This licenciate thesis studies Finnish police chiefs' career biographies. Through career biographies it explores various issues concerning work and the police organization, such as professional identity, turning points of career, leadership, supervisor position, and hierarchy in the organization. How does one tell one's career, and how do different experiences construct and shape the professional identity of the Finnish police chiefs?

The study approaches the police organization through decades' experience: police chiefs who were interviewed had all worked within the organization for many years, even decades. Thus it enables reader to get into a world that might not be reached otherwise. Police chiefs' career biographies offer an interesting viewpoint to the Finnish police organization. The study reveals, among other things, competitive nature and contradictory expectations concerning one's career moves. It also contributes to studies among civil servants' careers, well-being and motivation at work. In addition, it strengthens understanding about biographies as a relevant way of reflecting one's career.

The study implies that police chiefs' work and professional identity are strongly shaped by ambivalent publicity; hierarchy and competition within the police organization, and professional narrative that praises vertical mobility and career moves.

The study leans on the theories of narrative identity. The empirical data included 15 biographical interviews, and the analysis of the data was conducted using the expectancy analysis. Analysis is presented in two separate chapters and was motivated by two research questions. Firstly, which issues and experiences strongest construct and shape the professional identity of the Finnish police chiefs? Themes that are studied here are: career choice; supervisor position; different types of publicity, and social relations among those involved with the profession. Secondly, how do the police chiefs tell their careers; how are their work biographies told and emplotted? This section concentrates on the biographers' attitudes towards their (work) history. Four types of career biographies are presented: a battle-oriented romance; a progressive development narrative; a hope-lost career tragedy, and a more lightly oriented comedy narrative.

Police chiefs work biographies can be seen as bureaucratic interpretive models. Turning points in the career concerned moves in a structural path of the organization, and different positions were hierarchically connected to each other. Beginnings of the police chiefs' careers were often told with enthusiasm and satisfaction. Career moves took place regularly, one after another. These experiences form a striking point of comparison to the current situation, which instead could be characterized as a time of very few career moves.