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Mining for Heritage
Heritagisation processes and management of former and current mining areas at the Skellefteå Field

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Master’s thesis in Global Environmental History
Abstract

This thesis examines the heritagisation processes that have taken place at the Skellefteå Field since the 1980s, that transformed former and current mining areas into mining heritage sites. The purpose of the thesis is to find out how and why the heritagisation processes started and how the heritagisation processes developed through the years. Another important aspect of the thesis is to examine the narratives used to motivate the heritagisation of the areas.

The thesis uses Critical Discourse Analysis’ (CDA) three dimensional analytical model as a methodological approach to examine the narratives used, by comparing the narratives used by the Swedish National Heritage Board, the County Administrative Board in Västerbotten and by the local actors who manage the sites. The CDA model is used in combination with field theory, adapted by Isacson and Orre from Broady’s understanding of Bourdieu’s original field theory, to frame the mining heritage discourse as a field. For the understanding of the heritagisation processes of the former and current mining areas, the thesis uses the theoretical framework of heritagisation by Harrison, and primarily the reconceptualization of heritagisation by Sjöholm who has redefined heritagisation by adding the terms re-heritagisation and de-heritagisation.

The results of the essay show that local enthusiasm is the primary instigator of the heritagisation processes of the former and current mining areas. The narratives used by the mining heritage sites correspond well with the narratives used by the Swedish National Heritage Board and the County Administrative Board in Västerbotten. It is shown that the narratives used at each level, national, regional and local, are shaped by each other and that these narratives ultimately frame the field of mining heritage and the discourse of mining heritage sites at the Skellefteå Field. The local enthusiasts instigated the heritagisation processes and were supported during the 1980s by an increase in interest for industrial heritage from a national level. The heritagisation processes were in no way absolute, the heritage was constantly reaffirmed, and in some cases rejected. Heritagisation processes cannot be seen as fixed, they are fluid and the mining heritage sites are dependent on the continuous perception of them as heritage. The heritage sites become reaffirmed each time they are visited and perceived by the visitors as heritage. The thesis is connected to the larger projects Nordregio and REXSAC at the Royal Institute of Technology.

Keywords: Mining heritage, heritagisation, heritagisation processes, the Skellefteå Field, Västerbotten, narratives, Guldriet, Nordregio, REXSAC.

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1. Introduction

I must admit, I knew very little about mining, mining communities and mining heritage when I first started writing this thesis. I had of course heard of issues of mining, the environmental implications and the issues of Sami land rights – being a student at the Global Environmental History programme, it would have been hard to not hear about these issues. I had a vague idea of mining communities and their difficulties because of the deindustrialisation and depopulation that have hit small communities in the north of Sweden in the aftermath of an increased automatization of jobs within the mining industry. It did not occur to me that former, and in some cases current, mining areas could be turned into heritage sites. Even though mining was not a special interest of mine, I was interested in the history of technology and especially in how it affects people and environment. I knew that I wanted to write my thesis with some connection to the history of technology, and I contacted the division of history of science, technology and environment at the Royal Institute of Technology and asked if I could be included in one of their research projects. Thus, I came into contact with the REXSAC - Resource Extraction and Sustainable Arctic communities and the Nordregio Sustainable communities and the legacies of mining in the Nordic Arctic. The project is concerned with the legacies of mining communities in the Arctic, and how they manage the material and immaterial remnants of mining operations. The researchers connected to the project were already covering Svalbard in Norway, Qullissat in Greenland and Kiruna in Sweden, but they did not have anyone looking into the Swedish region of Västerbotten.

I chose to concentrate my research to the Skellefteå Field, located in Västerbotten, since the mining operations there had been the most large-scale and most recent in time. I soon learned of the mining heritage project Guldriket, and that opened up a whole world of heritage processes, mining heritage narratives and former and current mining areas. The research took me all over the country for interviews and archive materials. Raised from childhood in Stockholm, I had not been in Västerbotten before and it was a great chance for me to discover a beautiful part of Sweden. I am grateful for the opportunity to write about mining heritage at the Skellefteå Field, it has given me an understanding of the issues that small former and current mining communities face when mines either shut down or downsize. A mine is not simply a place where minerals are extracted from a pit – a mine is a vast system of people, infrastructure and knowledge that is not as easily shut down as the mining operations. Even though the pit and the immediate area is subject to reclamation, the experiences and the people who shared these experiences are left. These experiences are in some cases turned into mining heritage sites.

What has struck me when writing this thesis, is the work done by the local enthusiasts at the mining heritage sites. Despite what type of heritage is currently on the national cultural political agenda, they carry on with what means they have. I hope that my thesis can show the importance of their hard labour and inspire public and private actors to invest in their efforts in order to ensure the longevity of these sites, and perhaps to start new heritagisation processes at other former and current mining areas.
1.1. Aim and research questions

The aim of my thesis is to examine the heritagisation processes of former and current mining areas at the Skellefteå Field in Västerbotten. I want to explore why some of the sites have become successful heritage sites and why some have not. I will use a constructivist theoretical approach and will therefore explore how different actors interpret and narrate the sites and why, from public actors such as the County Administrative Board in Västerbotten, to the organisations and individuals who are managing the sites. I will explore the heritagisation processes at the Skellefteå Field through the mining heritage project Guldriket, and how and why changes have occurred.

Research questions:
- How, why and under which circumstances have some former/current mining areas been (re)-defined as heritage and why? Which parts of the former/current mining areas have been redefined as heritage and why?
- Why have some attempts to develop former/current mining areas been more successful than others?
- Which narratives and arguments have the actors managing the sites used in order to engage preservation and which ones have public organisations used to motivate their engagement?
- How have the mining heritage sites been managed in the area since the late 1980s, and why?

1.2. Concepts

Cultural heritage – the Swedish National Heritage Board defines cultural heritage as “every material and immaterial manifestations (traces, remnants, objects, constructions, environments, systems, structures, operations, traditions, naming norms, knowledge etc.) of human influence”. I have chosen to use this definition since the National Heritage Board is one of the most important actors within cultural heritage in Sweden, and their definition of heritage shapes how the mining heritage sites at the Skellefteå Field are managed and discussed.

Industrial heritage – according to Isacson, the industrial heritage is “an expression of values and thought patterns in our time” (Isacson 2013:17). What defines industrial heritage? What constitutes industrial heritage? Industrial heritage was formerly mostly understood as the physical, material remnants of industrial operations, but the definition has broadened over the years and today it includes more abstract, immaterial elements such as narratives (Timothy & Boyd 2003). I apply this broad definition of industrial heritage to mining heritage as well.

Former/current mining area – I use a system’s approach to view the former/current mining areas as systems. The systems include buildings for housing the mine workers, communities and the headquarters of mining operations, as well as post-processing plants such as ore crushers and concentration plants, infrastructures for transportation and communication (Bijker et al, 1987).

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1 The words cultural heritage and heritage are used interchangeably in this thesis.
2 http://www.raa.se/kulturarvet/, accessed 2016-06-02, my translation.
1.3. Previous research

There have been plenty of studies on industrial heritage, in which Marie Nisser, Sven Lindqvist and Gunnar Sillén were pioneers. Marie Nisser was the world’s first professor in industrial heritage research, a position which was located at the Department of History of Technology and Science at the Royal Institute of Technology in Stockholm (Isacson, 2013:26). These early scholars within industrial heritage research formed the backbone of industrial heritage studies, and as such they are important to many of the more contemporary works concerning mining heritage.

Previous studies of the field of mining heritage have mostly concentrated on more established and well known mining heritage sites. Studies conducted in Sweden, and of relevance to this study are for example Plats för kulturarv och turism: Grythyttan - en fallstudie av upplevelser, värderingar och intressen by Lotta Braunerhielm, a doctoral dissertation from 2006. Braunerhielm’s dissertation is a case-study of Grythyttan, which is an old mining community in Bergslagen in Sweden. The study focuses on the tourism aspect of a mining heritage sites, and what motivates tourists to visit. Braunerhielm also discusses the values that are put into the site by the people who either work there, live in the area or are concerned with the preservation of the site. Braunerhielm’s conclusion is that the commercialisation of the society at large as affected the heritage so that it has become commercialised as well, which created some tension between people who wanted to focus on the cultural heritage, versus the people who turned Grythyttan into a modern destination where the focal point was not cultural heritage anymore (2006:211). This was indicative of the times, as Isacson writes, there was a shift in focus at many heritage sites to become more attractive and “destinations” during the early years of the new millennia (Isacson 2013:28-30). This will be shown later on in the thesis, that this also affected the Skellefteå Field.

Another study that has been important to my own research is Industriarvet som tillväxtnmotor. Ånnu en satsning i ett luttrat Bergslagen by Inger Orre from 2016 which is a report from the research project Brytpunkt Bergslagen, funded by the Swedish National Heritage Board. Orre writes on behalf of the Swedish National Heritage Board and investigates the project “Brytpunkt Bergslagen” which makes up the major part of their effort to further mining heritage in Sweden. The study is extensive, and has been conducted for years, and the report is the first of three. Orre’s study has inspired my theoretical and methodological approach, which I will discuss later in this chapter.

Isacson (2003; 2013), has also influenced my study, as I am using some of his notions and understandings of Bourdieu’s field theory to frame a methodological approach for my study. Isacson argues that field theory is a helpful tool to answer questions of industrial heritage issues and what their relevance is within the field of cultural heritage, and ultimately how these two relate to the overall societal changes over time (Isacson, 2013). Isacson’s (2013) research correlates to my own, as his purpose is to shed light on and explain the heritage field’s level of openness to remains of industrial operations, in order to get a fuller understanding of how the industrial heritage is situated within the heritage field. Isacson analyses his material in different chronological phases, which I also found to be a good structure for this type of study that examines structural changes, and I will in my text go through the heritagisation processes in chronological order.

One of the most significant works on mining heritage is the recent doctoral dissertation Heritagisation, Re-Heritagisation and De-Heritagisation of Built Environments The Urban
Transformation of Kiruna, Sweden by Jennie Sjöholm from 2016. I use Sjöholm’s understanding of the theoretical concept heritagisation and her adaptations re-heritagisation and de-heritagisation as my theoretical framework for analysing and understanding the heritagisation processes at the Skellefteå Field. I will discuss the theory more thoroughly in the next chapter. The purpose of Sjöholm’s thesis is to contribute to the understanding of heritagisation in built environments and how heritagisation is interacting with changes to an environment. Sjöholm’s dissertation is a single case study, examining conceptualisations of built heritage in Kiruna, which is a bit different than the focus in my research. Built environments are more likely to become heritage sites, because of the national and regional focus on built environments as something that remains and therefore can be preserved¹. I will problematize this in my study, since there in many cases after mining operations is virtually nothing left behind to preserve which makes the initiation of heritagisation processes difficult (although not impossible!).

The remnants of a large scale mining operation leaves a scar in the landscape, as Anna Storm shows in her book Post-industrial landscape scars from 2014. Storm examines the scars caused by iron and steel industry, nuclear power production and mining. Storm argues that the scars must be acknowledged and that the memories of a place must be understood and shared to fully understand a post-industrial landscape. This is a significant train of thought, since it is basically what the mining heritage sites that I examine build on – memories of a place.

No larger study has been conducted on mining heritage sites in Västerbotten, although some shorter texts have been written about the project “Guldriket”. The most significant one is Kulturarvet och entreprenören: om nyskapet kulturarv i Västerbottens Guldrike by Torkel Molin (2007), which is a report from the Swedish National Heritage Board, which is the governing body of protected sites in Sweden. The aim of the report is to investigate how cultural heritage is managed by entrepreneurs. Molin has written shorter texts about Guldriket, a section in the report Industrihistoriska kulturarv i regional utveckling for the Swedish National Heritage Board in 2007, and a chapter in the book Topos: essäer om tänkvärda platser och platsbundna tankar in 2006. These former studies of Guldriket have been focused on the entrepreneurs who manages the sites in Guldriket and they are both written almost 10 years ago. Therefore, my research can provide knowledge of what happened after the years 2006-2007, when major changes occurred for these sites. Additionally, Molin’s texts have not been concerned with the heritagisation processes, as to why I believe that the approach of my thesis can provide new and valuable information of how heritagisation has been designated to the former and current mining areas at the Skellefteå Field.

Most studies of mining heritage sites have been conducted on more established and well-funded sites such as Bergslagen, who are currently enjoying the majority of efforts earmarked by the Swedish government towards mining heritage.⁴ There is not much written about mining heritage at the Skellefteå Field, despite its importance for the development of the mining industry in Sweden and thus its importance for mining heritage.

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¹ Interview with informant 2, 2016-05-19.
1.4. Methodological and theoretical frameworks

I have chosen the approach of Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) as a tool to do my research for this thesis. There is some confusion, since CDA is an umbrella term for a variety of different approaches that use critical discourse analysis, but it is also one of the approaches developed by Fairclough with specific adaptations. To confuse matters further, Fairclough was one of the founders of the critical discourse analysis school of thought (Phillips and Winther Jørgensen, 2002). I wish to make it clear that when I henceforth mention CDA in this text, I am referring to the approach created by Fairclough, not the umbrella term for the whole school of thought.

Fairclough (1995) applies a three-dimensional model through which a text is to be analysed where the first dimension is analysing the text, i.e. analysing the linguistics such as the vocabulary used. The second dimension is analysing the circumstances under which the text is produced and utilized, also known as the discursive practice, and the third is analysing the correspondence between the discursive practice and the wider social practice, in which both the text and the discursive practice belong. A central theme in Fairclough’s approach is that he understands discourse as a significant form of social practice, and that discourses are shaped by social structures and practices, while they are simultaneously changing and reproducing knowledge and social relations. As such, a discourse can be seen as both constitutive and constituted (Phillips and Winther Jørgensen, 2002).

CDA has received some criticism due to its vague theoretical approach, and thus CDA should be combined with a social theory to become a successful research approach. Fairclough himself suggests using Bourdieu’s field theory to create a more comprehensive understanding of a complex subject (Chouliaraki and Fairclough, 1999). Orre (2016) uses CDA in combination with a modification of Bourdieu’s field theory. Orre adapted the field theory of Bourdieu through an already existing adaptation by Broady (1996; 1998), concerning autonomous fields. Isacson (2013), also building on Broady (1996) understands Bourdieu’s theoretical concept of a field as a social room with a high autonomy and with specific rules of what that field entails and not. Both Isacson and Orre show that field theory is a valid theoretical approach to studies of cultural heritage, and Orre shows that it goes well with the CDA approach.

It is worth noting that I do not intend to use CDA a theory, but rather as an underlying methodological approach. I use the adaptations of field theory that Orre and Isacson use as a lens to view my field through. My field in this study is the field of mining heritage, and the discourses, structures and management that constitute the field. I will use CDA to analyse the empirical data collected from the archives, meaning that I will use Fairclough’s three-dimensional model to contextualise the discourses used by the actors within mining heritage at the Skellefteå Field with the larger discourses on industrial and cultural heritage held on the national and regional levels.

Using CDA, I try to understand and analyse through a combined analysis of the discursive practice and the overall social practices. Thus, I look at the discourses such as meeting protocols, applications for financial aid, strategies and programmes, by putting them into the larger context of the contemporary discourse on regional and national levels in the forms of the programmes for industrial heritage/cultural heritage provided the County Administrative Board and the Swedish National Heritage Board. I will to lesser extent look at how some key
value words in the programmes change, and how this change in vocabulary corresponds to changes in the management of the mining heritage sites.

CDA cannot, however, provide the theoretical concepts needed to explain my research questions concerning the heritagisation of the former and current mining areas. For the analysis of heritage and heritagisation, I have relied on Sjöholm (2016). Sjöholm uses the definition of heritage as defined by Harrison (2013). Harrison defines heritagisation as the process that takes place to turn objects, places and practices into cultural heritage. Harrison argues that heritagisation is when redundant objects and/or places are collected and listed. This is the idea of “assemblage”, stemming from actor-network theory and assemblage theory. Harrison’s idea is that heritage can be considered an “assemblage” that consists of “a series of objects, places or practices that are gathered together in a museum or on a list, register, or catalogue of some form” (Harrison 2013:33). Harrison’s definition of heritagisation is significant to my research, as I explore how and why heritagisation processes occur, and especially as the basis on which Sjöholm (2016) builds the new concepts of re-heritagisation and de-heritagisation.

Sjöholm argues in her doctoral dissertation that heritagisation needs two additional aspects; re-heritagisation and de-heritagisation. Sjöholm writes that heritagisation can have four different meanings; (1) The addition of new heritage. Sjöholm argues that this heritagisation process is “the designation of new parts of built environments as heritage” (Sjöholm 2016:88). When a physical space, either a building or a place, is deemed as official heritage, it is consequently added to lists and/or receives some form of legislated protection. (2) Re-affirmation of already designated heritage. This is one of the two forms of re-heritagisation conceptualized by Sjöholm. In this process, the same physical spaces are reaffirmed as heritage, by being identified and interpreted in the same way as before. (3) Re-interpretation of already designated heritage. The second form of re-heritagisation. This process takes place “when new, or additional, meanings are attached to the built heritage”. (4) Rejection of previous designated heritage. This is what Sjöholm describes as a de-heritagisation process. The consequence of the process is a loss of and/or decrease in the former cultural recognition given to the place (idem).

These new aspects of heritagisation form the theoretical framework through which I analyse the main part of my study. There is a significant difference in Sjöholm’s study and mine since Sjöholm studies the heritagisation processes of built environments, while my study focuses on perceived cultural heritage which does not necessarily correspond to a specific building or even a specific physical space. However, Sjöholm’s new take on the theoretical concept heritagisation is important and fruitful for me to use in my study to examine the processes in which the studied sites use their narratives to create, reaffirm, re-interpret and in one case even reject heritage. Sjöholm’s theory of re-heritagisation and de-heritagisation have aided me in analysing the heritagisation processes that have occurred at the Skellefteå Field, and will be used extensively by me throughout the study.

1.5. Sources

I have chosen a variety of sources within this study to answer my research questions and thus fulfilling the aim of the thesis. I have mostly used primary sources from archives, official reports from public institutions, as well as information gathered through interviews and surveys which I will discuss further on in this section. The secondary sources used for this research have primarily been used to form the background chapter of the study.
Since the mining heritage sites do not have separate archives that I had access to, I decided that the best way of investigating the history of mining heritage management was to go through the history of the project Guldriket which entailed all of the sites. The primary sources have been from the Västerbotten Country Archive, the archive at the Museum of Västerbotten and the archive at the Skellefteå Museum. In the archives, I have tried to find information about the project Guldriket, mostly about how the project progressed through the years but also about the motivations for creating Guldriket and for choosing certain areas that would later become mining heritage sites. There was a lot of documentation on the project, although it varied quite a lot depending on the year. There was virtually no documentation after 2007, thus for the contemporary management of the sites I chose to use a combination of empirical data, such as surveys, interviews and strategies for cultural resources management and cultural programmes from the Swedish National Heritage Board and the County Administrative Board in Västerbotten.

The process of interviewing for me started with identifying interesting actors and making contact. Sometimes, they did not have the time to meet with me and have instead referred me to someone else, but mostly they have taken an interest and have been glad to answer my questions. Some of the interviewees have known each other and some of them have worked together on the project Guldriket. They range from former employees at visiting sites, to current employees at the Skellefteå museum, to representatives for a visiting site as well as an employee at the County Administrative Board in Västerbotten. I conducted a total of five interviews with six people who are connected to mining heritage sites in Västerbotten. All of them except one have been involved within the project Guldriket in one way or another. All of the interviews have been conducted quite similarly. I have contacted the interviewees before the interviews and we have had some form of communication, often emails, beforehand so they have all been aware of who I am and what my aim for the research is. The interviews have taken place at different locations, all but one in Västerbotten – the other one took place in Lund. I did not ask specific questions during the interview, I chose instead to have an open discussion. This was made easy by the fact that the people that I interviewed were all very passionate about the subject, and since I had contacted them before and had had email correspondence with them where I specified the aim for my thesis, I barely had to start the conversations. I sometimes asked them to elaborate on different statements that they made, and occasionally asked for specific dates on certain events. Other than that, I let the interviewees talk about what was important to them, since what I was after was their narratives and their view of the sites and mining heritage in general.

I contacted all of the mining heritage sites that are within my research area, unfortunately not all of them answered. Most of them did answer, to my delight, and have helped me form an understanding of how the different sites are managed today. The aim of my questions was to find out how the sites are managed today. I have listed the questions in an appendix (see p. 50). One problem that I faced during this research was that some of the visiting sites were not able to meet with me, or answer my survey.

Apart from interviews and surveys, I have also included some personal email correspondence in the empirical material, from correspondence with a representative from Boliden AB concerning their view on Bergrum Boliden.

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One of the interviews was with two informants at the same time.
My primary empirical data has consisted of archive material from the County Administrative Board in Västerbotten and Skellefteå Museum. The archive material concerned the project Guldrietet, and has been a variety of applications for financial funding, meeting minutes, strategic plans and reports. A big part of my study has been devoted to investigating the motives behind heritagisation and the narratives used to motivate, so I have constantly been comparing sources against each other to find out how certain words and narratives arise. I have been searching for the source’s tendencies and it became clear that the mining heritage sites and the work group for Guldrietet tended to exaggerate in order to motivate funding. They used value words that had previously been used by national and regional levels, such as the County Administrative Board and the National Heritage Board. No source can ever be objective, so my outset have been that all of the sources have been subjective, especially since they are in these texts motivating their own existence.

When it comes to the interviews, I recognise that my selection of interviewees was conditioned by my preconceived notions of the field of mining heritage. These notions have gathered through the pre-study that I did before the research, and if I had chosen to read different literature than I did, I might have chosen to interview different people. Coincidences also play a big role in this, some of the people that I would have liked to talk were not available for one reason or another. If I had spoken to them, this study would have turned out differently.

Davies (2008) argues that reflexivity is important when conducting any type of ethnographic field work. The ethnographer, in this case me as interviewer, must reflect on their own position and how it relates to the position of the interviewee. In all of the interviews, the interviewees already had a pretty good idea of who I was and what I wished to find out. I have presented myself as a student, with intentions to write an academic study about mining heritage site in their region. My position as a student, and their positions, have not conflicted in any major way. Most of the interviewees are academics themselves, and as such we had some common ground which I believe facilitated the interviews, by using the same type of language.

No one asked to be anonymous, although I have chosen to anonymise the interviewees since it is customary.

1.6. Disposition

In this first chapter, I have described my aim for the thesis and through which methods, theoretical frameworks and empirical data I seek to answer my research questions.

The second chapter of the thesis is a background chapter, devoted to how the mining industry at the Skellefteå Field developed and the legal structures concerning mining that are of consequence to the former mining areas. I will go on to describe some of the key actors within mining heritage at the Skellefteå Field. This chapter is intended to facilitate the reading of the rest of the thesis and it is divided into three subchapters; The historic development of the mining operations at the Skellefteå Field, After the mining – environmental issues, reclamation legislation and the Swedish mineral strategy, and Actors within mining heritage at the Skellefteå Field.
The third chapter examines the history of the project Guldriket, through which I analyse the heritagisation processes at the Skellefteå Field. I will present the empirical data that I have collected and combine them with my theoretical framework. The third chapter has five sub-chapters: Groundwork, Early years, Golden days, Gold of Lapland and Mining heritage sites at the Skellefteå Field today.

The fourth chapter is for my discussion of the results from the empirical data, a brief conclusion and finally some ideas for future studies. After the presentation of the sources, appendices will follow with the survey questions sent to the recipients, a map locating the different mining heritage sites mentioned in the text and pictures.
2. Mining and mining heritage at the Skellefteå Field -
historic development, legislation and actors

This chapter will describe how the mining industry at the Skellefteå Field developed, the legislation concerning reclamation procedures and actors within mining heritage at the Skellefteå Field. This chapter is intended to facilitate the reading of the rest of the thesis and it is divided into three sub-chapters. I have focused on the historical development of the mining areas that would later go through heritagisation processes, which I examine in the next chapter.

2.1. The historic development of the mining operations at the Skellefteå Field

In the beginning of the 20th century, consensus was that Sweden was rich in iron but not in other minerals. The First World War caused a shortage of metals for import and new techniques were used to search for possible sources of ore in Västerbotten. Sources of ore were found at Fågelmyran near Bjurliden in 1924 and the mining operations began. Other sources were found in the area that became known as “Skelleftefältet” (the Skellefteå Field) and new mining operations were constructed in Adak, Kristineberg, Rudtjebäcken and Brännmyran to name a few (Lundgren, 1994). Quite a few of the findings of ore were originally discovered by locals, but after the First World War the exploration was conducted mostly by a holding company, “Emmissionsbolag”, which later became Boliden AB⁶. The Swedish government agency SGU⁷, the geological survey of Sweden, conducted explorations as well⁸ (Lundgren, 1994:3).

The mining operations began at Fågelmyran, and the area would henceforth be known as Boliden due to a misreading of an old map where Bjurliden was incorrectly named Boliden. Boliden AB became the name of the company, as well as the society that was built for the workers. The society was a modern one by the standards of other mining villages at the time, and Boliden did not just build houses for their employees – they built a whole society with school, cultural activity house, shops, proper streets and a main square. Boliden became the first of Boliden AB’s mining societies and would serve as a blueprint for other mining societies tied to their mining operations. Similar societies were built at several mines, most notably at Kristineberg (Lundgren, 1994). This narrative of Boliden AB as a community builder was and is of great importance, and I will return to it later in this study.

It was originally thought that the mine workers could be housed in the small village Strömfors, which was located close to the new mineral deposits at Fågelmyran, and it worked for a short time. However, the number of workers could not fit into the village and the idea of building a

⁶ It was called Boliden Gruv AB in the beginning, and the company is currently named New Boliden, but I will consistently use the name Boliden AB throughout the study to avoid confusion.
⁷ SGU was at this time called SGAB, but I will use the name SGU throughout the study.
⁸ There is no exploration conducted by the state today, but in this time period SGU was one of the two major explorers at the Skellefteå Field.
new, modern mining community in Boliden stopped further development of Strömfors. Strömfors was already an established, yet small, agricultural community, yet the company decided to hire architects to construct a new community, so why did Boliden AB chose to build a new community instead of facilitating the building of new houses in Strömfors? It was partly because of the fact that the construction of new houses was unregulated in Strömfors. In only three years, the population of Strömfors had gone from 36 to 443. Some 50 new houses were built along with several service operations such as shops and cafés. The company did not care for this development since it was unregulated, fearing that it would spiral out of their control (Wästerby et al, 2006:4-5).

Boliden was special, but at the same time very typical for its historical context. The community was extremely hierarchically built, the city planners employed by Boliden AB placed the managing residence and the residences belonging to the higher officials separated from the buildings where the mine workers lived. The managing residence was placed on the highest point in the community. The buildings and the residences built formed a semicircle around the centre in which the official buildings were placed. Boliden AB was equipped to handle the community and quickly built a school, postal office, telegraph, police office, fire office and a bath. Boliden also encouraged different community activities and various associations. In fact, Boliden became one of the leading communities in the country when counting the number of associations present in the community. Other business ventures such as shops and other services were soon built as well (idem).

In the beginning of the mining operations at Boliden, the company exported all of the ore abroad since there were no smelters by that time in Sweden. The ore was transported from Skellefteå harbour and shipped to Germany and North America. It was soon apparent that it would be more economically viable to process the raw material and to export the processed metals. This required a smelter in the general area and it was decided by Boliden AB that the smelter would be built at the island of Rönnskär, by the coast outside of Skellefteå harbour (Lundgren, 1994:7). The reason for building the smelter by the coast was that Boliden AB was concerned about the ore which was rich in arsenic. Ironically, it was not perceived as an equally big risk if some of it got into the ocean instead of into a nearby community. The construction of the smelter at Rönnskär began in 1928 and production started in 1930. The smelter resulted in the further development of Skellefteå harbour, since the workers needed housing – much like in Boliden. Apart from housing for the workers and the officials, shops and other service-providers were built. In 1928, when the construction started, Skellefteå harbour was a relatively small community of 378 people. Just 10 years later, the population had increased to 2552 (Mikaelsson, 1989:11).

The mineral deposits at Varuträsk, a small village near Skellefteå in Skellefteå municipality, were found in 1932 by a local man named Harald Holmgren who primarily mined quartz. The mining operations started with only 3 employees. Holmgren sold the mine in 1936 to Boliden AB, who discovered more mineral deposits. Boliden AB mined lithium and cesium, and the Varuträsk mine was during the Second World War the largest cesium mine in the world (Johansson, 1999:14). Boliden AB employed some 15-20 men, and the minerals were transported by trucks to the Rönnskär smelters9. When the Varuträsk mine was no longer considered profitable, it was shut down in 1946 (Johansson, 1999:14).

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Boliden AB kept branching out with new mining operations at this time, and began exploration in the area around Kristineberg, a small community in Lycksele municipality approximately 96 kilometres from the Boliden mine, in the 1930s. Mining operations began in 1940, but the construction of the new mining community in Kristineberg started in 1938 and lasted until 1943 (Johansson, 1999:32). The ore mined at Kristineberg was, and still is, a complex ore with copper, zinc, gold, lead and silver (Johansson, 2003:24). Just as in Boliden, Kristineberg was constructed systematically and planned singlehandedly by Boliden AB. 174 apartments, divided on to 67 buildings, were constructed during the years 1938-1943. Boliden AB constructed buildings for service-providers, a doctor’s clinic, a school, shops and a community centre, just as they previously did in Boliden and later in Adak. In 1943, when the construction was done, there were 472 workers employed by Boliden AB at the Kristineberg mine. (Lundgren, 1994:18-20). Other mines that were started in the vicinity of Kristineberg during this time period include the Rävliden field.

During the first few months of 1940, Boliden AB had to transport the mined ore to Helsingborg to be concentrated but they soon built their own concentrator in Kristineberg. Production increased rapidly, and the concentrated ore had to be transported by truck to Boliden to be distributed to costumers. This was a slight problem. The roads were not good, as they were not built to take on heavy traffic. A roundtrip Kristineberg-Boliden could easily take 10-12 hours – if the weather conditions were good (Lundgren, 1994:20). This problematic transport arrangement went on, but this was during the Second World War. Transporting costs grew as there was a shortage of both gasoline and rubber decks (Johansson, 1999:26). At the same time, the Swedish state had a high interest in increasing the copper production in the Kristineberg mine. Discussions within Boliden AB were first concerned with a potential railway between Kristineberg and Bastuträsk, which is about 30 kilometres from Boliden. The railway idea was ultimately discarded for financial reasons, and it would take too long to build it. Boliden AB chose to build a ropeway instead – the world longest ropeway. The construction of the ropeway started in 1942 and was finished in less than a year. The ropeway was constructed with 9 strategically placed stations:

- Kristineberg mine
- Ytterberg, operating station
- Strömfors, operating station. The cars were loaded with ore from Lainejaur mine and the Adak mine
- Rackejaur mine
- Mensträsk, in a lake where mineral deposits had been found at the bottom of the lake
- Bjufrors mine, where the cable cars were loaded with copper
- Äsen, where some of the ore could be loaded onto the railway
- Renström mine
- Boliden mine, from where the ore was loaded onto railway cars and transported on the railway to the smelters at Rönnskär

The ropeway stretched over 96 kilometres, which was the longest in the world by far at this time (Lundgren, 1994:23-24). Several of the operating stations were later named as potential mining heritage sites in the first project plan of Guldriket (Johansson, 1991).

When the “Klondike”-hype struck the Skellefteå Field, the area near the village of Adak was explored by state owned SGU in 1921, and the first mining operations began in 1929-1930. Adak is situated in the municipality of Malå, where the headquarters of SGU would later be located from the 1940s and onwards (Johansson, 2003:38). The Adak mine was active during the 1930s but not extensively, thus the opportunities for employment were not great. Some optimistic people relocated to the area anyway, and their optimism would be proved correct (Hallinder and Eriksson, 1980:219). In 1940, Boliden AB took over the operations, although
the mine remained state owned. Copper was mined in the Adak mine and the ore was sent to Kristineberg for enrichment. The shortage of copper during the Second World War was the reason for the increased mining operations at the Adak mine in the 1940s (Lundgren, 1994:31). When the mining operations increased, the demand for labour increased as well. The new mining community was thought to be well placed near the Adak village or perhaps in Björklund, which was near the Adak mine (idem). Similar to how it went down at the Boliden mine and later community, Boliden AB decided to build a new mining community in direct connection to the mine instead of in the existing nearby villages. The new community was simply named the Adakmine. To be clear, in this thesis I will make a distinction between Adak\textsuperscript{10}, the Adak mine\textsuperscript{11} and Adakmine\textsuperscript{12}. The construction of the new community Adakmine started in 1943. It turned out that there were several mineral deposits in the vicinity, and the mines in the area became known as the mines of the Adak field. Mining operations started at Rudtjebäcken in 1952 and in Brännmyran in 1960. The Adak field also included the Lindsköld and the Karlsson mines. Rudtjebäcken got their own small mining community, although without the services that were available in Adakmine (Lundgren, 1994:34). The golden days of Adakmine were in the 1950s when the community benefited from shops, postal office and a community centre where social activities such as dances and cinema were organised (Hallinder and Eriksson, 1980:219).

The original Boliden mine closed in 1967, but the community Boliden remained. The concentrator is still active today, and Boliden AB is still an important employer in the community. After the shutdown of the mine, and restructuring and modernization of the operations of the concentrator, Boliden has been struggling with depopulation. At most, in the beginning of the 1960s Boliden had some 4000 inhabitants; they are now down to approximately 1500 (Wästerby et al., 2006:21). Towards the end of the 1970s, several of Boliden’s mines were shut down and abandoned at the Skellefteå Field, amongst them the mines at the Adak field. The shutdowns were motivated by economic reasons; the mineral deposits were no longer profitable. The mining communities Adakmine and Rudtjebäcken that had been built around the mines were demolished, although some of the buildings were moved to other places. The communities were abandoned and today only a few traces remain from the former mining operations. (Lundgren, 1994:35-37). The smelters at Rönnskär are still active and owned and operated by Boliden AB, and the community at Skellefteå harbour is still inhabited. The ropeway was, as I will discuss in the next chapter, shut down in 1987.

2.2. After the mining – environmental issues, reclamation legislation and the Swedish mineral strategy

Most of the mines at the Skellefteå Field, past and current, are rich in sulphide ore from which copper, zinc, lead, gold and silver are extracted. Sulphide mining is particularly problematic from an environmental point of view because of how the sulphide ore reacts when it comes into contact with oxygen in the air. The sulphides oxidises in the rainwater which can lead to the acidification of nearby lakes and other bodies of water. The waters become polluted with heavy metals and demand extensive reclamation programmes. The implication of the mining

\textsuperscript{10} The old community that already existed at the time of construction of the mine.

\textsuperscript{11} The physical space where the mining operations took place.

\textsuperscript{12} The new mining community built by Boliden AB.
of sulphide mines is that even a short period of mining operations leads to years of environmental issues, often generations\textsuperscript{13}.

The long-time implications of the negative environmental impact are severe, not only because of the decrease in societal and environmental values of the area, but also because of the economic implications. The mines at the Adak field have not been mined since the late 1970s, yet they still require extensive reclamation, paid for by the Swedish government. The Swedish government has spent over 22 million Swedish kronor for these programmes and there is no end in sight – the evaluation deems that environmental monitoring will have to continue indefinitely, and there might be cause for new measures to be taken\textsuperscript{14}. The Varuträsk village struggled, like Adak, with the environmental ramifications of the mining operations. As early as during the 1930s, the local population noticed that the fish in the lake Varuträsket near the mine were dying. This was found to be because of the poisonous discharge from the mine, and Boliden AB were obligated to pay indemnity in 1959 (Varuträsk genom 500 år, 1999).

The mining companies, in this case Boliden AB, are legally obliged to conduct reclamation of the land that they once mined. There are two main methods of reclamation when it comes to sulphide mines, dry coverage and water coverage. The aim of both methods is to limit the oxygen supply in the waste, since the level of oxygen supply is what dictates the amount of heavy metals released\textsuperscript{15}. According to current Swedish mining legislation, a company that aspires to explore and mine a mineral deposit must have a reclamation plan when applying for a mining permit. If permission is granted to the company, the permit will specify what this reclamation will look like once the mining operations stop (Sveriges mineralstrategi, 2013). The legal conditions for reclamation are regulated in the Swedish Environmental Code, where the “polluter-pays-principle” is an important concept. The polluter-pays-principle is a legal way of saying “pick up after yourself”, meaning that whoever pollutes an area is responsible for the reclamation of that specific area (MB 2:8). It sounds clear enough, but it is not. Who the responsible party is can be hard to figure out, especially if several companies have conducted mining operations at different times but in the same area. There is also the complication of leases on mining operations, if one company owns the mine but another company is the one who actively conduct the mining operations. The company that is deemed to be the practitioner/polluter of the deleterious operations has a legal obligation to remedy the environmental damage that they have caused (MB 10:1). This does not only include the actual reclamation, they are also obligated by law to conduct an investigation of the damage and possibly paying a fine to redeem the environmental damage.

A practitioner/polluter can be held responsible for operations dating back to 1969, when the previous environmental protection law was passed, IF the implications of the operation were still causing damage in the year 1999, when the current Swedish Environmental Code was passed. The last condition for responsibility for actions back in time is that the damages need to be rectified (Ebbesson, 2015:163-165), which in the case of sulphide mines is always the case.

One issue with reclamation, made apparent at the Rakkejaur mine, is that a reclamation does not have to start immediately after a shut down if the mine can be expected to be mined again in the near future. If the mining company receives an exploration state, or several, with the intention of starting mining operations again then the mining company does not have perform a full reclamation. This happened at the Rakkejaur mine which was mined by Boliden AB

\textsuperscript{13}http://www.lansstyrelsen.se/vasterbotten/SiteCollectionDocuments/Sv/Publikationer/2012/Medd_nr_3_2012_tillsynsrapport_gruvor_web.pdf, accessed 2016-06-05.


\textsuperscript{15}http://www.lansstyrelsen.se/vasterbotten/SiteCollectionDocuments/Sv/Publikationer/2012/Medd_nr_3_2012_tillsynsrapport_gruvor_web.pdf, accessed 2016-06-05.
until the year 1970. After 1970, Boliden AB explored the mine sporadically, but nothing came of it since the ore was difficult to mine. Partial reclamation began in the early 1970s, and again in the late 1980s. An ultimate reclamation plan was initiated in 1998 and started in 2002. During the 30 years when the mine had only partially gone through a reclamation process, the environment was exposed to the sulphide ore that was not properly covered. The implications of a mining company being able to postpone reclamation, regardless of if their intention is to ultimately continue the mining operations or not, can be severe.

I have now gone through some of the environmental aspects of a mine shut down and the following reclamation. But what implications does the reclamation process have for the preservation of former mining areas as heritage?

The idea of cultural value is present in the vision for Sweden’s mineral strategy that was launched in 2013. The vision is “Through a long-term, sustainable use of the country’s mineral resources, in consonance with environmental, environmental and cultural values, growth will be created throughout the whole country” (Sveriges mineralstrategi, 2013:20, my translation). The notion of cultural values in the strategy is primarily within the initial process of mining operations, the strategy clearly states that regard should be payed to these values when establishing a new mine. There is not a strong focus on cultural values when it comes to the aftermath of mining. One sentence stands out in the mineral strategy and that is the following: “Mining areas will be restored or undergo reclamation so that new natural or cultural values arise after the shutdown of the operations” (Sveriges mineralstrategi, 2013:24, my translation). The strategy notes that the historical remnants of mining operation are valuable parts of cultural landscape and is of great significance to local populations. Interestingly, the strategy further says that “When both active and historical mines are present in the same area, it will lead to an increase in interest from both the local populace and visitors” (Sveriges mineralstrategi, 2013:28, my translation).

The strategy specifically points out the possibilities for the development of new mining operations on the basis of the history of mining in an area (Sveriges mineralstrategi, 2013). This is mentioned in the context of viewing heritage as “an important part of the branding of Swedish mining operations” (Sveriges mineralstrategi, 2013:28, my translation). The notion is that the companies that are mining can profit greatly from taking advantage of mining heritage.

I will discuss this in connection with Boliden AB’s narrative and their involvement, or rather lack thereof, in later parts of the study.

Boliden AB’s view of reclamation is of importance to this study, and perhaps even more so in future shutdowns of mines. Boliden AB’s policy on reclamation is to “restore the area so that it becomes a natural part of the surrounding landscape again”. This statement is somewhat contradictory to the mineral strategy’s view that the reclamation should lead to new cultural values. I will discuss this paradox later on in the study, but it is worth noting Boliden AB’s focus on the natural values rather than the cultural values, and that Boliden AB’s use of language implies that there is such a thing as a natural state of a landscape and that it is possible to eradicate the traces of a large scale mining operation.

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2.3. Actors within mining heritage at the Skellefteå Field

There are several actors within the field of mining heritage at the Skellefteå Field, one of the most important was the Swedish National Heritage Board, which is a Swedish government agency, governed by the Swedish Ministry of Culture. The National Heritage Board has a responsibility to ensure the preservation of cultural values of buildings and landscapes. Heritage is not defined by legislation, but the National Heritage Board do provide recommendations to what the ones in the evaluation and selection processes should consider. These recommendations are aimed at different actors, public, private and non-profits, who in their work evaluate and manage cultural heritage and cultural environments (Génetay and Lindberg, 2014). The recommendation from the National Heritage Board states that “An environment, building, ancient monument or some other material or immaterial phenomenon that is considered to possess value, has been subject to an evaluation.” (Génetay and Lindberg 2014:15). Thus, cultural heritage does not need to be designated by the National Heritage Board, but if they acknowledge the heritage status of a site, they are more likely to give out economic funding. Since the National Heritage Board follows the national political cultural agenda, their focus on a specific type of cultural heritage can shift – which we will see later on in the study has greatly affected the management of the mining heritage sites at the Skellefteå Field.

The National Heritage Board allocates economic funding to the County Administrative Boards in Sweden. The Country Administrative Board in Västerbotten was an important actor within industrial and mining heritage management in the 1980s up until the 2000s, but currently they do not have any projects concerning industrial heritage. The County Administrative Board in Västerbotten focuses mostly on cultural environments and particularly built environments. As such, they are not as object oriented as they were in previous years. Thus, “just” a mine is not as interesting for them to preserve while the environment around a mine, for example a mining community with preserved buildings is18. Here, we can see how the reclamation that is conducted by mining companies is directly contra productive to the potential heritagisation processes of former mining areas, in the eyes of the County Administrative Board. The County Administrative Board has outsourced the responsibility for technical and industrial history after the 1900s to the Skellefteå Museum19. The Skellefteå Museum is a foundation, and the ownership is divided to Skellefteå municipality, who owns 60%, and Region Västerbotten20, who owns 40 %.21. Skellefteå Museum played a large role in the project Guldriket, and will feature in the next chapter.

Public actors aside, the most important actors within mining heritage sites are the private actors. Most of the mining heritage sites are managed, and have historically been managed, by local enthusiast that have formed economic or non-profit associations. I will go further into this in the next chapter, and present the current actors that manage the mining heritage sites. The actor that has made all mining heritage sites possible, by starting the mining operations in the first place, is Boliden AB. Boliden AB is a mining company that operates six mining areas and five smelters in Sweden, Norway, Finland and Ireland22. As we will see in the following chapter, Boliden ABs attitude towards mining heritage at their old or current mining areas has varied through the years.

18 Interview with informant 2, 2016-05-19.
19 Interview with informant 3, 2016-05-20.
20 Region Västerbotten is a co-operative body, responsible for regional development in Västerbotten County.
This chapter will consist of the history of the project Guldriet, through which I examine the heritagisation processes at the Skellefteå Field. I will present the empirical data that I have collected and analyse it using my theoretical framework. The chapter follows a chronological structure, starting with the beginnings of the heritagisation processes in the area and ending with the current situation for the former mining areas that went through these processes.

3.1. Groundwork

3.1.1. It begins with a Ropeway…

The origin of the project Guldriket started in the midst of an upswing in interest for industrial heritage that occurred around the 1980s in Sweden. The interest for industrial heritage was sparked in 1968 when Marie Nisser and Gunnar Lindkvist called for a meeting with the intention of starting a voluntary inventory operation of buildings and environments connected to labour (Nisser, 1996). Industrial heritage as research field did not happen immediately, but the participants of the meeting became important in framing what would later become the academic field of industrial heritage in Sweden. Later in the 1970s, the industrial restructuring that brought on the unemployment and downsizing of many industries lit the spark for industrial heritage – the interest to save some of the industrialised communities’ history increased (Isacson, 2003:24-25). The Skellefteå Field was no different, as I described previously a number of mines at the Skellefteå Field were shut down during the late 1970s. In 1974, the new cultural policy was made, and it made clear that cultural heritage would now include the industrial history of Sweden, and that industrial environments and their histories and narratives were worth saving for future generations (Proposition 1974:28). The spark now had political backing, and more and more working life museums popped up during the 1970s and 1980s. These types of museums got state funding and support from the Swedish Arts Council in the year of 1984 and onwards (Isacson, 2013:23-24).

It is in this historic setting that we find the beginning of the heritagisation processes of former mining areas in Västerbotten. The first actor to create some form of tourist or visiting activities in Västerbotten was the Boliden AB mining company, who organised guided tours at the Långsele mine. Within the framework of this thesis, I have not been able to pinpoint when and why Boliden started these activities. Therefore further exploration of this early phase of the heritagisation process remain to be explored.

Skellefteå museum and the County Administrative Board24 were the first public actors who took an initiative to designate former mining sites at the Skellefteå Field as cultural heritage. In 1987, the museum published an inventory of historic industrial sites in Västerbotten

23 Guldriet was initially called Gruvriket, but I will use the name Guldriet in all cases except for directly referencing to texts were it is referred to as Gruvriket.
24 The County Administrative Board mentioned in this thesis is ALWAYS the County Administrative Board in Västerbotten.
County, on behalf of the County Administrative Board, containing descriptions of different former and current industrial sites which the museum considered to be industrial heritage. The inventory names the three main industries that have been prevalent in Västerbotten through history – forestry, mining and hydro power, and lists various sites with a connection to these industries.

The idea behind the inventory was to identify different sites that could be included in an upcoming industrial museum. The industrial museum that the authors of the inventory were hoping to create was an Eco museum. Eco museums were in the ropes during this time, and an Eco museum had opened in 1986 in Bergslagen (Sörenson, 1987). The idea of Eco museums arose in France in the 1970s and the idea was to create a museum without walls, a concept which will come back later in the study. The museum without walls was an idea of viewing cultural heritage as holistic, and in its original place. The focus was on place, not items or objects (Davis, 1999). There was also a more abstract idea of an industrial heritage archive that could be built on the basis of the inventory, and then be transformed into a more comprehensive and concrete archive that would provide knowledge of all of the different industrial heritage sites within Västerbotten (Jansson and Westerlund, 1987). The authors of the inventory note that mining operations play a significant role in the history of Västerbotten, and as such has shaped the cultural heritage of the region.

This inventory shows the formative idea that would later be presented in the programme for Guldriket in 1991. The authors of the inventory bring up the potential sites that could be included in the industrial museum, of which 14 were mining areas. Those were, without any priority given to them; the Adak mine, Boliden, the Bygdsiljemine, the Djäkneböle silver mine, the Kristineberg mine, the Krångfors mine, the Långsele mine, the headquarters of SGU in Malå, the Morö silver mine, the Näsberg mine, the Rakkejaur mine, the Varuträsk mine, the Västby mine and the Ropeway (idem). These different mining areas were not the only ones in the county, but they were the ones that the authors deemed as most suitable for further adaptation into visiting sites for the industrial museum. Some of the mining areas already had some tourism/heritage aspects of them, such as the guided tours at the Långsele mine. This indicates that some form of heritagisation process had already begun before the inventory was written. As I explained previously in the text, I have not been able to find the premises under which they were initiated more than that they were operated and started by Boliden AB. Boliden AB had also initiated guided tours at the Rönnskär smelters before the inventory, although the smelters were not included in the inventory (Johansson, 1991; Jansson and Westerlund, 1987).

The 1987 inventory, in combination with the shutdown of the Ropeway in 1987, was the starting point for the project Guldriket. The Ropeway had by then mostly been maintained by personnel who worked at the stations at Örträsk and Mensträsk25. The personnel were dismayed by the shutdown, Örträsk being a small village with limited possibilities for employment. There was a community movement to save what could be saved and the industrial heritage enthusiast Alve Johansson was the main actor in this movement. The initial idea was to transport tourists instead of the ore, preserving the Ropeway and at the same time preserving the history and the uniqueness of the Ropeway26.

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25 Interview 1, 2016-05-16.
3.1.2. The Mining Realm

The Ropeway initiative caught the attention of four different municipalities, Lycksele, Malå, Norsjö and Skellefteå who agreed that the history of mining and mining heritage could make for a successful tourist operation. It was decided by the municipal politicians that an investigation should be conducted to decide which mining areas could be further transformed into suitable visiting sites for the new tourist operation. The municipalities recognised Alve Johansson’s enthusiasm and employed him in 1990 to conduct the investigation (Molin, 2007:27).

This investigation, combined with a proposed programme came out in 1991 and was named “The Mining Realm of Västerbotten: a cultouristic project in Västerbotten County: inventory and proposed programme”27. The word “cultouristic” is a merging of the words “culture” and “touristic”. This word must be viewed and understood in a broader context. The following year, in 1992, the County Administrative Board came out with a structure plan that focused on identifying which cultural historical tourist sites in Västerbotten could be made into visitor’s centres (Karlsson, 1993). During these early years of the 1990s, the County Administrative Board made an effort to create “cultural rooms”28, which in Swedish was given a name that was a merging of the words culture and room, and “natural rooms”29, in Swedish a merging of the words nature and room. They can be roughly translated into, and corresponds to, the international term “visitor’s centres”. The idea behind a “cultural room” was to engage interest and to provide information about a site or environment with significant human influence. The “natural room” was a centre for visitors visiting an outdoors site, meant to describe and explain the virtues of the area and inspire the visitor to stay and “get in touch with nature” (Karlsson, 1993).

The inventory and proposed programme for Guldriket must be understood in connection to the structure plan for cultural tourism from the County Administrative Board (Karlsson, 1993). Many of the themes were the same and they were operating within the same field of notions of what it meant to be a cultural heritage site, and what is worth presenting as cultural heritage.

The investigation conducted by Johansson was presented as an inventory combined with a proposed programme consisting of 60 pages. The project Guldriket was here initially called “Gruvriket” which translates to the Mining Realm. The project was ordered by the four municipalities Lycke, Malå, Norsjö and Skellefteå, the County Administrative Board and the Skellefteå Museum. In the preface of the investigation, Johansson names the rapid societal changes that were occurring during this time period as an incentive to document the industrial history of the Western world (Johansson 1991:6). The previously mentioned idea of an Eco museum, that had been central to the original 1987 inventory of industrial heritage sites, is brought up in the preface and other museum without walls are given as examples of successful Eco museums around Europe. Quite optimistically, Johansson claims that they are in “many cases, regarding operating costs, self-sustaining” (Johansson 1991:6, my translation). Johansson provides no further information on how or why these other Eco museums are self-sustaining financially, and was maybe a bit too optimistic. Johansson goes on to say that Sweden has an exciting and rich mining history, and notes that other ventures within mining heritage are taking place across the country at that time. This project, he writes, has every opportunity to become a successful Eco museum. At this early stage of the heritagisation

27 In Swedish, Västerbottens Gruvrike – ett kulturistiskt projekt.
28 Kulturum.
29 Naturum.
process of the sites, the focus was on how to present the mining in a way that would attract visitors, but also how to present it so that it would become an attraction in combination with other tourist attractions and activities (Johansson, 1991).

3.1.3. The Underground Church, Bergrum Boliden and the Adak Cinema

The Underground Church in Kristineberg was built during the late years of the 1980s and was opened in 1990. The narrative of importance for the heritagisation process of the Underground church was the “Christ-image”. A mine worker went into the mine to start his shift early in the morning on the 29th November in 1946. The miners had performed a blast during the past day, but the smoke had not cleared until this moment. The mine worker noticed a figure on the mountain face, about three metres tall, shimmering in silver and white against the dark background. He thought it looked like Jesus Christ, and told the other miners. The foreman came to control the work effort a bit later in the morning and saw the figure, and a number of other mine workers followed during the day to see the peculiar figure. The first week saw some 100 curious visitors, among them the assistant vicar from the church and the wives of the miners. They went deep down into the mine, the image had appeared at 107 metres depth. These first visitors went down by an elevator and then had to climb a 13 metre ladder to arrive at the image. Despite the somewhat inconvenience of getting to the actual place, the Christ-image in the Kristineberg mine continued to bring visitors during the coming weeks. The news spread quickly, and the newspapers wrote about it although no journalists were allowed in the mine back then. The image soon darkened and faded, and the mining operations filled the space with rubble and sludge (Lundgren, 1994:20-21). The Underground Church was opened in 1990, and a replica of the Christ-image was painted on the mountain face.

The famous picture of the original Christ-image was taken by a photographer employed by Boliden AB. This picture has since then been used for postcards and for promotional purposes. The picture is quite powerful, the white figure is clearly distinguished from the darker background (see appendix, p. 52). This narrative about the Kristineberg mine was what started the heritagisation process in Kristineberg, and the Underground Church was built a few years before the visitor’s mine was established. I therefore view the establishing of the visitor’s mine in the Kristineberg as a re-interpretation of already designated heritage. Sjöholm (2016) argues that this aspect of heritagisation, which is one of her two forms of re-heritagisation, is a process in which new or additional meaning is attached to the already existing heritage, and that is exactly what happened here. It makes the Underground Church special amongst the others included in Guldriet, since the additional meaning was more prominently focused on mining heritage than the heritage that was already there, which focused on the religious aspect of the place.

Johansson and the work group emphasised the importance of a mine and mineral museum in Boliden, claiming that it was necessary for such a museum to be the centre of Guldriet. Boliden had great symbolic value since it was where the first mining operations began, and from where Boliden AB took their name. In the programme, they argue that a museum in Boliden is “a prerequisite to launch the concept of Gruvriket” (Johansson 1991:22, my translation). The idea for a mine and mineral museum in Boliden was established in 1986

31 Not yet named “Guldriket”.

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when a work group consisted of Boliden AB, the local historical society in Boliden, Skellefteå museum, a geoscientific association and a mine workers’ association presented a proposal for “Västerbotten’s mine- and mineral museum” (Lööw, 1989). Much of what was presented in the work group’s proposal for a museum was later incorporated when the museum was opened as Bergrum Boliden in the old Boliden ABs mining office in 1993. The exhibitions were divided in two, one that focused on the human and societal aspect of mining and one that focused on the geological aspect (DNR 208/99; Lööw, 1989). This is the same type of idea as in the County Administrative Board’s divide between “natural rooms” and “cultural rooms” (Karlsson, 1993). The old mining office was sold to Skellefteå municipality who leased it to Skellefteå museum. During the first years up until 1997, Bergrum Boliden was run by the local historical society.

The same year as Bergrum Boliden was opened, 1993, the Adak Cinema opened as well. The Adak Cinema was perhaps the one site with the least obvious connection to mining and mining operations. As I described in the background, there were no buildings left in the community Adakmine that was built by Boliden AB to house the mine workers at the Adak mine. However, the Adak mine did not only have an impact on its “own” community, its narratives and heritage was prevalent in the nearby village Adak as well. In Adak, a local couple built a house that enabled both dancing events and a cinema during the 1940s. The man was an employee at the Adak mine, and naturally many of the visitors to the cinema were mine workers and their families. The cinema was operated by the couple between 1945 and 1965, when they no longer had the financial means to continue. The building was joined with their private home, and they left most of the inventories in the home and the cinema when they moved from Adak in 1972. Alve Johansson came across the old building in the late 1980s in search of old furniture. He was amazed by the original details in the building, and the fact that almost everything was left the way it had looked when it was still active. Johansson and another local enthusiast, Eivor Jonsson, were the main actors in preserving the Adak Cinema and they had support from the local population. They formed an association, and the association in cooperation with the whole village helped restore the Adak Cinema to its former glory.

In the first proposed project programme for Guldriket (1991), the work group cites the Adak Cinema’s uniqueness as their main motivation for including the cinema. The Adak Cinema was also important to show a different side of the mining operations, the human aspect (DNR 208/99). Just as Bergrum Boliden was divided in two, with one part of the exhibition dedicated to the workers and their community in Boliden, the Adak Cinema provided an insight into everyday life for mine workers at the Adak field. The heritagisation process here was initiated by a few who in turn enthused a whole village. The process can be identified as designation of new heritage. According to Sjöholm (2016), designation of heritage is consequently followed by adding to lists and the Adak Cinema was included in the proposed programme for Guldriket (1991) by Johansson and the work group, thus included in a list of sorts.

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32 Interview with informant 4, 2016-05-20.
33 http://sagabiografen.ac.se/om-saga/sagan-om-saga/, accessed 2016-06-06.
34 Survey material from representative at the Adak Cinema.
35 Interview with informant 4, 2016-05-20.
3.1.4. Reaffirmation of already designated heritage

Not all of the sites that were listed as possible visiting sites were actual, physical former mining pits. The SGU headquarters in Malå and the Adak Cinema were not located at a certain former pit. The proposed mining heritage site at SGU Malå was at this time not a specific location, it was spread out at different places in Malå municipality, and it was SGUs possession of preserved exploration equipment that held a historic value, and therefore motivated its transformation into a mining heritage site (Johansson, 1991). Mining heritage sites are thus not dependent on a specific physical space near a pit, which was evident in the case of the Adak Cinema that was not near a pit. In fact, few of the sites that would become parts of Guldriket include an actual pit, with the exception of the Underground Church, where the mine was still active, and the Varuträsk Mineral Park. I have chosen to look at former and current mining areas as sociotechnical systems and all of the sites are parts that enabled larger systems, such as infrastructure for transportation, mining communities, and post-processing plants. The lack of pits at the heritage sites did not mean that the sites were not mining heritage, since Johansson and the work group had a similar way of looking at a mining area – as a system with many different components, components that could be turned into mining heritage sites.

At this early stage, we see how the heritagisation processes started. They were all initiated by local enthusiasts who felt that they had something worth preserving for the future, for others to see, but also to preserve for themselves to celebrate their heritage. These early processes fit into Sjöholm’s first meaning of heritagisation which is the addition of new heritage. The designation leads to the addition of the new heritage to lists of other heritage sites, in this case the list is the inventory made of former mining areas. But the mere inclusion of a former mining area does not make it go through the heritagisation process. Some of the former mining areas at the inventory list, and were deemed as promising, did not fully go through the heritagisation process to become heritage sites. They, however, still have the potential to become heritage sites since heritagisation processes can be initiated at any point in time – as Amrèus argues, industrial heritage is ultimately about “relationships that create the notion of value, and they are constantly renegotiated” (2013:10).

The heritagisation processes at the Underground Church, the Ropeway, the Adak Cinema and Bergrum Boliden had already begun when they were listed by Johansson and the work group in the inventory and proposed programme (Johansson, 1991). To be included in lists is primarily a part of the first meaning of Sjöholm’s (2016) concept of heritagisation which is addition of new heritage, but I argue that in this case it can be useful to combine the two meanings of heritagisation, reaffirming already designated heritage AND being designated as heritage. The mining heritage sites were at the same time added as new heritage and reaffirmed as already designated heritage by the inventory.

The initial name “Gruvriket” (the Mining Realm) was changed to “Guldriket” (the Golden Realm) when the project was advertised and launched in 1993, since the original name did not sound as thrilling. Guldriket had four established heritage sites at this time and these were the Adak Cinema, the Ropeway, Bergrum Boliden and the Underground Church in

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36 Interview with informant 1, 2016-05-16.
Kristineberg, whose heritagisation processes I have described in this subchapter, and they formed the foundation of the project Guldriket.

3.2. Early years

One of the first planning conferences for Guldriket took place in September 1992, approximately a year after the presentation of the inventory/proposed programme. The focus of the conference was to clarify certain policy issues that were to form the foundation of the continuing cooperation. The participants were the main actors within Guldriket who formed a work group, consisting of people from the four sites. The key focus of the work group for Guldriket was cooperation, and for the actors within the group to come to an agreement on a uniting profile that would facilitate their future work. This was also the first time in the documents concerning Guldriket where the word “product” was used about Guldriket. Guldriket was to be a product that could be offered to tourists, a product that needed to be attractive and alluring (DNR 103-8255-1993). In the summary of the meeting, the focus was yet again cooperation and what the different sites had in common and therefore could aid each other with. The participants agreed that the name “Gruvriket”, by this time not yet changed to “Guldriket”, should be what unified the sites and the name would be what was communicated to the market. The question was raised of what associations the name should invoke, and it was agreed upon that it was important to not only focus on industrial and mining heritage – there should be other needs that the site can fulfil to the visitors. Other needs could be spiritual ones, where the Underground Church could bring in visitors whose main motivation for visiting was the religious experience, not the mining heritage of Kristineberg (idem).

As previously shown, many of the early actors in Guldriket had strong personal interests in the preservation of mining heritage. Some had worked in the mines, or had close family who had done some form of work for Boliden AB37. This interest was made apparent in the early planning documents of Guldriket, when it was specifically cited that the participants in the work group all agreed that the pride they felt of their origin, i.e. the mining history of the area, was their strongest motivator for developing Guldriket (DNR 103-8255-1993). Their pride was what instigated the heritagisation processes at the Skellefteå Field. As previously mentioned, when the museum in Boliden was first planned in 1986, one of the main groups who propagated for the idea was a local history society in Boliden, made up of the wives of former mine workers, who communicated this to the municipality, who agreed and built the museum38. This enthusiasm amongst the initiators of Guldriket was by no means isolated to mining heritage. The County Administrative Board’s structure plan for tourism (Karlsson, 1993) emphasised the importance of local actors for the establishment of the visitor centres that they were hoping to build around the county. Local history societies, like the one in Boliden, were noted in the structure plan as the first step for preserving and raising awareness about the local cultural heritage (idem).

The locals’ historical narratives were the key factors in starting heritagisation processes in general, this can be seen in both the official documents from the County Administrative

37 Interview with informant 1, 2016-05-16.
38 Interview with informant 4, 2016-05-20.
Board and the meeting minutes from the project group of Guldriet. Their enthusiasm and involvement was both formative but also essential to convey the region’s heritage. The cultural identity of the region was one of the key motivators for the County Administrative Board to make efforts to develop strategies for cultural tourism in the first place (Karlsson, 1993).

This involvement of local enthusiasts in Guldriet made sure that “the product”, meaning the sites, would not be too commercialized. It was made clear by the workgroup that the main aim of the project should be to provide a qualitative and exclusive product with information and knowledge as the focal point of each site (DNR 103-8255-1993). This focus corresponded in large parts with the structure plan from the County Administrative Board (Karlsson, 1993). Both the workgroup and the County Administrative Board noted one word as essential for the creation of heritage sites; authenticity. The County Administrative Board argued that authenticity was the first and foremost criterion for cultural tourism. The visitor should be able to rely on the authenticity of a specific site/environment/building and it was important that this authenticity was perceived as substantial to the visitor. This was regardless of if the site in itself was typical or unique, the authenticity was what enabled and triggered the heritagisation processes (Karlsson, 1993). The other value word for the early work on Guldriet is “uniqueness”. Guldriet was marketed as something unique, and the claim for uniqueness stemmed from the narrative of the Skellefteå-field as one of the most mineral rich places in the world.

The notion of authenticity, or rather the perception of something as authentic, can be illustrated with the case of the Christ-image at the Underground Church. As previously explained, the Christ-image in the church was not the original Christ-image since the original faded and a newly made image was put up in its place. Clearly, the perception of authenticity was what mattered. I argue that this perception of authenticity regarding the heritage sites was part of what reaffirmed and still reaffirms the heritage sites as heritage. The heritage had already been identified as heritage through a heritagisation process, where the authenticity of the place was deemed sufficient by the initiators to start the process. The narrative of the Christ-image was and is the allure, and the fact that the image is not the original one is not significant. When visitors visit the Underground Church with the intent to see the Christ-image, they are reaffirming the heritage of the site and thus reaffirming the authenticity. The reaffirmation of heritage is directly correspondent to the perceived authenticity of the Christ-image, since the image is what constitutes the narrative of the site.

The concept of cooperation was used in both the structure plan from the County Administrative Board and in the meeting minutes from the work group on Guldriet. Cooperation was intended to further the efforts of cultural tourism within the county, where the County Administrative Board suggested that the different identified sites within the county could help each other by providing information at each site that would enable the sites to send tourists between themselves (Karlsson, 1993). At Guldriet, this was also an important point that was brought up various times. The mining heritage sites within Guldriet had the added advantage that the tourists visiting one site could be assumed to have an interest in mining heritage specifically, and therefore be more receptive to the idea of visiting other mining heritage sites in the area. The geographical aspect was of importance too, recognized by both the County Administrative Board and Guldriet. The structure plan (Karlsson, 1993) noted that accessibility played a large role in determining which sites could be deemed as potential successes on the basis on how accessible they were. They did however note that accessibility and attractiveness can balance each other out – a site with less tourist attractiveness could
have visitors if it was easily accessible. The unique sites, exemplified by one of the sites in Guldrikket, the Ropeway, was not easily accessible but was deemed to be a successful site since it had a uniqueness (idem). This uniqueness stemmed from the narrative of the Ropeway as the “World’s longest ropeway”, which continues to be the key narrative for the Ropeway today as well.

One quite interesting part of the historic narrative that was used to promote Guldrikket was about Boliden AB as community builders. The rather uncritical view of Boliden AB was present in their various promotional prints (examples, Guldrikket, part of Sevärt i Västerbottens län, 1999 and Guldrikket, 1994). The texts depicted the communities built by Boliden AB in Adak, Boliden and Kristineberg as “model villages”\(^39\) with state of the art accommodations; toilets, central heating, electric stoves etc. The texts compared this standard with others at the time, stating that they were much ahead of other mining communities. The “shanty town”\(^40\) in Malmberget was almost always used as a warning example. The fact that the representatives from Guldrikket described it in this fashion is understandable, since Boliden AB did create the structures for the existence of Guldrikket – without Boliden AB there would be no mining heritage to preserve and manage. The narrative was and is shared by not only the private actors in Guldrikket, it also prevalent in texts from the County Administrative Board (for example Johansson 2003:19). The texts imply that Boliden AB provided communities all over the Skellefteå Field with a modernisation that otherwise would have taken years, and that Boliden AB practically built their modern society. I will not argue against this since I am not investigating whether or not Boliden AB brought modernisation to the region. I will, however, point out that this rather uniform narrative of Boliden AB as community builders was and still is hegemonic, and that in itself is always problematic, especially when the narratives are told by public institutions and government agencies.

3.3. Golden days

3.3.1. Varuträsk Mineral Park and Malå Geomuseum

The 90s and the early years of the new millennium were years when the Swedish National Heritage Board focused their efforts towards industrial heritage in very tangible way. The efforts were to consolidate, launch and develop industrial remnants as heritage. The concept industrial heritage used by the Swedish National Heritage Board included aspects beside the physical industrial buildings, such as the technology used, the production lines and social conditions (Amréus, 2013:10). For Guldrikket, this meant that they were granted the financial means to further develop their existing sites and look at others former mining areas that were described in the initial proposed project programme (Johansson, 1991).

Varuträsk was the first to be added to the original four; the Adak Cinema, the Underground church in Kristineberg, the Ropeway and Bergrum Boliden, that originated Guldrikket. The Varuträsk Mineral Park was opened in 1998 (DNR 208-99). The ground work for the heritagisation process of Varuträsk was initiated by a local non-profit organisation, consisting of inhabitants of the village Varuträsk, as well as from other nearby villages (Varuträsk genom 500 år, 1999). The local section of Friluftsfrämjandet was the owner of the mine at this time\(^41\).

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\(^{39}\) In Swedish, “mönstersamhällen”.

\(^{40}\) In Swedish, “kåkstaden”.

\(^{41}\) Interview with informant 4, 2016-05-20.
The heritagisation process was started by locals, as we have seen in all of the previous former mining areas that became heritage sites.

The potential of creating a mineral park at the old Varuträsk mine was presented in the first inventory from 1987, and it was proposed as one of the sites in the first proposed programme for Guldriket (Johansson, 1991). The reason for creating the mineral park at Varuträsk was its extraordinary richness in minerals. The area around Varuträsk is in fact a national interest for mineral deposits because of its rare earth metals. People, mainly interested amateur geologists and mineralogists, had been coming to the area for years to collect minerals on their own (Johansson, 1991). The most important narrative of Varuträsk in the beginning of the heritagisation process was the richness in minerals. The extra special thing about the Varuträsk mine was that the pit was still there, it had not been covered through reclamation procedures. The mine could therefore be visited, and thus had a closer connection to the mining operations than for example the Adak Cinema. Guided tours were an important part of the site, and visitors could also collect minerals in the mineral park. Even though the mine was well preserved underground, there was only one building left above ground from the initial mining operations (DNR 208/99). Skellefteå municipality were directly funding the construction of new buildings at the mineral park, because of the building technique used, not necessarily because of the inherent cultural heritage values of the mineral park. The new buildings consisted of replicas of a headframe and other mining buildings (DNR 208/99).

The second project that was added to Guldriket during the 1990s was the exploration exhibition in Malå. Malå had been the key location of the state managed explorations since the 1940s, and the Mineral centre was one of the proposed sites in the project programme for Guldriket (Johansson, 1991). In the project programme, Malå Mineral Centre was thought to be a number 4 priority, the second highest, which meant that it was deemed to be developed as soon as possible. The motivation for the high prioritization was the historic significance of the place. The SGU exploration headquarters had been there since the 1940s and it was noted that “Malå through the SGAB operations occupies an international position within exploration techniques” (Johansson 1991:40, my translation). The initial idea in the project programme was to combine outdoor activities with geological knowledge. The ambitious plans for the Mineral Centre in 1991, with ideas of an outdoors recreational centre, had been somewhat downplayed when the plans resurfaced in 1996. At last, Malå Geomuseum opened in 1999, and became the sixth site included in Guldriket. The responsible party for the Geomuseum was Malå municipality. The focus of the Malå Geomuseum was to tell the narrative of the history of exploration and was located next to the SGU headquarters in Malå. The representatives for Guldriket were particularly excited about the opening of Malå Geomuseum since it was housed within the old Rakkejaur tree headframe (DNR 208/99).

The heritagisation process of the tree headframe from Rakkejaur is interesting because of the special circumstances. The Rakkejaur mine was never used in extensive mining operations, it was only used for exploration. In the first programme for Guldriket (Johansson, 1991), the headframe was upheld by Johansson as the “most interesting mining building in the county” (Johansson 1991:36, my translation). Representatives for Guldriket had for years, since the initial project programme from 1991, tried to include the Rakkejaur tree headframe in Guldriket.

43 Interview with informant 4, 2016-05-20.
44 SGAB being the previous name for SGU.
45 The Malå Geomuseum has been called Georange and is currently called Malå Geoexpo, but I use the name Malå Geomuseum throughout the study.
driket in some form. However, the Rakkejaur mine was by then going through partial reclamation at the same time as Boliden AB was exploring the area (see p. 21-22). If the Rakkejaur mine was to be mined again, then the headframe would be hard preserve as a heritage site so the recommendation was from the start to move the headframe (Johansson, 1991). Boliden AB, who owned Rakkejaur, did not want the headframe and sold it to Malå municipality to have it removed. The representatives of Guldriket viewed this purchase as a “rescue mission”, since it probably would have met the same fate as the other mining buildings at shutdown mining operations if it was left at the location (DNR 208/99).

This call for a return to the natural state of an area after mining, which is the intent of reclamation done by mining companies is directly damaging to the preservation of places and building that could be made into mining heritage (see p.23). The old mining buildings at the Adak mine were removed, but that was before the idea of mining heritage as worth preserving had surfaced. Now, in the late 1990s, the idea had a firm base, due to Guldriket and the support it had from both public and private actors. There were tools available to talk about mining heritage as something of value, and this discussion was recognised on all levels. This discourse enabled the rescuing of the Rakkejaur tree headframe, because the perception of it was that it was worth saving.

3.3.2. Forum Museum Rönnskär

Guldriket was during the 1990s looking for other sites that could become new potential members. They specifically looked for sites and actors who could pull their own weight financially and that they could contribute to the overall concept of Guldriket. The first prerequisite, however, for aspiring members was that their sites would actively work to develop the possibilities that existed in the industrial and cultural heritage values within former mining operations. These prerequisites on new members was to ensure that the profile would stay the same, and that the focus would not stray from the initial idea of mining heritage (DNR 103-1293-1999). The idea of Guldriket as an eco-museum was still strong, but in the late 1990s a view of Guldriket as a “destination” developed. This idea was consistent with the county strategic plan for travel- and tourist industry, which was developed by Västerbotten Tourism on the behalf of the County Council. Guldriket partook in in the making of this plan, as one of the destinations in the county46. The strategic plan mentioned the word “site”47 twice in 22 pages, but the word “destination” was used 57 times. The focus was clearly to establish the notion of a destination, but being a destination with several sites was always part of the idea of Guldriket, just not with that particular vocabulary. Guldriket had since the start been concerned with cooperation and the idea of different sites in the same general area could send tourists back and forth between each other. This was one of the building stones of Guldriket when it was first proposed in 1991. Guldriket had always been a destination, and the regional discourse was just catching up.

The industrial heritage was an important focal point during the 1990s for the cultural heritage management, both on a national and regional level (Amréus, 2013:10). It was clearly stated that the Västerbotten County had an industrial profile and that the goal was to preserve and maintain the former industrial buildings and environments. At the same time, the County Administrative Board struggled with this goal since these types of industrial buildings demand costly and time consuming maintenance. The County Administrative Board notes in a report on the financial aid pay-outs to cultural heritage management for the years 1981-2001, that

47 In Swedish,”besöksmål”.
the former industrial buildings are hard to find new usages for, and that it is not economically viable to preserve them as monuments. None the less, the County Administrative Board says that a large number of industrial heritage sites have been preserved in Västerbotten County, thanks to local enthusiasts, which was present in earlier programmes and reports from the County Administrative Board as well (Eriksson, 2003).

During the first years of the new millennia, industrial heritage was still an important focal point for the National Heritage Board, which meant that the different projects concerning industrial heritage achieved monetary funding and attention (Isacson, 2013:28-29). Some of this funding was assigned to the County Administrative Board who gave out an inventory in 2003, called “The industrial historical heritage of Västerbotten” (my translation). The inventory was a part of a project called “The industrial heritage of Västerbotten”. The inventory describes 487 different industrial environments from the time period 1850-1970. Just as the original inventory of industrial environments from 1987, this inventory was also conducted by Skellefteå Museum on behalf of the County Administrative Board. The purpose of the inventory and the overall project that started in the year 2000, was to aid the administrators at the County Administrative Board and the municipalities in their work and provide them with knowledge needed when handling questions regarding industrial heritage. The inventory was also intended as a planning tool. These purposes clearly show that industrial heritage, and the development and continued development of industrial heritage, was of importance to both the County Administrative Board but also to the National Heritage Board that assigned funding for this project.

The first phase of the project Guldriket was deemed to be complete late in the year 2000. This marked the end of Guldriket as a project, and a non-profit association with the same name was started. The new plan for Guldriket was revealed for the years 1999-2006. The last of the 1990s had been good, the number of visitors kept growing each year. The location of the work group had been relocated from Norsjö municipality to Malå municipality. With the Malå Geomuseum and the Varuträsk Mineral Park recently added to Guldriket, the hope was to investigate, develop and include other sites as well. The focus of the plan was quite similar to the ones we have seen in the previous years; cooperation and development of the existing sites. The motivations for the actors also remain the same as in previous years, to develop and preferably expand with new sites (DNR 103-1293-1999).

The next site to be included in Guldriket was Forum Museum Rönnskär. Both Guldriket and the representatives for what would be Forum Museum Rönnskär agreed that it was of utmost importance to show the link that was missing in Guldriket – the actual gold (DNR 324/01). The idea for a museum showing the smelters at Rönnskär had been around for quite some time. It was listed in the first proposed programme for Guldriket with the motivation that it was important for creating an understanding for the production chain, from ore to gold. At the time of the program, in 1991, Boliden AB already had guided tours at the smelters during the summer (Johansson, 1991). As I have noted previously in the study, I have not been able to pinpoint how or why these tours came to be other than that they were initiated and managed by Boliden AB. The idea for the museum was realised by the then-local manager at Rönnskär. Guldriket had been in contact with Boliden AB, since the visitors at the sites within Guldriket had specifically asked to see the actual gold, and that put some pressure on them to participate. At first, it was the management team at Rönnskär who had saved pictures from the operations through the years, but they eventually discovered that it was hard to combine this with their day jobs. The local manager asked Sten-Arne Burman, who worked at the smelters, to become the museum’s intendant and he accepted. The planned space for the museum was the old office
building that was built 1928 and around which the smelters have been built⁴⁸. I have myself visited Forum Museum Rönnskär, and can witness first hand on the quite bizarre feeling of seeing this old, beautiful building in the middle of the gigantic grey smelters. It feels misplaced, yet not, which I am sure contributes to the feeling visitors get. The view provides an understanding of the historic development of the mining industry and how it has shaped the area in a very direct way.

Forum Museum Rönnskär was opened in 2004. The most important narrative for Forum Museum Rönnskär was the smelting (yes, pun intended) of the smelters and the community of Skellefteå harbour that was developed by the presence of Boliden AB. Again, we see the narrative of Boliden AB as community builders. Forum Museum Rönnskär was funded and instigated by Boliden AB, with much of their archive material saved at the museum. Sten-Arne Burman chose from the start to accept everything sent to him and the museum from locals with connections to the smelters. The result was fascinating, the museum got an amazing amount of objects, memorabilia and newspaper clippings. The locals were engaged and the museum let them partake in the making of the museum⁴⁹. As such, the museum was filled with things of inherent meaning to the ones who had possessed them. It was heritage and worth saving to them, and the heritagisation of Forum Museum Rönnskär was constantly reaffirmed and also reinterpreted by their objects. Through sending in the objects, they reaffirmed the museum as heritage since they trusted the museum to save and communicate their former possessions. At the same time, the given objects gave additional meaning to the already existing heritage since they all shaped the narratives communicated by the museum.

3.4. Gold of Lapland

In the middle of the 2000s, the Swedish National Heritage Board’s interest in industrial heritage declined. According to the current Director General of the Swedish National Heritage Board, Lars Amréus, this was due to several reasons; amongst them the relocation of part of the agency, participation in other ventures and societal processes and new tasks (Amréus, 2013). This reasoning did not really mean that much, since the words in themselves had little to no relevance as to why the industrial heritage is no longer a prioritised venture for the Swedish National Heritage Board. The more honest reason, which he speaks of later in the text, was that “no one can support as everything equally at all time” which no can argue against (Amréus 2013:13, my translation).

The County Administrative Board made a strategy plan for cultural resources management in 2006, which would be valid for the years 2007-2011. The County Administrative Board emphasises in this strategy that the management of cultural heritage must be shared by both public and private actors, and points out that associations are extremely valuable to the whole county (Sundin, 2006). This notion has, as I have shown in the text, been present in every communication concerning heritage and heritage management from the County Administrative Board since the start of the 1990s. In this plan from 2006, the lack of interest and involvement from industries is criticised (idem). Later events would prove this point, which I will arrive at later in this section. The plan did not put as much focus on industrial heritage as previous ones from the County Administrative Board had done, which was indicative of the shift in attitude from the National Heritage Board.

⁴⁸ Interview with informants 5&6, 2016-05-20.
⁴⁹ Interview with informants 5&6, 2016-05-20.
The lack of enthusiasm from national and regional levels lead to a restructuring of the focus for Guldriket. In a strategy plan for 2005, the main focus was on the destination Guldriket, not the different, individual mining heritage sites that made up the destination. In the prerequisites for new members, there were no longer any mention of upholding the industrial and cultural values of former mining area – at least not specifically. Instead, the prerequisites for new members were now to get behind the vision and profile of Guldriket and to fulfil the quality criteria (DNR 789/2004). The vocabulary used to describe Guldriket was in this strategy plan quite different from earlier plans. Earlier plans, for example the strategy plan from 1999, was abundantly clear and direct about mining heritage and the importance of keeping the industrial and mining profile as way to differentiate Guldriket from other destinations, and as a way to manifest its uniqueness (DNR 103-1293-1999). If we go further back in time, to the programmes from the early 1990s, they clearly state that it was the pride in the shared heritage that drove Guldriket forward (DNR 103-8255-1993). In 2005, industrial heritage and mining heritage was barely mentioned in the strategy plan. The definition of Guldriket in this strategy plan was “a geographical destination” and “a brand associated with a quality norm”. The vision, mentioned earlier for the new members to get behind, was “Guldriket shall be a changing and wondrous realm, filled with experiences with a golden touch and some more”\textsuperscript{50}. The profile still included a mention of mines and history, but the phrase was “to provide experiences based on our shimmering culture, environment and history with a focus on the mines, narratives and personalities” (DNR 789/2004, my translation).

One important difference between the mid-2000s and earlier years, was that even though the work group for Guldriket mentioned that they wished to expand with more members they did not actively partake in the designation of new heritage at the sites. The members included after 2004 did not have a connection to mining or mining operations, as a direct result of the changed prerequisites for membership that were established in the strategy plan (DNR 789/2004). In the year 2007, Guldriket had 19 members, but only seven were mining heritage sites; the Adak Cinema, Bergrum Boliden, the Malå Geomuseum, Forum Museum Rönnskär, the Ropeway, the Varuträsk Mineral Park and the Underground Church in Kristineberg. The remaining 12 members were hotels, conference centres, campsites etc. Guldriket was in fact no longer Guldriket - it changed its name to “Gold of Lapland” in 2006. The association Gold of Lapland and the four former Guldriket municipalities came to an agreement that the name “Guldriket” would still be used as a theme for the seven mining heritage sites, but the now economic association, no longer non-profit, would be called Gold of Lapland (DNR 303-14938-2004). This was a natural development, since the EU funding that the project Guldriket had received only covered ventures until the year 2006. This explains the focus on new members pulling their own weight financially, and the reason for not having strict membership prerequisites. Mining heritage was not financially viable without the EU funding.

Guldriket, the theme not the association, now consisted of seven sites, struggling to keep up financially. During the following years, the sites would face some harsh times. The visiting numbers decreased, some of the sites did not keep reliable opening hours and the sites were expensive to maintain\textsuperscript{51}. Sten-Arne Burman retired in 2010 and Forum Museum Rönnskär could no longer keep their opening hours, which meant that the museum only could be opened on request. Boliden AB did not engage another employee to keep the opening hours, and Boliden AB has changed their attitude towards the museum significantly since they themselves decided to create it. A couple of years ago, the smelters got a new location manager who was not particularly interested in the museum\textsuperscript{52}.

\textsuperscript{50} In Swedish, “Guldriket ska vara ett föränderligt och förunderligt rike, fyllt av upplevelser med guldton och nalta mer”.
\textsuperscript{51} Interview with informant 4, 2016-05-20.
\textsuperscript{52} Interview with informants 5&6, 2016-05-20.
The harshest blow to Guldriket was in 2012 when its centre, Bergrum Boliden, was shutdown. The number of visitors to Bergrum Boliden had been on decline the past years, while the cost for the maintenance of the building grew. The museum’s cellar flooded every spring, and had to be sanitised time and time again. Skellefteå Museum, who were responsible for Bergrum Boliden, invited municipality officials in 2012 to have a look at the condition of the building since the municipality owned the building. They discovered severe damage from mould and realised that the restoration would have to be massive. Boliden AB was at the time expanding their operations and were in need of additional office space for their administrative crew, and they offered economic restitution to the museum if they agreed to move the Bergrum Boliden exhibitions to the community centre in Boliden. Skellefteå Museum did not believe that the exhibitions could be moved to a smaller space, but they communicated to Boliden AB that the museum wanted the exhibitions of Bergrum Boliden to live on in some form. An agreement was struck between the two parties and a contract was signed.

The contract stated that the museum would utilise and restore the objects that were displayed in Bergrum Boliden, and that Boliden AB would take care of the scenography which was left in the building. Furthermore, the contract stated that Boliden AB would install a visitor centre within two years, i.e. by 2014. By 2014, no visitor centre was in sight. The building was in much worse shape than the ocular inspection had suggested. According to Boliden AB, the cost of restoration would be too high and that affected the previously set time frame. Boliden AB and the new managing director for Skellefteå Museum recently had a meeting where they came to an oral agreement to dissolve the previously written contract. Boliden AB say that they intend to open a visitor’s centre sometime in the future. Exactly when remains to be seen.

3.5. The mining heritage sites at the Skellefteå Field today

Today, the overall collective project for the mining heritage sites at the Skellefteå Field is Gold of Lapland. All of the mining heritage sites are members, but Gold of Lapland do not have an exclusive focus on mining heritage. In fact, Gold of Lapland caters to providing “unique experiences” and a “diverse range of sites, attractions and activities”. We recognise this first value word, “unique” from the previous chapter. Uniqueness is still an important part of the narrative to market the sites, but there is no longer a single focus on mining heritage, indicated by the second value word “diverse”. The word “unique” is connected to the industrial history that has marked the development of the region. Industrial history is thus marketed as part of the narrative of the region, but it is no way as important as it was during the 1990s when the mining heritage was the narrative. Gold of Lapland has around 90 members today, of which six are mining heritage sites.

The sites that are currently active within mining heritage at the Skellefteå Field today are, using their old names; The Varuträsk Mineral park, the Underground Church in Kristineberg, Forum Museum Rönnskär, Malå Geomuseum, the Ropeway and the Adak Cinema. I have divided the mining heritage sites that are active today into two subgroups based on how they have change since the start.

53 Interview with informant 4, 2016-05-20.
54 Interview with informant 4, 2016-05-20.
55 Email correspondence with representative from Boliden AB, 2016-05-13.
57 Idem.
3.5.1 Change for the better or for the worse?

The first subgroup have changed their narratives as well as their names and purposes, and this group consists of Varuträsk Mineral Park and Malå Geomuseum.

Varuträsk Mineral Park has changed its name twice during the years. In the beginning, when the site was made into a heritage site by the efforts of local enthusiasts, it was called Varuträsk Mineral Park which strongly indicated their focus on mining and minerals. The name changed when it was taken over by an entrepreneur in the late 1990s/early 2000, to the Wilderness Mine. The entrepreneur that took over the site managed a larger Wilderness Centre in the area, typical for the time, where the focal point was adventure tourism (Isacson, 2013:28-31). The site is currently under restructuring and construction, and will reopen this summer – as Skellefteå Adventure Park. This name change has a tremendous impact in how potential visitors will perceive the site. Shakespeare wrote “A rose by any other name would smell as sweet”, but would a mining heritage site? Probably not. This new name change, especially in the light of its previous name change is indicative of a heritagisation process that Sjöholm (2016) describes as rejection of previously designated heritage. I have earlier in this study shown this heritagisation process in a bit more direct sense, when talking about Berggrum Boliden which was shut down. However, Sjöholm argues – and I agree, that the rejection of heritage does not have to be an abrupt shut down of a heritage site. Sjöholm’s definition of the rejection of previous designated heritage is that the process leads to a loss of or decrease in the former cultural recognition given to the place (2016:88). This name change, I argue, is indicative of the fact that the site is in the process of decreasing its perceived heritage. The reopening of the Varuträsk mine as Skellefteå Adventure Park is coming soon, and the park will open later in June this year. It remains to be seen how many visitors will visit because of the newly built Zip line, and how many will purposely visit the Park to visit the old mine shaft. This could have a positive overall effect on the mining heritage, if the Zip Line can attract more visitors that can “spill over” to the mine.

The second one in the change-group is the museum formerly known as Malå Geomuseum, which is now called GeoExpo. They have been struggling with a lack of staff which has affected their ability to be officially open to the public. This summer, however, this is going to change and they will be open to the public for five weeks. They are aiming their operations towards a younger target group, primarily schools who have been the reason for an increase in visitor numbers lately. They note that “children are the future” and that both teachers and students from schools have shown great interest when visiting, which hopefully will spread to other groups and schools. The GeoExpo are noting an overall increase in numbers from visitors as well as an increase in interest from the public for their operations, which sounds promising. The site is hoping to develop their operations, although they are battling the issue of costs for personnel. The narrative told at Geoexpo has changed from the original one which was to be a museum to showcase the history of exploration, to have now become more specified toward geology. Can this process therefore be said to be a decrease, or even rejection of heritage? That remains unclear, as it depends on how the visitor perceives the narrative. Geoexpo themselves say that different visitors are looking for different things, although they are clear about the fact that mining heritage is no longer the main focus of their operations. I have argued in the previous cases of the Adak Cinema and the Underground Church that the mining heritage is inherent in the place, and thus becomes a natural part of

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58 Survey material from Malå GeoExpo. 
59 Idem.
its narrative. This should therefore be the same for the changed Geoexpo. To argue against myself on this one, which can be rewarding and equally frustrating at times, I would like to point out that this case of the Geoexpo can be viewed differently than the other cases. The Adak Cinema and the Underground Church never had mining heritage as their original, main narrative. The previously named Malå Geomuseum was intended and run as a museum with the stated purpose to showcase and communicate mining heritage. Thus, I argue that this is both a decrease of the former cultural recognition given to the place, but it is also a reinterpretation of the already existing heritage. It could be either one, depending on the perception that the visitor gets when visiting Geoexpo. If he or she is after the historical context of exploration and mineral mining, then the knowledge is still there and the narrative is still set in a historical setting where mining plays the main role.

3.5.2. Winning concepts?

The ones that are continuing their original narratives are the Adak cinema, the Ropeway, the Underground Church and Forum Museum Rönnskär. All of these have basically the same purpose as when they started out in the 1990s, and their narratives have not changed significantly since the start.

The Adak cinema remains mainly a cinema, their primary focus today is not mining heritage – even though the mining history of the site is crucial for the narrative of the Adak Cinema. The cinema was built by a mine worker who worked fulltime at the Adak mine, and that is their most important narrative. According to their answers to the survey, no one in the board group for the Adak Cinema today has a personal connection to the Adak mine. This however is not entirely true. In the same sentence, they mention that “maybe someone of us has a relative who worked there in their younger days”\(^\text{60}\). This goes to show that the history of the Adak mine is so intensely intertwined with the narrative of the community that the inhabitants barely reflect on who worked there or not. The main motivation for continuation of the operations of the Adak Cinema is, according to the survey material, to preserve the culture and history of the village since it is important to the inhabitants and the enthusiasts who operate it today. The Adak Cinema are aiming their advertisements to children and youth this year, hoping for a payoff in visits. They say that they are constantly trying to improve on the operations of the site, and that they are adapting to other events in the area that could possibly steal away visitors from them\(^\text{61}\).

Thus, the Adak Cinema has gone through a continuous reaffirmation process of heritagisation. According to Sjöholm (2016:88), reaffirmation of heritage is a heritagisation process where the same physical space is being identified and interpreted in the same way as it used to be. My view is that every time it is included in different projects launched by either local or regional institutions, or included in marketing of cultural heritage sites in the region, or even every time any visitor comes to visit, the place is reaffirmed as a mining heritage – as long as the visitor can identify and interpret it as a mining heritage site.

The Ropeway seems to be one of the more active sites, but they are also highly dependent on the seasons since they cannot operate during the winter months. The operators of the site

\(^{60}\) Survey material from the Adak Cinema, my translation.

\(^{61}\) Survey material from the Adak Cinema.
have other activities as well, such as conferences and events, and they organise musical evenings for the local population. The Ropeway association is active on social media and are communicating directly with potential tourists as well as the local population. They seem to have found a winning concept, which of course is facilitated by their truly unique heritage site. They have branched out, with events and activities not directly linked to the mining history, but they have kept telling the same narrative through the years, which I believe is a key factor in their continuing heritagisation. The Ropeway was recently featured as one of the 19 coolest cable cars in the world by American Express. The Ropeway has been constantly reaffirmed as heritage throughout the years, and has not, according to me, gone through any processes of decrease or rejection of heritage.

The association that is managing the Underground Church in Kristineberg are reporting a decrease in overall visitor numbers, but notes that this is due to the fact that less buss groups come each year although the other types of visitors have increased. The Underground Church is one of the two current mining heritage sites at the Skellefteå Field that have some form of cooperation with Boliden AB, the other being Forum museum Rönnskär. Boliden AB owns and operates the Kristineberg mine, and they also own the facilities where the Underground Church operates on the surface. There are many similarities between the Ropeway and the Underground Church. They have remained within their original narratives, and have by keeping them built up a reputation. This is of course also due to the perceived uniqueness of the sites that the other heritage sites cannot match. The Ropeway is the world’s longest ropeway, and everything with the “the world’s”- prefix is an attraction in itself, regardless of what the attraction is. Combined with the local enthusiasm for the preservation of mining heritage in small communities, this a winning concept. The Underground Church also possess a uniqueness with the narrative of how Jesus appeared in the mine. This attracts a different type of visitors that may or may not necessarily be interested in the mining heritage aspect. This however should not be viewed as an indicator the rejection or decrease of the heritage. As I have previously discussed, the fact that a former mining area does not solely focus on mining heritage is not in itself evident of the rejection of mining heritage. The narrative of mining heritage is inherent, no one visiting the Underground Church can escape the narrative of mining history. The same reasoning is applicable to the Adak Cinema.

Forum Museum Rönnskär has kept its narrative and purpose, although the site is not as old as the others and has thus not had as much time to change. Forum Museum Rönnskär has an economic stability because of the connection to Boliden AB who takes care of the maintenance of the building – the others sites are struggling with expensive maintenance, especially the Ropeway. Even though Boliden AB started Forum Museum Rönnskär, they are reluctant to support it today as I previously mentioned. Boliden AB does not even mention the museum on their website, which I will discuss in the upcoming discussion chapter. Since two years back, Forum Museum Rönnskär does not offer guided tours during the summers which they did earlier. This is said by Boliden AB to be due to the risky nature of letting unauthorized people into the smelter area, but the museum would have liked to continue these

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64 Survey material from the Underground Church.
tours, and do not fully buy into the safety reason for abandoning the tours.65 Worth noting is that the tours were held in cooperation with Boliden AB, and that the tours stopped around the same time as the smelters got a new location manager66. One way in which Forum Museum Rönnskär has changed, is that it has different opening procedures now than they used to have. It used to be open daily, and now an aspiring visitor must first contact the museum and ask to be let in. Although the staff, which mainly consists of Sten-Arne Burman, are very service minded and try to be available, these new opening policies are problematic since visitors must plan their visits in advance. I would like to, as the last argument of this chapter, argue that this change in opening hours is in fact indicative of a process of rejection of previously designated heritage. Sjöholm (2016) defines the rejection of heritage as a process that leads to a loss or decrease in heritage. I have previously in this study used this aspect of de-heritagisation to describe the shutdown of Bergrum Boliden, where the cultural recognition was lost, and the case of Varuträsk Mineral Park where the cultural recognition was decreased by a recent name change. In this case of Forum Museum Rönnskär, I argue that because of the lack of availability to the site, the cultural recognition is simultaneously decreased. Cultural recognition can be given by anyone at any time, and as I have discussed several times in the text the heritage sites are reaffirmed as heritage each time a visitor visits them and recognises them as heritage. If the visitor cannot visit Forum Museum Rönnskär, then the recognition of it as heritage cannot happen. The reaffirmation of heritage is vital to the survival of these mining heritage sites.

65 Interview with informants 5&6, 2016-05-20.
66 My own train of thought.
4. Conclusion

This last chapter of my thesis will be divided into three subchapters; discussion, conclusion and ideas for future studies. In the discussion part, I will first discuss some of the empirical data that I have collected and presented in the thesis. I will also discuss some more personal reflections that I have had through the research concerning the sites, actors and source material, and from that make some predictions/suggestions for the future of these mining heritage sites. The second subchapter will consist of a brief conclusion of the results of the study. Lastly, I will make some suggestions to future studies within this subject.

4.1. Discussion

There is a lot to be said about the heritagisation of mining areas, but a good way to start is to figure out which mines can be considered to have heritage values. One prerequisite should be that there is something, some aspect of the mining operations, left when the mine is shut down. I have found that one of the issues for the establishment of mining heritage sites is that the legislation concerning reclamation work after the shutdown of a mine dictates that the mining company must restore the former mining area in a way in which it becomes a natural part of the surrounding landscape again. This is not only hard to achieve, it is also directly in conflict with the interest to preserve mining history for future generations. It is very hard, not to say impossible, to restore an area where mining operations have been active to an “untouched” state. Firstly, there is no such thing as untouched nature, there has been human impact in the area before the mining operations. Boliden AB specifies that they seek to restore the area to become a “natural part of the surrounding landscape”, which is interesting since the notion of what is natural or not in the surrounding landscape is not specified. For several decades, Boliden AB’s mines were a natural part of the surrounding landscapes at the Skellefteå Field. Is it not better to own up to the fact that they were in fact there, instead of erasing all traces of the mining operations?

Boliden AB’s policy is also in conflict with the Swedish Mineral Strategy which states that mining areas should undergo reclamation so that new cultural values arise after the shutdown. It is obviously impossible to preserve all of the former mining areas, but a closer connection between the industry and the preservation of cultural heritage would be beneficial for both of them. The mining operations make up a big part of the historical narrative of the Skellefteå Field and also make up part of the local identity, which is stated over and over again from the mining heritage sites and the programmes and strategies provided by the County Administrative Board. This identity should be recognised and supported by both local and regional, public and private actors, to the benefit of them all. Almost all places can be considered as heritage, if only there are actors who are willing to interpret, use and narrate them as heritage. In places such as the Skellefteå Field, the heritagisation of mining areas can make the difference between staying and leaving. The depopulation of former mining areas is problematic, but if these areas can be turned into heritage sites they can also provide job opportunities for the local population and thus stay and sustain a living community.
One thing that surprised me during my research was the role of Boliden AB as an actor within the field of mining heritage. They own the buildings that house Forum Museum Rönnskär and the Underground Church, but they do not promote either one of them on their website. Why is this? Why do they not promote their own history, as they previously did at Bergrum Boliden?

One explanation, as indicated by some of the interviewees in the study, is that Boliden AB made changes in their management team a couple of years ago. Previous management at Boliden AB were more inclined to help the mining heritage sites, either officially or off the record, but now it is hard to get them involved at all. Another explanation, which I argue is more plausible is that they do not have to. Boliden AB do not have to tell their own narratives in a museum since all of the narratives told by the mining heritage sites at the Skellefteå Field uphold a narrative of Boliden AB as a community builder and a provider of modernisation. Which is not that strange at all, since the mining heritage sites were all initiated by local enthusiasts with strong connections to the mining operations. There would be no narratives for the mining heritage sites to tell without the basis that Boliden AB’s narrative forms.

The problem is that Boliden AB do not fully seem to appreciate the mining heritage sites, not even the ones that are housed by the company. Forum Museum Rönnskär is the only mining heritage site at the Skellefteå Field that was initiated by Boliden AB themselves, which makes their lack of promotion of it more confusing. On their webpage, there is not one mention of Forum Museum Rönnskär, despite the fact that it is housed within their own building, partially financed by them and showing their company’s history. It seems to me like Boliden AB would have everything to gain, and little to lose in promoting the mining heritage sites on their website or via other channels. In the section about social responsibility on their webpage, they even bring up the fact that “the histories of some towns and communities have been closely connected with Boliden’s development over the years”, yet no mention at all of the different mining heritage sites that actually shows and supports this narrative. This section could easily include links to the mining heritage sites that build their narratives around Boliden AB’s operations, alternatively only to the sites that they are involved with, i.e. Forum Museum Rönnskär and the Underground Church in Kristineberg. An increased involvement from Boliden AB would be welcome. An increased involvement from Boliden AB might actually be beneficial to them as well. As I previously wrote about the Swedish Mineral Strategy, the strategy states that an involvement from mining companies in creating new cultural values in former and active mining communities is encouraged. The strategy also remarks on the benefits of having both active and historical mines in the same area, as it will lead to an increase of interest from the local population. This is yet another reason for Boliden AB to get more involved in the mining heritage projects at the Skellefteå Field.

4.2. Conclusion

I have found that the most important circumstance, or rather the instigator of the heritagisation processes, is local involvement. Local enthusiasts have been crucial to all of the heritagisation processes that I have examined in this study. The local enthusiasts felt like they possessed a narrative that should be shared, and they sought out the means to realise it. As I have shown in the study, their efforts were aided by the general discourse and notion that industrial heritage, including mining heritage, was something worth preserving. The heritagisation processes were possible since they were initiated in a time and place where industrial heritage was val-

ued on both national and regional levels, which facilitated the actors on a local level to transform some of the former and current mining areas into mining heritage sites. The historical setting for the development of mining heritage has been crucial to understand how and why these mining areas have been made into mining heritage sites. To explain this historical setting and to connect the discourse held at a local level with the national and regional discourses of cultural and industrial heritage, CDA in combination with the special adaptation of field theory have been fruitful as a methodological framework. I have treated mining heritage at the Skellefteå Field and the discourse on it as an autonomous field, inspired by the adaptations of Bourdieu’s theory made by Orre and Isacson. Through this methodological approach, I have narrowed in on the narratives used by actors within the field, both from actors trying to engage preservation and from actors motivating their engagement.

The narratives used by the actors managing the mining heritage sites have in some of the cases changed drastically, but in most cases they have remained the same. The management of the sites have changed, many of the initial local enthusiasts have moved away or retired.

The arguments that were used for motivating the heritagisation processes of the former and current mining areas corresponded well with the discourse held at national and regional levels, and the changes in vocabulary and motives at the different levels followed each other. Mining heritage sites were once deemed as an important part of the industrial heritage of Västerbotten, but currently they have not been subject to any larger efforts from national or regional levels. The actors that are managing the sites struggle with the financial difficulties of maintaining the often expensive buildings while both public and private actors such as the National Heritage Board and Boliden AB show a lack of interest. Heritagisation of mining areas does not happen easily, since the reclamation performed by mining companies on former mining areas often result in a demolition of the buildings that could have been preserved and transformed into mining heritage. The mining companies, in this case Boliden AB, should pay some attention to the section in the Swedish Mineral Strategy that states that reclamation should be conducted in such a way so that new cultural values can arise.

As a main theoretical framework to understand the heritagisation processes of the former and current mining areas at the Skellefteå Field, I have used Sjöholm’s take on heritagisation with her additional aspects of re-heritagisation and de-heritagisation. These aspects, which together with the original concept of heritagisation defined by Harrison, have been useful at every turn for me to understand and interpret the changes that the mining heritage sites have been through. Sjöholm’s theory has provided me with a way to answer why some attempts to develop mining areas into mining heritage sites have been more successful than others. This was answered by analysing the changes of the mining heritage sites by using Sjöholm’s concepts of re-heritagisation and de-heritagisation. A successful site is a site where re-affirmation of the already designated heritage happens continuously. Re-affirmation, I argue, can be viewed as a process that is happening each time a site is included in a project, marketed or when visitors come to the site. In short, each time the site is recognised for its heritage it is reaffirmed. A site that is constantly reaffirmed as heritage, will in most cases be successful – even though things like damages to buildings or sudden economic setbacks can have severe impact on a site which might force it to shutdown, as was the case with Bergrum Boliden. A successful site does not have to have mining heritage as its primary narrative, as shown in the case of the Underground Church in Kristineberg. As long as mining is part of the narrative in some way, mining heritage can be viewed as inherent to the place and will thus be presented to the visitors, who will take part of the narrative and thus reaffirm the site as mining heritage.

Heritagisation processes are in no way absolute, in the cases presented in my thesis they were constantly reaffirmed, and in some cases rejected. Heritagisation processes cannot be seen as fixed, they are fluid and the mining heritage sites are dependent on the perception of them as
heritage. The heritage sites become reaffirmed each time they are visited and perceived by the visitors as heritage.

4.3. Ideas for future studies

In my thesis, I have been primarily concerned with the heritagisation processes and how and why they are instigated, and by whom. Therefore, I have not focused on the visitors to the sites, which I believe would make for an interesting study of the sites at the Skellefteå Field. If the visitors and their motivations for visiting are researched, it could provide important information for the sites to aim their marketing and thus increase their number of visitors. This could be done by conducting interviews or handing out surveys at the sites, and this study would be done in close cooperation with the sites and build on their experiences to form valid research questions. In addition, it would be interesting to see how the local populations around these heritage sites view the sites. I have shown that the main instigators of the heritagisation processes are local enthusiasts, but I have also shown that some of the original instigators have left the sites. A study researching the generation shift, in connection to the depopulation of the areas, and how this affects the view of the mining heritage sites would be an important one.

The self-identification with mining as part of the local heritage is another idea that popped up while I was writing this thesis. The demographic change of former mining communities, in relation to self-identification with mining would be an interesting research topic. I would like to explore whether or not there is a connection between demographic change and a strong sense of identification with the mining heritage of the area. Are people from places with a strong mining identity more or less likely to move away? Do the people show an interest in maintaining mining heritage as part of their narrative of the place, and does this change when the older generation disappears? My study at the Skellefteå Field has been conducted in an area where mining operations are still present, but it would be interesting to see what happens in former mining areas where the mining operations have been shut down for more than 50 years. The idea of self in connection to the physical space, in combination with having parents/grandparents who worked within the mining industry in the area, would be interesting to research in any former mining area of the world.

Another interesting study, most suitable for a dissertation, would be to further investigate Boliden ABs attitude towards facilitating the heritagisation of their former/active mining areas and compare it to for example LKABs\textsuperscript{68} approach. I would be interested to find out how different mining companies interpret the Swedish reclamation legislation, and particularly how they interpret that legislation in regard to the Swedish Mineral Strategy – the two being a bit contradictory, as I have shown in this thesis. On a larger scale, the heritagisation processes of mining areas in different regions of the Arctic could be compared. Do the heritagisation processes differ from country to country, depending on national legislation? Or can similarities be found in communities of different countries that have a similar history of mining? This study would be well suited for a doctoral dissertation with research conducted over a few years.

\textsuperscript{68} Luossavaara-Kiirunavaara Aktiebolag, a Swedish mining company that operates in Kiruna and Malmberget.
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**Personal communication**

Informant 1: Former historical consultant at Guldriket. The interview took place in Lund, 2016-05-16.

Informant 2: Administrator for cultural environment issues at the County Administrative Board in Västerbotten. The interview took place in Umeå, 2016-05-19.


Informant 4: Employee at the Skellefteå Museum and former board member of Gold of Lapland. The interview took place in Skellefteå, 2016-05-20.


Email correspondence with representative from Boliden AB, 2016-05-13.

**Survey material from**

The Adak Cinema
Malå Geoexpo
The Underground Church in Kristineberg
Forum Museum Rönnskär
Appendix 1. Survey questions sent to the sites

1. How did your operations start? What is your motivation for operating the site?
2. Why did the operations start at the specific physical place?
3. Have the operations changed since the start? In which way, and why?
4. How do you market your site/operations and to which target group?
5. Why have you chosen that specific way of marketing yourselves?
6. Who are your visitors? What do the visiting trends suggest, which seasons are your best? Do some years see more visitors than others? If you care to speculate, why?
7. Is mining heritage the most important theme of your operations? If yes, which aspects of mining history are your focus and why? If no, which is the most important theme of your operations, and why?
8. Does someone within the operations have a personal connection to the abandoned/current mining operations of the site? Has the operations ever had someone involved that had a personal connection?
9. Do you have plans to develop/change the operations? Why?
10. Are you connected to/collaborating with other community actors, such as the company that ran/runs the mining operations, the municipality, the County Administrative Board, the County museum or other organisations? In which way, and why?
Appendix 2. Map over the mining heritage sites, past and present

1. The Adak Cinema
2. Malå Geomuseum (now Geoexpo)
3. The Underground Church
4. The Ropeway, Mensträsk station
5. The Ropeway, Örträsk station
6. Bergrum Boliden (no longer active)
7. Varuträsk Mineral Park (now Skellefteå Adventure Park)
8. Forum Museum Rönnskär
Appendix 3. Photo

The original Christ-image in the Kristineberg mine. Photo by Helmer Andersson, 1946. Source: http://underjordskyrkan.se/bildgalleri.html