of the planks in the water cisterns: they are brownish-red in tone due to the corrosion of the rusted iron nails. The general colour of the wreck is brown. Blue and green locate the subject of the poems to the marine and watery element.

The sea—and more generally, water—has a great symbolic, metaphorical and also very realistic position on the scale of the entire planet. Water is not only a geographical and physical element, it has also always influenced and continues to influence cultural processes, social contexts and the environment. Water has social and cultural dimensions built of meanings and values given to water, and to water's ability to connect various things (Lehtimäki *et al.* 2018: 10). Water is a medium for similes, metaphors and allegories (Lehtimäki *et al.* 2018: 11).

Five of the animals in the fourth verse are water animals: water dragon, flounder, burbot, octopus and crocodile. It is interesting to note the last four of these—flounder, burbot, octopus and crocodile—move in a squirmy manner, staying fairly close to the ground, trying to be unnoticed. Water dragon throws us to a mythical world, to the era of maps in which the cartographer used more imagination than observations of reality. As a water dragon, the wreck has an air of something unknown, mysterious and mythical. It lives in tales.

Of the animals living on land, snake, bear, goose, lion, blackbird, wombat and cat are chosen for the poems. Snakes and wombats are slow, the bear and the lion are strong. Cat is fast, agile and gracious. Blackbird and goose have the ability to fly, a goose has a bit of plumpness in its looks and webbed feet. In literature, a blackbird symbolises something common, easy to ignore. The same could be true with barges in the wreck world: they are easily overlooked and forgotten in comparison to merchant and war ships. The blackbird and its symbolic meaning could stand as a starting point to the discourse of value setting.

Structured poetry as an experience

By observation, the result of the poem was a surprise to many of the participants. One of the joys of structured poems is that the poetry 'is born' when (in this case) 'she/

Table 20.1. Feedback keywords and their occurrence per 10.

Keywords	Occurrence of keywords per ten feedbacks
Fun	8
Easy	4
Surprising, unexpected result	5
Will try at own work	2
Relaxing	2
Suitable for non-specialists	3
Fascinating	3
Inspiring, new thoughts emerged	3

he/it is' is added in front of the lines, and thus, the verses suddenly make sense. The participants were curious to hear what kind of poems the others had written. The chosen adjectives, nouns and verbs prompted vivid discussion of the variety and oddity of attributes or metaphors which people connected to the same wreck. The atmosphere was relaxed and somewhat hilarious. Many commented that writing a poem was not so terrible after all!

At the end of the workshops, I asked the participants to provide feedback. There were no structured questions for this. I received 10 written feedbacks, which are analysed by keywords in Table 1.

Two participants who did not leave written feedback said they planned to use the exercise in cultural heritage in their work with children. If there had been more time, a structured or semi-structured feedback form would have provided the opportunity to elicit more detailed answers to whether this kind of creative exercise can bring new ideas regarding the subject. Three participants thought the poems brought new ways to look at cultural heritage, inspired to new approaches and showed how varied were the perceptions of experts.

The organisers of the congress had a very positive attitude about adding the poetry workshop to the event. The archaeologists and conservators of the Finnish Heritage Agency chose suitable pieces of the wreck and transported them to the event. The organisers also aided in advertising and inviting people to participate the event. Organisers said the workshop and the poems created there were featured in the participants' social media during the Congress.

Discussion and further implementations of creative approaches

In 'Figuring it out' Colin Renfrew (2003: 7) writes: 'I have come to feel that the visual arts of today offer a liberation for the student of the past who is seeking to understand the processes that have made us what we are now.' I think that in addition to visual arts, all creative methods can add a new dimension to dealing with the relationship between a human being, nature, past and present, science and cultural perceptions. Fiction and symbolic, metaphorical language

convey unconscious feelings and experiences through which we can explore what is in between subjectivity and the objectivity of science.

Creativity and poetry workshops can be used both for experts and in engaging general public in cultural heritage work and interpretation. Creativity offers ways to exploit non-curated material culture in an ethical, nonintrusive, fun and respectful manner. The Hahtiperä wreck is perishable, organic material and the non-preserved pieces will rot—fast. Soon the beautifully carved timbers will only remain in stories told by the ones who were lucky enough to see them. Utilisation of non-curated artefacts could also add accessibility: people with visual impairment, for example, can also take part in cultural heritage work by means of other senses.

Through slow and lingering creative workshops, I believe we can bring meaningfulness to the extended biography of an object, add ethical appreciation to both the afterlife of the object and the general public's right to participate in the cultural management discourse, and to feel cultural pride when included in value-setting. I think it is not only interesting, but also audience-friendly, to give general public a chance to mingle with non-curated cultural heritage. In museums, all the artefacts are labelled, 'pre-chewed'. When interacting with non-curated heritage material, people gain the experience the archaeologists get in the excavation: What is this? Where does this scent come from? The public have the freedom to work with their material imagination, come up with virgin interpretations, maybe get surprised.

Different kind of approaches, especially creative ones, can make people aware of their relation to cultural heritage. In combination with a wreck, creative methods can help people find their maritime 'identity-niches' (Dicks 2003: 28–29). Through creative activities, the general public is given a chance to explore subjective interpretations and verbalise their thoughts. In heritage management discourse, the focus is on objectivity. Maybe the dialogue between these two stakeholder groups could be facilitated by a joint creative poetry workshop: could the poems act as a mirror for meanings and hopes, narrow the discourse gap between general public and the experts?

As a writer, writing teacher and poetry therapist, I believe by adding creative, engaging activities, the afterlife of cultural heritage can be more meaningful to both cultural heritage and consumers. Creative methods not only allow people to experience the cultural heritage slowly, at a personal level and from various viewpoints, but they also facilitate the verbalisation of meanings, thoughts and affects towards cultural heritage, thereby giving everyone a voice in cultural pluralism. In this process, cultural heritage becomes part of people's own personal lifestory. Involvement and inclusion in the cultural heritage discourse can also add cultural pride and benefit to society.

What about them? Past people in a poetic mirror

… hand holding the tar brush
a blacksmith blowing his ember
an old woman plaiting a coarse rope
arms grabbing the pitch barrels
a sad wife longing for her seaman
a bourgeoise fond of Tellicherry Black pepper
a pretty young man addicted to Arabic coffee
an ugly lady petting Coromandel cotton
a snotty nosed girl begging for a penny in the harbor
a mouth chewing the salty dried pike
a priest who blessed them all to eternal sleep.
Me, when I think of you
all the time.

(An excerpt from the Poem biography of the wreck of Hahtiperä, section II: 'The ones who touched/were touched by her'; Vuori 2022.)

How can we approach the long-gone people who had carved, sewed, hammered, shaped or clipped the material remains that archaeologists use to understand and to interpret the past human behaviour? Instead of trying to look for these people by their names, occupations and home addresses, maybe we can try to approach them by thinking of the rhythm, the bodily movements they used to create the objects and how peoples' lives, near and far, were affected by the object, in this context ships of various status.

Speculative fictional narrative is criticised for making up things, being misleading (van Helden and Witcher 2021: 6). Many times, fictional novels and short stories of historical or prehistorical era include details we do no not know to be factually correct: sex, age, background, diet, personality, marital status, voice, *etc.* of a character. To use Bernbeck's (2015: 261) words, in fictional narratives the past people's right to speak for themselves is denied. I posit the language of poetry is more subtle. When we use poetry, we avoid the problems of speculative fiction. We can get closer to past people and yet not steal their own voice.

I repeated the IKUWA7 structured-poetry exercise with an archaeology graduate student at the University of Oulu. In this exercise, the focus was on the historical people who might have been in contact with the wreck of Hahtiperä before its demise. To orientate the student to the barge, I showed her the slideshow of the IKUWA7 poetry workshop. To mimic the authentic pieces, we examined photos of the timbers. When she observed the carving marks, she noted a certain level of closeness with the putative carpenter. She assumed that with the original logs, such a feeling of intimacy could have been stronger, the carpenter becoming more of an individual.

Having authentic archaeological objects in a creative workshop could lead to an even more profound 'from human to human' dimension. Through authenticity, public

can conceptualise cultural heritage as a product of a human action. By letting the public get into a leisurely interaction with the objects, they can pay attention to the tool marks, whether skilful or rudimentary, aesthetic or ugly. This interaction can help people not only to see objects, but to see the past populated.

I instructed the student to 'focus on the people who built the barge'. The lines were the same as in the structured-poetry exercise described in this article (Fig. 1.), with one change: I replaced the fifth line ('your favourite season and your favourite place') with 'describe what they or he or she sensed'. The structured poem came out like this:

He is a book
He is strong and sweaty
He is sawing, pushing, dreaming
He is a brown woodpecker
He is hearing the forest.

After finishing the exercise, we talked about the thought associations which arise from the poem. The student said she focussed on a person who had gone to the forest to cut down the trees needed to build the vessel. She had some hesitation to use the noun 'he'. She would have rather used the Finnish gender-neutral 'hän', given the possibility that a woman or person of non-binary identity could have carried out the tree-felling task.

She sensed solitude and calmness when thinking of the person. A book which describes everyday chores, tragedies, joys, a lifetime was associated with the story. To be able to fell a tree and work on it, the person needed to be strong. Here, the writer pointed out, there were probably additional people involved, as the work was likely too much for just one person.

He is sweating, panting, grasping air. The movement of arm is 'pushing and then pulling' as he saws the tree. He dreams of a better life, getting nourished, returning from a wintery forest to a warm home. The allegory of a woodpecker leads to the sound: the clasping of an axe, the rhythmical echoing in the forest. In the verse 'he hears the forest', we can think of all the sensory elements of the surroundings: birds, breath, the crack of a tree branch, the crumbling voice of snow and even the deep silence when the work ceases.

With the combination of slow archaeology and poetry, I believe we can approach the people behind the objects sensitively. The language of poetry allows the expert or the public to cast out ideas about historical people, to draw a verbal picture in order to make them alive and vivid. We could even go further, go to the forest and include bodily writing to the poetry exercise by mimicking all the movements required to build the barge: pull, push, lift, peel, chip, chop, apply tar. Take off your shoes, smell, hear, feel and taste the forest. Write down everything you feel in your body, feel the ancient heartbeat in your chest. We are not that different, after all—are we?

Acknowledgements

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