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Roundtable:

The future of culture in more-than-human worlds of being

Alvar Aalto in Yyteri: Naturecultural quest for organic land use planning in the City of Pori, Finland

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Abstract: Alvar Aalto's regional plan for the Kokemäenjoki river valley (1943) became a naturecultural plan of its time. In his planning approach, Aalto blurred the boundary between nature and culture. Aalto emphasised the everyday nature of human activities and the organicity and rhythm of the landscape. I will think with one area – Yyterinniemi – at the mouth of the Kokemäenjoki river about the effects and timeliness of Aalto's planning approach. I will discuss how the organic complexity, unity and dynamic patterns of doing and undergoing are indeed present in Yyterinniemi, and how the city of Pori, local landowners and other actors have tried to, spontaneously and intentionally, maintain and develop Yyterinniemi as a multispecies assemblage and enable it to fulfil its short-term functions and long-term coevolutionary potential.

Introduction

Taming rivers and their basins is nothing new, but ecologically oriented river basin management is. More-than-human practices are still far out of sight. While people have always tried to command rivers to their

will, understanding naturecultural functions and multispecies purposes while managing them for human and non-human good is still rare.

In Finland, the first holistic attempt to plan the river basin's functions and purposes happened between the Winter War (1939–1940) and the Continuation War (1941–1944). Then, Harry Gullichsen, the CEO of Antti Ahlström Ltd and the Pori Chamber of Commerce, invited architect Alvar Aalto to design a regional plan for the Kokemäenjoki river valley in the autumn of 1940. By then, with Frank Lloyd Wright, Aalto was already a world-known functionalist architect. Aalto's furniture was at the exhibition at the Museum of Modern Art in 1938, and he designed the Finnish Pavilion of World Affairs in New York in 1939. Ahlström Ltd was one of Finland's major sawmill industries (Wairhaye 2007).

Aalto's (1943) regional plan for the Kokemäenjoki valley became a naturecultural plan of its time (Hynynen 2014). The plan had a prototype in the United States. Alvar Aalto was familiar with the operation of the Tennessee Valley Authority, established in 1933 with the aim of raising the region from the depression by developing its vitality overall. Aalto's plan was the first that could be called a regional plan in Finland (Nupponen 1989; 2002; 2012). It influenced the Building Act of 1952 to extend to the countryside, simultaneously when the right and obligation of land use planning were transferred and assigned to municipalities. Regional planning became a formal planning instrument in the Building Act of 1959 (Pelkonen 2009, 120; Hynynen 2017).

In his planning approach, Aalto faded the boundary between nature and culture. With a humanistic approach, he drew attention to the exchange of matter and meaning between them and the effects of technologies on them. Aalto emphasized the everyday nature of human activities and the organicity and rhythm of the landscape. Aalto's plans are designed for a specific location and are tied to a specific place, responsive to local climate, geophysical features, and particular dynamics and complexities (Radford and Oksala 2007).

According to Aalto (1943, 12, all translations of Aalto 1943 JH), "the river valley is a geographic area that can be considered as one social organ, and which incorporates such a versatile set of economic activities that it can be considered an independent economic unit." The riverside settlements, fields, forested areas, roads and communities should alternate and constitute an organic whole and eventually a new level of community development. Aalto's attention was in rhythm; he shuddered at the continuum. "It would be against the nature of the river valley and also against the development of Pori itself (as the main area), unfavourable to developing the master plan area of the city of Pori town into a continuous, peripherally river-oriented growing housing area." (Aalto 1943, 19).

As we now know, the development of the Kokemäenjoki river valley did not progress precisely this way. I will use one area – Yyterinniemi – at the mouth of the Kokemäenjoki river as an example and think about the planning for the functionality and purposes of natureculture. I will show how the organic complexity, unity and dynamics are present in Yyterinniemi, but to what extent the city of Pori has been able to follow Aalto's strategic vision and enable the coevolutionary potential of the area is what I am intending to do in this article. My perspective is that of an interested citizen, trained by the city of Pori and the university departments of land use planning matters, a person who embodies sensory memories of these places.

Alvar Aalto and pragmatism

According to Aalto scholar Kirmo Mikkola (1994), pragmatism, the most influential philosophical school born in the United States, impacted Aalto's work (Schildt 2007, 590; Standertskjöld 1999, 77–90). Mikkola (1994, 20) writes: "America's most valuable gift to Aalto was a pragmatist philosophy that avoided difficult

epistemological speculations as vain. According to the doctrine, the truth of a claim is determined by its consequences. Each act produces its own philosophy." In the late thirties and early forties, Aalto's enthusiasm for the opportunities and freedoms offered by the United States subsided as a critical consideration of the country's social and intellectual conditions (Schildt 2007, 590). However, at least two aspects of his conception support the assumption that the United States and pragmatism influenced his work.

First, Aalto adopted the philosophy of doubt from pragmatism, which has taken its most advanced form in the work of Charles S. Peirce (1839–1914). Aalto writes: "The often-despised worldview of doubt is an absolute condition of cultural contribution" (in Mikkola 1985, 24). According to the pragmatist method, beliefs and practices change and develop via the cycle of doubt, inquiry and belief-update (Hiedanpää & Bromley 2016, 1–20). Aalto (1997/1958, 16) writes: "The condition for this, however, is that we should at all times and at every phase of our life be prepared to doubt and criticize and, when using technology, to make the scale and the interest of the little man [child] the measure of all things."

Second, pragmatism supported Aalto's thinking that experiences bring about a disruptive and surprising path of opportunity – not a harmonious continuum – and can lead to, after a belief-update to economic, technical, intellectual, and especially importantly, moral growth. Unlike the mechanization of life forms, Aalto aimed to keep structures organic and variable to fulfil the design's purpose despite the conditions' dynamics. If habits become too rigid, they become a mechanical routine, the preconditions for development and growth decrease, and preparedness for surprises weakens. John Dewey (1859–1952), however, took an even more organic line as he emphasized intellectual and moral growth, the cumulative art of doing, understanding the effects of actions, and a willingness to change habits (Alexander 1987; Dewey 1980).

These two pragmatist features can be seen in Aalto's social vision of rational and democratic development and growth. Aalto highlights culture (civilization) and its significance in guiding technologies for lifestyle and social development efforts. However, for Aalto (1997/1958, 16), the condition is that "the concept of culture should not be misunderstood nor misused. It is not an isolated phenomenon, separable from life; there must be no so-called cultural circles or special decorative elements detached from real life, because culture is the warp which runs through all phenomena".

The basic idea of functionalism is that things should be designed for their purpose. According to functionalism, the solutions envisaged must work in practice and fulfil their purpose as part of a broader social whole and its dynamic stability (Allmendinger 2009). The function fulfils a purpose and maintains specific characteristics and outcomes at a broader level (Godfrey-Smith 1998). For Aalto (1997/1938, 98), "on deeper examination, architecture is not merely a set of structural results, but to a much greater degree a complex process of development whose inner interaction steadily produces new solutions, new forms, new building materials, and constant changes in structural ideas."

Aalto's relationship to rationalism comes up interestingly at this point. Rationalism, as such, is not a problem. The problem is that people, designers, or social planners have not been rational enough; they have been unwilling and unable to understand the relationships and interdependencies of form, structure, and function in everyday human life. Aalto (1997/1941,154) writes: "Nature is the most remarkable standardization institute of all. Nowhere else does one find such thorough and effective standardization… Nature's biological system evidently represents a prime example of what standardization adapted to the character of architecture should be. All previous architectural systems and orders have been related to this natural standardization rather than to the standardization borrowed from the domain of pure technology that has recently invaded architecture."

Aalto (1997/1935, 91 & 93) writes:

> "… [O]ne way to produce more humane built environments is to extend our definition of rationalism… We have this come back to the question of 'form in itself.' An ever-changing environment means that there must exist some form that is independent of the structure of the object. We have already touched upon the importance of variation potential. Nature, biology, has rich and luxurious forms: with the same construction, the same tissues, and the same principles of cellular organization, it can create billions of combinations, each of which represent a definitive highly-developed form. Man's life belongs to the same category. The things that surround him are hardly fetishes or allegories with mystical eternal value; more than anything else, they are cells and tissues, living beings like himself, building components that make up human life. They cannot be treated differently from other biological units, lest they run the risk of not fitting into the system and becoming dehumanized."

In Aalto's words (1943, 10), in the Kokemäenjoki river valley, "an entirely new, extensive community level, higher than the urban concept, is obviously emerging, formed by a combination of industrial, agrarian, transport-technical and cultural activities spread over a wide area: where settlements, factories and agriculture, etc. are intricately intertwined inseparably throughout the region" (Box 1). In what follows, I will offer a perspective on how development has actualized in Yyterinniemi. I explore how multispecies encounters and doings, practices and undergoings, and spontaneity and interdependencies have constituted the dynamic landscape that allows things to be done and events to happen.

BOX 1:

The Kokemäenjoki River

The main stem of the area, the Kokemäenjoki River, was not in good condition in the 1970s. There was little concern for it then, so evident and natural it was to pollute it. The political realisation of the tragedy began later, and by the time it started, society had already awakened to the importance of environmental matters and the need for nature protection. Legislation and environmental policy slowly did their job, and the ecological state of the river improved, which is quite different today from the golden age of heavy industry.

The Kokemäenjoki River is one of the large, tamed rivers of Finland. While it was tamed to the will of people, it was humiliated and made to act contrary to its nature: filled, dug, dammed, and tangled. (Box 2.) However, even after all the treatment, it remained essentially and functionally a river. It has carried water from its catchment to the sea, provided livelihoods and the green infrastructure of its valley, and provided a habitat for the most diverse range of life, especially in its estuary.

As recently as 2014, a human failure at a chemical industry plant resulted in the leakage of 66 tons of nickel and 1.3 tons of cobalt into the river. This incident had severe consequences for the river's ecosystem, as elevated levels of nickel were detected even in the sea near the river's mouth. The ecological impact was dramatic; for example, over a million freshwater pearl mussels (*Unio crassus*) perished due to the contamination, with dead freshwater mussels found up to 40 kilometres from the riverbeds.

The eco-historical periods of the Kokemäenjoki River have changed rapidly over the past hundred years. The nutrients and raw materials needed by organisms and local populations come from outside of them, and organisms change their environment through their metabolism and by actively modifying it, creating and re-creating their small-scale living conditions, their own biological niches (Rouse 2023). This also

applies to the Kokemäenjoki River, with the difference that the river was not only physically altered, but it had to cope with all the nutrients, raw materials and waste produced by the human niche constructive industrial practices. Part of the river took on itself, and some of it flowed into the Bothnian Sea. The luck of the river was that the surrounding population was not more significant, nor was the polluting industry more powerful.

The river undoubtedly has agency, but it cannot purposefully reproduce conditions favourable to it; it does it spontaneously. Living organisms like freshwater river mussels, salmonids, and humans do this purposefully, as end-directed selves. If the river had that capability, we might think it was a "self". Although the Kokemäenjoki River remains in good health, flowing and alive, and we can conclude from its improved ecological condition that it has recovered, it is not such a goal-oriented "self" (Sherman 2017). The river could, however, have some type of "proto-self". The Kokemäenjoki River as a material actor affects its environment and, as a recognised entity, causes people to react to these effects, albeit in ever-changing ways. The river has been strong in creating human doubt, inquiry, new beliefs, and hope. The human generations have passed away, but the river has recovered and diversified its presence.

Yyterinniemi

Alvar Aalto's regional plan for the Kokemäenjoki river valley begins with a picture and description of the Yyteri dunes. This is not surprising, as the Yyteri sands were already one of the most famous tourism and recreational destinations in the 1930s and 1940s. The shape of the dunes was a good feature to start with. The shapes in the landscape manifested the designer's ultimate professional vision.

Aalto separated Yyteri sands and the 8 km2 forest area into an area suitable for shared use. According to him, the area of Yyteri sands complements the Mäntyluoto village plan, which consists of an area of industrial activity in the north, an area of central settlement and roads, and a sports and leisure area in the south (see Figure 1). According to Aalto (1943, 19), "all of these thus form an ideal parallel to the various forms of life."

The situation has not always been like that. It was not until about 1500 years ago that the present-day city of Pori began to flash out of the sea. As a consequence of the Ice Age and the kilometer-high ice cover, the land continues to rise from five to seven millimeters per year (Kontturi & Wallin 2005, 95–110). As the land began to take shape, the locals began to call it the Ytterö, the farthest island in Swedish. As generations of humans passed, the island grew. But the area was first inhabited by grey seals. People became interested in it much later. First, humans used the land for grazing their companion animals and, much later, for recreation and idleness in Yyterinniemi.

The developmental shift from coastal fishing and agriculture to industrial activities took a while. With the rise of industrial activity and the sawmill industry, human presence and influence on the landscape grew significantly. In particular, the early days of the Finnish forest industry and timber exports industrialized the Mäntyluoto landscape, which is still one of Finland's most important export harbours. The sawmill industry, especially Ahlström Ltd., also appeared in Yyterinniemi and the mouth of the Kokemäenjoki River. Later, the shipbuilding industry settled in the area. The industrial activity also needed its employees, and along with the decades came the residential neighbourhoods of Uniluoto, Halssi, and Kaanaa. Yyterinniemi was industrialized and inhabited by working-class people (Tiira 2005).

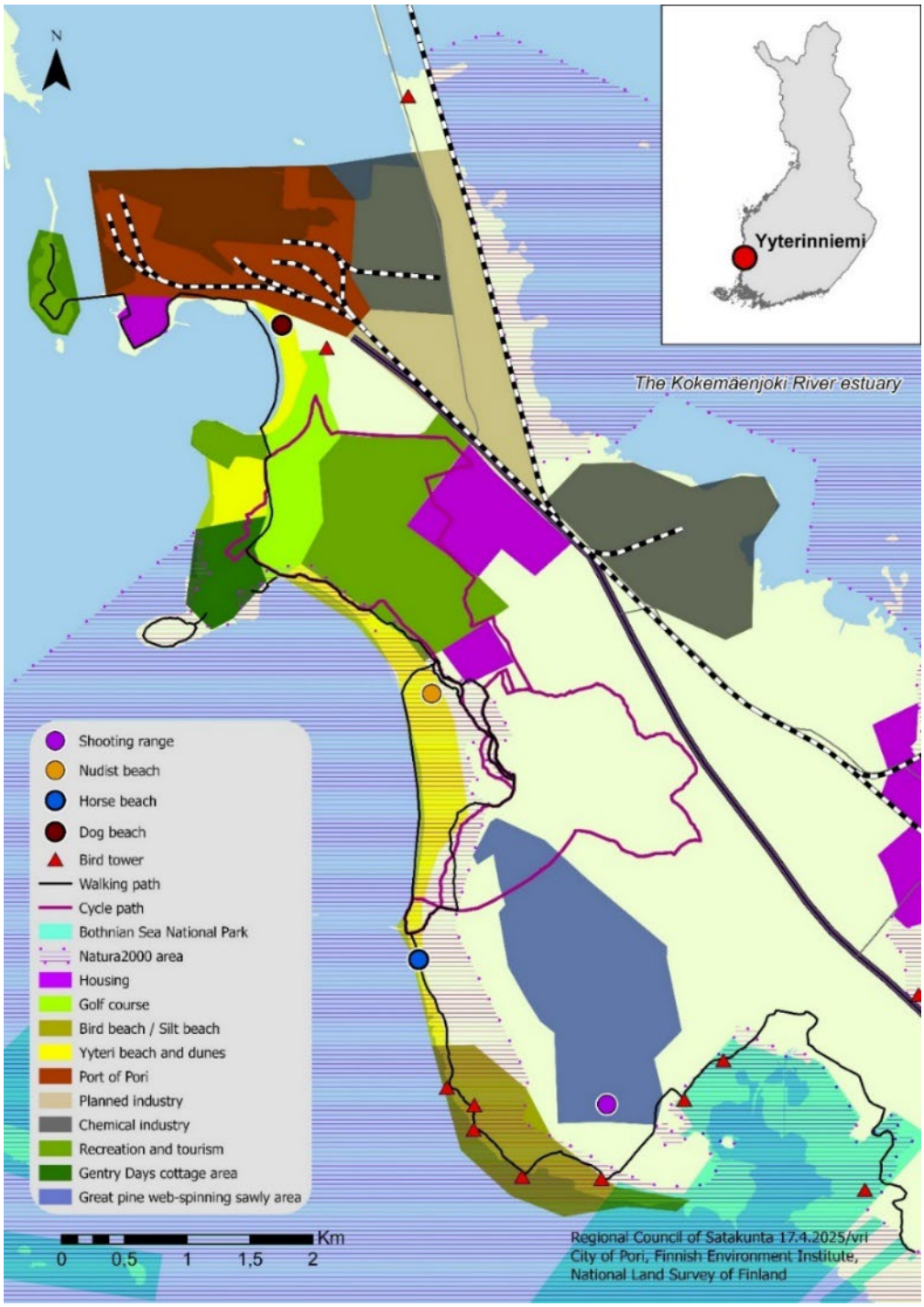

Figure 1: The Yyterinniemi area, Pori, Finland

Naturecultural affordances and niches emerge with hard or soft boundary-making. Forest areas serve a different purpose as zoned summer cottage plots than economic forests, and for example, everyone's right applies only to the latter. After September 11 2001, all industrial activities became fenced from other human activities. One main road cuts Yyterinniemi, and its road tributaries circle around, affording access to the coastline and recreational pathways. Forest roads for silviculture open new opportunities for hikers and foragers. As Macfarlane (2013, 17) writes, "paths are the habits of a landscape": paths are formal and

informal, they connect, relate, and separate – they are end-directed and consensual. As social conventions, restrictions on yard access apply even though a fence does not physically exist.

The most northern part of the sandy beach, Karhuluoto Dog Beach, is an example of how the non-prohibited use of the landscape becomes a local custom over time. On a dog beach, people bathe on dog terms. There are no masses of people moving there. While the large, perfect sun-worshipping sand and beaches located further south, the dog beach, even more fine-grained and hence greyish, is not aesthetically similarly pleasing for humans. The beach affords fun and dwelling for other species. It is an excellent place for spotting animals and their tracks. Judging by the tracks, lynxes have visited the beach, and wolves are likely to have also visited the area. Roe deer may have attracted predators. Humans smell nothing special on the beach, only wet and moist sand. The air used to smell like a chemical factory, but with the cessation of production, the smellscape has returned to a more natural state.

On the south side of the dog beach is the Herrainpäivät, the Gentry Days. A local sense of irony helps in understanding the character of the place: the area is located north of the sandy beach and is constituted by a workers' cottage village, alder bark and a swimming place. It is a peaceful haven where working-class families can spend their leisure time. It has been used for the past 100 years (Herrainpäivät 2025). There is also another meaning to Herrainpäivät. According to old tales, Herrainpäivät got its name from the fact that "parliaments" were held there in old times. The legend is supported by the fact that at least in the early 20th century, a circle of stones could be seen, perhaps for deliberating over decisions. The region's spirit has remained relaxed and relatively low-key. However, when the city of Pori allowed small extensions of the cabins, almost everyone took the opportunity. For the past forty or so years, there has been a golf course on the south side of the cottage area, where the Yyteri beach area begins. Practices and beliefs about idleness are changing.

Yyteri sands form a valuable landscape area protected as a geologically relevant dune formation. The Keisarinpankki (Emperor's Bank), which shone from the sea as a slight surface disturbance 1500 years ago, now dominates the landscape. The material of the dunes is fine ridge sand and sand sorted by shore forces and wind, which consists mainly of quartz. The Yyteri dune area is exceptionally representative. The underwater ridge formation offers plenty of material, and the beach is gently drawn and open to the prevailing winds to the west (Nylén 2009, 7–8) The gently sloping and shallow seabed of Yyteri sands adds to the refreshing speciality of the airsand area.

The prevailing west and south-west winds blow unhindered from the open sea Yyteri's sand. The excellence of wind conditions has been noticed by windsurfers, paragliders, and dune vegetation; for example, dunes provide a habitat for lyme grass (*Leymus arenarius*). At the same time, the plant binds the dunes in place. Despite its effort, the wind will see that the dunes slowly move. The beach has, for example, held beach volleyball events each summer, but more significant events, such as beach football, have been forced into the city due to its ecological impact. Dune vegetation cannot withstand uncontrollable masses of people, and that is why the dunes do not either.

South of the nationally known recreational beach is a beach for nudists and naturists. In the 80s, a local municipal politician initiated the idea, and the city council accepted its establishment. It officially ceased when the new Order Act repealed the City and Municipal Order Rules in 2003, but the city of Pori left signs and poles in place to commemorate the old era. The boundaries of the area can still be seen - and the naturists. Even the nudity section of the ordinance emphasized that it is forbidden to swim naked, but the articles have not always been followed. In 2024, some problematic human-human encounters appeared again, and this time, the prohibition was promised to be enforced strictly. That remains to be seen.

If dogs, workers, athletes, naturists, and families have their own beaches, according to Pori's principle of fairness, there should be one for horses. Among other beaches, a horse beach is a local custom approved by the city, encouraged by natural conditions and welcomed by local riders. There is much debate about the future of the horse beach, but bathing the horses is not yet forbidden. For riders, a gallop in shallow shore water is a unique experience, the denial of which would take an essential nuance from the riding (I can tell). There are marked equestrian trails inside the Yyterinniemi trail network. The horse-rider combinations belong to the landscape.

Birds are a fundamental aspect of the Yyterinniemi landscape. Yyterin lietteet (Yyteri silt) and the Preiviikinlahti Bay are among the most significant bird areas in Satakunta, Finland and in the Nordic countries. Valuable nesting areas favoured by waterfowl and waders, as well as beach areas recognized as migratory resting areas by Arctic waders, naturally belong to Natura 2000 conservation programmes and, as of July 2011, the Bothnian Sea National Park. The Habitats and Birds Directive for Finnish conditions mentions several rare natural areas. The Preiviikinlahti Natura 2000 area of 5552 hectares is one of them.

The most impressive of the birds has been the short-billed dunlin (*Calidris alpina schinzii*), which once and for all organized the Pori bird enthusiasts. The decline of the bird population also affected the Kokemäenjoki estuary, and the Preiviikinlahti coastal meadows began to be restored in 1987. The southern favourite was the most endangered of the birds. It rose to the protection of birds as a symbol. There are currently seven bird towers and six platforms in Meri-Pori. Yyterinniemi is unique for a bird enthusiast because "you can always see someone flying", as one nature enthusiast put it.

Invasive species also cause human confusion and landscape change. A new arrival settled on Yyterinniemi, the great pine web-spinning sawfly (*Acantholyda posticalis*) around twenty years ago. The first swarm observations were made just before midsummer in 2006; severe damage was observed over an area of about 20 hectares. The worst-eaten pines died in 2007, but no new larvae were detected then. In June 2009, again, a substantial swarm resulted in nearly 150 hectares of pine groves being eaten almost cleanly. Although it is an ecological phenomenon, geologic formations play a role in change, as the region's unique dry fabric has enabled the first occurrence in Finland. Three subpopulations, swarming not every three years but every year, but milder. Efforts were previously made to prevent damage by nematodes (*Steinernema feltiae*) planted in the ground, but the expensive form of control has now been abandoned (Pouttu & Silver 2016, 18–27). Damage areas have become smaller in size. It was feared that 10,000 hectares would be lost, but that did not happen because of natural reasons or human preventive actions; nobody knows.

The Kokemäenjoki River estuary, located on the eastern side of Yyterinniemi, is the second-largest estuary in Finland and one of the most significant wetlands in the Nordic countries. Based on the Habitats Directive, 2,885 hectares of the Natura 2000 network are protected in the delta. The Fleiviikki meadow on the southern shore is the most significant and most valuable continuously grazed river delta meadow in Southern Finland and is unique in Finland. As the river brings sediments from upstream and ongoing land uplift, the estuary is a constantly changing complex of habitats.

The estuary affords fishing and hunting of waterfowl and small predators. Locals know the importance of August 20 when the birding season starts. Nature conservation imposes restrictions on the bird hunt. Cleverly, hunting small predators has been linked to a condition placed on bird hunting. For the nesting of beaches and beach meadows to be successful, the positions of mink and raccoon dogs must be regulated. Unlike ducking, hunting small predators has lost much appreciation since the 1970s. Regarding other hunting, the multiple use of Yyterinniemi especially affects the hunting of elk and deer. Due to the location

of the hunting grounds, special attention must be paid to safety. The city of Pori requires a unique safety plan from the Yyterinniemi hunting associations.

BOX 2

The late Toejoki River

I moved to the Toejoki neighbourhood in Pori during second grade. The district got its name from a side branch of the Kokemäenjoki River, one of Finland's most significant rivers. However, the Toejoki River had already been filled in and paved over as a road since the 1970s. It felt strange to bike to school on what used to be a river. The neighbourhood's name came from two words: A toe and a river, Toejoki. A toe is an old Scandinavian fishing gear used for salmon and whitefish fishing. In Finland, the toes were built primarily on the Kokemäenjoki river from the 14th century.

As a schoolboy, not a day went by that I did not think about the lost organ of the Kokemäenjoki River. Did the main stem of the river feel pain? Did it have a phantom ache? Why was the Toejoki River destroyed? Do people miss toe fishing? I understood something about progress, but the reasons for filling the tributary went beyond my mind. I knew that there must have been something wrong with the water. For sure, there was no good flow in the river, as the area used to be the seabed 1500 years ago. There was water in the Toejoki River, but it was the wrong kind, at the wrong time, and in the wrong amount. "The specific problem with the Toejoki River was water: floodwater was everywhere, but no drinking water was found in the soil; the nearest drinking water well was located in the city of Pori, on the other side of the Kokemäki River" (Toejoki 2025). Therefore, the city did not need the Toejoki River for drainage, flood protection, or other human use.

The embankments of the Kokemäenjoki River managed flood protection, and the grand ditch network took care of land drainage. The channel of the Toejoki River may have been too broad to function effectively as a ditch; it took up valuable space and might have even produced unpleasant odours in the summer. Toe fishing and river locks were also long gone. The new and wide Toejoki Riverside Road was seen as a factor for social attraction, which was sorely needed in Toejoki. Ulvila, a neighbouring town, had previously attempted to give Toejoki to Pori, but that was in vain. Ultimately, Pori had to take it by order of the government in 1941. There were reasons for Pori's reluctance, but I did not think about urban development issues back then; my thoughts and sympathies were on the river organ.

Concluding remarks

As Aalto (1943, 19) envisioned for Yyterinniemi, the industrial activity in the north, a central area of settlement and roads, and a sports and leisure area in the south should "form an ideal parallel to the various forms of life." Aalto foresaw an ecosocial approach to ecological rationality when writing (Aalto 1943, 19): "A completely new, extensive, level of community, higher than the concept of a city, is emerging. It is formed by a combination of industrial, agrarian, transportation-technical, and educational activities spread over a wide area, where settlements, factories, agriculture, etc., are intricately intertwined and inseparable throughout the entire region." In a similar vein, Alvar Aalto’s biographer Göran Schildt (1997, 516) writes of the Kokemäenjoki river valley regional plan: “To master the problems of these areas, it was not enough to impose a handful of prohibitions, and statutory obligations; creative imagination and the ability to stake out general plans were needed in order to define and combine the various components,

such as jobs, housing, services, farmland, forests, recreational areas, and traffic arteries, into a functioning unity."

Complex naturecultural landscapes bring uncertainties and conflicts of interest to the fore. Disputes must be settled or overcome. For the past 80 years, the city of Pori has been challenged to enable the quest for organic unity, understand the interplay of various ecosocial structures and functions, reconcile the consequent rhythms and tensions, and practice democratic steering of creativity and freedom of civil and economic actions. In Yyterinniemi, land use tensions have been prevalent. The city of Pori has tried to allow spontaneity and freedom, while constraining some other actions. The rugged continuum of multispecies and multifunctional relations has been sustained by not allowing aggressive commercial development initiatives, which would have been a sign of the wrong kind of Americanization, the attitude Aalto shared with Lewis Mumford (Schildt 1997, 121–122). Organically, the city has allowed ecosocial purposes and functions in their often softly bordered, separated but interacting spaces. When it comes to forest logging, the city cannot constrain privately owned forests. The Forest Law and the Forest Damages Prevention Act scaffold forestry practices.

Aalto was a thinker of binaries (Pantzar 2004, 78). He tried, however, hard to overcome them in practical planning work. Aalto highlighted that interesting things happen in border zones of binaries, in between humanism and technology, business and culture, Fordism and sensory culture, and spontaneous order and bureaucracy. Boundary transgressions bring intensity of insight and doubt to the fore, valorizing the possibilities and development potential, and strengthening the aesthetics of everyday situations, rather than the hope for equilibrium and harmony. Patterns of doing and undergoing have remained surprisingly stable in Yyterinniemi. However, the complexities and dynamics in interrelations between and leakages from one spatially separate ecosocial formation to another are continuously changing. This becomes a challenge of environmental governance.

As Aalto's writes (1943, 10), referring to whole the whole Kokemäenjoki river valley, "an entirely new, extensive community level, higher than the urban concept, is obviously emerging, formed by a combination of industrial, agrarian, transport-technical and cultural activities spread over a wide area: where settlements, factories and agriculture, etc. are intricately intertwined inseparably throughout the region.", and he continues (Aalto 1943, 19), "all of these thus form an ideal parallel to the various forms of life." As said, there is a strong resemblance to the ecosystem approach, initially introduced in the Rio Declaration in 1992. Nature and culture intertwine in ecosocial practices. The governance challenge is to sustain the life-enhancing continuum of rhythms and patterns, not the continuum of equilibrium and harmony.

Binaries offer a contrast space for thinking about land use planning in problematic situations where the needs, desires, and ideas about admired goals vary (on binary thinking, see Rorty 1999; Elbow 1993). Emeritus Alvar Aalto professor Ari Hynynen (2022) elaborated on the challenge in Table 1. For Aalto, one way of overcoming critical binaries and ethical dilemmas in planning work was to take a child's perspective, that of a "little man". Children's lived imagination and experience are multisensory. Recollect the landscape, smellscape, soundscape, and touchscape of Yyterinniemi. Children's sensory courage and capabilities extend beyond regular adult experience and especially beyond how experience is typically understood in land use planning, even when more-than-human approaches are present and used. However, children's position of being at the mercy of decisions made by others is similar to that of other-than-human species. Aalto's insights on nature and multisensory experience resemble those of John Dewey and Jakob von Uexküll, i.e. the presence of smellscape, soundscape, and touchscape is not only metaphorical but also a concrete aspect of lived everyday experience, in transaction in multispecies umwelten (von Uexküll 2010, 200–208) or varied naturecultural situations (Dewey 1929, 203–242).

***Functional zones**, emphasis on borders, unambiguity*	***Functional overlapping and hybridity,** crossing boundaries, accepting ambivalence*
***Reducing complexity** by urban modelling (system, network), professional methods for efficient planning*	***Retaining complexity** in planning, emergence, citizen activism highlights everyday issues*
*Efficiency through **consensus,** regulation of encounters*	*Allowing **conflicts**, tensed encounters, specific conflict zones, scenes for cultural recognition*
*Approaching the planning object through **concepts and metaphors**, ready-made classifications*	*Dealing with the planning object **without preconceptions**, creating new classifications*
*Space is produced by official, **hierarchic planning system***	*Space is produced by **heterogeneous network***
Idealistic and abstract plan centricity	***Everyday practices** as space producers, lived space*
***Order**, aiming to final state, efficiency, quantitative objectives*	***Ordering** (instead of order), continuous process, tolerating uncertainty and incompleteness, qualitative objectives*
***Strict definitions**, classification and naming*	***Broad definitions**, unclassified, unnamed*

Table 1: Professor Hynynen on the governance challenge

Yyterinniemi is rich with ecosocial potential. The area affords and maintains countless opportunities. It is neither possible nor necessary to create harmonious developmental pathways; instead, a continuum of reflective and organic doings and undergoing may more likely lead to the development of "the higher community level" and freedom, Aalto foresaw. Referring to Aalto's regional plan for Kokemäenjoki river valley Göran Schildt (2007, 538) articulates naturecultural normativity beautifully: "It was not enough to solve the problems of the regions with a set of prohibitions or statutory obligations, but it needed creative imagination and ability to perceive comprehensive solutions with different components, i.e. jobs, housing, services, farmland, forest area, recreation areas, traffic routes, etc. defined and combined into functional entities." Yyterinniemi is rich with coevolutionary potential.

To conclude with Aalto (in Simons 2022, 11. Translation JH): "Nature is a symbol of freedom – by basing our technical master plans strongly on nature, we have the opportunity to turn the curve of development back in the direction that our everyday work and all its forms increase freedom, not decrease it".

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