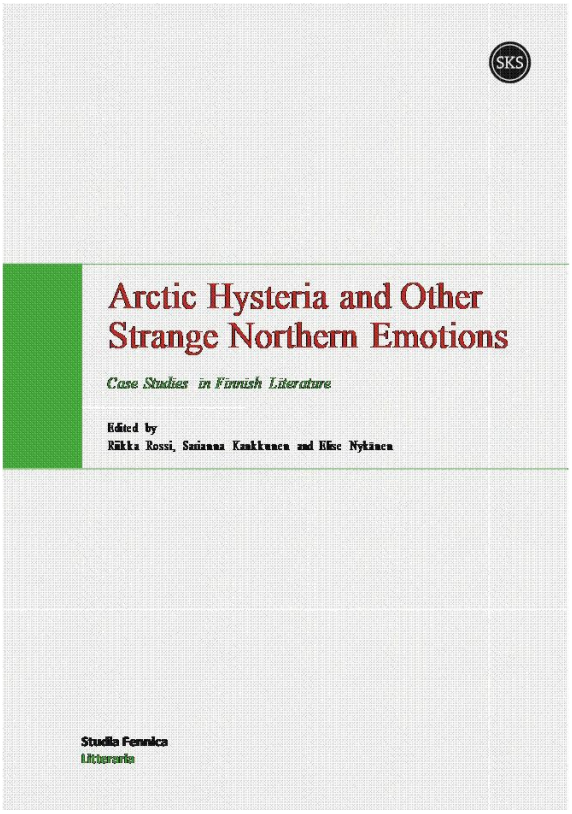
Arctic Hysteria and Other Strange Northern Emotions

Case Studies in Finnish Literature

Elise Nykänen



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Introduction to Arctic Hysteria in Finnish Literature

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Arctic Hysteria and Other Strange Emotions: Case Studies in Finnish Literature participates in a thriving area of research on the cultures of the North and the Arctic in the light of case studies in Finnish literature and emotions. The book addresses the cultural history of Arctic hysteria in the Finnish context in particular and maps emotions depicted and evoked in literature of the Finnish North in general. By focusing on the imagined North in the literature of modernism and late modernity, the contributions offer views to experiences of modernisation and the changing Northern environment; they ask how Finnish literature has reflected and re-imagined anxieties and hopes provoked by the effects of the Anthropocene.

Arctic hysteria, which is also known as *piblobtok, gievvat, kebovat, meryak* and *menerik,* is a myth of a culture-bound syndrome linked with many Northern cultures. The concept refers to an alleged hysterical condition that was believed to affect people living in the Arctic region in winter during the long periods of darkness and subzero temperatures. The idea of Arctic hysteria has fascinated numerous scientists, psychiatrists, anthropologists and artists since it was first referenced by researchers of Siberian shamanism in the 1860s and by early explorers of Greenland in the 1910s.[1] During the 'Arctic hysteria' attack, natives were reported to experience a sudden dissociative period of extreme excitement or extreme rage, tear off their clothes, run naked through the snow and scream during convulsive seizures, fall into trance and perform irrational or dangerous acts, followed by amnesia concerning the event. However, contemporary studies have shown that what has been called 'Arctic hysteria' is a catch-all rubric under which explorers lumped various anxiety reactions among the indigenous people

[1] The concept is first referenced in the study of Siberian Shamanism (Eliade 1951, 24) and later in the studies among the Inuit population in Canada (Dick 1995, 1) and the Skólt Sámi (Äimä 1932, 409).

(see Dick 1995, 1). More importantly, 'symptoms' of Arctic hysteria were induced by stress reactions to colonialism; it was a concept reflecting obsessions of the Western explorers during the heyday of Freudian psychoanalysis.

Arctic hysteria as a culture-bound syndrome is a rejected theory in anthropology. However, it is not widely known that the concept has lived on in the Finnish cultural imagination. After the Second World War, Finnish modernist authors adopted the concept and expanded and redefined Arctic hysteria making it signal to the whole cultural mentality of the nation. Some contemporary authors have reinterpreted the term positively and turned it into a source of artistic creativity and unique identity. In this approach, Arctic hysteria has been transformed into an ambivalent, sometimes even a positive emotion, mood or condition and its uniqueness can be seen as reflecting the general strangeness of some other emotions and moods typical of Finnish literature. Now that contemporary Finnish literature has begun to imagine entirely different futures and emotions for the North and the Arctic area, irreparably changed by anthropogenic climate change, it is relevant to examine its past and present environmental emotions.

The concept of 'Arctic hysteria' is known in Finnish scholarship especially due to Markku Ihonen's illuminating article 'Arktisen hysterian äärellä' [Towards Arctic Hysteria] (1999). For Ihonen, Arctic hysteria is a culturally produced construct that has shaped Finnish literature since the late 19th century. As noted by Ihonen, the tradition of Arctic hysteria is not geographically limited to the literary portrayals of the Arctic region. Rather, the tradition expands and displays communities living in harsh weather conditions in Central and Eastern Finland, Ostrobothnia and Finnish Lapland. According to Ihonen (1999, 231), the poetics of contrasting light and darkness, guilt and anxiety, death and suicide, social and social-economic isolation, impulsive sexuality and religious abuse of power culminate in post-war modernist works. From the very beginning, 'Arctic hysteria' has carried ambivalent political implications. Historically it has involved a keen outside interest in Sámi culture, revivalist Laestadian movement and 'hysterical' behaviour of women in the Finnish North. Sanna Karkulehto insightfully reflects on the return of these topics in the contemporary fiction of the 21st century in her article 'Pohjoinen puhuu taas' [North Speaks Again] (2010), focusing on the literary history of the Finnish North. The ironic rewriting of the earlier tradition results in fiction, which is grotesque and dark yet celebrates the Northern mentality of survival.

While these important analyses have inspired our approach, the affective effects and multiple manifestations of Arctic hysteria in Finnish literature have not been thoroughly examined. In this volume, we focus on Finnish fictions that explicitly or implicitly tie with the concept of Arctic hysteria and its cultural history yet we dig deeper to map and identify its various versions and narrative functions and study the political and environmental dimensions invested in the concept. Moreover, the selected case studies provide views to other related conceptions of Finnish cultural mentality such as melancholia, loneliness and anxiety in Finnish literature. Through the lens of

recent studies in literature and emotion, attention is directed to poetic, rhetoric and narrative strategies of depicting and triggering emotions, affects and moods in texts. For instance, we explore the ways in which a comforting or alienating sense of anxiety or an ecstatic mood is generated in Finnish literature. The chapters provide views to nuanced affects and feelings manifested by the fictional characters when living in the Northern habitat and to historical emotion cultures in the region.

By studying how Finnish literature has depicted and evoked emotions related to Northern living environments characterised by cold, darkness, ice and winter weather, the book participates in the research on the imagined North by extending the study of the discourses of the North to experientiality and emotions. 'The imagined North' is itself a multifaceted concept. As Daniel Chartier (2018, 12) has defined, it refers to a plural and shifting discursive system, produced both outside and inside the Arctic and subarctic literatures and cultures and which functions in a variable manner according to the contexts of enunciation and reception. The ideas of the North are not limited to the North as a region, but fiction can also create temporary Norths or alternative imaginary geographies that envision elements of the Arctic, such as cold, snow, ice and darkness, outside the real-world North. Furthermore, as representations these imagined communities and narrated spaces can affect how the real North and its peoples are felt and perceived.

The understanding of the North as a relational concept, and the idea of the imagined North as a discourse created by cultural artefacts provide a starting point for the present study. However, our interest lies in the affective aspects of this system and of literary texts produced both outside and inside the Arctic and subarctic regions. We study the ways in which the idea of the North itself has been shaped by and reflected various emotions and feelings evoked in literary texts. Our approach has been inspired by the research on literature and emotions, that has in recent years become a flourishing field in literary studies. It draws from interdisciplinary research on emotion and uses multiple tools and methods. Affective aspects of texts are multilayered. The objects of study range from words of emotion and the narrators' and characters' emotions to affective atmospheres in texts; this is usually called the textual tone or mood (Ngai 2005). Research on readers' emotional responses to texts and the study of narrative empathy have also been key approaches in this field (Keen 2007; Hogan 2010).

Moreover, the study of emotions and texts covers their social and cultural impact. In recent years, many scholars have argued that emotions themselves should not be regarded only as psychological states but also as social and cultural practices. Emotions are not 'in' either the individual or the social but they are produced in and shaped by the interaction between the individual and the society (e.g., Ahmed 2004). Culturally encoded emotion discourses can provide available grammars and vocabularies for language speakers and trigger ritualised ways of expressing emotions or even develop into automatised cognitive habits (see Reddy 2001) and circulate in cultures over generations that are adopted in 'emotional communities', to use Barbara Rosenwein's (2006; 2016) concept. In this view, the study of the imagined North and emotions extends to

what Sara Ahmed (2004) has called the cultural politics of emotions: what do emotions do in societies and how have they shaped the cultures in which people live?

Historical Imaginations of the North in Europe

Northern regions and peoples have inspired writers, artists, philosophers and geographers both within and outside the North since Antiquity (e.g., Chartier 2018; Davidson 2005; Hansson and Norberg 2009; Briens 2016; Hansson et al. 2017). Previous research already implies that cold regions have been characterised as places where many desires and fears are evoked (Spufford 1996; Davidson 2005; Halink 2019). Historically, discourses of the North have included an aspect of environmental psychology by suggesting that the Northern climate and the environment have a major effect on how its inhabitants think, feel and act.[2] Already ancient geographers believed that climatic conditions had a major effect on the emotions and cultures of peoples and persistent discourses on the South and the North as well as the East and the West were initiated already in Antiquity. The rugged and barbaric North also served as the antipode of the more civilised South in later cultural imaginations in the Middle Ages; later, the discursive opposition was sometimes strengthened by real encounters between the representatives of the formal Southern and more informal Northern courts. The area of Scandinavia was considered as even more peripheral, mystical and less known than Germany (see Stadius 2005, 29–31). As part of the Swedish empire until 1809, Finland was seldom, if ever, mentioned as a separate geographical or cultural area.

The era of Romanticism was a cultural game changer for the North because writers, philosophers and other thinkers in Germany and elsewhere began to imagine the region in more positive terms: as having unique national cultures and mythologies that differed positively from the classical, pan-European traditions that originated in the South. The discourse of the North developed in new directions (Halink 2019, 2–3). For instance, for Madame de Staël (1800, 162–164), the North was a realm of melancholic, contemplative emotions that differed from the more active and joyous emotions of the sunny and warm South. As the climate and the environment were seen as producing differences in emotions, the approach appears as an early form of environmental psychology that examines how the surroundings affect the human psyche. In general, Romanticism was a very significant intellectual and literary movement for Finland since it helped the writers and thinkers to create the idea of and imagery for the Finnish nation once the area had been separated from Sweden in 1809 and annexed by Russia as an autonomous Grand Duchy. The Romantic discourse of the melancholic North is also presented as an expression in the Finnish national epic, the *Kalevala*, created by Elias Lönnrot, in

[2] This aspect has been re-considered in recent environmentalist or ecocritical approaches, which have reconsidered how the contemporary literature of the North depicts and reflects climate change and re-imagines the relationships between humans and nature (e.g., Körber et al. 2017; Lahtinen 2013; Perkiömäki 2021).

the mournful, passive emotions of its lachrymose heroes (see Isomaa and Kankkunen 2022).

At the same time, the sublime and the Picturesque played a particular role in the Romantic version of the North and in the perceptual baggage with which nineteenth-century explorers and travellers travelled the globe. The feelings of the sublime offered techniques of adaptation and masked terror in environments that could include real-life dangers and disastrous consequences for the explorers (MacLaren 1985, 89). The nineteenth-century Romantic and Decadent authors in particular, from Edgar Allan Poe to H. C. Andersen and Charles Baudelaire, engaged with a way of writing about the North as an extreme and mysterious space at the end of the world (e.g., Davidson 2005). In the Romantic context, the North frequently involves a risk of being lost in the wilderness, overcome by darkness and snow, eaten by bears or wolves, losing the sunlight, numbed by the kiss of the Snow Queen or confronted by the merciless whiteness of the permafrost. For Baudelaire's traveller in *Spleen de Paris* (1869), the lands from Tornio to the Northern Pole represented "the counterfeits of Death". However, for the traveller, life at the North Pole appears monotonous and approaches nothingness, since instead of variety, the milieu is characterised only by the slow alternation of light and darkness, the only break and entertainment being the sparkling light of the aurora borealis that the speaker associates with Hell's fireworks.[3] In Baudelaire's imagination, the North is both serene and strangely unsettling.

The idea of the imagined North is perhaps best known through colonial travelogues and the Romantic dark North narratives on the unknown Arctic. Recent postcolonial approaches to the imagined North have shifted the focus from the exoticised outside perspective to the inside view. Imaginations of the North tend to reflect power relationships between the centre and periphery and between the dominant groups in the South and indigenous peoples in the North (e.g., Ridanpää 2005; Carlsson et al. 2010; Briens 2016). The concept of 'Borealism', which is a re-formulation of Edward Saïd's renowned 'Orientalism', has been developed to illustrate how the idea of the exotic North has been produced especially in the Central-European cultural discourses. The difference between the 'inside' and 'outside' views to the North is naturally not straightforward or binary but rather a layered system of power relationships. As Chartier (2018, 10) notes, Scandinavian or Nordic imaginations of the North usually situate between the inside and outside perspectives. While Nordic literature provides views to the experiences of the inhabitants of the North and the Arctic region, the outside perspective is sometimes circulated and consolidated within the Nordic literature itself (Chartier 2018, 10). This perspective extends to Finnish literary imaginations of the North. A complex of internal power relationships between the South and the North of Finland, centre and periphery, Finnish and the Indigenous Sámi population, is also discernible

[3] The idea of the North as a frightening realm of death and night is indeed characteristic of many outside imaginations of the North. From the *Old Testament* to the *Kalevala*, the evil comes from the North. Even the ancient Aztecs associated the North with night, war, death and Hell (Chevrel 1999, 15).

in the Finnish-language corpus of the present study. This aspect will be reflected in the case studies in more detail.

The Paths of Arctic Hysteria in Finnish Literature

In Finnish literature, the myth of Arctic hysteria and its various versions can be traced back to post-war modernist literature in particular. In Finland, the concept gained general acceptance through Finnish anthropologists and linguists in the 1920s and 1930s. Sakari Pälsi (1882–1965), a Finnish anthropologist, explorer and author, used Arctic hysteria in his travel narrative *Tukkimetsistä ja uittopuroilta* [From Timber Forests and Log Streams] (1923), which describes the working life of Finnish lumberjacks in the logging industry of Finnish Lapland. In this work, Pälsi used the concept of Arctic hysteria to illustrate the nervousness and quick-tempered nature that he attached to the population of Finnish Lapland in general. The concept was also used by a Finnish linguist Frans Äimä (1875–1936) in his study on the Skolt Sámi language (1932). Especially through Pälsi's studies, the concept became popularised and began to circulate in the Finnish press. In the 1930s and 1940s, the term was used to refer to Finnish and Northern cultural mentality in general and to describe intense, emotional outbursts in various contexts ranging from the political in socialism to the religious in various practices of the pietistic movements of the North.[4]

After the Second World War, the concept of Arctic hysteria was extended to designate the whole cultural atmosphere of the nation. Marko Tapio (1924–1973), the author of the novel series *Arktinen hysteria* 1–2 [Arctic Hysteria 1–2] (1967–1968) was the first to explicitly adopt the notion to explain the nation's destructive path to the civil war in 1918. Tapio's definition of Arctic hysteria can be found in his 1958 article before he began writing his series. In Tapio's work, the term, which Pälsi and Äimä elaborated from the early indigenous studies to explain the imagined polar temperament of the peoples living in the Finnish Arctic region, was transformed into a myth of Finnish mentality. According to the author's vision, every Finn carried the seeds of Arctic hysteria in them, even though the condition manifested only in those individuals

[4] Previous research has drawn attention to the circulation of ideas of *sisu*, which is often called the Finnish national emotion, in the 1920s and 1930s. The concept, as difficult to translate as it is, can be understood as a form of perseverance, which has both negative and positive connotations (see Tepora 2012). The Northern environment, including long periods of darkness and sub-zero temperatures, is unfavourable, even lethal to many organisms and requires special capacities of adaptation (Michel et al. 2021). In a positive sense, *sisu* has been attached to capacities of adaptation and survivalism in extreme conditions: to a feeling of finding energy in the moment more than about long-term endurance, goal setting and achievement or to surpass one's preconceived limitations by accessing stored-up energy reserves (Lahti 2019). Recently, however, the connotations and ideas related to *sisu* have become pejorative again, as have many other national symbols; *sisu* has inspired proponents of right-wing nationalism and it has been used in an extreme right political context in Finland.

whose mental or physical 'weaknesses' were revealed in the extreme weather or social conditions of the North:

> Arctic hysteria is not a disease. We don't know what it really is. It is melancholia that doesn't know any limits when it is set free. A man of few words stays happy and peaceful for months, sometimes even for years, sometimes even for decades, but then, all of a sudden, he starts to drink and continues drinking until he collapses, starts it rapidly, roams furious and restless in his neighborhoods, rants and raves, talks endlessly, explains his whole life, sad. In other words: he burns. Till the very end. [– –] Every so often, [this] extreme phenomenon appears in that region: that's arctic hysteria. Its outbursts reach utmost extremes and no means of self-control can contain them. (Cit. Palm 1995, 124.)

While the concept is heavily charged with a racist history of colonisation, even fascism in Tapio's case, Arctic hysteria has been a term used in Finnish literary studies to denote a strand of post-war modernist literature. Ever since the concept of Arctic hysteria was introduced in the literary field, it has sparked cultural controversy and self-reflective criticism. Even before the publication of Tapio's *Arktinen hysteria* novels, Northern authors and scholars addressed the complexities of regional cultural politics, gender politics, economic exploitation and the social marginalisation of Northern regions and religious-spiritual traditions, including Sámi culture. Other Lapland authors, such as Annikki Kariniemi (1913–1984), who the press called the 'priestess of sex', were suspected of exoticising and marginalising Lapland and the Sámi people in their portrayal of the global North. As noted by Ihonen (1999), the representations of Arctic hysteria have circulated among Northern authors and different literary traditions; thus, they take distance from the naturalist, dark 'realism' or nature neoromanticism of post-war Lapland literature, not to mention the Sámi tradition.

The new forms of Arctic hysteria have extended into realms of gloomy fantasy, imagination and dream in both serious and humorous forms. On the other hand, Finnish writers Rosa Liksom (b. 1958) and Miki Liukkonen (1989–2023) have used the concept in a positive sense, to refer to resistance to the norms and ideals of civilisation and for the concept's potential for self-reflection, parody and creativity (see Liukkonen 2020). Contemporary authors Tommi Liimatta (b. 1976) and Hanna Hauru (1978–2021) continue to comment on and re-assess the post-war literary tradition of far Lapland, either in a humorous or raw, matter-of-fact style. Readers' interests in primitive myth, shamanism and sexual or neurotic excesses are also the subject of modernist or contemporary authors who deal with issues of social injustice, religious ecstasy and sexual abuse by aesthetically distancing these topics or seeking relief through humour.

However, it is important to note that although Finnish-language authors have found in Arctic hysteria even carnivalesque material for self-parody, in the Sámi context the term reminds people of its colonial history. In his pamphlet for the Sámi people

Terveisiä Lapista (1971 transl. *Greetings from Lappland* 1983), Nils-Aslak Valkeapää lists the term as one of the pejorative notions used to describe the indigenous peoples. Niillas Holmberg (b. 1990) is one of the contemporary Sámi authors who convey the painful effects of colonisation, modernisation and climate catastrophe on today's Sámi lifestyle and culture (Mattila 2022) yet do not use the term.

From Loneliness to Eco-anxiety

In order to provide a nuanced view to emotions and the imagined North in Finnish prose fiction and essay-writing, this volume considers various aspects and dimensions of evoking emotions. The chapters map the emotions of the fictional characters and narrators and challenge the notion of Arctic hysteria (see e.g., the chapter on contemporary dystopia by Saija Isomaa and Kaisa Kortekallio) or analyse its parodic potential (see the chapter on Rosa Liksom by Elise Nykänen, Sarianna Kankkunen and Charlotte Coutu). The real readers' responses to melancholic fiction (see Anna Ovaska's chapter) question how Finnish literature has shaped emotional communities and antimodern thought (e.g., Antti Ahmala's chapter) and what kind of affective styles and ideas of emotions are invested in this corpus of texts. The role of tone, affective atmospheres and moods depicted and created in texts forms one key issue that is discussed in several chapters (e.g., chapters by Elise Nykänen, Riikka Rossi and Sarianna Kankkunen). Various aspects of literary texts, from words of emotions to descriptions of objects to narrative points of view and stylistic aspects are important in creating moods in texts and trigger emotional effects in the reader.

In chapter II 'Loneliness, Solitude and Northern Melancholies', Elise Nykänen examines existential loneliness, its affective styles and effects in Finnish prose fiction from the early stages of modernisation to late modernity and beyond. Beginning with Juhani Aho's neo-romantic, Decadent novella *Yksin* [Alone] (1890), Finnish authors have contemplated the pleasures and pains of lonesome melancholia, considered a symptom of modernisation. Aho's work invites readers to feel with and share the narrator's sorrowful moods of homesickness as he travels to the metropole of Paris. In Marko Tapio's book series *Arktinen hysteria 1–2*, the young nation's turn to industrial modernisation involves both aversion and enchantment, resonating with the firstperson narrator's ethically estranging fixation with authoritarian and fascist ideas. In his novels, Tapio adopts the myth of Arctic hysteria to study the violent histories between families escalating since the Finnish Civil War in 1918. The lone wolf's rant lures in readers with a combination of extreme emotion and passive indifference, which trigger aversion in an alert reader. In Rosa Liksom's internationally acclaimed novella *Hytti nro 6* (2011, transl. *Compartment No. 6* 2014), the seemingly neutral narration evokes estranging amusement and sympathy for the solitary female protagonist. The grinding encounter between a lonesome Finnish girl and a Soviet ex-prisoner on a Trans-Siberian train

embodies the violent past of Finland under Russian domination and the Northern nation's imagined prehistory in Mongolia.

In chapter III 'An Upstart Nation: the Finnish National Character and Modernity in the Writings of Pentti Linkola and Timo Hännikäinen's *Hysterian maa*', Antti Ahmala addresses the interpretation of the Finnish national character and the effects of modernity on the Finnish psyche as presented in the essays of Pentti Linkola (1932– 2020) and Timo Hännikäinen (b. 1979), two antimodern cultural critics. Linkola's radical ecological antimodernism involves the idea that technological and material progress is destructive for both the environment and for the Finnish people's mental and physical well-being. Ahmala pays special attention to Linkola's negative views of the working class and its banal, materialistic values that according to Linkola have become dominant in all areas of Finnish society at the turn of the 21st century. Ahmala examines Hännikäinen's essayistic literary study *Hysterian maa* [Land of Hysteria] (2013), which offers an analysis and interpretation of Marko Tapio's two *Arktinen hysteria* novels (1967–1968). Ahmala shows how Hännikäinen's reading of Tapio and the myth of Arctic hysteria resonates with Hännikäinen's own far-right antimodern thought. Hännikäinen's cultural antimodernism involves a large canon of literary influences stretching from 19th century French antimodern writers to Oswald Spengler, Linkola and Michel Houellebecq, among others. In Hännikäinen's interpretation, Arctic hysteria as it is depicted by Tapio represents the primitive and dark side of Finnishness, an integral part of the national character that despite its destructive potential should not be the source of shame but rather celebrated. The chapter relates Linkola's and Hännikäinen's thought to the history of Western antimodernism. Ahmala also discusses the two authors as public characters and influential figures for today's Finnish far and extreme right movements.

In chapter IV 'Ecstasy and Ecstatic Techniques in Timo K. Mukka's *Maa on syntinen laulu* and *Kyyhky ja Unikko*', Riikka Rossi investigates ecstasy both as a topic and a style of literary representation. The long-lived cultural myth of the Arctic as a dark, melancholic realm of death and destruction is both affirmed and re-assessed in her chapter on ecstasy in Mukka's ballad novels *Maa on syntinen laulu* [The Earth is a Sinful Song] (1964) and *Kyyhky ja Unikko* [The Dove and the Poppy] (1970). She shows that Mukka's depictions of the ecstasy of the characters, narrators and poem speakers frequently pairs with the ecstatic qualities of his texts. Cumulative energy typical of ecstasy is increased by affective intensifiers such as oxymorons and upsetting images of force and aggression; fusion-increasing techniques such as parallelism and phonetic patterning add a sense of dissolution of borders. In line with Tapio's manner of rhetorically putting the careless reader under the spell of his words, Mukka's 'trance-inducing' techniques of enchantment decrease rather than increase the potential ethical awareness related to feeling with controversial narrators and characters. Using multiple poetic and rhetoric devices, Mukka's novel generates the emotional effects of ecstasy, targeted to the implied reader to produce high intensity, pleasure and fusion by loosening the reader's sense of control and rational faculties. The ecstatic qualities

of Mukka's texts distract the reader to feel aesthetically elated in responding to those narrative elements which, in their celebration of painful passion and female sacrifice, may also emerge as ethically disturbing.

In chapter V 'Emotion, Space and Gendered Nation in Rosa Liksom's *Everstinna*', Elise Nykänen, Sarianna Kankkunen and Charlotte Coutu return to Liksom's oeuvre by analysing *Everstinna* (2017, transl. *The Colonel's Wife* 2019), a fictional autobiography based on the imagined life of Lapland author Annikki Kariniemi. In their reading of the affectively endearing, engaging narration of Liksom's novel Nykänen, Kankkunen and Coutu show how narrative form, drawing from the myth of Arctic hysteria, evokes readerly responses, such as ecstasy or ethical estrangement that are familiar from the earlier literary tradition of Arctic hysteria. The affective intimacy of the first-person narrative in the novel blurs the clear distinctions between right and wrong as the narrator-monologist, fascinated by domesticated ideas of fascism, invites readers on her journey of healing and reconciliation after her violent marriage to a Finnish colonel and sexual re-awakening with an underage Sámi lover. On the other hand, Liksom's work embarks on geographical and spatial reformulation of the association between violence and the North. Through her ecstatic encounters with northern wetlands, the protagonist gradually outgrows her extreme nationalist ideas and religious upbringing. The stirring effects of the text arise from norm-breaking emotional expression as regards gender, sexuality, nationality, ethnic minorities and social class. The chapter demonstrates how Liksom uses parody, satire and hyperbole in her carnivalistic work to offer a counter-narrative to early, violent portrayals of Arctic hysteria, including female victimhood and masculinist narratives of the gendered nation: the Maiden Finland, who is forced to repeatedly surrender to military attacks, destruction and (domestic) violence.

In chapter VI 'The Sense of November: Strange Emotions and Entanglements of the Self and the World in Tove Jansson's *Sent i november* (1970, transl. *Moominvalley in November* 1971), a different sense of melancholy is explored. In her analysis, Anna Ovaska examines the last book in Jansson's Moomin series, which readers have found both melancholic and consoling. In readers' experience, the strange atmosphere of the book is tied to the absence of the Moomin family, denoting their parting at the series' ending. In dialogue with prior academic and non-academic readings of flesh and blood readers, Ovaska states that the strangeness of the affective states Jansson conveys in her book involve the way her characters' mental and physical being is entangled with and shaped by the changing natural environment. These entanglements produce the 'sense of November': it is both the distressing feeling of anxiety and gloomy mood and the need to seek shelter and comfort that are evoked by the change in environment and in one's embodied being. For readers, the book itself can function as what Ovaska calls 'affective scaffolding': the book shapes its readers emotions and helps them to cope with the winter darkness. Especially the metafictional features of the novel emphasise the theme of creativity as well as the aesthetic frame that creates a sense of safety

and potentially alleviates the experiences of sorrowful loss of summer, even winter depression.

In chapter VII 'On the Edge: Spatial and Emotional Extremes in Finnish Contemporary Prose Fiction', Sarianna Kankkunen studies entanglements of emotion and space in three Finnish contemporary novels: Ulla-Lena Lundberg's *Is* (2012, transl. *Ice* 2016), Tommi Liimatta's *Autarktis* [Autarctic] (2017) and Hanna Hauru's *Jääkansi* [Deck of Ice] (2017). The novels take their readers to spaces and communities that hover far away from the centres of power or that remain close yet are hard to reach such as the outer archipelago in the South-West (Lundberg) and Finnish Lapland in the North (Liimatta and Hauru). In her study of the geography of emotions, Kankkunen shows how the spatial understanding of emotion, seeing emotions as socially shared and spatially mediated, can significantly broaden the examination of literary works and the effects of the emotions they evoke in readers. Many fears involving space, as shown already by the case of *Sent i november* are, in fact, related to the presence or absence of other living beings. As noted by Kankkunen, the true challenge in Northern or Arctic peripheries is not coldness but isolation and distance, which trigger extremes in emotion, thought and action. All three Finnish contemporary novels invite their readers to pay attention to how they feel and narrate spaces around them. In Lundberg's *Is*, the Finland-Swedish islanders' sensitivity towards weather and landscape is a recurring theme in the narrative, reflecting the animistic worldview of the oral folk tradition and premodern communities. Liimatta's *Autarktis*, in turn, gives voice for three men of the underclass of Lapland peripheries from three generations, united only by their spatial coordinates. Hauru's *Jääkansi* emphasises pain and painful contacts between the human subject and the surrounding non-human nature in the portrayal of the neglect, the violence and extreme poverty of the female protagonist's childhood in post-war Finland. In an otherwise emotionally distant narrative, the intimacy between the feeling subject and surrounding wilderness stages the importance of bodily and tactile sensation and the way wilderness can invade the human subject.

In the concluding chapter VIII 'Negative Environmental Emotions in 21st century Finnish fiction', Saija Isomaa and Kaisa Kortekallio examine contemporary Finnish apocalyptic and climate fiction that imagines contemporary or future worlds where the ecological condition has worsened due to unsustainable human activities. Their chapter analyses the effects of environmental change on the human psyche as they are portrayed in *Memory of Water* (2014) by Emmi Itäranta, *Korpisoturi* [Wilderness Warrior] (2016) by Laura Gustafsson, *Lupaus* [Promise] (2018) by Emma Puikkonen and *Maa joka ei koskaan sula* [The Land That Never Melts] (2021) by Inkeri Markkula. Isomaa and Kortekallio claim that some of the characters' responses to anthropogenic climate change resemble the kind of extreme emotions and symptoms of psychosis that could have been perceived as Arctic hysteria by previous generations. However, in their analysis, Isomaa and Kortekallio employ the conceptual framework of the modern study of emotion since it offers more nuanced tools for examining the subtleties of character emotions. Isomaa and Kortekallio show that in the novels, characters

experience negative emotions when faced with global environmental problems; instead of joining in a collective effort to solve the problems, most of them seek individualistic solutions such as a self-sufficient lifestyle or new forms of spirituality to deal with their negative emotions. In the novels, individuals in different social positions experience the environmental change differently, as exemplified by a mother's anxiety over the future of her child or the feeling of eco-nostalgia experienced by a member of an indigenous group when perceiving the rapid changes taking place in the Arctic region. For some characters, Northern nature still offers an emotional refuge or the opportunity to build a survivalist shelter while for others it allows for new, posthuman forms of spirituality.

In sum, these case studies provided in the volume demonstrate how ideas of Arctic hysteria and emotions linked to the North were re-configured in Finnish modernism and continue to take new forms in contemporary literature. The scale of affective constellations in our corpus is broad and often politically controversial, ranging from environmental concerns and future-oriented eco-anxiety to antimodern neonationalist feelings. Our analysis has paid attention to how literary works both depict and evoke emotions while they configure and generate historical structures of feelings; thus, they impact the building of real-life emotional communities. Literature is a powerful cultural force in teaching people how to feel about the world and its different phenomena and its study benefits from a transdisciplinary approach. Many emotions and feelings discussed here from loneliness and melancholia to anxiety and ecstasy are universal and transcultural. Yet we hope to open new views to culture-specific conceptions of emotions in general, which is a fruitful and largely unexamined question in the study on literature and emotions. We look forward to enlivening discussion on other cultural constellations of emotions that await investigation in world literature from the South to the North.

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Notes on Authors Studied in the Following Chapters

Juhani Aho (1861–1921), one of the earliest professional authors who wrote in Finnish, enjoyed both wide readership and critical acclaim during his lifetime. Aho's oeuvre spans psychological realism and naturalism to neoromanticism and differing forms of short prose. His first novel *Rautatie* (1884, transl. *The Railroad* 2012) observes the onslaught of modernity in the Finnish countryside and among the humble peasantry, while the marriage novels *Papin tytär* [Minister's Daughter] (1885) and *Papin rouva* [Minister's Wife] (1893) offer psychologically fine-tuned portraits of the emotionally and morally constricted life of a rural upper middle-class woman. The novel *Yksin* [Alone] (1890) depicts the disillusionment and disappointment of a rebuffed suitor seeking solace in bohemian pleasures. Among Aho's best remembered works today are his works of short prose, which Aho himself named 'splinters' (*lastut*). Aho's works have been widely translated.

Laura Gustafsson (b. 1983) is a Helsinki-based novelist and playwright who has also worked in the fields of visual arts and television. In her novels, she has not only created thought-provoking, grotesque representations of violence against women (*Huorasatu*, 2011, Slut Fable) and children (*Anomalia*, 2013) but also offered a macabre, apocalyptic vision of the late modern society drowning in waste (*Rehab*, 2020). *Pohja* [Bottom] (2017) is an autofictive novel, whereas *Korpisoturi* [Wilderness Warrior] (2016) imagines the life of a survivalist. Gustafsson's style changes from work to work but she typically introduces elements of playfulness, humour and fantasy even in the darker works, creating a poetics of oppositions and contrasts. Myths and stereotypes are also evoked and discussed in her fiction.

Oulu-born Hanna Hauru (1978–2021) depicts grotesquely harsh environments in her minimalist yet lyrical short prose. Hauru's stylistic devices as well the themes of her works associate her with the tradition of Timo K. Mukka and Rosa Liksom. Her novel *Jääkansi* [Deck of Ice] (2017) was shortlisted for the Finlandia Prize. Many of Hauru's short prose pieces involve powerful female characters that struggle through poverty, neglect and abuse, while her last work of fiction, *Viimeinen vuosi* [The Final Year] (2021), depicts one year in the life of a solitary male regional novelist. Two of Hauru's short stories have appeared in German (*Moster* 2014) and Czech anthologies (Burdová et al. 2019) of Finnish fiction.

Timo Hännikäinen (b. 1979) began his literary career as a poet and translator. Hännikäinen's later career has been marked by provocative essays, contributions to far-

right media and nationalist political advocacy. The essay collection *Taantumuksellisen uskontunnustus* [Confession of a Reactionary] (2007) reflects Hännikäinen's interest in the philosophy of Pentti Linkola, a deep ecologist thinker who has also been deemed an 'ecofascist'. Hännikäinen's much-debated collection *Ilman: Esseitä seksuaalisesta syrjäytymisestä* [Without: Essays on Sexual Exclusion] (2009) depicts male sexual frustration, while his later works have presented criticism towards liberalism as an ideology in *Liberalismin petos* [The Deceit of Liberalism] (2012) and contemporary masculinity in *Kunnia. Esseitä maskuliinisuudesta* [Honour: Essays on Masculinity] (2015). His works as a translator involve authors as diverse as Oscar Wilde and Theodor Kaczynski, also known as the Unabomber. Hännikäinen is the second vice chairman of *Suomen Sisu*, a far-right nationalist organization. He is also the main editor of the online magazine *Sarastus* (Dawn), which presents itself as a 'national and European, traditionalist and radical' publication and an editor at Kiuas Publishing, a far-right publishing house.

Emmi Itäranta (b. 1976) is an author of science fiction and fantasy. Itäranta's novels and short stories combine lyrical language and a contemplative style with societal and ethical challenges central to the Anthropocene, such as class privilege and colonialism. *Memory of Water* (2014), written by Itäranta simultaneously in English and Finnish (published with the title *Teemestarin kirja* in 2012), imagines a far-future Arctic changed by climate change and the collapse of nation states. The novel has been translated into at least 20 languages and extensively studied in the contexts of climate fiction and young adult fiction. *Kudottujen kujien kaupunki* (2015, transl. *The City of Woven Streets* 2016) is more clearly fantastic in genre, depicting an isolated community built on secrets. In *Kuunpäivän kirjeet* (2021, transl. *The Moonday Letters* 2022), the affluent classes of humanity have left the Earth behind and colonized the solar system. Itäranta writes her novels simultaneously in Finnish and English.

Tove Jansson (1914–2001), the creator of Moomins, is one of the most well-known and internationally acclaimed Finnish authors. In addition to the Moomin novels, short stories, picture books, and comics Jansson published several novels and short story collections for adults and created a large body of work as an illustrator and a painter. The daughter of Swedish-born graphic artist Signe Hammarsten-Jansson and Finnish-Swedish sculptor Viktor Jansson, Jansson based the Moomin family partly on her own family and similar artistic characters can also be found in her adult fiction. Jansson lived and worked in Helsinki during the winters and spent her summers in the nearby Pellinge archipelago. From 1964 to 1992 she had a cottage on a remote island, Klovharu with her partner, graphic artist Tuulikki Pietilä. Her works often depict family life but with humorous and dark twists: they reveal an interest in strange or surprising dynamics between people and in their interactions with their environments and nature. She often places her characters in the middle of natural catastrophes, upheavals or in remote or strange locations. Her writing also repeatedly deals with questions of loneliness, isolation and death. Finally, a central theme of her works for both children and adults is creativity; she focuses on being or becoming an artist and how an artist's perspective on the world changes what is perceived and experienced.

Tommi Liimatta (b. 1976) is known for his role as a singer-songwriter of the prog rock and Finnrock band Absoluuttinen nollapiste. Liimatta's autobiographical novels *Jeppis* (2014) and *Jeppis 2* (2016) take place in Jakobstad in Bothnian Bay, while *Rollo* (2020) documents his youth in the northern city of Rovaniemi. His densely packed narratives revolve largely around the male experience of northern peripheries and backcountries and the social margins of misfits and outsiders. Liimatta's rich vocabulary and inventive use of language reinforces the multi-layered complexity of his novels.

Rosa Liksom (b. 1958), born in Ylitornio, is a Finnish author and artist who has often been associated with the onslaught of postmodernism in the Finnish arts. Liksom's early works, such as *Yhden yön pysäkki* (1985, transl. *One Night Stands* 1993), depict the lives of misfits and the urban underclass in a compact form of short prose. Her works continue Timo K. Mukka's experimentation with a grotesque and naturalist depiction of Northern communities but instil these imaginations with satiric and ironic humour and absurdist philosophy. Liksom has written two biographical novels of eminent Laplandic artists: *Reitari* (2002) of painter Reidar Särestöniemi, and *Everstinna* (2017, transl. *The Colonel's Wife* 2019) of writer Annikki Kariniemi. Liksom's most well-known work is the novel *Hytti nro 6* (2011, transl. *Compartment No. 6* 2014), an examination of the relationship between the Soviet Union and Finland. In 2011, her novel was awarded the Finlandia Prize, the most prestigious literary award in Finland.

Pentti Linkola (1932–2020) established himself as a deep ecologist while living an ascetic life as a fisherman. Linkola's essay collections were lauded for their literary style and were widely read contributions to the environmentalist discussion of the late 20$^{\text{th}}$ century, although Linkola's radical views on population control, his resistance to parliamentary democracy and his expressed support for many acts of terrorism strained his relationship to the mainstream of the environmentalist movement. An abridged edition of Linkola's last collection of essays *Voisiko elämä voittaa – ja millä ehdoilla* (2004) has been translated into English under the title *Can Life Prevail? A Radical Approach to the Environmental Crisis* (2009). The Finnish Natural Heritage Foundation, founded by Linkola in 1995, continues to buy and preserve some forests in Finland.

Ulla-Lena Lundberg (b. 1947), born and raised in the autonomous archipelago of Finnish Åland, depicts the history of the seafarers of the Baltic Sea and the life of Finland-Swedish island communities, as well as the presence of war and reconstruction in Finnish society. Her works continue the tradition of the Finnish family saga and Nordic regional novel that is situated in the archipelago (*saaristolaisromaani*). In 2012, Lundberg's novel *Is* (2012, transl. *Ice* 2016) was awarded the Finlandia Prize. Lundberg's works have been translated widely into English, German and other languages.

Inkeri Markkula (b. 1977) works as a researcher in biology. She has published two novels, *Kaksi ihmistä minuutissa* [Two People a Minute] (2016) and *Maa joka ei koskaan sula* [The Land That Never Melts] (2021). Both novels have female researchers as protagonists. Along with offering a sensitive psychological portrayal of

the characters, the novels discuss major societal issues from malaria and genderneutral marriage to climate change and the treatment of ethnic minorities.

Timo K. Mukka's (1944–1973) literary oeuvre from the 1960s and 1970s comprise six novels, two collections of short stories, and one collection of poetry. Mukka, who grew up in the Western part of Lapland by the Tornionjoki river on the border with Sweden, portrays life in remote villages of northern Finland and Lapland wilderness. While Mukka's early work connects to naturalist tradition, recent scholarship has seen Mukka as an avant-gardist writer and as a reformer of Lapland's literature. His works unite the Arctic environment, sexuality, psychology and religious experiences; they employ modernist techniques and experimental forms such as collage technique. Mukka debuted young, at the age of 19 and published his literary oeuvre in the frame of six years. Opinions of the reading audience and press in the 1960s were divided about his bold novels and strong opinions. The author's early death at the age of 28 prompted speculation on how scandalous publicity affected the deterioration of his health. His works have been translated into 17 languages, including Czech, French, Hebrew and Italian.

Emma Puikkonen (b. 1974) works as drama teacher in Helsinki and has written several novels, short stories and librettos. In her novels, Puikkonen often combines history and realism with speculative forms, creating visions of alternative histories and possible futures. Her novels, such as *Eurooppalaiset unet* [European Dreams] (2016) and *Lupaus* [Promise] (2018), offer engaging descriptions of the minds of the characters that try to deal with life-changing historical or future events such as the fall of the Berlin wall in 1989 or the consequences of climate change. *Musta peili* [The Black Mirror] (2021) combines the past and future by imagining the lives of three women from the past and the future whose lives are closely connected with the production of oil.

Marko Tapio's (1924–1973) works contributed to the post-war reassessment and renewal of Finnish prose fiction. Tapio's break-through novel *Aapo Heiskasen viikatetanssi* [Aapo Heiskanen's Scythe Dance] (1956) maps the post-war experience of returning to civilian life. The book series *Arktinen hysteria 1–2* [Arctic Hysteria 1–2] (1967–1968), is often viewed as Tapio's modernist response to the grand narratives of nationalism and the genre of the family saga. *Arktinen hysteria*'s focus lies on the family Björkharry, whose history depicts a sombre picture of the societal conflicts and psychological and social resentments that the series presents as the key factors of Finnish history. Tapio did not finalize the series; published works involve the first novel, *Vuoden 1939 ensilumi* [The First Snow of the Year 1939] (1967) and the second book, *Sano todella että rakastatko minua* [Say if You Really Love Me or Not] (1968).

Loneliness, Solitude and Northern Melancholies

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Introduction

This chapter sheds light on the narrative aesthetics of loneliness, its affective styles and effects. Besides analysing the representations of loneliness in the Finnish fiction from the 1890s to the contemporary novel, my investigation produces new knowledge of cultural myths and narratives of Finnishness, such as 'Arctic hysteria'.[1] With its neoromantic moods, Juhani Aho's early novella *Yksin* [*Alone*] (1890)[2] belongs to tradition of decadent narratives that precede the darker moods of Arctic hysteria in Finnish post-war modernism. In addition to Aho's novella, I discuss loneliness, solitude and varieties of nostalgic melancholia in Marko Tapio's novel series, *Arktinen hysteria* 1–2 [Arctic Hysteria 1–2] (1967–1968) and Rosa Liksom's contemporary novel *Hytti nro 6* (2011, transl. *Compartment No. 6* 2014). The chosen texts help me to demonstrate how the historically changing ideas of loneliness and solitude relate to literary conventions of expressing emotion, which are shaped by larger cultural and political circumstances. Even though the experiences of loneliness are often framed in these works as existential rather than societal, narrators' or characters' (ideas of) gender, ethnicity and nationality, among other variables, influence the works' affective styles and effects. In particular, my interest lies in the local and global encounters of cultural mentalities, which I analyse from the perspective of depressive and anti-depressive forms of melancholia.

The emotional complex of introverted melancholy and fiery anger characterises the myth of the Northern dark mentality (Rossi 2017), which Finnish post-war modernists like Marko Tapio later defined as Arctic hysteria. The author Juhani Aho's words about his contemporary, the world-famous composer Jean Sibelius, addresses this dual nature

[1] In addition to anonymous peer-reviewers, I thank Antti Ahmala for his insightful comments and suggestions on this chapter at different stages of the writing process.

[2] The novella has been translated into French with the title *Seul* (2013). An English translation does not exist. All quoted translations are mine, if not indicated otherwise.

of Finnish temperament: "A fiery temper is the twin sister of melancholy".[3] Finnish novels, as they are discussed in the context of Arctic hysteria in this chapter, test the conventional ideas of modernism as a literary movement, which was enchanted only by the urban and the modern. Instead of being a unified school of art, 'Arctic hysteria' refers to parodic or more serious styles of portraying the social and geographical margins of the Finnish North, especially Finnish Lapland. Some authors, including Tapio and Liksom, have used the concept for their own artistic purposes, which are scrutinised in more detail in this chapter. Aho's early novella serves as point of departure for studying the gradual change from a national-romantic view of Finnish melancholia to darker, politically problematic or more emancipatory forms of expressing emotion.

My approach to solitude and loneliness draws from the phenomenology of 'existential feelings' which, according to Matthew Ratcliffe (2008; 2015), constitute the sense of possibilities the world incorporates and offers. Existential feelings resemble 'background emotions' or 'moods' (or Heidegger's *Stimmung*[4]) in that they concern a pre-reflective sense of being in the world. They affect the ways people experience relations between the self and world, how people encounter others and interact with their environment and with literary works (Nykänen 2022). Even though Ratcliffe does not discuss loneliness as such, felt loneliness and solitude often involve people's very existence, their connectedness and rootedness in the social world and in their natural and human-built environment (see also, Tirkkonen 2019). Loneliness and solitude are not only states of being alone but also felt sensations of belonging or not belonging in a community, a culture or the world. They trigger experiences of closeness and distance, homesickness and separation, a sense of meaningfulness and alienation, authenticity and inauthenticity. As such, existential feelings of this kind permeate everyday experience whether acknowledged or not.

Loneliness has often been described as the 'dark side of modernity' (Saari 2016, 33), which both enchanted and troubled authors of the long 20th century. Researchers have later approached loneliness as the 'national disease' (*kansantauti*) in Finland.[5] The discussion of loneliness in sociology, medicine and health studies has emphasized the negative aspects of both social and emotional isolation and the marginalisation of different groups in modern or totalitarian societies. Struggles to overcome loneliness,

[3] "Tulisuus on surumielisyyden kaksoissisar" (translation by Börje Vähämäki 2005, v). Aho recounted these words about the composer after the premiere of his *Kullervo* symphony in 1892. The love triangle of *Yksin* was inspired by Aho's infatuation with Aino Järnefelt, Jean Sibelius's future wife (Konttinen 2019, 107–110).

[4] According to Martin Heidegger (1988, 172) "[w]hat we indicate ontologically by the term 'state of mind' is ontically the most familiar and everyday sort of thing; our mood, our Beingattuned", that is, Stimmung.

[5] The negative aspects of loneliness prevail in the public discussion on the topic, even though studies have shown the relatively low appearance of loneliness in Finnish society and other Nordic welfare states and the high levels of happiness secured by the well-functioning institutions in the country (on this paradox, see Saari 2016). At the time of writing this article, Finland is counted as the happiest country in the world, ranked number one also among the Nordic welfare states (Helliwell et al. 2023).

either cognitively or spiritually, have also reigned in aesthetic, philosophical and religious takes on loneliness. For such individualist thinkers as Friedrich Nietzsche, the tolerance of loneliness served as a test for superior morality beyond conformist categories of good and bad: only those who transformed their venomous *ressentiment* into pleasurable solitude could achieve true self-mastery without self-disintegration. The positive aspects of social isolation, as opposed to emotional loneliness felt in the company of oneself or with others, connect to the idea of solitude and melancholy as states of fruitful self-reflection. Positive experiences of being alone, which are achieved through reflective melancholia, can become ways of finding one's soul in creative work or in communion with one's 'other self', art, nature and/or with God (Arendt 1962; see also Dahlberg 2007; Brady and Haapala 2003).[6]

Transnational narratives of melancholia can be examined for both positive and negative aspects of Northern solitudes. In literature, melancholia and loneliness emerge as aesthetic, self-reflective emotions as much as everyday affects, which are generated by material transformations in the lived, bodily experience of space and time. Upon closer inspection, emotions or feelings that appear anomalous, extreme or strange may rise from alterations in the structure of embodied everyday experience that activate during reading (e.g., Caracciolo 2014; Flatley 2008, 28). Modern writing exhibits the fragmentation of selfhood or existential relations of selves and the (social) world through poetic use of language and narrative form.

Bitter forms of loneliness and melancholia, in particular, carry political and ethical problems that I shall address in my analyses of literary *ressentiment.*[7] Melancholic works often channel collective emotions of isolation and hatred at moments of societal breaks and transformations. However, myths like 'Arctic hysteria' often suggest unified styles of emotion expression as ahistorical features of nations, peoples and social.[8] These myths feed cultural narratives that problematically affect both political thought and grass-roots folk culture. Parodic and ironic representations of Finnishness, on

[6] As McGraw (1995, 43) writes, "[– –] loneliness, like any 'suffering from' can be utilized as 'suffering towards' [– –] mental and moral growth by means of greater sensing, refining, deepening and purifying one's being". Here McGraw uses terminology introduced by the holocaust survivor and neurologist Viktor Frankl.

[7] In his work *Bitter Carnival. Ressentiment and the Abject Hero* (1992), Michael André Bernstein refers to the Roman carnival tradition, while he analyses the bitter poetics of melancholia in Dostoyevsky's oeuvre alongside other works published after the French revolution. In the theory of four humours, melancholia, meaning 'black bile' (from Ancient Greek *melas*, dark or black and *kholé*, bile), was considered as one of the four temperaments or dispositions. Early scientists and philosophers perceived melancholia as a state of imbalance that originated from dysfunctions in the spleen and resulted in an excess of black bile in those individuals who were born under the planet Saturn in the season of autumn. On the tradition of black saturnalia in Finnish post-war modernism and postmodern fiction, see Salin 2002 and 2008.

[8] In today's scientific discourses, the idea of 'national character' has been abandoned, even though scholars still discuss national identities and ethnicities. In fact, people may have multiple ethnic identities, which are historically changeable and culturally constructed, that is, enforced or challenged by cultural, social and political practices.

the other hand, aesthetically experiment with national and gendered stereotypes in a more self-reflective manner. My investigation tracks the affective styles and effects of portraying solitary, melancholic Finnishness and shows its variations in the works of Aho, Tapio and Liksom.

A Stranger in Paris: Northern Loner Meets Southern Beast

Juhani Aho's novella *Yksin* (= *Y*) depicts the middle-age crisis of a man who recounts his personal story of love disappointments after leaving his home country. The metropole of Paris, which for a moment feels like home, eventually becomes a worldly stage of decay and decadence. On Christmas Eve, the narrator reads from a newspaper that his Finnish beloved has become engaged to another man. To ease his misery, he ends up spending a night with a prostitute in *Moulin Rouge*. The narrator's adventures in the Parisian *demimonde* bring only a fleeting cure for his unhappiness: the reader witnesses him feeling even emptier at the closure of the novella.

At the beginning of Aho's novella, the narrator's feelings of loneliness and melancholia seem to arise from a loss that has a specific target: the absence of the beloved Anna who has refused his offer of marriage. Feelings of loneliness typically arise in situations, in which one feels to be 'not chosen' or not 'good enough' but rather "rejected, excluded, forgotten, abandoned, unwanted or unnecessary" (Dahlberg 2007, 198). Besides altering one's overall sense of reality and inducing physical pain, felt loneliness evokes more intentional emotions such as sorrow, (self)-pity, anger, envy, disgust, humiliation and fear of abandonment. Above all, loneliness involves shame; a sense of worthlessness directed at one's entire being or selfhood (Dahlberg 2007, 196, 200; McGraw 1995, 44–45). Because of this socially structured identification with oneself as shameful, loneliness may lead to bitter *ressentiment*. This type of bitter, usually masculine, melancholia involves double transvaluation of oneself and the desired, unattainable object. As an emotional mechanism, the gradual re-assessment of one's value helps to maintain one's self-worth and build a new, either individual or collective, identity. Even individuals who have relatively secure positions in society may express resentful attitudes that gradually develop into a sense of vulnerability, victimhood and moral indignation (see e.g. Salmela and Capelos 2021).

In *Yksin*, the lonesome narrator, who repeatedly perceives himself through the eyes of the worshiped other, feels ashamed of himself: old, clumsy and unattractive. He also feels morally inferior. This inferiority evokes a powerful sense of shame directed at his entire selfhood. While staying in Paris, Aho's narrator tries to make a commitment of staying "innocent" (*Y*, 19) to be able to live according to the standards of the

woman, who is fifteen years younger than he is.[9] The narrator's correspondence with the beloved's brother, his long-time friend, seeks to find solutions to the dilemmas of alienation and self-estrangement by "constructing psychological systems of love and life" (*Y*, 45).[10]

Aho's self-conscious first-person narrator suffers from melancholia, which has often been seen as the sickness of modern age (e.g., Flatley on Baudelaire 2008). When the narrator sets off from his homeland, he feels momentary relief, which soon transforms into desperation and a sense of hollowness. Having lost his place as a wheel in societal "machinery" (*Y*, 40), he has lost his life's meaning and purpose.[11] Nostalgic or religious longing, which characterizes existential or metaphysical loneliness,[12] has through the ages fed fantasies and utopias about the greatness of one's homeland.[13] In Aho's novella, the utopian or nostalgic qualities are attached to the idealized image of the Finnish beloved as an emblem of home and belonging. As transient emotions and feelings, loneliness and alienation have often been ascribed to limit situations of life: times of collective or personal crises, seasonal renewal and death through aging, illness, loss of loved ones or other major life changes. Experiences of existential loneliness are easily mixed with similar emotions: boredom, anger, grief, depression, despair and homesickness, some of which might never become conscious for the individual experiencing them (McGraw 1995, 43, 57; Dahlberg 2007, 200).

Revealingly, the narrator's past life before his first meeting with Anna suggests a situation in which the narrator finds himself after his wish to win the girl's heart has already proven hopeless. The lack of intellectual stimulus and boredom in the countryside motivate his escape to the capital of Finland to study the French language: "I come here with that inner rage which is born in the solitudes of the countryside, in the god-forsaken tiny towns in which one's life force drains and the human soul shrinks and suffers for it" (*Y*, 12).[14] After broken engagements and the loss of his parents, the narrator feels uprooted in a world in which he cannot find a fixed direction or moral compass.

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[9] "Viattomana eläminen on minulle nyt siveellinen vaatimus, vaikka ennen olin sellaisille olkapääni kohottanut."

[10] "Pienimpäänkin vivahdukseen saakka tarkistimme sielunilmiöt itsessämme ja koetimme niiden avulla rakentaa sielutieteellisiä järjestelmiä rakkaudesta ja elämästä yleensä."

[11] "Kotona olin kuitenkin jotain, edes ratas koneistossa."

[12] According to John McGraw (1995, 57), existential loneliness consists of the "recognition of the ineradicable loneliness that perdures throughout the spheres and stages of human experience" from birth to death. Metaphysical loneliness, on the other hand, is an outcome of the lack of security, stability and safety that results from the experience of being both internally and externally separate from others and the world (McGraw 1995, 47–48).

[13] Nostalgia (from Greek, *nóstos* meaning homecoming, *álgos* pain) originally referred to a feeling of homesickness. Later it came to denote a more abstract kind of longing for a home (that never was) or a prospect of finding one's way to a home in the future (Boym 2001; Sandbacka 2017a).

[14] "Tulen tänne sillä sisäisellä raivolla, joka syntyy maaseudun yksinäisyydessä, pikkukaupunkien kaukaisissa kolkissa, joissa elon voima tuntuu kuivuvan kokoon ja henki kitistyy ja siitä kärsii."

In analysing felt loneliness, John McGraw (1995, 44) has described its dynamics in terms of the absence of authentic connection, not only in respect to oneself but also in one's relationships: "One feels emptied (the lack of intimacy) and hollowed (the lack of meaning). The desired other, therefore remains present in its absence as a kind of emotional regulative and constitutive ideal, all of which signals a deficit or defectiveness of being in the lonely". Rather than wanting someone to be intimately in one's life, the lonely one wants to be a part of the life of the missed one, who becomes a fixed, often idealised, image of emotional relief: a promise of the end of one's suffering. Even while Aho's narrator is still able to spend some time alone with his beloved, he repeatedly feels that he is not able to truly connect with her. The warmest memory of Anna involves shared amusement, which they find in grading the dress of the common people in the countryside in their more fashionable outfits. Experiences of emotional numbness and loneliness also emerge in the presence of the friend's bourgeois family, colouring the narrator's overall relationship with himself and his social world.

Literary studies of recent decades have emphasized the cosmopolitan 'artistic frame' (Nummi 2002, 129) of Aho's first-person narrator's trip to Paris.[15] The autofictional or confessional elements of the novella highlight the self-reflective ethos of the work. The narrator's solitary self-communion divides him into two distinct personae: the experiencing I and the I, who is reflecting and narrating past events and experiences, unable to imagine the future (Nummi 2002, 294–302). Aho's novella concludes with 'an authorial signature' (Rossi 2017, 4) that connects the work's aestheticized, melancholic moods to the author's real-life experiences in two timespaces: "Paris, Sept. 1889 – Iisalmi Aug. 1890".[16]

In 1889, a year before *Yksin* came out, Aho travelled to Paris as a 28-year-old journalist and author to report on the achievements of modern art and sciences at the *Exhibition Universelle*. The author's first trip abroad was partly financed by a grant from the Finnish Senate. In the spirit of earlier national romanticism, the goal of these artistic expeditions was to adopt new ideas from 'old' European cultures and integrate them into Finnish lore. In addition to modern technologies, the exhibition involved troublesome, racist aspects of marginalisation: it displayed the curiosities of minority cultures, including the Sámi culture, to the European audiences (Rossi 2020, 100– 113). Besides the outside view of the Northern peripheries, the national-romantic idea of noble savages was built in the cultural self-reflection and construction of 'imagined communities' (Anderson 1983) in the wake of modern nation states. For Finnish cultural, academic and political elites, the archaic heritage of the oral folk poetry of *Kanteletar* [The Maiden of Kantele] (1840) and the *Kalevala* (1835, second edition 1849) were manifestations of the greatness of the nation.

[15] For a more detailed analysis of the text's intertextual context from Paul Bourget, Gustav Flaubert, François-René de Chateaubriand, Guy de Maupassant and Gérard de Nerval to J-K Huysmans, Fyodor Dostoyevsky and Knut Hamsun see e.g., Nummi 2002 and Rossi 2017.

[16] Iisalmi is a small town in the North of Savonia, where Aho was born and raised in a small village parsonage.

In *Yksin*, the melancholic experiences of homesickness are triggered by feelings of non-belonging, which have a distinctively Northern yet simultaneously cosmopolitan quality. The epigraph of Aho's novella comes from the collection of Finnish-Karelian oral poetry *Kanteletar* (= *K*).[17] The verse from the poem 'Eriskummainen kantele' (A Strange Kantele) shows the archaic roots of melancholia as Finno-Ugrian sorrowful mentality: "No, music was made from grief, moulded from sorrow [– –]".[18] Placed at the beginning of *Yksin*, the epigraph highlights the predominance of the narrator's reflective melancholia and his sorrowful mood, which alternate with periods of individualist scorn toward the nation's elite and its conservative values.

Due to the work's 'pornographic' ending, the publication of *Yksin* in 1890 triggered some public outrage and condemnation by those critics who highlighted the educational role of literature as serving the enlightenment of ordinary people, the nation's families and children (see e.g., Meurman 1891). The reviewer in *Savo-Karjala*[19] likens the book to a sweet fruit that suddenly reveals its rotten side. The reviewer imagines that morally disgusted readers would toss the book away as if it were a rotten apple; half-eaten by worms. However, the less conservative reviewers acknowledged the author's artistic ambition. They realised the value of the book as a high achievement of modern Finnish literature, which was finally written with professional skill. The delighted critics also paid attention to the neo-romantic, nostalgic features of Aho's novella. Nevertheless, they considered the book to contribute both to the realist and idealist traditions of describing the melancholic sensibilities of Finnish people: "Even though Juhani Aho is a realist author and portrays the authentic condition of human life, one can feel in his work the idealistic spirit and melancholic temperament that so famously characterizes Finns", an unknown critic wrote in the *Savo*[20] newspaper in 1890. Those critics who were enthralled with Aho's impressionist collage even felt that the author invited them to find their own struggles mirrored in the estranged narrator's self-doubts and sorrows.

The alternating periods of extreme sentiment and indifference in the narrator's melancholic self-examination show traces of both neo-romanticism and irony in Aho's decadent novella. In contrast to earlier national romanticism, which was largely built on positive definitions of national feeling as loving belonging, the collective urge to define the status of young Finnish culture among other world cultures channelled not only Anti-French[21] but also Anti-Russian and Anti-Swedish sentiments. While conveying

[17] In the national epic the *Kalevala*, Kantele (the Finnish Zither) is played by the age-old sage and poet Väinämöinen and the 'Kanteletar' can be perceived as a muse-like, feminine figure. Elias Lönnrot compiled the poems of *Kanteletar taikka Suomen Kansan Wanhoja Lauluja ja Wirsiä* (Kanteletar or Old Songs and Hymns of the Finnish People) after his trip to Finnish and Russian Karelia in 1838. His primary source for the collection of folk poetry was singer Mateli Kuivalatar who performed most of the poems for him on the banks of the lake, Koiterejärvi.

[18] "Soitto on suruista tehty, murehista muovaeltu [– –]" (K, 3).

[19] *Savo-Karjala*, 01/12/1890, No. 139.

[20] *Savo* 09/12/1890, No. 144.

[21] See, for instance, Ahmala (2016, 49–50) on Kashmir Leino's essay 'New Directions in French Literature' (Uusia suuntia ranskan kaunokirjallisuudessa, *Valvoja* 1892), in which the author critically

the narrator's self-estrangement, *Yksin* refers to the struggles of the Grand Duchy of Finland under the rule of the Russian Empire during the years of political oppression after the long Swedish era.[22] Before Aho's narrator reads about Anna's engagement, he discusses the hardening political climate with a Finnish acquaintance in a French café. According to the friend, Swedish-speaking elites are reluctant to give positions to the radical defenders of Finnish culture and 'conspire' (*Y*, 72) against Fennomans.[23] The verses of *Kanteletar*, provided as the epigraph of the novella, serves as the authentic voice of the Finnish common people and their melancholia, which Aho explored in his later Karelian and Pietist-revivalist works during the 1890's, achieving his status as an acclaimed national author (see Rossi 2020).

The emotional bond of Aho's narrator with his Finnish beloved and his ensuing loneliness parallel his complicated relationship with his nation and its creators. Above all, the narrator's mocking self-reflection reveals his sense of inferiority in relation to the modern South as opposed to the more rugged North. Despite his efforts to merge into the masses, the narrator feels that he stands out: not as an aristocratic *flâneur* but as a shabby foreigner feeling lost among the French people who proudly know their place "at the centre of the world" (*Y*, 122).[24] At the same time, Aho's earlier novella radically modifies, even mocks, the earlier tradition of young bourgeois men, who confessed their personal weaknesses as a gesture for winning their fiancées' emotional support and understanding. Strengthened by their wives, these sensitive male geniuses drew inspiration from the nation's golden age and served their higher purpose in arts, sciences and politics (Eiranen 2021, 98–99). Unable to realise his higher ideals of (nationally spirited) love, Aho's bohemian narrator chooses the women of *Moulin Rouge*. According to the narrator, his friend's choice of settling down in a married life represents an antiquated choice; an "old sickness" (*Y*, 87), which does not tempt him, unlike the exotic allure of French decadence.[25]

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examines the 'unnatural' overcultivation of educated people, which leads to the end of the human race (see also Meurman 1891 on 'indecent' and 'destructive' French literature).

[22] As structures of feeling, the bitter forms of melancholia drew from the experiences of fear and hatred, which were spreading in the Grand Duchy of Finland before the Russian revolution in 1916. Finnish authors like L Onerva later portrayed these discourses from the perspective of Finnish-Russian minorities and Sámi people in her novel *Yksinäisiä* [Loners], published in 1917, in the same year Finland finally gained its independence (see Parente-Čapková 2020).

[23] "Hän on suomenmielinen ja ruotsinmieliset vehkeilevät häntä vastaan." Fennomans were nationally enlightened young men, who wanted to raise awareness of the Finnish language, culture and history and often admired peasant people from afar, idealising their experiences and sufferings (Haapala 2021, 34–35). As shown by Rossi (2020, 134–135), Aho's Karelian works, such as *Juha*, also express anti-Russian attitudes in their depiction of passionate love and male disillusionment.

[24] "Käsitän niin hyvin, kuinka hän voi tuntikaudet vaeltaa tällä lailla edes ja takaisin ja kuvailla olevansa koko maailman keskipisteessä."

[25] "Mistä ihmeestä se yht'äkkiä on tullut tämä takatempaus vanhoihin tauteihin?" In the Fennoman, nationalist ideology of Aho's time, bourgeois women were still ascribed the role as the guardians of the moral purity of the nation and family, whereas men were free to explore their sexuality before marriage.

In some respects, Aho's narrator resembles the 'barbarian man-child' Charles Baudelaire portrayed in his essay 'Le Peintre de la vie moderne' (1863, The Painter of Modern Life). In line with Baudelaire's prose poem 'Anywhere out of the World' (= *A*, from the collection *Le spleen de Paris*, 1869) Aho's novella conveys a modern experience of *ennui* and *spleen*, which follow the solitary traveller wherever he goes. Sick of life, he enjoys his melancholic state as much as suffers from it (Nummi 2002, 155). While witnessing the pale sun setting beyond the horizon of the boulevard in Paris, Aho's narrator experiences a sudden sensation of being home and travels back to his homeland in his imagination. The speaker of Baudelaire's poem, respectively, wishes to escape the cities of the South to Northern lands, which offer him both consolation and excitement. He asks his audience to join him in an imaginary journey to the Finnish town of Tornio and even farther, to the polar Arctic region. The "rosy showers" of the Aurora Borealis are like "reflections of Hell's fireworks", which spark a long-desired aliveness in him: "Finally my soul erupts!" (*A*, 93).[26]

Aho's novella frames the 'hysteric' qualities of its male protagonist in both pejorative and idealistic ways. Like the protagonist's moods that shift rapidly from thrill to boredom, the image of the Finnish beloved transforms in his mind. The narrator's sense of inferiority and shame leads him to re-assess the desirability of the unattainable object, a reaction that is typical of *ressentiment*. The maiden of Finland appears "petty", "cold" and "weak" (*Y*, 70) in comparison with her southern, warmblooded sister. The Northern region only delivers cold breaths from its "icy swamps" (*Y*, 70) and gives no instant emotional or sexual gratification.[27] As the emblem of the modern age, the city of Paris is portrayed as a sexually enticing female beast, which makes the narrator forget his commitments to stay "morally pure" (*Y*, 19) for his true love, the North.[28] In the city of *Exhibition Universelle*, the narrator pictures man-made machinery as a huge engine that pumps "steam, gas, and electricity" (*Y*, 50) into the veins of modern city life.[29] Standing at the base of the Eiffel Tower, the narrator feels the collective elation running through his nerves like an electric shock. He compares the hubris of celebrating crowds to a religious hysteria or intoxication of a modern cult, which reveals the ultimate emptiness of modern life: "When the 'glowing stars' [of fireworks] start to play their colourful symphony and the Eiffel Tower turns into a flaming red blaze, I'm too taken by the collective ecstasy. I shout in front of that sacrificial altar, which seems

On the double, gendered standards of Finnish bourgeoisie see e.g., Lappalainen 2000, 185–188; on the conflicting ideals of marital love and bohemian life style of male artists see Konttinen 2019, 112–117.

[26] "Enfin, mon âme fait explosion." (A, 138)

[27] "Onhan se kaunis Suomi ja sen taivaanranta herättää niin vienoja ja puhtaita tunteita. Mutta ne ovat niin laimeita, niin heikkoja. Siellä on kyllä kesäyön kirkkaus, mutta ilmassa liikkuu aina nuo kylmät, jäähdyttävät juovakkeet, joita huokuvat roudasta sulamattomat suot."

[28] "Viattomana eläminen on minulle nyt siveellinen vaatimus, vaikka ennen olin sellaisille olkapäätäni kohottanut."

[29] "[P]onnistavat kaikki tämän aikakauden käsivarret ja takovat kaikki sen vasarat ja liehtovat höyry, kaasu ja sähkö [– –]."

to be lit up to celebrate the human genius revolting against gods" (*Y*, 51).[30] After a moment, the world-weary narrator feels that the "[m]odern age is humbug" (*Y*, 51).[31]

In *Yksin*, the myth of the Northern dark mentality is combined with the narrator's existential alienation due to modernisation. Throughout the story, Aho's loner is torn asunder by an overall sensation of self-disintegration, which triggers in him doubts of the weakness of his character. The modern engine threatens the cohesion of his self in a similar vein as the forces of nature were once thought to endanger the very existence of primitive man (cf. Simmel 1964, 409). The feeling of losing oneself or of splitting in half emerges as a sense of disorientation felt between two fast-moving trains on a crowded platform. While entering the cathedral of Cologne, the narrator feels the boundaries of his self blissfully vanishing: "It's me, after having explained religious feelings as the ecstasy of weak characters, who is now melting down like wax" (*Y*, 41).[32] In the serene atmosphere of the cathedral, the exhausted traveller feels a sudden urge to stay forever among other worshippers:

> May the train depart, may the world pass and roar! I will stay here, under the silent vaults. And how well do I understand now those hermits, monks and nuns who retreated into their abbeys or sought a hiding place in the solitude of wilderness, tired of life and disappointed in their high hopes. How different would it be compared to seeking oblivion from work and the rumble of the world.
>
> Antaa junan jättää, antaa maailman mennä ja pauhata! Minä jään tänne, holvien hiljaisuuteen. Ja kuinka hyvin käsitän minä nyt nuo erakot, munkit ja nunnat, jotka uupuneina elämään ja pettyneinä toiveistaan sulkeutuivat luostareihin ja hakivat itselleen lymypaikan erämaan yksinäisyydessä! Kuinka se olisi toista kuin etsiä unhotusta työssä ja upottaa itsensä maailman pauhinaan. (*Y*, 41)

The narrator's sudden affinity for reclusive people of the wilderness reveals his longing for harmony, which is possible only for those who have found peace with themselves. Religious or spiritual longing of this kind is familiar from the classic works of decadence, including J-K Huysmans's *Á rebours* (1884, transl. *Against the Grain* 1926), which was originally entitled *Seul* [Alone]. However, for Aho's modern narrator, religious and ascetic traditions appear as abandoned life choices, as relics of the past. In Paris, the indulgence in creative work, absinthe and paid sex serves as a temporary remedy for the narrator's malaise but does not solve his self-alienation.

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[30] "Kun sitten illan tullen 'loistavat tähdet' alkavat soittaa värisinfoniaansa ja koko Eiffeltorni pelmahtaa punaiseksi tulipatsaaksi, niin tempaahan minutkin yhteinen riemu ja minä hurraan minäkin tuon uhrialttarin ääressä, joka näyttää olevan kuin jumalien uhalla sytytetty ihmisneroa ylistämään."

[31] "Nykyaika on humbuugia [– –]".

[32] "Minä, joka aina olen selittänyt uskonnolliset tunteet heikkojen luonteiden hurmaustilaksi, sulan kuin vaha."

Instead of showing a national collective becoming conscious of its noble origins, *Yksin* portrays the experience of a highly sensitive individual who suffers from modern melancholia, even neurasthenia or hysteria. For those audiences who wished to see defenders of the young nation in hardening political times, this individualist choice seemed degenerate and dangerous. In line with the Expressionist painting *Skrik* [The Scream] (1893) by the Norwegian painter Edward Munch, Aho's prose work channels modern individual's despair and anxiety involving the human condition. The narrator's cry seems to channel all human suffering and the shared void of modern existence: "And it is not only my misery but the misery of the entire human race that seems to burst out through me and let out the wailing cry of suffering, this suffering, which at this very moment makes me feel as if everything were broken and crooked. How foul, filthy and false everything is!" (*Y,* 86)[33]

From Black Pile to White Northern Melancholia

Whereas Aho's decadent novella maintains its neo-romantic tone through the narrator's individualistic search for his true North, Marko Tapio's later novel series *Arktinen hysteria 1–2* (= *AH* 1–2) is almost devoid of such sentiments. In *Arktinen hysteria* novels, the portrayal of loneliness involves societal class conflict, which evokes emotional extremes typical of Arctic hysteria (see Tapio's definition of the term in Chapter I). The first-person narrator of the family saga, Harri Björkharry, has lost his faith in his people, in God, in humanity and in himself. The character type of a melancholic Nordic *flaneur* or aesthete gradually becomes a more bitter type of absurd 'abject hero' (Bernstein 1992) familiar from Russian and French existentialism, nihilism and Nietzschean individualism. As opposed to the aestheticiced, melancholic solitude of Aho's *Yksin, Arktinen hysteria* novels express *ressentiment* typical of Fjodor Dostoyevsky's Saturnalian works, including his novel *Notes from Underground* (1864).[34] Tapio's underground aesthetic, however, manifests a distinctive Finnish style characteristic of the tradition of Arctic hysteria, later modified in postmodern and contemporary novels.

The self-reflective, melancholic atmosphere of Aho's earlier work darkens into grave desolation in Harri Björkharry's rant, full of *ressentiment.* Instead of contemplative grief expressed by the verses of *Kanteletar*, Tapio portrays Finnish melancholia as a bitter, dark force: as an energy reserve, that not only guarantees fierce self-defence but also leads to internal conflicts and destruction. The loner's anguish is presented as an abrupt outburst of negative emotion that poses a danger to the surrounding

[33] "Koko tämän elämän kurjuus, koko tämän kohtaloni surkeus painaa ja ahdistaa minua. Ja se ei ole mielestäni ainoastaan minun onnettomuuteni, vaan koko ihmiskunnan onnettomuus, joka tuntuu tahtovan tällä hetkellä minun kauttani puhjeta parkasemaan valitushuutoa siitä samasta särkyneestä ja kierosta, josta minä nyt kärsin. Kuinka tämä on likaista, saastaista ja valheellista!"

[34] The complexities in the abject hero's self-examination are also prevalent in the later fictional works belonging to the existentialist-philosophical and absurd tradition, such as Jean-Paul Sartre's *Nausea* (1932) and Albert Camus's *The Fall* (1956).

community and societal equilibrium. In contrast with the earlier democratic portrayal of Finnish collectives, Tapio's work describes a middle-class outsider's individualistic 'war' against Finnish workers and communists. The anti-democratic ethos of Tapio's novels challenges the sympathetic view of Finnish working-class people as presented in Väinö Linna's novel series *Täällä Pohjantähden alla* 1–3 (1959, 1960 and 1962, transl. *Under the North Star* 2001–2003) and his war novel *Tuntematon sotilas* (1954, transl. *The Unknown Soldier* 1957).[35] *Arktinen hysteria* novels resort to absurd, antitherapeutic provocation that significantly differs from the pacifist tradition of his predecessors, including the avantgarde literature of the politically radical decade of the 1960s. Meant to be a tetralogy, Tapio's novel series was left unfinished due to the author's untimely death from alcohol and drug misuse and resulting health problems in 1973.

In *Arktinen hysteria* novels, the tense present moment of the prologue spreads across the first and second part of the series: *Vuoden 1939 ensilumi* [The First Snow of the Year 1939] (1967) and *Sano todella rakastatko minua* [Say If You Really Love Me or Not] (1968). This moment covers only a twenty-minute period of the narrator's life. However, in story time, the frozen moment expands into a long narrative of Harri Björkharry's family history recounted in the two novels. The saga of three generations develops, in turn, into a story of the Finnish nation and its major conflicts with both inner and outer enemies on a timeline from the 1890s to the 1960s. In the narrator's frenzied consciousness, present and past moments fuse in a synchronic narrative that contains multiple layers of experience in Saarijärvi and Helsinki. The logic of history is often replaced by mythopoetic simultaneity as the narrator's own experiences merge with his father's and grandfather's past predicaments.

In line with an earlier naturalist-decadent tradition, Tapio's individualist narrator questions the idealised image of Finnish people as humble, hard-working and obedient peasants. *Arktinen hysteria* novels, however, lack the reconciling or sorrowful affective tone typical of earlier portrayals of the Finnish poor. The purpose of the nationalist-romantic vision, created in J L Runeberg's poem 'Bonden Paavo' [Paavo of Saarijärvi] (1830), was to invite bourgeois readers to support the Fennoman cause by stirring positive emotions of love, compassion and Christian solidarity in them (see Lyytikäinen 2020, 103). On the contrary, the abject hero's bitterly melancholic confession is a product of an exercise of authenticity in an existentialist sense: it is a disillusioned examination of an individual's subjective, experiential relation to his people, avoiding any moral conformity of good and bad in the Nietzschean spirit.[36]

[35] Linna's novel has been translated into English twice: the first edition, *The Unknown Soldier*, was translated by William Collins in 1957 and the second edition, *Unknown Soldiers*, was translated by Liesl Yamaguchi in 2015.

[36] According to Jakob Golomb (1995, 8), authenticity for existentialist writers meant refusal of dogmatic beliefs, societal values, ethical norms and ideologies, which alienated individuals from their true self. Concepts like 'sincerity', 'honesty' or 'truthfulness' were not what existentialists understood as authenticity or authentic life: "For them, the notion of authenticity expresses, among other things,

According to Harri Björkharry, he is "an absurd man" (*AH* 1, 46) who has abandoned all hope. One of the most provocative scenes in *Vuoden 1939 ensilumi* arises from the narrator's fantasy of shooting an old woman in rags, as she is searching for food to live. According to the narrator, his wish to kill the woman represents an act of mercy, as it promises an end to her pointless suffering.

Arktinen hysteria novels illustrate the dangers of resentful loneliness, which at worst leads to self-disintegration. Harri Björkharry's split into two conflicting selves is closely related to the question of his reliability as a first-person narrator. Matti Kuhna (2004, 125) has conceived Harri Björkharry as a mainly rational and trustworthy firstperson narrator who struggles to save the uneducated masses from their primitive conditions and thus, from themselves. In his view, *Arktinen hysteria* is a narrative of Finnish entrepreneurship and a depiction of the rise of the nation into a modern welfare society. Pirjo Lyytikäinen (2020, 107) on the other hand, has interpreted Tapio's narrator as an unreliable abject hero who channels the 'hysterical masculinity' of young men. They uncritically idolise the wars of their fathers and suffer from an inferiority complex. The god-forsaken construction site, which is supposed to bring electricity and enlightenment to the Finnish hinterlands becomes a war-like setting for the narrator, epitomizing the failed modern project and approaching climate catastrophe.

The almost opposite academic readings of the novels reveal the ambivalence of the novel series in terms of both the emotionally isolated narrator's reliability and resulting aesthetic effects. In addition to the unorthodox temporal-spatial arrangements of the story line, the order of narration in the prologue guides the interpretation of the entire novel series, including its affective tone. In Tapio's books, the narrator's pessimistic ideas of human progress and repetition of history are closely tied with the novels' spatial form. As stated by Joseph Frank (1945, 225), readers of modernist literature tend to apprehend texts "spatially, in a moment of time, rather than as a sequence". The narrator's rant and ensuing behaviour in the prologue illustrate the state of 'Arctic hysteria', which gradually proceeds from emotional restraint to a sudden outburst of rage. The novel series begins with the narrator's seemingly rational confession of his feelings of shame, guilt and embarrassment. This confession, however, simultaneously reveals the narrator's social disconnect and his subjective position in relation to Finnish workers and peasants. The engineer Harri Björkharry has returned to his home village in Saarijärvi[37] after 15 years of education in the capital of Helsinki. The freezing cold, poor conditions on the construction site shock him to his very core. After having kept

revolt against the traditional conception of truth and the ideal of sincerity derived from it" (Golomb 1995, 9).

[37] Saarijärvi is a small town surrounded by a larger agrarian municipality in Central Finland. In Runeberg's poem 'Peasant Paavo', Saarijärvi serves as both a pastoral and a more realist setting, for which the region has become one of the national landscapes created in Finnish literature. The place represents the heroic role of Finnish peasants who succeed as the cultivators of the unruly bog land despite their struggles against hunger and poverty.

silent about what he calls the truth of his people, he has now decided to share what he has witnessed.

In his grotesque modification of Plato's ship of state, Harri Björkharry vents his hatred and compares the Finnish poor to a league of slaves found in the middle of the sea of civilisation. They are like vermin clinging to the back of their president's jacket. In the narrator's vision, the Finnish society is full of naivetes, hypocrites and liars who are ready to stand up for and idealise the poor, either because of their ignorance or willingness to use the lambs for their own political purposes. In the narrator's view, his father (serving as a minister in Finnish parliament) belongs to an equally hysterical group of capitalist upstarts. They suck the blood of ignorant people who place their trust in the wrong leaders. Even when these authoritarian wolves manage to hoard wealth and power to cast more misery on the uneducated, they suffer from a stubborn sense of inferiority and shame perceived as the diseases of a young nation.

In *Arktinen hysteria* novels, the narrator's resentful attitudes towards Finnish workers are based on a distorted sense of his own vulnerability and victimhood. In his solitary agony, the narrator juxtaposes himself to a son of God, who feels the approaching hour of suffering coming nearer:

> I cannot but wonder, here, by the telephone, with 30 to 40 men standing behind the wall: is this what Jesus once meant by it all. When one reads his words during the Last Supper that was never finished and in Gethsemane, one cannot miss the agony and pain that drives him forward: those sentences were said by a man who was almost panting and about to lose it.
>
> En tässä puhelimeni äärellä, 30–40 miestä parin seinän takana, voi olla ihmettelemättä: tätäkö Jeesus mahtoi kaikella kerran tarkoittaa. Kun lukee hänen viimeisellä, keskeneräiseksi jäävällä aterialla ja Getsemanessa lausumiaan sanoja, niin ei voi olla huomaamatta, mikä hätä ja tuska häntä ajaa: ne ovat melkein sekapäiseksi pillastuneen ihmisen katkeilevia, melkein huohottavia lauseita. (*AH* 1, 269)

In the prologue that launches the first part of the novel series, the narrator Harri Björkharry faces alone a situation, which he later defines as the "intolerable condition of existence" (*AH* 1, 149). The narrator sits in his office with his father's *Suomi* submachine gun[38], waiting for the order of his call to his mother to go through. The old dam, which holds back the rapid stream providing the powerplant's power, is about to break loose. The men working for the father's company refuse to cooperate with the narrator in his efforts to save the family business and stubbornly continue their strike. Just a moment earlier, the narrator witnessed with a strange kind of passive

[38] The *Suomi* submachine gun was designed in the 1920s and used in the Second World War by Finnish soldiers.

fascination working-class men beating his father half-dead. Vikki Björkharry is now lying in a hospital bed and his son is forced to confront a catastrophic situation, which is building up on two fronts: the workers' collective anger and the natural forces of a stream held up by a deteriorating dam are about to destroy his father's capitalist project. Together these forces generate mental pressure, which has debilitating effects on the narrator's self-control.

In *Arktinen hysteria*, the alienating effect of the dual perspective stems from the narrator's very acknowledgment, even his melancholic enjoyment, of watching the scenes of destruction he himself participates in creating, both as a passive bystander and as an active perpetrator (Lyytikäinen 2020, 110). The narrator witnesses with simultaneous horror and fascination the men's brutal behaviour: their heavy drinking, knife fights and sexual violence. They gang-rape an under-aged girl, while their superior passively watches on as if following a thrilling movie scene. The narrator witnesses with the same exhilarated passiveness or sorrowful adoration the suffering of the *rahvas* ('rabble') of society who mourn their lost, ruined land.

The solitary mood of the first part of the novel series is generated by providing nostalgic melodies from Soviet working-class songs. The nostalgic tone produces a highly alienating effect as it accompanies the brutal acts of violence. One of the melodies is sung by a drunken labourer at the dam worksite: "Oh, arrive summer, arrive once more. / It might be that you'll never arrive again" (*AH* 1, 212).[39] As a "Slavic type of exaggeration" (*AH* 1, 158) Arctic hysteria and the melancholic submission to one's degraded condition blossom from the soil of unfulfilled hopes and dreams. After hearing the old man singing this song, the narrator experiences deep desperation. His soul feels barren and deserted as if he were the only person in the entire universe. Unable to tolerate the pain caused by the pitiful sight – the degraded state of the drunken poor man repeating the lyrics without truly feeling the emotion they express – he does what he repeatedly does: he chooses social isolation.

The reception of Tapio's provocative novel series in the 1960s raises important questions about the relationship between arts and politics. During the decade of cultural wars of the 1960s, the narrator's inclination to philosophise and aesthetically distance violence seemed a clear signal of Tapio's own artistic programme for promoting fascistic values and ideologies. *Arktinen hysteria* was considered the work of a fascist author and a defence for nationalist, right-wing Finland. This kind of reception was to be expected as the novel series includes direct quotations from Adolf Hitler's *Mein Kampf* (1925–1926, transl. *My Struggle* 1933).[40] Hitler is mentioned for the first time in the prologue before the workers' strike begins, after the negotiations with their spokesman have failed. To my understanding, the national debate around Linna's therapeutic nov-

[39] "Oi tule kesä, tule vielä kerran. / Vai tokko tulet enää milloinkaan – "

[40] See e.g., Palm 1995, 112. The connection between 'spatial form' and fascist myth has been suggested in the study of modernist poets such as T. S. Eliot and Ezra Pound. This connection, however, is not constitutive of the formal pattern itself but connects to the purposes for which it is used in the work in question (see e.g., Mitchell 1980).

els inspired Tapio to remove the destructive rituals of bitter melancholy into the realm of his readers' aesthetic experience. Tapio's ironic work follows the official narrative of white Finland written after the civil war of 1918 between the nationalist 'Whites' and the socialist 'Reds'. The narrator's Nietzschean exercise reveals harsh truths about himself and the Finnish bourgeoisie: "I do not know yet how to put into words my fascination with this thing, war, and why it intrigued me and why it still does. I can only say that behind my fascination there is something that is unbearably difficult to look straight into, to face reality eye to eye" (*AH* 2, 46).[41]

In my view, Harri Björkharry serves as the author's untrustworthy spokesman for middle-class, divided individuals, who are products of the overly-rationalist and antiromantic strands of the Enlightenment project (on this anti-modern strand in Finnish essayist writing, see Chapter III).[42] These disillusioned individuals turn toward fascist myth in their yearning for an atavistic life force. Intentionally or unintentionally, the novel series delivers diagnostic insights of the white nation's history after the collective view of the civil war began to slowly change in the Finnish historiographies of the 1960s. The tone of the second part of the novel series is more sympathetic and sincere, reflecting the changed attitudes of the patriotic bourgeoisie towards Finnish workers and socialists after the joint national effort of the two wars waged against the Soviet Union in 1939–1944, including the miraculous victory of the Winter War. The second part of the novel series focuses on the history of the Second World War as narrated by Vihtori 'Vikki' Kautto, who has previously accompanied the narrator's father, Vikki Björkharry, in these wars.[43]

Both Anne Fried (1975, 92) and Matti Kuhna (2004, 67–69) perceive the narrator-protagonist as belonging to complex yet developing personalities that can "rise above the circumstances" (*AH* 1, 198) and refuse the temptations of violence for the sake of modern progress. Lyytikäinen (2020, 110, 112), on the other hand, argues that Harri Björkharry suffers from Arctic hysteria and is unlikely to find a cure for the condition he diagnoses in himself. As the family saga, planned to be a tetralogy, was never finished, it will remain unclear how the narrator's story would have developed. Would

[41] "En osaa vieläkään tarkalleen sanoa, miksi tuo asia, sota, minua kiehtoi ja kiehtoo yhä. Voin sanoa vain, että aavistan kiinnostukseni takana olevan jotakin sellaista, jota on äärimmäisen vaikeata katsoa suoraan silmiin, niin kuin todellisuutta on katsottava."

[42] In his yearning for primitive energies, Harri Björkharry resembles Harry Haller, the divided, bourgeois protagonist of Herman Hesse's existentialist work *Steppenwolf* (1927, *Der Steppenwolf*). Similarly, William Faulkner's novel *Wild Palms* (1939) is briefly mentioned in *Vuoden 1939 ensilumi*, in the discussion between the narrator and a Jewish literary critic Epstein. As Matti Palm (1995, 127) writes, Tapio's plan was to have the female character protect the protagonist from the working men's attack, while the narrator is helplessly shouting: "I am to be judged!" – and potentially getting killed like the protagonists' female companions in Faulkner's and Hesse's novels. See Kuhna 2004, 43–45, for more details about the manuscript of the third part of the novel series.

[43] Vihtori Kautto's monologues include stories of the Winter War (1939–1940) and the Continuation War (1941–1944). Tapio's intention was to add a depiction of the Lapland War and the departure of the military forces of Nazi Germany from the North, in the third part of his novel series (Palm 1995, 99).

he have chosen the path of his violent, authoritarian father or the path of his pacifist, communist beloved, Kaisa Kataamäki? The outline of the third part of the novel series consisted of only four lines. The lyrics of a Russian *schlager* form the first two of them, speaking of a utopian city in a promised land: "I've heard of a heavenly city".[44]

All in all, Tapio's work is a difficult, ethically disturbing novel as it offers to its readers only unreconciled alternatives. His novels force their readers to face the dark psychology behind personal and national myths in a morally testing, open situation. As the estranged narrator's moralistic self-study reaches its nihilistic peak, it offers no middle-ground without ethical compromise. Flesh and blood readers may succumb to the enchantment of extreme negative emotions channelled by the narrator's authoritarian impulses or watch the world of violence through his aestheticizing, passively submissive lens. The more cautious readers, however, soon find themselves stretching their ethical abilities by actively rebelling against these lures. According to Tapio himself, wolfish leaders like Hitler exercised their rhetorical abilities by enchanting naïve or ignorant audiences. The same 'hysteric' method of luring readers with extreme affect seemed to have tempted Tapio, who as an author struggled with opposite impulses. Behind the torn image of Hitler, Tapio kept on his own wall while writing the novel series, the author had written the following words: "In case you work for educating people then put the image of darkness in front of you so that you shall see, understand and always remember that this is the thing that threatens people and which you must show so that others understand it too" (cit. Palm 1995, 112).

Fear and Loathing on the Trans-Siberian Express

Whereas Aho's and Tapio's first person male narrators portray the pleasures or pains of solitude or loneliness experienced alone or in the company of others, the female protagonist of Rosa Liksom's *Compartment No. 6* (= *C*)[45] mostly suffers because of the lack of privacy and personal space. The novella recounts a young girl's nightmarish journey across the Soviet Union in a train compartment (No. 6), which gets associated with a shared prison cage or a room in a mental hospital. In Liksom's novella, the unnamed Finnish 'girl' ends up sharing her compartment with Vadim, a Soviet worker, a misogynistic and violent ex-prisoner who becomes sexually attracted to the girl. *Compartment No. 6* self-consciously plays with national and gendered stereotypes

[44] These twice-repeated verses are followed by a description of the origin of the song ("from the favorite song of a Finnish communist working man's wife") and then a line of repeated words: "OH FATHER FATHER FATHER FATHER FATHER". The manuscript of the fourth part of the novel series existed only as an empty pile of white paper.

[45] The English translation of Liksom's novel *Compartment No. 6* by Lola Rogers was published in 2014 and received the English Pen Award. All English excerpts from Liksom's novel in this chapter are from Rogers' translation. The film adaptation of the novella, co-written and directed by Juho Kuosmanen, won the Grand Prix in Cannes in 2021. In comparison to the novella, the mood of the film is warmer and less violent.

and also comments on the earlier masculine tradition of 'Arctic hysteria' in Finnish literature.

In the portrayal of the protagonist's melancholic loneliness, Liksom's novella resorts to restrained third-person narration that lacks any comment on the side of the narrator. Compared to Liksom's more carnevalist and parodic works of Arctic hysteria (discussed in more detail in Chapter IV), the affective style of *Compartment No. 6* is more poignant and subtle. This kind of ironic minimalism is also characteristic of Aki Kaurismäki's cinematography among other internationally acknowledged works, which portray Finnish mentality. As an outcast underdog, Liksom's protagonist belongs to a group of Finnish loners who feel out of place, seek human connection yet repeatedly encounter the alienating forces of surrounding society. The silent and reserved characters may appear naïve yet they remain observant and gain the audience's sympathies in facing injustice in absurd situations they can only partly influence themselves. (Seppälä 2022, 11.)

The narrating voice in Liksom's novella remains mostly an outside observer or a recorder of actions happening to the girl. Despite this emotional distance or partly because of the seriousness of the restrained style, Liksom's novel can be read as a depiction of a woman's methods of survival in those societies that are ruled by masculine aggression and unpredictability. Sexual harassment or violence, among other forms of oppression, may be morally condemned yet still widely practised and accepted.[46] The encounter between the two strangers, the girl and Vadim, eventually develops into an unexpected friendship, which comes as a surprise given the brutality of the man's behaviour and conversation during their journey together. How is this interpersonal equilibrium or balance of horror achieved and what varieties of personal space, solitude and loneliness does it involve?

Liksom herself has described her novel as an allegorical portrait of the history of Soviet-Finnish relations in the post-war era (Mayow 2013). In his analysis of the failed modern project as well as the derailed communist utopia in Liksom's melancholic novella, Kasimir Sandbacka (2017) considers the work's autobiographical and metafictional features. Liksom herself has said that she is not the unnamed girl in the novel. Nevertheless, the girl's literary journey across the Soviet Union was inspired by Liksom's own travels in the vast country in the 1980s before the totalitarian system collapsed. The period from the end of the Second World War to the dissolution of the Soviet Union in 1991 has been described as the age of 'Finlandisation' (the term first coined in German as *Finnlandisierung*), especially in the international analyses of Finland's foreign politics during the Cold War. The seemingly objective or neutral girl in the story is juxtaposed with the Maiden of Finland and the hulk-like, boastful figure of Vadim with the huge Bear of the Soviet Union that is holding her hostage.

[46] Cultural conservatives, including the priests of the Evangelical Lutheran Church of Finland, attacked the portrayal of free sexuality in the radical works of the 1960s yet typically kept silent about religious or sexual violence represented in these works.

The global encounter of cultural mentalities in Liksom's novella exhibits antidepressive and depressive forms of melancholia, which emerge as shared experiences of social and emotional isolation. The story progresses with a series of Vadim's unreliable and insulting stories, to which the girl listens attentively though she remains silent most of the time. Immediately, the man's disturbing presence feels strangely familiar. Vadim's self-importance and opinionated rudeness remind the girl of her Finnish father. Vadim's stories invite the girl to reminisce about her first trip to the Soviet Union as a fifteen-year-old girl. She immediately falls in love with "Russia's wild beauty" (*C*, 56)[47] and never recovers from it. Due to her father's reckless experiments with drinking and prostitution, her first experience of Moscow is like "a stony fist" (*C*, 55), having a similar effect on her as a Mayakovsky poem.[48] The Soviet man, in turn, accepts the girl as his traveling companion after a brief hesitation. The man introduces his racist ideas about various ethnic groups from Georgians to Estonians but his ideas about Finns involve mild acceptance based on stereotype and bias. The girl appears to him dry, cold, and "mummified" (*C*, 81), like other women of Finland.[49]

> I was thinking for a moment that they'd given this old codger a stiff sentence, put me in the same cage with an Estonian. There's a difference between the *Finlyandskaya respuplika* and the *Sovietskaja Estonskaya respuplika*. Estonians are hook-nosed German Nazis, but Finns are basically made from the same flesh as we are. Finlandiya is a little potato way up north. You people are no trouble. All the world's northern people are one tribe, a northern pride holds us together. By the way, Miss, you're the first Finn, I've ever seen. But I've heard a lot about you. (*C*, 4–5)
>
> Mä jo ehdin ajatella, että ovat äijää rankaisseet kovimman kautta ja laittaneet samaan häkkiin virolaisen kanssa. Finljandskaja respublikan ja Sovjetskaja Estonskaja respublikan välillä on ero. Virolaiset on koukkunokkaisia saksalaisia natseja, mutta suomalaiset on periaatteessa samasta läskistä tehtyjä kuin meikäläiset. Finlandija on pieni peruna kaukana ja korkealla pohjoisessa. Teikäläisistä ei ole harmia. Kaikki maailman pohjoiset kansat ovat yhtä porukkaa, pohjoinen ylpeys yhdistää. Neiti on muuten ensimmäinen suomalainen, jonka olen koskaan nähnyt. Mutta kuullut olen paljon. (*H*, 10–11)

In addition to the girl's Northern pride, the man appreciates her silence. In his opinion, Russian dames talk too much. They force their men to lose their nerve and they must then resort to violence to keep them quiet. Nevertheless, his admiration

[47] "Tyttö katseli jäätuulen puhaltamasta takaikkunasta Venäjän villiä kauneutta." (Hytti nro 6 = H, 62)

[48] "Moskova oli ollut kuin kivinen nyrkki Majakovskin runosta." (H, 61)

[49] "Seuraava malja kohoaa hyttimme upean nuoren naisen sekä muiden suomalaisten muumiomaisten naishahmojen kunniaksi." (H, 87)

towards Russian women, including his wife Katinka, is endless: they are the ones who carry the nation on their shoulders. Liksom's choice to use irony as a rhetorical device to both distance and intensify emotion has its risks, as noted by Sandbacka (2017). The subtle irony in the portrayal of the man's offensiveness and the girl's quiet resistance might go unnoticed yet it is also targeted at communicating the girl's restrained anger and loathing. The girl's embodied reactions easily also become the reader's reactions. In addition to amused alienation or repulsion, the reader is invited to feel with the girl. The girl's calm temperament is repeatedly testified by the man's malicious and belittling words yet she actively resists expressing her anger: "His words make her heart knock in her chest. She counted in her mind: one, two, three ... nine ... twelve ... until she calmed herself" (*C*, 74).[50] At times, the girl lets her disgust and distrust openly show, which encourages the man to reinforce his misogynistic insults:

> [– –] The girl was tired. She would have liked to sleep.
>
> 'How do they drink where you come from? You probably live Baltic style. The men revolve around the bottle, the women revolve around men, and the children around the women. It's the bottle makes everything go round. It's the opposite here. We turn the bottle; it doesn't turn us.'
>
> She looked him. She didn't seem impressed. His face turned stony and he looked at her sternly. 'I ain't interested in your opinions. You're just shitwater to me.' They sat quietly. The girl swallowed.
>
> 'Forgive an idiot, my girl,' he said with genuine regret in his voice. (*C*, 90)
>
> Tyttöä väsytti. Hän olisi halunnut nukkua.
>
> – Miten teillä päin juodaan? Teillä eletään varmaan balttilaiseen tapaan. Miehet pyörivät viinapullon ympärillä, naiset miehen ympärillä ja naisten ympärillä lapset. Viinapullo pyörittää koko sakkia. Meillä tämä juttu menee toisin päin. Me pyöritetään pulloa, pullo ei pyöritä meitä. Tyttö katsoi miestä eikä näyttänyt vakuuttuneelta. Miehen kasvot kivettyivät ja hän katsoi tyttöä tuimasti.
>
> Mua ei kiinnosta sun mielipiteet. Mulle sä olet pelkkää paskavettä.
>
> He istuivat hiljaa. Tyttö nieleskeli.
>
> – Anna tyhmälle anteeksi tyttöseni, mies sanoi äänessään aitoa katumusta. (*H*, 96)

In her portrayal of the girl's deep fatigue and angry melancholia, Liksom abandons both modernist existentialist authenticity and post-modern suspension of suspicion and replaces them with sincerity, typical of metamodernism or post-postmodernism

[50] "Miehen puheet saivat tytön sydämen hakkaamaan. Hän laski mielessään yksi, kolme, yhdeksän, kaksitoista... Niin kauan tyttö laski että rauhoittui." (H, 80)

(Sandbacka 2017). However, the residual elements of irony in the novel still illustrate Liksom's emancipatory, postmodern project of parodying the masculinist, seriously romantic or violent literature of the North (cf. Ridanpää 2010). Irony also provides needed aesthetic distance by evoking relief and amusement. The novel's dark, grotesque humour stems from the reader's acknowledgement of the ultimate cleverness of 'Maiden Finland' in dealing with her bully, often too intoxicated by vodka and his own stories to be fully attentive.

Compartment No. 6 can be analysed as a humorous yet simultaneously nostalgic return to one's imagined roots in the transnational sphere of Northern peoples. As suggested already by the novella's title 'Compartment No. 6', which refers to Anton Chekhov's novella *Ward No. 6* (1892), Liksom's work also pays a sincere tribute to the great classics of Russian literature. In addition to the lack of pleasant solitude, the Slavic atmosphere of the novella is motivated by the girl's sorrowful reflection on her past and on her possibilities for a better future. She has embarked on her trip to Mongolia after events in her life suddenly begin to go awry. The girl's Russian boyfriend Mitka has voluntarily signed into a mental institution in Moscow to be able to escape serving in the Soviet-Afghan war. During his time away, the girl has fallen in love with his mother Irina who has taught her to appreciate Russian literature. Confused by this queer love triangle, the girl decides to go to Mongolia alone to see the ancient petroglyphs and carry out a previous plan she had made with Mitka.

During the transnational encounter, three names of early Finnish scientists are mentioned as historical background for the girl's explorations in Siberia. Finnish linguist G J Ramstedt found the petroglyphs during his archaeological expedition to Mongolia in 1909 with the Finnish archaeologist, ethnographer and photographer Sakari Pälsi. Furthermore, the arctic frontier traveller, anthropologist and linguist Kai Donner was among the men who gathered scientific knowledge of the peoples of the North in Russia including their customs, traditions and languages. Vadim's speech implicitly refers to the quasi-scientific conceptions of 19th-century and early 20th-century linguistics: European scientists categorized Finno-Ugric peoples as Mongolians to distinguish them from Germanic people, including the Swedes (Kemiläinen 1994, 362). Vadim mentions the people living in "God's refrigerator" (*C*, 3)[51] as primitive people who need education and moral guidance:

> The Mongolians have treated us Russians terribly and crushed the moral backbones of the likes of us, and still, we try to help them. Try to help them up to the present. But they don't understand anything. They screw their children and laugh right in our faces ... Am I getting through to you? Look, the Soviet Union is a powerful country, a great, old, very diverse people live here. We've suffered through serfdom, the time of the tsars, and the revolution. We've built socialism and flown to the moon. What have

[51] "Kiiltävät kiskot vievät meidät Jumalan jääkaappiin." (H, 9)

you done? Nothing! What do you have that's better than us? Nothing! (*C*, 16–17)

Vaikka mongolit kohtelivat meitä venäläisiä kovin huonosti ja murskasivat meikäläisten moraalisen selkärangan, silti me yritetään auttaa niitä. Me viedään sinne tätä päivää. Mutta ne ei ymmärrä mitään, nussivat lapsiaan ja nauravat röyhkeästi meille päin naamaa ... Meneekö perille? Katsos Neuvostoliitto on valtava maa ja täällä asuu vanha, suuri ja hyvin sekalainen kansa. Me ollaan eletty ja kärsitty läpi maaorjuus, tsaarin aika ja vallankumous. Meikäläiset on rakentaneet sosialismin ja lentäneet kuuhun. Mitä teikäläiset on tehneet? Ette yhtään mitään! Mikä teillä on paremmin? Ei mikään!" (*H*, 22–23)

The girl's short stay in Ulan Bator ultimately changes her relationship with the longawaited bliss of being alone. After spending the long days in the compartment in the man's company, solitude in the Siberian wilderness turns out not to be as desirable as the girl had expected. The violent attack of the men of the Soviet security service on Irina's acquaintances in Ulan Bator dashes the girl's plans to reach the petroglyphs. She feels unsafe and painfully lonely, just as she had earlier in the Trans-Siberian express train. With time, the girl becomes accustomed to the unpleasant feeling of anxiety sparked by her solitude. Eventually, she decides to seek Vadim's help to find her way to the petroglyphs. The girl's later, more equal encounter with Vadim is a manifestation of the fragile understanding born between two strangers. During their journey together, Vadim has described the balance between trust and distrust among the Soviet people as a state of continuing suspicion, which covers everyone from an enemy to a friend.

Instead of the restorative nostalgia typical of bitter melancholia, the girl's reflection on the past is marked by melancholic, reflective nostalgia: she acknowledges the losses of the past, which are worked through to find a way to a better future with her Russian lovers, Mitka and Irina. The suffering of the Soviet people under tyranny is juxtaposed with the girl's own terror in the compartment, where she has come to understand Russian nature in all its complexity. By challenging monolithic national identities, reflective nostalgia can contribute to a construction of a more pluralistic collective memory in transnational space, whereas restorative nostalgia seeks to maintain the monolithic national identities (Boym 2001, xviii; Sandbacka 2017, 34). The girl's relationship with the Soviet man resembles her relationship with the whole country that maintains its arrogance and pride amidst its horrific misery and cruelty: "She thinks about how she's come to love that strange country, its subservient, anarchistic, obedient, rebellious, callous, inventive, patient, fatalistic, proud, all-knowing, hateful, sorrowful, joyful, hopeless, satisfied, submissive, loving, tough people, content with little" (*C*, 144).[52] The time spent on the Trans-Siberian express sets everything in motion

[52] "Tyttö mietti, miten hän saattoi rakastaa tuota outoa maata, sen nöyrää, anarkistista, tottelevaista, kapinoivaa, mistään piittaamatonta, kekseliästä, kärsivää, kohtalonuskoista, ylpeää, kaikki ti-

and the girl thinks about the "millions of Soviet citizens that the machine has abused, tortured, mistreated, neglected, trampled, cowed, humiliated, oppressed, terrorized, cheated, raised on violence, made to suffer" (*C*, 144).[53]

In Liksom's work, the aesthetic framing of the protagonist's grief and sorrow as anti-depressive, even pleasant modes of solitude or energising melancholia challenge the view of melancholia as anxious, inner states of mind that lead to inaction, paralysis or alternatively, freely raving madness. Rather, melancholia can also spark rebellious energy and collective uprise needed to fight against social and political oppression, which is allegorised in the solitary encounter of Maiden Finland with Russian Bear. As shown by the current political situation, especially Russia's war in Ukraine, national borders still matter and need to be transnationally protected. However, in her essay, published in *The Guardian* in 2022, Liksom (2022) warns about the risks of isolating the Russian people by breaking off all cultural and scientific ties with the country. The author condemns Russia's aggressions in Ukraine and elsewhere. Yet she expresses her worries that the current political developments will fuel right-wing populism and anti-democratic tendencies in the West and thus assist Putin in his fight against 'Western decadence'. In *Compartment No. 6*, Vadim's darkly humorous narrative of a Soviet man standing alone on Red Square, holding a sign "What's taking our happy future so long?" (*C*, 79)[54] epitomises the horror and absurdity of a totalitarian system. The solitary man, rebelling on his own, is sentenced to 25 years in prison. The spirit of authoritarian tyranny, resented by Aho's loner and admired from afar by Tapio's narrator, is encountered face-to-face by Liksom's globetrotter before the internal collapse of the Eastern giant.

Conclusion

Modern *ennui* and *spleen* and their later modifications of melancholic solitudes are anti-cathartic by nature. The closure of Liksom's work, as in Aho's and Tapio's novels, is open-ended, leaving the future uncertain. This kind of disruption in the temporal structure of experience, accompanied by a return to the unresolved past, is characteristic of fictional narratives portraying existential feeling (Nykänen 2022). The narratives of Aho, Tapio and Liksom all tap into both depressive and anti-depressive forms of melancholia in their portrayal of emotional or social isolation, leaning either towards restorative or reflective nostalgia. What is common to all analysed texts is the

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etävää, vihantäyteistä, murheellista, iloista, epätoivoista, tyytyväistä, alistunutta, rakastavaa, sitkeää ja vähään tyytyvää kansaa." (H, 150)

[53] "[M]iljoonat neuvostoihmiset, joita koneisto on pahoinpidellyt, kiduttanut, kohdellut huonosti, lyönyt laimin, tallonut, kyykyttänyt, nöyryyttänyt, alistanut, pelotellut, huijannut, pakkokasvattanut, pannut kärsimään." (H, 150)

[54] "Missä viipyy onnellinen tulevaisuus?" (H, 86)

narrators' or characters' experience of existential situations, which results in the loss of their lives' direction and meaning on an individual or collective scale.

While Aho's bourgeois male narrator seeks to rebuild the lost connection with his people even at the deepest moments of lonely desperation and sense of inferiority, the middle-class narrator of Tapio's novels guides readers into darker and more resentful realms of loneliness. The bitter attitudes of an estranged loner resemble shame as it is experienced by Aho's narrator. However, the narrator of Tapio's *Arktinen hysteria* novels perceives violent escalation, rather than grief and melancholic self-reflection, as a solution to inner and outer conflicts. The narrator's conflicting impulses trigger totalitarian and fascist fantasies in him. In Liksom's novella, loneliness is portrayed as a painful state of emotional isolation experienced by the female protagonist in the company of the Soviet fellow traveller. The girl's solitary melancholia involves fully justified anger and stubborn resistance rather than racist hatred as she fights her perpetrator to avoid attack. The girl's nostalgic reflection of her past eventually leads her to Siberian lands, where she experiences at least temporary moments of peace.

The historically changing ideas of loneliness and solitude relate to literary conventions of ways of expressing emotion. As my analyses show, material conditions and social variables such as gender, ethnicity and nationality affect how loneliness and solitude are presented in fiction. Through portraying encounters between nationalities and nations, the modern narratives of the North reveal historical changes in literary cultures, affective styles and effects. The literary context of the analysed texts range from neo-romantic decadence to modernist and post-modern forms of Arctic hysteria. Liksom's ironic minimalism creates an affective style that parodies the melancholic elements of the postwar modernist literature. By inviting readers to feel with the protagonist, the novella also resorts to sincerity typical of metamodernism or post-postmodernism. Modernist-existentialist ideas of 'authenticity', referring to the individual's need to remain truthful to oneself rather than to true cultural origin or convention, play a significant role in Tapio's *Arktinen hysteria* novels. Whereas the origin of sorrowful melancholia is placed in archaic Karelia in Aho's novella, the educated outsider's resentful confession in Tapio's novels creates new myths of Finnishness as a 'Slavic type of exaggeration'. The novels may lure readers with extreme emotion but mostly trigger aversion in a more alert reader. Liksom's novella parodies both the romantic and violently masculinist visions of the North yet in *Compartment No. 6* Liksom also sets different traditions into dialogue with her more egalitarian, cosmopolitan vision.

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An Upstart Nation: the Finnish National Character and Modernity in the Writings of Pentti Linkola and Timo Hännikäinen's *Hysterian maa*

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Introduction

This chapter explores the interpretation of the Finnish national character and its tenuous relationship with modernity in the works of two essayists, Pentti Linkola (1939–2020) and Timo Hännikäinen (b. 1979), who can both be described as far-right cultural critics. I begin by introducing Linkola and Hännikäinen as public figures and authors. At this point, the chapter goes beyond literary studies by discussing how Linkola and Hännikäinen are involved in shaping today's Finnish far-right movements, emotional communities that draw a large proportion of their energy from negative feelings towards ethnic Others. I then proceed by relating Linkola's and Hännikäinen's worldviews and political positions to the history of Western antimodern thought, which is a key context for the interpretation of the authors, particularly Hännikäinen.[1] My understanding of antimodernism as a cultural, political and literary phenomenon is based on my reading of several theoretical sources, Antoine Compagnon's (2005) and T J Jackson Lears' (1994) studies and Peter King's (2016) normative conception ranking as the most important ones. After setting this interpretative context, I analyse some of Linkola's texts and devote special attention to Hännikäinen's book *Hysterian maa* [Land of Hysteria], (= *HM*, 2013), which presents an analysis of Marko Tapio's two *Arktinen hysteria* novels [Arctic Hysteria] (1967–1968).[2]

[1] I have previously analysed antimodern thoughts and sentiments in three articles dealing with the essayists Linkola, Antti Nylén (b. 1973) and Volter Kilpi (1874–1939) (Ahmala 2018, 2020a and 2020b).

[2] Tapio's novels are analysed in Chapter II in this book.

Linkola is domestically a highly influential thinker, a celebrity figure of the late 20th and early 21st centuries and a 'grand old man' of Finnish essay writing. Hännikäinen is one of the many essayists of the younger generations who have been influenced by Linkola, in his case in terms of both style and content. Somewhat like Linkola, he is also a notorious provocateur, with a much more negative public image, although he began his literary career as an appreciated poet and translator.[3]

Linkola's and Hännikäinen's texts are often marked by a provocative, angry attitude and style, typically laced with irony. This sort of *vitupération* is a typical feature of antimodernism in literature (see Compagnon 2005, 137–154). However, Linkola's and Hännikäinen's texts include a wide variety of different style registers.

In Linkola's case, I analyse his essay 'Mietteitä ja muistoja vanhasta sivistyneistöstä – näkökulma vuosisadan aatehistoriaan' [Thoughts and Memories Concerning the Old Intelligentsia – a Perspective on the Ideological History of a Century] as a key text expressing Linkola's outright contemptuous attitude towards the working class, a demographic group that is often deemed representative of the character of the nation. The text was originally published in the cultural magazine *Hiidenkivi* in 2001, and it appears in Linkola's last essay collection *Voisiko elämä voittaa – ja millä ehdoilla* (2004, transl. *Can Life Prevail? A Radical Approach to the Environmental Crisis* 2009).[4]

The concept of national character has been abandoned in scholarly discourses, but in my view the words capture the way Linkola, the narrator of Marko Tapio's *Arktinen hysteria* novels and Hännikäinen generalise about the nature of the Finnish people. Workers or peasants as 'basic Finns'[5] are traditionally those who represent Finnishness in art, literature and nationalist discourse. Linkola's and Hännikäinen's views of the typical Finnish person and the character expressed by him or her are often not flattering. Still rather interestingly, both authors are widely appreciated by far-right nationalists, especially at the extreme end of the far-right spectrum.

I distinguish between the radical right and the extreme right based on Cas Mudde's (2019) concepts. The far right encompasses both radical right populist parties such as the Sweden Democrats and the Finns Party and, on the other hand, extreme right movements that are opposed to democracy and aim to overthrow it, often through violence. The extreme right involves antimodern ideas concerning society and human nature, a strong critique of capitalism, globalization and the post-industrial consumer

[3] Hännikäinen has completed a Master of Arts degree at the University of Helsinki, majoring in Finnish literature.

[4] The essay is not featured in the partial English translation of the collection, published in 2009 by the Budapest-based far-right publisher Arktos Media with the title *Can Life Prevail?* Many essays have been omitted from the collection since, according to the translator, they deal mainly with Finnish domestic issues. From the point of view of this article, these are some of the most interesting essays in the volume. In general, Linkola's thinking is very much rooted in the national cultural and natural landscape.

[5] The right-wing populist Finns Party's Finnish name Perussuomalaiset translates roughly as 'Basic Finns', a concept that highlights the party's populist tendencies.

society, as well as ecological dispositions that are usually absent from and even despised in populist right-wing politics.

The chapter draws attention to antimodern thoughts and sentiments expressed in the imagining of the Finnish nation in Linkola's texts and Hännikäinen's *Hysterian maa*. Hännikäinen's reading of Marko Tapio is to a large extent biographical: he sees the novels as profoundly personal, reflective of Tapio's troublesome relationship with his personal and family history, the short history of Finland as a nation and the modern world at large (see *HM,* 16–17). A central point in my argumentation is that Hännikäinen's reading is also idiosyncratic: it resonates with Hännikäinen's own brand of right-wing antimodern thought and sensibility, which on the most abstract level is premised on a pessimistic view of humanity. Tapio and Linkola are both important authors in Hännikäinen's personal literary canon, in which antimodernism stands out as one central thematic core.[6] I argue that Hännikäinen's *Hysterian maa* and Linkola's texts express different yet convergent aspects of the antimodern experience, which involves a view of modern life as banal. Hännikäinen's reading of Tapio is informed by his personal theory of the antimodern and especially its right-wing forms, which he has dwelled on since before his first essay collection. Other kinds of readings are naturally possible and have been suggested. They may, for instance, pay more attention than Hännikäinen does to the ambivalence, polyphony and irony in Tapio's novels. In particular, they may interpret differently the relationship between Tapio the author, or the implied author, and the narrator of the novels, Harri Björkharry. The novels can be interpreted as containing right-wing antimodern ideas and sentiments, yet it is not at all clear whether they should be attributed to Tapio or even the implied author. Pirjo Lyytikäinen (2020) has interpreted the narrator of Tapio's novels as unreliable. This interpretation, with which I concur, challenges Hännikäinen's view that the novels are deeply personal and his consequent equation of the narrator and Tapio the author.

Similar to Linkola's essay 'Mietteitä ja muistoja vanhasta sivistyneistöstä', Marko Tapio's novels can be interpreted as challenging the positive view of working-class Finns presented in Väinö Linna's (1920–1992) novel trilogy *Täällä Pohjantähden alla* (1959, 1960 and 1962, transl. *Under the North Star* 2001–2003) and his war novel *Tuntematon sotilas* (1954, transl. *The Unknown Soldier* 1957), as Matti Kuhna has argued in his dissertation study (2004). Hännikäinen's reading of Tapio similarly points out the character narrator's negative view of the plebeian masses, yet in Hännikäinen's interpretation the dark side of the national character is also embraced as part of oneself. In Hännikäinen's reading, Arctic hysteria, as it is composed into words by Tapio, represents a special northern form of the irrational core of human nature, which continues to shape history even though modern man's rationalist hubris persists. The primitive energy of Arctic hysteria becomes a source of authenticity and a way of transcending the dull, tame and emasculated aspects seen in contemporary reality. Thus,

[6] Hännikäinen (2023) lists in his blog 100 works of literature – only one from each author – that he considers important for him.

antimodern thought as it is understood here is very much concerned with affects and emotions. It conceives human beings in general and the Finnish people in a particular way as fundamentally primitive, affect-driven creatures. According to Hännikäinen, Tapio presents the affective core of the Finnish national character as epitomized in Arctic hysteria.

This chapter deals with essays, a highly varied and fluid literary genre that operates on the blurry boundaries between fact and fiction. One should distinguish between three 'actors' in an essay: the author as a flesh and bones person, the essay's speaker, sometimes referred to alternatively as the narrator, and the implied author, that is, the view of the author as it is constructed by the reader based on the 'blueprints' written by the 'actual' author. The significance and implications of these distinctions vary among different essayists and types of essays. When there seems to be some kind of polyphony at play in an essay, perhaps in the form of ambivalence or irony, then it may be practical to refer to the speaker as a textual agent distinct from the author. More usually, however, referring to the voice speaking by the author's name seems the more natural choice, keeping in mind that the name does not guarantee unity of meaning, the lack of polyphony (cf. Korhonen 2006, 40).

Many of Linkola's essays are rooted in the author's deeply personal experiences, involving especially the natural environment and its degradation in the grips of industrial modernity. Putting these experiences into words, the texts combine affective means of persuasion, of 'wooing' the reader to support the environmental cause, with argumentation based on knowledge about biology, ecological issues and some other fields such as sociology. Despite the generally personal nature of the essays, the texts are often loaded with such bombast, irony, exaggeration and other foregrounded stylistic features as well as contradictions and ambivalence that one tends to read them as the words of a constructed speaker. However, I generalise about Linkola's views as far as it is possible, keeping in mind that there are a vast amount of different textual 'Linkola's'. Timo Hännikäinen's work *Hysterian maa*, which I focus on in his case, is far less personal than Linkola's typical essay and is quite different from Hännikäinen's more confessional works. The degree of subjectivity of the book lies in the ground between a scholarly study and a more personal, subjective essay, the literary genre pioneered by Michel de Montaigne (1533–1592). There is no reason to doubt that Hännikäinen is being straightforwardly sincere and hence no reason to distinguish between the implied author and the speaker. This is due to the aims and the implied audience of the book: it is intended as a (non-scholarly) study of Marko Tapio's *Arktinen hysteria* novels, even though it is at the same time reflective of Hännikäinen's own thought and literary influences.

Linkola and Hännikäinen as Authors and Public Figures

Pentti Linkola was an internationally somewhat known deep ecologist, fisherman and author of essays and other non-fiction. His views on environmental issues were extreme. He believed technological and economic modernization was a disaster for the environment as well as culture and the wellbeing of humans. The Finns were a special case, as were all peoples in their own way, due to each people's special relationship to the natural environment. Linkola saw his northern native country – the most populous one on its high northern latitude – as an extreme instance of industrial modernity gone wrong: a nation of newly affluent upstarts who do not know what is best for them. For Linkola, the (late) modern Finn is "an expensive, almost unbelievably expensive pest of the natural economy, a monster" (Linkola 2004, 334).[7]

Both Linkola and Hännikäinen have constructed themselves as characters in both their texts and public statements and appearances. Linkola was very much aware of his role as a media character and living legend and seemed to enjoy making outrageous comments both in front of the press and in his writings. Since the 1960s, he held an important position in the public imagination, as a personification of stubbornness and dedication and a speaker of uncomfortable truths. One could imagine the 'dissident thinker' and fisherman suddenly entering a casual conversation in, say, a service station café. As a legend, he might appear in the conversation as more or less distorted – presuming that there is a 'real' Linkola somewhere behind the media character and perceptions of him. For instance, Linkola might be seen as a hermit, but in reality he had many friends, acquaintances and even multiple love interests, as Riitta Kylänpää's biography (2017) and Anneli Jussila's (2021), Linkola's long-time companion's book show.

Linkola died on the fifth of April in 2020 at the age of 88 years. Many have since written assessments of him as a person, a thinker and a writer of essay-type literature in which style is as important as content. According to my rough interpretation, the assessments can be divided in three groups. Many have focused on appreciating Linkola's ecological message, his uncompromising way of life and often his literary talent, while a significant number of others have mostly or to a relatively large degree criticized his anti-humanist and, according to the harshest interpretation, borderline fascist views. The third group, arguably the largest one, represents a middle approach: it sees Linkola as an early forerunner of an emerging environmental awareness, while it also considers and, in some cases, empathetically condemns his ethically questionable views. The author and lawyer Jarkko Tontti (b. 1971), for instance, belongs to the second group. He wonders how it is possible that so many people still do not quite see Linkola for what he is: an ecofascist and an apologist for the Nazis (see e.g., Tontti 2021). Representing

[7] "Suomalainen on kallis, lähes käsittämättömän kallis luonnontalouden tuholainen, hirviö." All translations are my own.

the first group, author and publisher Erkki Kiviniemi (b. 1945) thinks Linkola was at heart a great humanist whose outbursts were expressions of strong environmental anxiety (Kiviniemi 2020). Similarly, according to the sociologist Salla Tuomivaara, "[t]hat which appears to be radicalism or fanaticism often is distress" (Tuomivaara 2008, 38).[8] The literary scholar Mikko Kallionsivu's essay (2021) represents the third group as it rejects Linkola's anti-humanist views but embraces his fundamental environmental agenda.

Linkola's writings and public statements, which sometimes made tabloid headlines, included expressions of Nazi sympathies, admiration for different kinds of other totalitarian and dictatorial systems, appreciation for terrorist acts such as 9/11 and calls for completely ending development aid and humanitarian immigration (see e.g., Söderkultalahti 2019). These kinds of statements – whether completely serious or, as they sometimes seemed to be, more like 'trolling'– increased Linkola's appeal to the Finnish and even the international extreme right, even though Linkola supported the idea of a world government that would control the size of the global human population (see Linkola 1979, 62). The extreme right has tended to appreciate the general toughness that characterized both Linkola's chosen lifestyle and his ecological thinking, dispositions that can from a right-wing viewpoint be interpreted as masculine, uncompromising and sincere.[9] Linkola even suggested a controlled nuclear war using neutron bombs, carefully planned by physicists and engineers, as a possible way of dealing with the problem of global overpopulation (see Finn 1995).

Linkola's elitism and contempt for the materialist, upstart masses that have taken over all areas of society is evident in the essay 'Mietteitä ja muistoja vanhasta sivistyneistöstä', which I treat as a key text in this article. This elitist attitude derives in part from a nostalgic view of the cultural milieu of Linkola's childhood. His father, who died when he was only nine years old, was a professor of plant biology and rector of the University of Helsinki. Linkola's family tree consisted of high-ranking members of society: successful academics like his father, politicians and members of the business elite. For instance, his maternal grandfather, the philologist Hugo Suolahti (1874–1944), was chancellor of the University of Helsinki and the first chairman of the conservative National Coalition Party (*Kansallinen Kokoomus*). Linkola lived a privileged early childhood, but after his father's death, the family was thrown into relative poverty. Linkola studied biology at the university for only a year and began his rugged life as a fisherman in the Finnish southern region of Häme already at the end of the 1950s, a life he never abandoned although he suffered setbacks, including a painful divorce and serious physical and mental health issues.

Linkola began his career as a writer and public provocateur at a time when Finland was experiencing a rapid phase of industrial modernization and urbanization. The

[8] "Se, mikä näyttäytyy radikalismina tai fanatismina, on usein hätää."

[9] Unlike Hännikäinen or the far and extreme right in general, Linkola himself is clearly not a masculinist in the sense that he would somehow privilege the male over the female gender or masculinity over femininity. On the contrary, he expressed support for a matriarchal system (Kylänpää 2017, 398).

country had quickly returned to the pre-war path of economic development, and the war reparations paid to the Soviet Union had played an important part in the growth of heavy industries like ship manufacturing. For most of the time, the Finnish economy was booming for many decades before the deep recession that hit the country at the turn of the 1990s. In this context, Linkola's calls for a simpler, more natural way of life were not fashionable: the country was not supposed to be 'downshifting' but moving forward towards material affluence, the kind of 'progress' that Linkola criticized. Still, many saw Linkola as a beacon of integrity, even a kind of personification of some perceived key features of the Finnish national character. Linkola was seen as honest to the point of brutality, as Finns are sometimes stereotypically presented. He lived in almost pre-modern conditions as most Finns had not so long ago. The whole nation seemed to have moved far away from the 'authentic' lifestyle that Linkola chose. According to Hännikäinen's interesting interpretation, Linkola as a public character and legend was an integral part of Finnish 'national mental hygiene' (Hännikäinen 2021, 190).[10] In Hännikäinen's view, Linkola represented a voice of conscience and as such functioned as a 'substitute sufferer'[11] (Hännikäinen 2021, 189) for the entire nation. He fought against nature's degradation and gained the people's admiration, even though in a schizoid way the upstart masses were unwilling to abandon their notions of progress.

Though controversial, Linkola's reputation and image in Finland have remained generally positive.[12] Abroad he has been more often viewed as an extreme rightwinger and an anti-humanist deep ecologist, one of several thinkers of this type; a case in point is the English-language, American-based far-right website www.penttilinkola.com that offers a selective reading of Linkola as an ecofascist. Linkola's relationship with the Finnish green movement was troubled. His 1985 speech to the Greens, who at the time were a movement not yet organized as a party, involved a call for a militant organization: the members should sacrifice their personal lives for the cause, show strict discipline and strong physical health; above all, they should understand that the preservation of life is 'a deadly serious thing'[13] (Linkola 1989, 83). The speech is included in Linkola's essay collection *Johdatus 1990-luvun ajatteluun* [An Introduction to the Thought of the 1990s] (1989). It formed the basis for a radical programme that Linkola (1987) proposed as a platform for the Green movement.

[10] "[K]ansallista mentaalihygieniaa".

[11] "[S]ijaiskärsijä".

[12] For instance, immediately after Linkola died he was described solely in a very positive tone in the prime-time news of the national TV broadcaster, YLE: as a deeply devoted environmentalist and conservationist. Naturally, the mainstream media refrains from criticizing those who have just passed away if their reputation is predominantly good. Linkola's most concrete good deed was the founding of Luonnonperintösäätiö (The Finnish Natural Heritage Foundation) in 1995. The foundation's prime function is the purchase and protection of old growth forests in southern and central Finland.

[13] "[K]uolemanvakava asia".

In contrast to Linkola's generally positive reception, Timo Hännikäinen is arguably one of the most notorious *persona non grata* in Finland's current liberal cultural circles, due to his far-right connections and provocative statements both in his books and elsewhere, especially in social media. Hännikäinen wrote *Hysterian maa* (2013) at a point in his career when he had already established a notorious reputation as a provocateur. He became a topic of discussion and debate in the Finnish media following the publication of *Ilman: esseitä seksuaalisesta syrjäytymisestä* [Without: Essays on Sexual Exclusion], his second collection of essays in 2009. In the book, the then 29-year-old author reflects on his relatively poor sexual history from a personal and larger societal perspective. Hännikäinen traces the problems of today's mating culture primarily to the sexual revolution of the 1960s that reflected modernity's broader tendency of eroding traditional values and institutions. People today are 'free' to compete in the sexual marketplace, largely unimpeded by such traditional notions as family values. However, the good things in life tend to accumulate to the few, while many are doomed to loneliness and misery, to what Hännikäinen calls sexual exclusion. Similar thoughts are expressed in today's online 'incel' ('involuntary celibate') communities.[14] Besides being based on personal experiences, Hännikäinen's *Ilman* is strongly influenced by Michel Houellebecq's (b. 1956 or 1958)[15] depictions of depressed and nihilistic 'outsider' characters who loathe modern life's materialism and emptiness and yet are themselves only driven by the desire for money, sex and sensual gratification.

In terms of its genre, *Ilman* can be described as autobiographical and pamphletesque (see Hurskainen 2011, 14–33). It is intended to provoke. In an oftenreferenced passage, Hännikäinen (2009, 26) provocatively 'asks' whether young women should perhaps serve in brothels as an equivalent to the mandatory military service of Finnish men.[16] Antti Hurskainen (b. 1986), an essayist himself, has studied the reception of *Ilman* in the media and online discussion in his master's thesis (2011). The thesis shows how the heated online discussion was directed above all by representations of *Ilman* in the media and the participants had only rarely read the book.

Since *Ilman*, Hännikäinen has gained notoriety mainly due to his public activity.[17] In recent years, he has been active in right-wing nationalist circles. He is involved in the organization *Suomen Sisu* (The Sisu of Finland),[18] as have been some particularly right-wing politicians of the populist Finns Party, including the party's former

[14] Tuija Saresma (2016) has interpreted Hännikäinen's Ilman from the point of view of 'emotional communities of hate and resentment' (vihan ja kaunan tunneyhteisöt), as the title of her article shows.

[15] It is unclear whether Houellebecq was born in 1956, which is the official year of his birth, or in 1958. He has claimed his mother faked the earlier birth year to get him into school earlier, as he seemed gifted.

[16] Hännikäinen's provocative question follows a reference to Linkola's statement that a brothel should be added to every health care center.

[17] Hännikäinen details his experiences of publicity and the literary circles and institutions of Finland in his tellingly named book Lihamylly [Meat Grinder] (2017).

[18] Sisu can be translated very roughly as 'perseverance'. It is a mythologized core affective ingredient of the Finnish national character.

chairman Jussi Halla-Aho. Hännikäinen is currently *Suomen Sisu*'s second vice chairman. He is also the main editor of a blog-like online magazine named *Sarastus* (Dawn), which describes itself as 'national and European, traditionalist and radical' (*Sarastuslehti*). The magazine features conservative and right-wing authors who are collectively labelled under the hypernym traditionalism. Traditionalism in *Sarastus* and elsewhere in Hännikäinen's usage refers loosely to a tradition of rightwing thought that has "radically questioned the principles of the Enlightenment and liberalism's rationalistic and individualistic view of man"[19] (Hännikäinen 2016, 159). Such thought represents antimodernism in its most right-wing form. According to *Sarastus*, the authors of the magazine have different views on many issues but are "connected by the view that society is a union between the living, the dead and the unborn – a civilization which loses its traditions and hierarchies is doomed to perish sooner or later". This involves a tradition of thought: "This traditionalist perspective is represented in Western philosophy by thinkers like Joseph de Maistre, Oswald Spengler and Julius Evola" (*Sarastuslehti*).

Many, though not all the writings in *Sarastus* can be described as neofascist. They often criticize 'cultural Marxism', liberalism and globalization from a position that is more radical than today's mainstream, populist far-right politics. The magazine has much in common with the American white nationalist publisher Counter-Currents Publishing and its associated magazine *North American New Right*, as well as other right-wing publications like *AltRight.com* and the German *Junge Freiheit*. Hännikäinen has contributed to Counter-Currents' website (https://www.counter-currents.com/). Both *Sarastus* and Counter-Currents contain writings for example on Julius Evola (1898–1974), Oswald Spengler (1880–1936), the decorated German soldier, author and conservative thinker Ernst Jünger (1895–1998) and Pentti Linkola. *Sarastus* is engaged in 'metapolitics', which means that it aims to contribute to a gradual change in culture and society's values, rather than discussing the details of daily politics.

Hännikäinen's most notorious public act occurred during the midsummer evening of 2015. While drunk, the author wrote derogatory comments on the Facebook pages of the old feminist organization *Naisasialiitto Unioni* (Women's League Union) as well as a support organization for rape victims, *Naisten linja* (Women's Line), prompting his publisher *Savukeidas* to finally end its troubled relationship with him. Hännikäinen has since published his books through a small publisher called Hexen Press and more recently Kiuas (literally 'Stove'), where he also works as an editor.[20] Hexen Press has been a subsidiary of Kiuas since 2017. Kiuas has published fiction, critiques of multiculturalism and immigration and translations of works by the antimodern classics Spengler and Joseph de Maistre (1753–1821), as well as Gustave le Bon (1841–1931) who analysed modern mass society in the early twentieth century. Kiuas was banned from participating in the Helsinki Book Fair of 2018 and has not participated since.

[19] "[R]adikaalisti kyseenalaistanut valistuksen periaatteet ja liberalismiin sisältyvän rationalistisen ja individualistisen ihmiskäsityksen."

[20] Kiuas has used the slogan 'Kirjoja aikaa vastaan' (Books against time), which is a direct translation of the slogan of the American publisher Counter-Currents.

Hännikäinen's works are from the beginning influenced by Linkola in terms of both themes and essayistic style. Ecological themes held an important role especially in Hännikäinen's first essay collection *Taantumuksellisen uskontunnustus* [Confession of a Reactionary] (2007), combined with cultural critique aimed at the perceived herd mentality of liberal and leftist circles and the materialism and hedonism of late modern society. Hännikäinen (2021, 181) writes in his essay 'Vaistonvarainen luonnonrakastaja' [An Instinctive Lover of Nature] that when he was in his 20s, Linkola was for him 'a prophet'. However, ecological issues have since played only a minor part in Hännikäinen's writings. Instead, the focus of his critique has for many years been on perceived decline in the cultural sphere, the decline of late modern Western civilization, and on his interpretation of the deepening delusions of the progress-minded left.

The Antimodern Tradition

Right-wing antimodern thought and its history beginning from the time of the French Revolution (1789–1799) and the First Industrial Revolution is a key context for the interpretation of Linkola's and Hännikäinen's worldviews and ethical and political positions. Their texts are preceded by a long history of resistance to modernization. A strong consciousness of this tradition and its analytical reflection is typical of Hännikäinen's texts, while in Linkola's case the connections are more implicit.

Hännikäinen's 'message', especially in *Ilman*, often resembles Michel Houellebecq's pessimistic views of human nature and modern society, and Houellebecq has directly influenced him (see Hurskainen 2011, 9, 21). In one of the essays in *Ilman*, titled 'Kulttuurivallankumouksen jälkeen' [After the Cultural Revolution], Hännikäinen (2009, 142) cites Houellebecq's analysis from *Extension du domain de la lutte* (1994, transl. *Whatever* 1999) concerning the commonalities and connections between the sexual marketplace and the capitalist economies of today's Western societies. Throughout his oeuvre, Hännikäinen resonates with and sometimes even echoes Houellebecq's cultural pessimism. He has edited an anthology of essays on Houellebecq, titled *Mitä Houellebecq tarkoittaa?* [What does Houellebecq Mean?] (2010), which features prominent Finnish authors. A central point of view in Hännikäinen's own essay in the collection, titled 'Esimerkillinen elämänkielto' [An Exemplary Denial of Life], is the relevance of H P Lovecraft (1890–1937) for Houellebecq. According to Hännikäinen's (2010, 106) description, Lovecraft was, "despite his scientific worldview and atheism, politically an ultra-conservative for whom modernization, mechanization, liberalism, democracy and change on the whole represented forces of darkness and decay".[21] Like Houellebecq, Lovecraft belongs to the tradition of antimodern authors, even though when it comes to science and religion, he is very modern.

[21] "[T]ieteellisestä maailmankuvastaan ja ateismistaan huolimatta yhteiskunnallisilta näkemyksiltään äärikonservatiivi, jolle modernisaatio, koneistuminen, liberalismi, demokratia ja kaikkinainen muutos edustivat pimeyden ja rappion voimia."

Lovecraft, Houellebecq and Hännikäinen are each in their own way critics of liberal modernity, and as such they continue an over 200-year-old tradition of going 'against the grain', the literary and ideological tradition of antimodernism, which is especially prevalent in French literature and which thrived in Europe during the *fin de siècle* and the early twentieth century. One of Houellebecq's controversial novels, *Soumission* (2015, transl. *Submission* 2015), depicts France becoming an Islamic society, but Houellebecq does not aim his cultural critique at Islam but rather at the perceived nihilistic vacuum of secular France. The decay of France and Western civilization is a result of the legacy of the *dual revolution*, the intertwined effects of the French Revolution and the Industrial Revolution (on the concept, see Hobsbawm 1962). The protagonist of *Soumission* is a literary scholar who has written his doctoral dissertation on Joris-Karl Huysmans' *À rebours* (1884, transl. *Against the Grain* 1926), a key novel of French Decadence. *À rebours* is a thoroughly antimodern and at the same time experimental novel. With its aesthetic and philosophical ponderings and few plot elements, it resembles an essay collection.[22] The protagonist, duke Jean-Floressas des Esseintes, spends his time in his chateau isolated from the banality of modern society, contemplating and performing strange aesthetic experiments such as decorating the shell of a living tortoise with jewels. Des Esseintes' decadent aestheticism is not only a symptom of overcivilized degeneration but also rebellion against modern bourgeois society, particularly its emphasis on rationality and practicality. Paradoxically, art and aesthetic contemplation offer both comfort and transgression but des Esseintes ultimately only sinks deeper into depression and anxiety. Only religious belief could cure him from his melancholia and pessimism, but the mind of the overcultured decadent is far too analytical for a leap of faith.

Oswald Spengler, one of Hännikäinen's influences, envisioned the decline of the West as part of the recurring cycles of rise and decline that made up the great motion of history (in Spengler 1918–1922). Hännikäinen (2013, 97) points out empathetically in his reading of Marko Tapio that "[i]t is important to note that Tapio", similar to Spengler, "conceives history as cyclical, not as a linear progression".[23] In other words, the decay and destruction of civilizations time and again makes way for the rise of new ones, and for the pessimist Spengler, his contemporary culture was of course on a downward path. Hännikäinen's interpretation is one of the most striking examples of the dialogue that he puts forward between his antimodern canon and Tapio. The interpretation is strongly informed by Hännikäinen's reading of antimodern literature. It connects Tapio to the cyclical view of history as expressed not only by Spengler but also for instance Julius Evola, one of the favourite antimodern thinkers of today's far and especially extreme right.[24]

[22] Similar to Huysmans' À rebours or for instance some of Dostoyevsky's works, Houellebecq's novels too have an 'essayistic' quality, as Hännikäinen remarks in his essay (Hännikäinen 2010, 103).

[23] "On tärkeää huomata, että Tapion historiakäsitys on syklisesti, ei lineaarisesti etenevä."

[24] Donald Trump's former strategist, Steve Bannon, is one of many examples of Evola's influence on today's far right (see Horowitz 2017).

The antimodern condition (cf. King 2016),[25] as it is expressed and developed in an idiosyncratic right-wing form by Hännikäinen, is a historically oriented ethical, political and literary position with its own canon of literature that stretches from the arch-conservative count Joseph de Maistre through Spengler, Evola and Ernst Jünger, among others, to Pentti Linkola and Michel Houellebecq. Hännikäinen often calls his right-wing brand of antimodernism 'traditionalism' (e.g., Hännikäinen 2016). By contrast, Peter King, an English social philosopher, has in his book *The Antimodern Condition: An Argument Against Progress* (2016) developed his own normative, ethical version of antimodern thought. King identifies with many antimoderns of the past such as de Maistre and René Guénon (1886–1951) but distinguishes himself from such far-right traditionalists as the esoteric fascist Evola or Alain de Benoist (b. 1943), leader of the currently functioning French ethno-nationalist think-tank GRECE (*Groupement de recherche et d'études pour la civilisation européenne*). For King, the nationalist and racist thought typical of today's right-wing traditionalists, to whom Hännikäinen belongs, are modernist aberrations that should not be mixed with worthwhile antimodern ideas. While King is a conservative thinker and has been involved with Britain's Conservative Party, he says that because of his views on race and nationalism he has been accused of being a 'cultural Marxist' (King 2016, x). For him, antimodernism is true conservatism and essentially the opposite of radicalism: it consists above all in accepting one's place in the world and embracing tradition as a source of wisdom. According to King, we should always be wary of change, and if sought, it should be corrective rather than transformative (King 2016, passim.).

While King represents an idiosyncratic brand of political conservatism, antimodernism or the antimodern in literature has been studied extensively in the context of French literary history by Antoine Compagnon (2005). Drawing upon the study, Kevin Rulo (2016) has applied Compagnon's conception of the antimodern as a comparative framework in an analysis of the British modernist group whom Wyndham Lewis named 'the men of 1914', as well as T E Hulme (1883–1917), who is aesthetically and politically in line with the group. Hännikäinen has similarly discussed Hulme as an antimodern modernist in an essay (2005) in the cultural magazine *Kerberos* (Cerberos), which he edited until it ceased publication in 2014, and in the last essay of his debut collection *Taantumuksellisen uskontunnustus*. Peter Gay (2008) similarly describes the right-wing authors Knut Hamsun (1859–1952) and T S Eliot (1888–1965), among others, as antimodern modernists.

The concept of the antimodern has had a similar, though not necessarily completely identical content in many other studies, including a collection of articles on *fin de siècle* art across the western world, edited by Lynda Jessup (2001). T J Jackson Lears (1994) has studied the role of antimodern currents in the transformation of American

[25] The title of Peter King's book *The Antimodern Condition* alludes to Jean-François Lyotard's *The Postmodern Condition* (1979), even though King is not particularly polemical towards Lyotard or postmodernism.

culture during the decades around the turn of the 20th century, at the time of the Second Industrial Revolution which simultaneously swept central Europe. As Lears shows, antimodernism at the time involved "the recoil from an 'overcivilized' modern existence to more intense forms of physical or spiritual existence supposedly embodied in medieval or Oriental cultures" (Lears 1994, xv). A sense of inauthenticity and unreality accompanied the secularization and rationalization of life. However, the recoil from this experience was "not simply escapism" but "ambivalent, often coexisting with enthusiasm for material progress" (Lears 1994, xv). It could function as a kind of corrective therapy: "Rooted in reaction against secularizing tendencies, antimodernism helped ease accommodation to new and secular cultural modes" (Lears 1994, xv). Especially in the United States this meant for instance that "[c] raftsmanship became less a path to satisfying communal work than a therapy for tired businessmen" and that attempts to revive the martial ideal "ennobled not a quest for the Grail but a quest for foreign markets" (Lears 1994, xv). In Europe, where discontent with liberalism was more rampant, antimodernism gave rise to communitarian-type critiques of capitalism and especially far-right movements on a larger scale (Lears 1994, 6).

In historical right-wing ideologies, antimodernism has often been paradoxically combined with enthusiasm for technological and economic progress. This was the case in Nazi Germany, which despite the NSDAP's (*Nationalsozialistische Deutsche Arbeiterpartei*) misleading name was economically more capitalist than socialist, though it operated a mixed economy.[26] The Nazis utilized the efficiency of capitalism and industrial corporations in the implementation of many of their goals, including war efforts and atrocities (see Rohkrämer 1999). As Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels had long before rather convincingly argued in *The Communist Manifesto* (1848), a market economy ultimately tends to threaten tradition. The economy, technology and culture are inseparable; in the long run, it would probably turn out at least difficult, if not impossible, to have persisting traditional values, great social mobility and rampant technological and economic progress simultaneously. Today change is still the norm in the current phase of the "age of the bourgeoisie" in which "all that is solid melts into air" (cf. Berman 1983). In the view of Marx and Engels, the great upheavals of the capitalist era would pave the way for the birth of a new communist order, essentially a new type of human being free from the restraints of tradition. Such progress-oriented, radically transformative ideas are the polar opposite of core conservatism and what can be called antimodern pessimism, expressed in its most classic form by Joseph de Maistre and Edmund Burke (1729–1797), two early critics of the French Revolution (see Compagnon 2005). Nevertheless, antimodern ideas are often combined with revolutionary radicalism. The historical Nazis, today's various fascist and Nazi movements and Pentti Linkola's radical deep ecology are some cases in point. Linkola is a radical conservative for whom revolution means returning to a sustainable way of life.

[26] Early Strasserite socialist elements were rooted out of the party, particularly as part of Adolf Hitler's great political purge, the Night of the Long Knives in 1934.

In contrast to the Nazis or some of today's populist right-wingers, Linkola rejects technology and industrial modernity, although as a fisherman he did appreciate at least one modern invention, namely Nokia rubber boots (Kylänpää 2017, 402). Linkola does not believe that man is capable of controlling the destructive potential of technology since he is unable to transcend the base instincts within him. Unsurprisingly, the luddite terrorist Theodore Kaczynski (b. 1942), also known as the Unabomber, felt an affinity to Linkola's views and even approached Linkola in 2014, asking if Linkola thought the Finns had understood the inevitable destructiveness of modern technology. Linkola did not bother to respond to the letter bomber's letter. (Kylänpää 2017, 433.) Kaczynski's manifesto from 1995 was published as translated into Finnish by Timo Hännikäinen in 2005, at a time when Hännikäinen's antimodernism was more ecological in orientation and Linkola was his 'prophet' (Hännikäinen 2021, 181).

In recent years, antimodern ideological currents have re-emerged particularly among right-wing nationalists, from Brazil and the United States to Europe and Russia, where they have played a role for instance in the thought of Alexander Dugin (b. 1962) and the Orthodox Patriarch Kirill (b. 1946). These national-conservative thinkers echo Russian imperialist and pan-Slavic thought of the 19th century, as expressed by Fyodor Dostoyevsky (1821–1881) among others who viewed the economic and social modernization of society from an essentially antimodern perspective. In such nationalist antimodernism, Russia has been seen as a beacon of conservative spiritual and cultural enlightenment, while the politically and socially more progressive West has been presented as morally decadent.

In my view, antimodernism is defined above all by its rejection of what is perceived as the abstract utopianism of modernity. Instead of believing in the power of the human mind and its theoretical constructions, as expressed for instance in communism or the liberal ideas of the American and French constitutions, antimodernism stresses that societies should evolve organically, based on history and experience. Postmodernism, too, involves scepticism towards modernity's insistence on progress, but antimodernism sets itself apart from the late 20th century movement in its orientation towards the past and tradition. Antimodernism is a tradition that has always gone hand in hand with modernity, beginning from the critics of the French Revolution and the First Industrial Revolution. It is an ideological and artistic current roughly four times older than postmodernism.

According to Lears (1994, xix), "[w]hat [literary] critics call modernism" and what he as a cultural historian calls antimodernism "share common roots in the *fin-desiècle* yearning for authentic experience – physical, emotional, or spiritual". The *fin de siècle* and the early 20th century are the heyday of antimodernism in Western cultural history, particularly in central Europe, from French Decadent authors, Friedrich Nietzsche and the 'conservative revolution' of the Weimar republic (see Rosner 2012) to the Nazis. An air of cultural pessimism existed alongside ideas of progress, especially among artists, writers and the educated classes. This pessimism infiltrated Finnish cultural circles already at the turn of the 20th century through influences such as Nietzsche, Søren

Kierkegaard and French writers such as Joris-Karl Huysmans and Charles Baudelaire (1821–1867). However, industrial modernity with its blessings and malaises, whether objective and/or experienced, hit Finland on a scale comparable to central and western Europe only much later, after the Second World War. Pentti Linkola and Marko Tapio were some of those who experienced the transformation during their youth.

Based on the religious studies scholar Arthur Versluis' (2006) analysis, I distinguish between three types of antimodernism that are often combined in different variations: cultural, spiritual and ecological antimodernism. Timo Hännikäinen is primarily a cultural antimodern, as were the many antimoderns of the early 20th century, including some elements in Nazi Germany's ruling party. Ecological issues often play a part in such right-wing antimodernism, but the main concern is with culture and its perceived decay, as it often is in current extreme right nationalism. For instance, the much-discussed documentary series *Suomineidot* (2022, Maidens of Finland) about young female nationalists, which was aired by the national broadcaster YLE, features as one of its main characters Jasmina Jalonen (b. 1995; in the documentary with the surname Ollikainen), a children's author who is a fan of Linkola and associates his ecological thinking with her own brand of green nationalism. The environment is important for her, but she is above all concerned with the vitality of Finnish culture, which has always been thought of as deeply rooted in nature. Jalonen is one of the four authors of the relatively recent essay collection *Linkolan perintö* [Linkola's Heritage] (2021), which also features an essay by Hännikäinen. Jalonen participated in the 2023 parliamentary elections as a candidate of the Blue-and-Black Movement (*Sinimusta liike*), a neofascist and ethnonationalist party that involves antimodern elements especially in its strong ecological positions and critique of capitalism and globalism.

Pentti Linkola represents an extreme type of ecological antimodernism, which involves at its core an insistence on returning to a simpler way of life and reducing human populations globally and especially in Finland, even though Linkola himself fathered two daughters. Linkola views Finland as an ecological rogue state. His thought is always centred on the environment, but he is also a cultural conservative who for instance deemed homosexuality unnatural and re-joined the Lutheran church in his later days, even though he said he still did not have real faith but rather believed the church had a moral mission in society, a role to play in hampering the onslaught of cultural and economic modernization (Kylänpää 2017, 440–443).

The Finnish Soul, the Working Class and Modernity According to Linkola

> It has been concluded – and it was concluded so in that seminar as well – that Linna gave the common man a sense of dignity. However, this deal did not turn out well. The ways of life, interests and ideals of the people

did not change. They are the same as they have always been: bread and circuses, nothing else. Instead of adopting civilization, the people with its newly gained self-esteem dragged down the intelligentsia – with the brute overpowering force of the masses.

On todettu – ja todettiin tuossa seminaarissakin – että Linna antoi kansan syville riveille omanarvontunnon. Mutta kävi hullusti siinä kaupassa. Kansan elämäntavat ja intressit ja ihanteet eivät muuttuneet. Ne ovat samat kuin ajasta aikaan: leipää ja sirkushuveja, ei muuta. Sen sijaan että kansa olisi omaksunut sivistyksen, se itsetunnon saatuaan veti sivistyneistön alas – rahvaan ruhjovalla ylivoimalla. (Linkola 2004, 237)

The above excerpt is from one of Linkola's most discussed essays, titled 'Mietteitä ja muistoja vanhasta sivistyneistöstä – näkökulma vuosisadan aatehistoriaan'. The essay is based on a presentation Linkola gave at a seminar celebrating the birthday of the esteemed author Väinö Linna. Linna's novel trilogy *Täällä Pohjantähden alla* and his war novel *Tuntematon sotilas* are canonized interpretations of Finnish history and representations of admirable working-class characters. The novels have shaped the public consciousness as narratives of a developing national unity after the class warfare of the Finnish Civil War in 1918. Linkola considers Linna's interpretations of history flawed. According to him, they present an idealized view of the common man, while Linna's educated characters are often morally questionable, much more so than educated people of the early twentieth century tended to be in real life. The modernization and democratic development of Finland – above all the growing political influence and well-being of the common man – has been accompanied by the decay of the intelligentsia: it too has sunk into the base materialism and egoism, the *panem et circenses* mentality typical of the masses. Equality and social mobility have meant the levelling of society.

The essay 'Mietteitä ja muistoja vanhasta sivistyneistöstä' represents a key text expressing Linkola's attitude towards societal change in Finland as it endeavours to present a "perspective on the ideological history of a century", as the subtitle goes. Linkola's view of the intelligentsia of his childhood is idealistic and his image of the decadence of contemporary society somewhat exaggerated. Linkola claims the educated people of his youth were not interested in pursuing wealth or even talking about it; such a mentality was considered boorish. Intellectual pursuits flourished, charity was practised and the lower classes were treated with dignity. The essay is blatantly subjective and emotionally loaded. According to Linkola, "[w]e are living in the time of the deepest degradation in history, an era of the most foul simplistic materialism, the reign of money – that materialism from the mire of which man has in previous eras tried to rise out of and has even partly managed to" (Linkola 2004, 248).[27] The

[27] "Elämme historian syvimmän alennustilan aikaa, törkeän pelkistetyn materialismin, rahan valtakautta – sen materialismin, jonka liejusta ihminen aikaisempina aikakausina on yrittänyt ponnistella ylös, ja osaksi onnistunutkin."

Finns of today are an upstart nation whose national character is defined by the lowest denominator. The 'old intelligentsia' represents a lost ideal of a balanced organization of society: a nation ruled by a civilized upper class.

In our current era of money and consumption, all is lost, as Linkola states at the end of his essay:

> A cultivator of irony may find something positive in this atmosphere of the end of history: honesty. People are honestly greedy. Could there be more honest, apt denominations than the market force, the market economy? The market: a roundup of cheapness, miserable junk, biscuit-likes, whisks and balloons, a spectacle of hucksters, a jubilee of the riffraff. Civilization and the intelligentsia were what little beautiful and noble wretched mankind was able to squeeze out of itself. I miss it. At least I was around in time to see it. Today I do not feel at home anymore.
>
> Iroonikko voi löytää jotakin myönteistä tässä historian lopun ilmapiirissä, rehellisyyden. Ollaan avoimesti ahneita. Voiko rehellisempiä, osuvampia nimityksiä löytää kuin markkinavoimat, markkinatalous? Markkinat: halpahintaisuuden tiivistelmä, surkeimman rihkaman, pumppernikkelien, huiskujen ja ilmapallojen, helppoheikkien spektaakkeli, roskaväen riemujuhla. Sivistys ja sivistyneistö oli se vähä kaunis ja ylevä, mitä raadollinen ihmiskunta pystyi itsestään pusertamaan. Minulla on sitä ikävä. Ehdinpähän sen nähdä. Enää en viihdy. (Linkola 2004, 249)

The end of history, a Hegelian concept known from Francis Fukuyama's study *The End of History and the Last Man* (1992), denotes the victory of liberal democracy and capitalism over all ideological opposition. In addition to Linkola's essay, the concept appears in the preface of the collection *Voisiko elämä voittaa?* (2004, 5). For Linkola, the words carry a very literal meaning in addition to the one familiar from Fukuyama: the victory of democracy and neo-liberal capitalism means the end of hope for the planet and mankind.

Throughout his oeuvre, Linkola's ideal image of the Finnish commoner is a peasant, a small-time farmer who lives in a balanced relationship with the natural environment, performs physical labour and rests at the end of the day, perhaps reading a work of fiction. Characters resembling this ideal image – apart from the habit of reading, usually – have been depicted in the Finnish literary tradition of *kansankuvaus* ('depiction of ordinary people') beginning from the 19th century, most notably from Aleksis Kivi's (1834–1872) novel *Seitsemän veljestä* (1870, transl. *Seven Brothers* 1929). The characters are typically far from perfect people and can rather be described as antiheroes. The tradition is also characterized, among other things, by a democratic tendency that runs contrary to Linkola's elitism.[28] However, the essential idea in comparison to

[28] A classic description of the six main traits of the kansankuvaus tradition is given by Kai Laitinen (1997, 310–311).

Linkola's worldview is that the characters and settings are traditionally agrarian. The full-blown corruption of Linkola's ideal character is realized in the socialist industrial worker, a materialist and greedy creature.

According to Linkola, any system that promotes material or social progress should be opposed, and socialism is an extreme instance of the malaise of modernity. However, socialism as it was actually implemented seemed to Linkola the better of the two major competing systems of the 20th century; at least this is the impression gained from some of his writings that are often mutually and even internally contradictory. Socialism's ethos of progress was antithetical to Linkola's ecological agenda and his cultural conservatism, but the '*Realsozialismus*' that was practised in various places across the globe produced less material welfare than Capitalism; thus, as Linkola seemed to believe, it was less destructive for the environment (Linkola 1989, 57). Nevertheless, since his earliest writings Linkola resented the collectivism inherent in socialism, as seen for instance in the essay 'Runo-Suomi vai hyvinvointivaltio' [PoetryFinland or Welfare State] (1960, in Linkola 1971). Socialism represents for Linkola an ideological 'sublimation' of the banal values, interests and affects of the working class. It grows out of jealousy and resentment, the affects congregating in the ugly urban hives of industrial towns, yet it presents itself as utopian.

For Linkola, remnants of an ideal agrarian way of life can still be seen on the outskirts of civilization. In one of his essays, titled 'Karjala' [Karelia] (1993, in Linkola 2004), Linkola's speaker ventures to Karelia, continuing the long tradition of romanticizing the eastern regions of the country and the Fenno-Ugric lands that have lain beyond the border with Russia. In 19th and early 20th century national Romanticism, Karelia was associated with folklore and the birth of the national epic, the *Kalevala* (1835, second, complete edition 1849). The region was idealized to the extent that some who visited it were sorely disappointed with their contemporary reality. In contrast to his often pessimistic themes, Linkola stresses in the essay that the stories of Karelia that he has heard do not do justice to the land and its people. He sees the people of 1990s Karelia as natural downshifters who settle for what they have. They have remained untainted by the hectic spirit of modernity, surrounded by pristine nature. These wonderful people represent an ideal past, not as folklore singers but as authentic human beings. Sadly, nearly all the inhabitants of Linkola's contemporary Finland have lost their way, abandoned their ideal better self.

Linkola suffered from very intimate solastalgia as expressed in many of his essays, such as 'Itke rakastettu maa' [Weep, oh Beloved Land] (1983, in Linkola 1989), which depicts the damage done to a beautiful countryside landscape by the lumber industry and pursuit of material progress.[29] Solastalgia can be characterized as 'homesickness' one experiences in familiar surroundings due to environmental change.[30] In the essay

[29] Linkola's solastalgia has been remarked upon by Mikko Kallionsivu (2021) in an essay which is one of the many texts that have assessed Linkola's legacy in the years since his death.

[30] The concept has been used referring especially to climate change.

'Vihreä valhe' (1993, in Linkola 2004, transl. *The Green Lie*), Linkola laments how he has suffered through "the whole post-war history of the breaking down of the countryside, the mother landscape of Finland, the forests, the crushing and smearing of the motherly face of the fatherland" (Linkola 2004, 26).[31]

Based on his own emotional turmoil, Linkola often generalises about other people's relationship to nature. Many of his essays insist that the Finns know instinctively, as a bodily experience rather than in their fully conscious minds, that they are unwell. For instance in the essay 'Minkä tähden?' [For What?] (1983, in Linkola 1989) Linkola thinks everyone "feels deep down that the basic needs of man are working with one's entire body and soul, need, striving and the accomplishments of one's own hands, that without these, and without the silence of rest and the darkness of the night, life will crumble" (Linkola 1989, 43).[32] According to the Linkola of the Independence Day of 1983, the contemporary Finn was "more distressed, more sad and more unwell than ever before in history" (Linkola 1989, 58).[33]

Linkola presents himself as an interpreter of the nation's sentiments. His solastalgia can be seen as a form of Arctic hysteria: an affliction caused by the decay of the familiar northern environment and landscape, shared, according to him, in the affective experience of the entire nation. For Linkola, the psychic and biological makeup of the Finns is deeply rooted in the natural environment, accustomed to its harsh conditions throughout the centuries. The environment binds people together as a natural tribe. Thus, anyone from, say, Brazil, is for Linkola a foreign soul, as he writes in his 1966 essay 'Ihmisten veljeydestä' [On the Brotherhood of Men] (in Linkola 2015).

Despite its tribalist attitude typical of Linkola's whole oeuvre, the essay 'Ihmisten veljeydestä' belongs to a phase in Linkola's career that was marked by a relatively 'soft' and even semi-optimistic disposition. Linkola's first book, the pacifist pamphlet *Isänmaan ja ihmisen puolesta – mutta ei ketään vastaan* [For the Fatherland and Humanity – But Against Nobody] (1960) seems by all accounts particularly 'progressive'.[34] The essay 'Runo-Suomi vai hyvinvointivaltio' (in Linkola 1971) from the same year expresses some hope for change in our way of life. The early Linkola thinks we can perhaps rid ourselves of the notion of never-ending material progress and competition that capitalism has instilled in us. Linkola's growing pessimism is evident in his second collection of essays, *Toisinajattelijan päiväkirjasta* [From the Diary of a Dissident] (1979).

[31] "Maaseudun, Suomen emomaiseman, metsien luhistumisen, isänmaan äidinkasvojen rutistumisen ja töhriintymisen koko sotienjälkeisen historian olen läpikäynyt."

[32] "Kyllä he pohjimmiltaan tuntevat, että ihmisen perustarpeita ovat työnteko koko ruumiilla ja sielulla, puute, ponnistelu ja omien kätten aikaansaannokset, että ilman niitä, ja ilman levon hiljaisuutta ja yön pimeyttä, elämä luhistuu."

[33] "[A]hdistuneempi, surullisempi ja huonovointisempi kuin koskaan historiassa."

[34] The pamphlet is the product of discussions among members of a group of young intellectuals, put into concise written form by Linkola.

Linkola's radicalism is not only ecological but also involves a sense of the banality and decay of modern culture. His stance in the essay 'Mietteitä ja muistoja vanhasta sivistyneistöstä' is strikingly anti-democratic and right-wing. Linkola interprets the Finnish civil war as born out of the base affects of the working class:

> On both sides the intensity of participation varied from case to case. Even some who opposed violence got dragged into the Reds, pressured by those around them. Still, the cause of the revolt is familiar to everyone, the same as that of all red revolutions: a raging ressentiment and jealousy towards those who are economically and above all mentally superior. And in practice the revolt meant brawling, looting and murders. For the intelligentsia, choosing sides was easy. After all, it was also a confrontation between civilization and barbarism.
>
> Molemmilla puolilla osallistumisen intensiteetti oli tapauskohtaista. Punikkeihinkin joutui jopa väkivallan vastustajia vedetyiksi mukaan ympäristön painostuksesta. Kapinan syy on silti kaikille tuttu, sama kuin jokaisen punaisen vallankumouksen: raivokas kauna ja kateus taloudellisesti ja ennen kaikkea henkisesti ylempänä olevia kohtaan. Ja sen käytännöksi tuli räyhääminen, ryöstäminen ja murhaaminen. Sivistyneistölle puolenvalinta oli selviö. Olihan kysymyksessä myös kulttuurin ja barbarian yhteenotto. (Linkola 2004, 241)

The Reds lost, and Linkola considers the 1930s and the time of the Second World War as the golden age of the values of the 'old intelligentsia'. After that "the downfall began: industrialization, the welfare of the masses and their aggressive sense of self-worth. The Reds finally got what they had wanted" (Linkola 2004, 245)[35]. According to Linkola, today there are only relics left of the 'old intelligentsia'. In the year 2000, the decay of true civilization can be seen everywhere. The upstart masses of the post-industrial north dance around a new golden calf, a trinket store called Nokia, which sells cell phones instead of useful Nokia rubber boots.

Hännikäinen's Hysterian maa and Antimodern Thought

Linkola sees his contemporary society as corrupt and banal. The unreliable narrator of Marko Tapio's *Arktinen Hysteria* novels is just as pessimistic as Linkola, Tapio's contemporary. Hännikäinen's interpretations of the novels in his essayistic study *Hysterian maa* are premised on the view that the character narrator's thoughts and sentiments

[35] "Mutta sitten alkoi luhistuminen: teollistuminen, massojen hyvinvointi ja hyökkäävä omanarvontunto. Punikit saivat lopulta mitä olivat halunneet."

reflect those of Tapio. At the same time, the interpretations are informed by Hännikäinen's reading history and literary and ideological interests. *Hysterian maa* is primarily a study of Tapio's novels, but as an essayistic work it also contains more general reflections upon themes that Hännikäinen has also addressed in his more personal texts, particularly the dark aspects of human nature and Finnishness.

According to Hännikäinen's apt description of the concrete subject matter of the novels, "[*Arktinen*] *Hysteria* depicts through its character gallery the transition of this strange Northern people from an agrarian into a modern society during the first half of the 20th century" (*HM*, 23).[36] The novels tell the story of the Björkharry family and the entire Finnish nation from the 1890s to the 1960s, the tale of a young country becoming independent and struggling with internal conflicts and against external enemies. The Björkharry family is an upstart family, reflecting the development of Finland as an industrializing nation. The first-person narrator of the novels describes the Finns as "a people bearing the mark of the most upstartly culture in the world" (Tapio 1967, 136).[37] The narrator Harri Björkharry works as a manager at the construction site of a hydro-electric plant, in a position that is emblematic of progress. He has evolved into a complex man of culture who likes to spend his time reading and listening to symphonies, while his father Vikki Björkharry is closer to the primitive common man, though he is also a capitalist upstart, a banker, and becomes a cabinet minister. Like his father, grandfather and the entire Finnish nation, the narrator Harri Björkharry is affected by the primitive 'syndrome' of Arctic hysteria, as Pirjo Lyytikäinen (2020, 110, 112) has pointed out, emphasizing the fact that the unstable narrator's words do not necessarily reflect the views of the (implied) author. At the same time, Björkharry is detached from his roots, the humble origins of his family, and alienated from life as action and vitality. Decadent overculture and primitivism become intertwined in the character, in this respect even somewhat resembling the extremely overrefined protagonist of J-K Huysmans' *À rebours* (1884). Because of his shifting mental states and affectively loaded views, Björkharry is an unreliable narrator, although Hännikäinen ignores this fact, arguing for an interpretation of the works as deeply personal, rooted in Tapio's own contradictions (*HM*, 16–23).

According to Hännikäinen,

> The essential theme of the novel series[38] [*Arktinen hysteria*] is Finnishness: a bluff, melancholic, passive and withdrawn national character, which from time to time unexpectedly bursts into extreme mental states and deeds. *Hysteria* is a deep examination of the dark side of Finnishness but not

[36] "Hysteria kuvaa henkilögalleriansa avulla tämän oudon Pohjolan kansan siirtymistä agraarisesta moderniin yhteiskuntaan 1900-luvun ensimmäisen puoliskon aikana."

[37] "[M]aailman nousukasmaisimman kulttuurin leimaa kantavan kansan."

[38] Tapio originally planned to write a four-part novel series but managed to complete only two parts.

> really a morality play or a sick report. Recognizing the dark sides in a culture does not mean abandoning it or putting it to shame.
>
> Romaanisarjan varsinainen aihe on suomalaisuus: jäyhä, alakuloinen, passiivinen ja sulkeutunut kansanluonne, joka välillä leimahtaa äkkiarvaamatta äärimmäisiin mielentiloihin ja tekoihin. *Hysteria* on suomalaisuuden pimeän puolen syväluotaus, muttei varsinaisesti moraliteetti tai sairaskertomus. Pimeiden puolten tunnustaminen kulttuurissa ei tarkoita sen hylkäämistä tai häpäisemistä. (*HM,* 22)

Hännikäinen reads Tapio's novels essentially as an exploration of the Finnish psyche. According to him, Tapio presents Arctic hysteria as something that has always resided within the minds and bodies of the Finns (*HM*, 22–23). Unlike Linkola's solastalgia, it is not caused by the modernization process that Tapio's novels depict, the rapid transition from an agrarian into an industrial society, though it may react to the changing circumstances. Instead, Arctic hysteria is a natural phenomenon. In Hännikäinen's view,

> Tapio suggests that the thoroughly Finnish habit of hovering between subordination and lack of restraint is perfectly natural given the environmental circumstances that the Finns have had to deal with since the stone age. Arctic hysteria is a mentality typical of northern peoples in general and the Finns in particular. It is a geographic-cultural phenomenon and almost immune to the passage of time.
>
> Tapio antaa ymmärtää, että perisuomalainen häilyminen alistuneisuuden ja hillittömyyden välillä on täysin luonnollista kun otetaan huomioon ne luonnonolot, joiden kanssa suomalaisten on pitänyt pärjätä kivikaudesta saakka. Arktinen hysteria on pohjoisille kansoille yleensä ja suomalaisille erityisesti leimallista mentaliteettia. Se on maantieteelliskulttuurinen ja ajan kululle lähes immuuni ilmiö. (*HM,* 22)

In Hännikäinen's interpretation of Tapio, the Finnish national character and mentality is for an important part defined by Arctic hysteria, as the narrator seems to suggest. The 'bipolar' nature of the Finns represents danger and chaos, but it can also be unleashed as vitality and strength; thus, it has served a purpose in the history of the nation, particularly in times of war, even though it has also fuelled the fratricidal madness of the Civil War. Arctic hysteria affects every Finn: man and woman, worker and banker, White and Red.

The geographic far north and the actual Arctic regions play no role in Tapio's *Arktinen hysteria* novels. The main story is set in Saarijärvi in central Finland, a town that bears a symbolic meaning as the setting of the national poet J L Runeberg's (1804– 1877) poem 'Bonden Paavo' [Paavo of Säärijärvi] from the year 1830, which depicts an ideal peasant character: a hard-working, humble and god-fearing man who

expresses fortitude in the face of setbacks – the antithesis of most of the workers in Tapio's novels. Despite the milieu set in central Finland, the narrator of the *Arktinen hysteria* novels interprets the Finnish national character as an essentially northern entity, as if the Arctic stretched across the entire country.

Tapio's narrator Harri Björkharry, an engineer and capitalist, expresses negative views of the working-class Finns, in some ways resembling the views of Linkola. According to Hännikäinen's (2013, 26) description, the writer Tapio – whose ideas the narrator seems to express, in Hännikäinen's view – can in terms of his opinions regarding the commoners be considered 'right-wing'– in quotation marks – while Väinö Linna is 'left-wing'. The workers of Björkharry's construction site act against their own best interests and appear to the narrator as creatures driven by bitterness, resentment and other base emotions and instincts. Their existence revolves around drinking, violence and other erratic behaviour stemming from their primitive nature and its tenuous relationship with external circumstances. Björkharry's workers sabotage his attempts to bring modernization and material progress to them, launching a strike just as the dam of the powerplant is about to burst, destroying everyone's work.

Despite Björkharry's negative views of the masses and the class conflicts depicted in Tapio's novels, Hännikäinen considers *Arktinen hysteria* to be more philosophical than political in orientation (*HM*, 43). In other words, Hännikäinen interprets Tapio as more interested in human nature and morality than the transient affairs of politics. The novels express "a sentiment of life" that is "a combination of pessimism and frenzy" (*HM,* 8)[39] and "the hard to define, almost nihilistic despair that emanates from Tapio's text prevents one from reducing *Hysteria* to any kind of political statement" (*HM,* 26).[40] As argued in Chapter II in this book, the narrator is an 'abject hero' type of character, reminiscent of the dark personalities of Russian and French existentialism. He has lost all hope in the divine and in humanity. He can also be interpreted as antimodern, despite his efforts to bring technological modernization to the people. Hännikäinen interprets this to be the stance of the (implied) author: "The novel expresses scepticism towards modernization and a feeling that the forces unleashed by it will demand a bitter sacrifice as always when a new order is born" (*HM*, 55)[41]. Economic and social modernization are inseparable, and Björkharry also expresses scepticism towards technology. According to my interpretation, the discrepancy between his aspirations as an engineer and his antimodern sentiments is part of his thoroughgoing ambivalence and self-contradictory nature.

According to Hännikäinen, Tapio's antimodernism involves not only scepticism towards technological, economic and social progress but also a pessimistic view of human-

[39] "Vaikka kerronnan intensiteetti vaihteli suurestikin alun jälkeen, sen välittämä elämäntunne, yhdistelmä pessimismiä ja kiihkeyttä, pysyi samana."

[40] "Mutta Tapion tekstistä huokuva vaikeasti määriteltävä, lähes nihilistinen epätoivo estää *Hysterian* supistamisen minkäänlaiseksi poliittiseksi puheenvuoroksi."

[41] "Romaanista tihkuu epäluulo modernisaatiota kohtaan ja tunne, että sen irralleen päästämät voimat vaativat katkeran uhrin kuten aina uuden järjestyksen syntyessä."

ity. Man as a species is not the 'homo sapiens' conceived as an a-historical abstraction by the Enlightenment. The Arctic hysteria of the Finns is a natural phenomenon just like violence and oppression are constants of human history, realities that only a utopian modernist mind would consider eradicable. In Hännikäinen's view,

> The basic philosophical disposition of *Hysteria* is in this sense conservative – in the philosophical sense of the word rather than the political. Tapio does not believe in peaceful and painless progress: real change always involves violence and the painful parting with the old. And we cannot know for certain whether any benefit created by change can replace that which we lose. Life itself consists of too many unpredictable and incontrollable elements for change to be directed rationally.
>
> *Hysterian* maailmankatsomuksellinen perusvire on tässä mielessä konservatiivinen – pikemminkin sanan filosofisessa kuin poliittisessa merkityksessä. Tapio ei usko kehityksen rauhanomaisuuteen ja kivuttomuuteen: aitoon muutokseen sisältyy aina väkivaltaa ja tuskallista vanhasta luopumista. Emmekä voi varmuudella tietää, voiko mikään muutoksen tuoma etu korvata sitä minkä menetämme. Itse elämässä on liikaa ennakoimattomia ja hallitsemattomia elementtejä, jotta muutoksia voitaisiin rationaalisesti ohjata. (*HM*, 55)

Conservative in this sense is synonymous with antimodernism's scepticism towards progress. For the antimodern mindset, the realities of human nature and the teachings of history cannot be ignored. The French Revolution, a central birth event of modernity, and the Finnish 'red rebellion' and Civil War are instances in which aspirations for sudden radical change have brought about violence on a massive scale.

One of the chapters in Hännikäinen's book is titled 'Puhdistava sota' [Cleansing War]. According to Hännikäinen's interpretation, Tapio's novels present war as a natural phenomenon, just like Arctic hysteria is natural among the northern peoples. War is ugly business, yet in a bizarre way it may have a 'cleansing' effect, albeit only a temporary one, as part of the cycles of rise and decline that make up the cyclical motion of history (*HM*, 97). War shows individuals and human nature as they really are, in their bare wretchedness (*HM,* 78), yet a man of the working class, Vihtori Kautto, expresses the best potential of the Finnish national character as a soldier (*HM,* 93–94). Kautto narrates the history of the Second World War in the second part of the *Arktinen hysteria* series, titled *Sano todella rakastatko minua* [Say If You Really Love Me or Not] (1968). He is an individualistic worker who sides with Björkharry in the conflict against his fellow workmen at the construction site. Kautto has earlier accompanied the narrator's father Vikki Björkharry in the Winter War and the Continuation War. Resembling the character Antti Rokka in Väinö Linna's *Tuntematon sotilas*, Kautto does not conform to the strict discipline of the military, displaying according to Hännikäinen's description a type of antimodern mentality: "Once again

it is a matter of the straightforward and independent character not conforming to the complex organizations of modern times" (*HM,* 94).[42]

Similar to Hännikäinen's interpretation of Tapio's 'cleansing war', right-wing anti-modernism often sees war as an antidote to the banal materialistic spirit of modern society, even if war is not actively sought. In times of war, manly heroism and honour can perhaps once again mean something. War unleashes primitive energies, and in the heat of war one can perhaps feel truly alive. Fuelled by notions like national pride and honour, war brings an end to 'the end of history', the reign of material welfare. This line of thought is expressed in a particularly interesting way by one of Hännikäinen's favourite author's, George Orwell (1903–1950). Hännikäinen has translated a selection of Orwell's essays from the 1940s with the title *Sinä ja atomipommi* [You and the Atom Bomb] (2021). The selection includes Orwell's review of Hitler's *Mein Kampf* from 1940. In the essay, Orwell argues that Hitler's appeal for the Germans involves the realization that people ultimately value heroism, honour, national pride and military parades more than the hedonistic pursuit of comfort and pleasure that both socialism and capitalism have to offer. Even though Orwell described himself as a democratic socialist, Hännikäinen appreciates him as a thinker and author, particularly as an essayist. The essay about Hitler can be seen as one display of Orwell's ability to grasp the 'manly' spirit.

Hännikäinen's approach to the problem of 'the end of history' is different from Linkola's, though there are similarities. Resembling Orwell's interpretation of the appeal of Hitlerian chauvinist militarism, the fate of masculinity is a central issue for Hännikäinen. In his book *Kunnia: esseitä maskuliinisuudesta* [Honour: Essays on Masculinity] (2015) Hännikäinen writes that

> If the height of modernity is "the end of history" when everyone is a docile consumer who accepts his lot, forming male groups means beginning history again. The brotherhood is the basic unit of history, out of which all revolutions, voyages of discovery, religions and all paradigm changes in general have sprung.
>
> Jos moderniuden huipentuma on "historian loppu", jossa kaikki ovat säyseitä ja osaansa tyytyviä kuluttajia, miesryhmien muodostaminen tarkoittaa historian aloittamista uudelleen. Veljeskunta on historian perusyksikkö, josta ovat kummunneet vallankumoukset, löytöretket, uusien uskontojen synnyt, ylipäätään kaikki paradigmanvaihdokset. (Hännikäinen 2015, 115)

For Hännikäinen, honour means being viewed as strong, brave and capable within the homosocial context of what he calls an "honour group" (Hännikäinen 2015, 39).[43]

[42] "Jälleen on kyse suoran ja itsenäisen luonteen sopeutumattomuudesta modernin maailman mutkikkaisiin organisaatioihin."

[43] "[K]unniaryhmä".

Hännikäinen's ideal brotherhood is a community that is "inevitably antimodern" (Hännikäinen 2015, 115).[44] It rejects modern notions of equality, the hedonistic pursuit of comfort and pleasure, and consumer culture in which masculinity is reduced to mere appearance. There is a fantasizing streak to Hännikäinen's idolization of 'authentic' manliness. According to his narrative, by taming nature and bringing about peace and prosperity, modern men have created a world in which their special tendencies and abilities are no longer essential, a world for women. However, strong and brave men may still be needed if the "post-industrial shopping paradise" (Hännikäinen 2015, 54)[45] crumbles. Some kind of apocalypse could perhaps bring down the consumer culture that sees itself as "the end of history". According to Hännikäinen, Marko Tapio too saw the "idea of the end of spiritual and moral struggle" as "a nightmare" (*HM*, 46)[46] – essentially a nightmarish "end of history" as it was conceived by Nietzsche in *Thus Spake Zarathustra*'s (1883–1885) dystopian figure of "the Last Man". At the end of history, the Nietzschean ideal of continuous self-transcendence – Tapio's ideal according to Hännikäinen – becomes obsolete. In Hännikäinen's view, Tapio's ideal character is "a Nietzschean man of will who rises above the given circumstances" (*HM*, 49).[47]

Hännikäinen's interpretations of Tapio resonate with antimodern thought of the *fin de siècle* and the early 20th century, the heyday of antimodernism in Europe. Antimodernism at the time often turned towards mysticism, spirituality and/or the veneration of the past, seeking an existence with deeper meaning and feeling (see Lears 1994). The glorification of war was evident at the onset of the First World War, as millions of people in different European countries displayed their national pride. The ideology of technologically advanced Nazi Germany involved a dose of agrarian romanticism. This is an important aspect of Nazism's appeal for Linkola, with whom Hännikäinen shares much in common. The allure is to a considerable degree aesthetic and affective: Linkola admires the image of healthy and beautiful Aryans hiking in the mountains, dressed in national costumes (see Hillebrand 2015). Interestingly, Hännikäinen has discussed the aesthetics of Nazism from a thoroughly different, even opposite perspective in his essay 'Kolmas valtakunta ja Dorian Gray' [The Third Reich and Dorian Gray] (in Hännikäinen 2011). He compares Nazism to the decadent aestheticism of the *fin de siècle*, which in its own way rebelled against modern rationality. The same essay describes Linkola as "above all a great aesthete who feels an almost physical pain when he encounters something ugly" (Hännikäinen 2011, 196).[48]

[44] "[V]äistämättä antimoderni".

[45] "[J]älkiteollinen ostosparatiisi".

[46] Hännikäinen refers to Tapio's widow Tuulikki Valkonen (2003): "Valkonen kirjoittaa, että ajatus henkisen ja moraalisen kilvoittelun pysähtymisestä oli Tapiolle painajainen, jonka estämiseen tarvittiin jyrkkiäkin hierarkioita."

[47] "Tapion ihanne oli annettujen olosuhteiden yläpuolelle nouseva nietzscheläinen tahtoihminen."

[48] "Linkolahan on ennen muuta suuri esteetti, joka tuntee lähes fyysistä tuskaa kohdatessaan jotakin rumaa."

For the antimodern mindset, mysticism, spirituality, agrarian romanticism, aestheticism and the glorification of war can offer some alternatives to the banality of modern life. Arctic hysteria, too, can be interpreted as a source of transgressive energy, involving a sense of authenticity and an intensity of experience lacking from the life of the docile consumer at 'the end of history'. It can represent a counterforce of overcivilization and decadence, as primitivism in general often does (cf. Rossi 2020). It definitely bears these meanings for Hännikäinen, who has been fascinated by extreme characters like the artist Kalervo Palsa (1947–1987), theatre director and author Jouko Turkka (1942–2016) and the alcohol-ridden Marko Tapio, men who can all be characterized as prime examples of Arctic hysteria in action. In his essay collection *Ihmisen viheliäisyydestä* [On the Wretchedness of Man] (2011) Hännikäinen writes about "[a]n unofficial, dark Finnishness expressed in such mythical and real characters as Kullervo, Turmiolan Tommi, Isontalon Antti, Paavo Ruotsalainen and Kalervo Palsa" (Hännikäinen 2011, 98).[49] The characters represent rebellion (Kullervo), the dangers of alcohol abuse (Turmiolan Tommi), violent and criminal behaviour (Isontalon Antti), religious fanaticism (Paavo Ruotsalainen) and transgression and carnivalization in art (Kalervo Palsa) – a true gallery of Arctic hysteria. Even Hännikäinen's own behaviour in the social media, in which moral transgression and carnivalesque attitude are entwined, can be interpreted as expression of Arctic hysteria.

Whether Hännikäinen's interpretations of Tapio are considered correct or not, or perhaps as plausible interpretations among others, depends on the interpretation of the relationship between the narrator and the (implied) author. In my view, the unreliability of the narrator should be considered, in which case Hännikäinen's interpretation of the worldview and message of the novels becomes questionable. If we consider Björkharry unreliable, he is reduced to being only a character instead of the spokesman of Tapio's sentiments. Moreover, it is clear that Hännikäinen's interpretations are informed by his antimodernism which is discernible in his other texts. In other words, Hännikäinen arrives at his conclusions through a reading that is both biographical and at the same time reflective of his own worldview and ideological and literary interests, which include a fascination with the dark side of Finnishness.

Conclusion

I have analysed Linkola and Hännikäinen's *Hysterian maa* from an essentially intertextual point of view, emphasizing the way Hännikäinen's interpretations of Marko Tapio resonate with his antimodern canon which includes Linkola. I have outlined an intertextual continuum of antimodern thought that begins from the time of the French Revolution. In Linkola's case, I have focused on his interpretation of societal change in Finland as expressed particularly in the essay 'Mietteitä ja muistoja van-

[49] "Epävirallinen, pimeä suomalaisuus elää sellaisissa myyttisissä ja todellisissa hahmoissa kuin Kullervo, Turmiolan Tommi, Isontalon Antti, Paavo Ruotsalainen ja Kalervo Palsa."

hasta sivistyneistöstä'. In the essay, Linkola believes all areas of Finnish society have sunk to the level of the lowest denominator, the pursuit of material welfare that is the soul of the working class. Even though the working class only seems to be fulfilling its true nature, Linkola paradoxically believes that the upstart Finns with their cars, heating systems, microwave ovens and summer cottages are not truly happy. They have lost their better self.

Linkola's negative views regarding the working class spring from his nostalgia towards his privileged childhood and from contempt towards industrial modernity. He shares with Hännikäinen a pessimistic view of human nature and the development of modern mass society. The idea of 'the end of history' is a concern for both authors. In Linkola's last essay collection *Voisiko elämä voittaa?*, the dystopian vision is seen from the perspective of both ecological and cultural antimodernism. Late modern society involves the impoverishment of the biosphere as well as Finnish culture and human life in general.

For Timo Hännikäinen, the Arctic hysteria depicted in Marko Tapio's novels represents primitive affects that for their part define the Finnish national character. Embracing Arctic hysteria as part of oneself is for Hännikäinen just as essential an ingredient of national pride as pride in *sisu*, a concept that today evokes an association with the far-right organization *Suomen Sisu*, vice-chaired by Hännikäinen. According to Hännikäinen, a sense of danger and primal life force is characteristic of Finnishness. Arctic hysteria in this sense is also important for Hännikäinen's and Linkola's essayistic style, their antimodern *vitupération*, as well as their public provocations and transgressions, which involve a dose of carnivalesque attitude, particularly in Hännikäinen's case. Moreover, for the antimodern mindset, Arctic hysteria can represent transcending the banal, docile and emasculated life of the post-industrial consumer.

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Ecstasy and Ecstatic Techniques in Timo K. Mukka's *Maa on syntinen laulu* and *Kyyhky ja unikko*

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Introduction

Timo K. Mukka is generally acknowledged as one of the iconic authors of the Finnish North. His works on Arctic life in Finnish Lapland are included into the paradigmatic works of the 'arctic hysteria tradition' in Finnish literature.[1] Mukka's novels frequently depict and evoke intense emotional experiences from passionate love to outbursts of rage and violence. The emotional intensity that is characteristic of Mukka's novels extends from the representation of the characters' and narrators' emotions to the *mood* created in Mukka's texts. An intense, sometimes 'agonized' atmosphere has been considered central to Mukka's work, especially to his most renowned novel *Maa on syntinen laulu* [The Earth is a Sinful Song] (1964) (Mäkelä-Marttinen 2008, 96). The Northern agony is fostered by the narrative milieu. Mukka's novels are set in harsh Arctic conditions in isolated rural communities torn by the traumas of the Second World War. Nature is severe and the social world cruel. However, Mukka's original style mixing grotesque naturalism, poems and lyric prose is recognized for its aesthetic qualities. His work has widely enjoyed readers' admiration and aroused a vivid interest by literary scholars.[2]

In this chapter I approach the extreme emotions evoked in Mukka's work through the lens of the emotion of *ecstasy*. His novels provide descriptions of altered stages of consciousness, spiritual and secular ecstasy ranging from religious trance to sexual

[1] Mukka is mentioned as an example of an author of Arctic hysteria by Ihonen (1999, 225), Lahtinen (2013, 54) and Karkulehto (2010, 221).

[2] Mukka became a widely recognized author of the North soon after the appearance of his first works; he was a "living legend", to quote Mukka's biographer Erno Paasilinna (1974). However, the immediate reception of Mukka's work was controversial (see Lahtinen 2013, 73–84 and the introduction in this volume). Later Mukka's work has been relatively amply studied among Finnish authors. Three doctoral dissertations have been entirely devoted to Mukka and his work (Mäkelä-Marttila 2008; Arminen 2009; Lahtinen 2013) and part of one dissertation (Ovaska 2020).

rapture and feelings of union with nature. At the same time, his works exemplify the Janus-faced nature of *ek-stasis.* Ecstasy, which originally signals to 'stand outside of oneself', has been defined as an intense emotional experience that fuses the limits between the self and the world and is accompanied by a sense of transcendence from the everyday world, passivity or a loss of voluntary activity (Meadows 2014, 193–195; Tsur 2015, 20). The sense of dissolution of the border between the self and the world, which is characteristic of ecstasy, can lead to pleasure, an emotional fulfilment, revitalizing experiences and new apprehension of life, or, alternatively to mental confusion, a loss of agency and a sense of reality, disintegration of the self and madness (Meadows 2014, 192–193). Mukka's novels abundantly illustrate the dark side of ecstasy. In his work ecstatic experiences are accompanied by violence and trauma; his novels are narratives of pain and abuse (see Mäkelä-Marttinen 2008; Lahtinen 2013; Ovaska 2020).

In addition to direct representations of ecstasy, in Mukka's work ecstasy extends to techniques of literary representation. Building and elaborating on Reuven Tsur's (2006; 2008; 2015) research on ecstatic poetry, I argue that Mukka's depictions of the experiences of characters', the narrators' and speakers' ecstasy frequently pair with the ecstatic qualities of his style. By 'ecstatic qualities' I refer to a set of 'tranceinducing' verbal means that contribute to the emotional effects of ecstasy in Mukka's texts. If the emotion of ecstasy moves between high energy levels and a sense of undifferentiation, these ecstasy-inducing techniques include both energy-increasing and fusion-increasing linguistic and poetic devices. In the poems included in Mukka's novels, devices such as apostrophes and oxymorons serve as affective intensifiers that accumulate energy and increase the ecstatic mood of his text. In the prose sections of his novels, scenes of graphic violence enhance the energy levels of the narrative and upset established categories by force and aggression, which adds a sense of dissolution of borders. Fusion-increasing verbal means include blurred images and abstract tropes and mantra-like techniques, such as parallelism. Phono-emotional qualities, like the emphasis on dark back vowels (*u, æ*) and the rhythm of Mukka's prose narration also add to the dark, hypnotic-ecstatic tone in Mukka's text.

I also propose that the border transgression typical of ecstasy extends to moral categories and further to questions of narrative ethics. The hypnotic-ecstatic mood in Mukka's work may impact the reader's moral evaluation of the narrative events. The ecstatic qualities may even serve as practices of moral persuasion: ecstatic effects of fusion and enjoyment solicit the pleasure of reading and evoke the reader's openness to the storyworld.[3] When pleasure is foregrounded, the reader is more willing to accept Mukka's ethically controversial storyworlds or even to fall into a moral oblivion.

Methodologically, my approach builds on cognitive and affective poetics (e.g., Tsur 2008; Lyytikäinen 2017; Rossi 2021), that accounts for the relationship between the narrative, stylistic and rhetoric properties of literary texts and their perceived effects

[3] Here, my reading has been inspired by Rita Felski's (2008; 2020) neo-phenomenological view on enchantment as an important aspect of reading.

and is based on interdisciplinary research on emotion and cognition. The study of affective poetics provides information on how emotions and feelings are depicted and evoked in a text and what kind of emotional effects are targeted to the implied reader. A central notion here is the concept of *mood,* which is also called emotional tone and refers to an all-encompassing whole of affective aspects, emotional intensities and emotional effects in a text. Mood plays a significant role in readers' encounters with art and narratives (Carroll 2003; Caracciolo 2017, 15). However, the mood, is dispersed and diffuse;[4] it is neither entirely reducible to the text's internal representation of emotions nor to the narrators', characters' or readers' emotions (Ngai 2005, 28; Lyytikäinen 2017, 255; Rossi 2021, 44). As Caracciolo (2017, 19) formulates, it is not only through representation that narrative might create moods, but narrative and stylistic strategies also play an equally important role. In the following analysis of the ecstatic mood in Mukka's novels, attention is specifically directed to the stylistic aspects.

I first concentrate on ecstasy and ecstatic qualities in Mukka's breakthrough novel *Maa on syntinen laulu*. The novel opens a view to the difficult life in a remote war-torn Lappish village in the 1940s and centres on a young woman, Martta, whose painful coming-of-age is marked by a tragic romance with a Sámi man, Oula. *Maa on syntinen laulu* alternates between two genres: poetry and sharply naturalistic prose chapters that favour a documentary style in descriptions and use local dialect in dialogue narration. The poems anticipate the tragic of the narrative and elaborate the tendency towards transcendence, whereas the prose chapters outline the village members harsh life under nature's stranglehold and oppressive religion. The novel, which is subtitled as a ballad, is inspired by the archaic mentality of myths. As in ancient ballads, love and death are bound together and romance leads to death. Martta's father chases her lover to the thin ice on a frozen lake where the man drowns. The degeneration and regeneration tie together; Martta gives birth to a son, her father commits suicide.[5]

I then provide some observations on ecstasy and ecstatic qualities in his later novel *Kyyhky ja unikko* [The Dove and the Poppy] (1970). The emotion of ecstasy is also salient in this novel. Rapture (in Finnish *hurmio*) is a named emotion in the narrative, which explicitly depicts the characters' altered states of consciousness: intoxication, a sense of depersonalization and sexual pleasure. Like *Maa on syntinen laulu* this novel is a narrative of abuse and violence. It describes a destructive relationship between an adult man and a teen-age girl, sexual abuse and murder. Despite its sinister themes, this novel is also known for its lyrical prose style endowed with an enchanting, poetic beauty.

[4] In emotion studies, moods are generally separated from emotions on the basis of their objects and intentionality (e.g., Frijda 1994, 59–60). Emotions have specific, intentional objects, whereas the intentional object in moods is general and diffuse. If emotion focuses its attention on more-or-less particular objects and situations, which are about something, moods can be considered as non-intentional affective states that are nothing specific or about everything–the world in general (Fridja 1994).

[5] The ending can be considered as a rewriting of the myth of the Virgin Mary and its versions in the Finnish folklore as Lahtinen (2013, 51) suggests.

Affective Intensifiers

In literary texts, openings are usually strategic and mood-creating techniques that may set up the emotional tone of a text and orient the reader's perception.[6] The ecstatic mood of Mukka's *Maa on syntinen* laulu is also tuned in the very beginning. The novel opens with a prayer-like poem in which the speaker[7] mourns the pain of the earth he loves and prays to God for help. The poem ties intertextually with lamentations and ecstatic poetry. The vocabulary of the Bible, such as references to Psalms and *Song of the Songs* are recognizable.[8] Like the biblical subtexts, the poem is charged with passion, cumulative energy and a sense of being at the border of something ineffable. I quote here the entire poem (my free translation).

> Woe my beloved earth Woe my beloved shore weep oh earth, oh lovely shore
>
> through the night's sigh – through frail flower's scent over cup lichens
>
> The song shall soar, a burning cry to the sky. Men shall bend their knee to the earth fold their hands in prayer to the god of heaven.
>
> Prayer shall weigh heavily on the heads of my men, heavy towards earth's perspiring lap.
>
> Woe my love – Weep melancholy tears.
>
> This, my land moans silently.
>
> This, my land has felt stabs to the very heart.
>
> Murdered is the startled bird of love.
>
> Slain, slaughtered this beautiful, timidly stepping creature.
>
> Sorrow has stepped in – into the sickened heart – there where lies the name and sign of the song's singer. There where the midnight hour has come.
>
> Woe weep my beloved, weep hot tears when sorrow has arrived. weep melancholy tears when love has flown away. Woe,
>
> sorrow has stepped into the weeping eyes of the marshes.
>
> Happiness has melted over the border.
>
> The mouths of my men are shouting this prayer as if they were weeping
>
> This prayer forces my woman to bend her knees and beg

[6] The emotion effects created in the beginning of a text modify and adjust the reader's general emotional orientation by shaping modes of perception and organization of information. On the role of order and meaning, see e.g. Perry 1979.

[7] It is also possible to interpret the mimetic speaker as a collective of speakers (Mäkelä-Marttinen 2008, 96–97).

[8] On biblical intertextuality, see Mäkelä-Marttinen 2008, 99–100, and Lahtinen 2013, 56–57.

Oh great god

let it rain refreshing rain all the days of life.

Let a human understand the heated pain of the earth.

the song of my voluptuous beloved. the singer of the songs is singing and rowing away in the mist.

Let a human understand a significant confession:

God

God in heaven

I confess – I am a human being

God, I am your lascivious beloved...[9]

> Voi rakkaani maa voi rakkaani ranta itke oi maa itke oi ihana ranta yli yön havinan – hentojen kukkien tuoksun jäkäläpikarein yli
>
> on taivaaseen nouseva kuumana huutona laulu Ja miehet polvillaan painuvat maahan ja kätensä ristivät taivaan jumalaa rukoillen.
>
> Rukous on raskaana painava miesteni päitä päin hikoovaa syliä maan Voi rakkaani – itkua haikeaa itke. Tämä maani valittaa hiljaa
>
> tämä maani on tuntenut piston sydämeen asti Murhattu rakkauden säikkyvä lintu on tapettu murhattu kaunis arkana astuva eläin ja sinne on astunut suru – – sydämeen sairaaseen
>
> sinne missä on nimi ja merkki laulujen laulajan sinne tullut on keskiyön hetki.
>
> Voi itke rakkaani kyynelet kuumat kun suru on tullut itke haikea itku kun lempi on lentänyt pois Voi
>
> suru on saapunut jänkkien itkuisiin silmiin ja onni on haipunut savuna ylitse rajan Tätä rukousta huutavat miesteni suut kuin itkien tämä rukous polvistaa naiseni anomaan
>
> Oi jumala suuri anna tulla sadetta virvoittavaa kaikkina elämän päivinä
>
> Anna ihmisen ymmärtää kiimainen tuska maan minun kukkean rakkaani laulu laulaa laulujen laulaja sumussa soutaen pois

[9] Thank you for Marlene Broemer and John Calton for translation suggestions for my free translations on the excerpts of *Maa on syntinen laulu*.

Anna ihmisen ymmärtää tärkeä tunnustus Jumala

Jumala taivaassa minä tunnustan – olen ihminen rietas rakkaasi jumala ...

(Mukka 1964, 7–8)

Besides the direct representation of agony and pain, the poetic devices add to the energy levels and a sense of confusion. The apostrophes, which generally signal the strong commitment of the speaker and indicate the speaker's invested passion (Culler 1977, 60), serve as important intensifiers. The speaker turns to inanimate, absent objects in exclamatory verses (e.g., "Woe my beloved earth", "weep oh earth oh lovely shore", "oh great god"). The onomatopoetic, 'pre-linguistic' syllables of *voi* (woe) and *oi* (oh) indicate an overwhelming amount of awe, pain and sorrow beyond words; the amount of agony and bewilderment is almost beyond linguistic capacities.[10] At the same time, the combination of lamentation (woe) and eulogy (oh) creates an ambivalent fusion of negative and positive affect. The blurring of boundaries between agony and awe is emphasized by the Finnish originals *(voi, oi)* which are phonetically close to each other.

In Mukka's poem, the apostrophes also add the aspiration to transcendence beyond ordinary realities. The energy of apostrophes extends from the speaker to the addressees which are made potentially responsive and sentient forces: apostrophes enliven the poetic *I-Thou* relationship and empower the non-human addressees to whom the poet speaks (Culler 1977, 61). In Mukka's poem, apostrophizing extends and merges humans to nature and the Divine; an archaic, pantheistic cosmos is created. The borders between the human and non-human world are opened for an ecstatic fusion. Other similar devices reduce the distance between the speaker and the addressee and further intensify the *I-Thou* relationship. The use of possessives and demonstratives ('This, my land') indicates the speaker's spatial and emotional closeness to nature and intimacy with the female-nature to whom the poet speaks. It strengthens the speaker's strong affection and desire for the female-Earth, a central trope that is used in the novel.[11]

The oxymoronic tropes also serve as key intensifiers that accumulate energy. Mukka's poem presents a set of extremes in terms of spatiotemporal expansion, emotional and metaphysical opposites: the earth is contrasted to the sky; the humans to the Divine; love to sorrow; humans to nature – here it means nature at the Arctic edge of the world, as it is suggested by a

[10] This is characteristic of the language of laments in general, see Halbertal 2014, 5.

[11] As previous studies have emphasized, the female-Earth is a central image of the novel (see Mäkelä-Marttinen 2008, 100 and Lahtinen 2013, 23–24).

few subtle references to 'cup lichens' and 'marshes'.[12] The gradual increase of energy is further heightened by the metaphors that evoke bodily heat and weight: the cry is burning, tears are hot, the lap of the earth is sweating and the prayer is heavy. The heat, weight and immensity of space brings a sense of enormous force and urgency to the experience. Another contrast is created when the force and urgency are met with passivity and humbleness. The sense of heated chaos and the power of the song forces men to bend down on their knees and pray to God; it also forces the beloved woman to bend down. The tendency towards passivity extends to the poem's speaker, whose agony calms towards the ending. In the last stanza of the poem, the apostrophes are reduced and the last line ends in an elliptic three dots, as if the poet's strength was waning.

While the oxymoronic contrasts enhance the affective energy, the abstract images function as fusion-increasing techniques that bring a sense of obscurity into play. Thing-free entities like 'god', 'night', 'midnight' and 'border' represent divergent, blurred images that provide insights to objects beyond the limits of perception and ordinary senses and tend towards a transcendental world beyond ordinary life.[13] Besides abstractions, liquids and gases that recur in Mukka's language (rain, waters, mist, fog) represent prototypical symbols that suggest a state in which the boundaries of objects are erased: facing uncertainties inherent in abstract and infinite images of vagueness, a writer may use undifferentiation and ambiguity to enhance the ecstatic qualities of a text (Tsur 2008, 485; 2015, 233). This may add a sense of mysticism and integration to one's environment in a move towards an ecstatic experience in which one's rational faculties can disappear.[14]

All in all, the opening poem creates an ecstatic mood, which anticipates the description of the characters' ecstatic experiences in the prose chapters and contributes to the overall mood of the novel. The emphasis on pain and agony prepares the reader to the tragic passion that is central to the prose narrative. In contrast to the love eulogy of *The Song of Songs*, which is a classic example of ecstatic poetry, Mukka's lamentation connects love passion with suffering. As Leena Mäkelä-Marttinen (2008, 99) reminds us, Mukka's allusion to the biblical bird motif underlines this conversion.

[12] In the third stanza, Mukka refers to marshes by using a local dialect word jänkkä: "suru on saapunut jänkkien itkuisiin silmiin", "sorrow has arrived in the tearful eyes of the marshes" (Mukka 1964, 8).

[13] Divergent style is opposite to convergent style, which is marked by clear-cut shapes, both in content and structure; it is inclined toward definite directions, clear contrasts (prosodic or semantic) and an atmosphere of certainty where there is a sense of intellectual control (Tsur 2015, 170).

[14] Diffuse elements stimulate certain areas in the hypothalamus, which activate sympathetic and parasympathetic activities, related to states of affect, emotions and mood (see Tsur 2015, 102).

"Murdered is the startled bird of love". In the poem the dove, the symbol of peace and love in the Bible, is killed.

Cumulative Energy Through Force and Aggression

In the history of emotions, the emotion of ecstasy is best known from religious contexts and mystic texts. Ecstatic experiences have been seen as transports to transcendence that allow the soul to engage with the Divine (Meadows 2014; Tsur 2015). Mukka's *Maa on syntinen laulu* connects with religious ecstasy in several ways. Widely known scenes of Mukka's work depict spiritual ecstasy inspired by charismatic Christianity as seen in the variety of pietist religious movements that have shaped the cultural mentality of Finnish Lapland.[15] A significant episode in the middle of the novel *Maa on syntinen laulu* depicts a revivalist meeting. In accordance with Mukka's poetics of extreme emotions, the meeting takes an extreme turn, transforms into group ecstasy and finally a sexual orgy.

A lay preacher visits the village community. His sermon incites the congregation into a state of mass rapture in which the sense of connection with God manifests itself through a violent trance. As the preacher's sermon accelerates and proceeds with breathless sentences, it is saturated with powerful images and aggressions targeted to the audience. As the sermon progresses, the preacher begins to speak in the second person singular, addressing individuals directly with aggressive and ugly vocabulary, accusing them of the death of the Christ and cannibalism on the sacred body. Here are some examples of the sermon's style:

> Thou bastard of human being, thou are begotten and born in sin, in dung and dirt, thou deserve none of those gifts He rewards you every day. Thou pierced His sacred heart with a spear, thou thrust a cold iron to his chest and pressed it to his good heart. [– –]
>
> Thou sucked the blood of Christ and it ran out of your mouth, staining you with the sign of eternal sin.
>
> Sinä olet synnissä siitetty, sonnassa ja loassa kasunnut ihmisen penikka, joka et ole ansainnut yhtään mitään niistä lahjoista, joilla hän sinua joka päivä palkitsee. Sinä työnsit keihään hänen rintaansa, hänen pyhään rintaansa sinä työnsit kylmän raudan ja painoit sen hänen hyvään sydämeensä asti. [– –]

[15] Although Mukka's works are often linked to Laestadian Lutheranism, a revivalist movement, which has had a major influence in Finnish Lapland, it is important not to confuse his fictional descriptions with historical practices of Laestadianism. Instead, *Maa on syntinen laulu* has been connected to some extreme charismatic movements that were present in Northern Sweden and Finland in the 1930s (see Mäkelä-Marttinen, 2008, 121).

> Sinä ryystit Kristuksen verta ja se valui suupielistäsi tahraten sinut iankaikkisen synnin merkillä. (Mukka 1964, 100)

The preacher threatens the audience with the final judgement and the lake of fire. The oxymoronic, aggressive images function as linguistic intensifiers and impact the congregation. The old women's gaze blurs, their breathing quickens and bodies begin to sway. Some move into ecstasy:

> – ai-ee-hee-hee-ee-yee-ai jesus sweet jesus forgive thou my sins ... , moans Elina from Pouta's house.
>
> Alli Mäkelä rises from the corner, swaying wildly back and forth, crying out loud; she grips the bible in her bony hands. The man, advancing to grab her thigh, falls crashing to the floor.
>
> – aagh- aaagh-haaa-ha-hi he-ee ...
>
> – Jesus christ, jesus, jesus, Alli's lips tremble.
>
> – aa-iih-hi-hi-ihjih-haih jiesus rakas jiesus kristus anna antheeksi minun synnit..., voihkii Poudan Elina.
>
> Mäkelän Alli nousee nurkasta huojuen hurjasti edestakaisin ja huutaen täyttä kurkkua – hän puristaa raamattua laihoissa käsissään. Mies, joka tulee kopeloimaan hänen reisiään, kaatuu rähmälleen lattialle. – ... aaa-aaah-haaa-ha-haih hii-ih...
>
> – Jiesus kristus, jiesus jiesus, tempovat Allin huulet. (Mukka 1964, 102)

Here Mukka uses rich onomatopoetic language[16] that imitates a state of regression during the ecstatic experience. The woman's passion for 'sweet jesus' engages with ideas of ecstasy in religious traditions, involving love for the divine in which the relationship of the faithful one is understood by analogy with that between a lover and his bride (Meadows 2014, 195). However, instead of sublime union with the Divine, Mukka's description of religious ecstasy underlines how the altered state of consciousness enables abuse and violence in the secular world.

The religious group ecstasy results in a kind of group abuse of the most vulnerable in the community. As the quotation above illustrates, the woman in ecstasy becomes an object sexual harassment. The preacher who preaches and incites the mass ecstasy abuses a young woman; an old man harasses two minor sisters. Transgenerational abuse circulates in the community and results in a kind of emotional contagion of violence: victims of abuse become perpetrators themselves. The protagonist of the novel, Martta, who has herself been an object of sexual abuse and harassment, seduces a young boy. He has recently been adopted to the family; hence, she abuses her foster brother.

[16] More on the onomatopoeic in Mukka's novel, see Rossi 2022.

Mukka's combination of violence and the sacred reminds us of ecstasy in the religious tradition, in which suffering is often a prerequisite for the connection with God. In visual arts, the *Ecstasy of Saint Theresa* (1647–1652), a baroque sculpture by Gian Lorenzo Bernini, is mentioned as a prototype representation of ecstasy as a feeling of being transported. However, Bernini's sculpture of a woman, who looks as if she is being transported while feeling pleasure with lips open and eyes closed, poignantly manifests the ambivalence of religious passion.[17] The intensity of *Saint Theresa*'s passion is enhanced with potential pain: a cherub points an arrow at the woman and is ready to pierce her.

The crossing of borders and a sense of confusion through pain and violence, which is typical of images and techniques of ecstasy in the religious context, is elaborated further in other scenes of the prose narrative *Maa on syntinen laulu.* The naturalistic prose chapters surprise with a series of shocking scenes that are likely to trigger unpleasant feelings, repulsion and horror in the reader. In the first part of the novel, graphic descriptions of homicide, death, slaughter and violent religious ritual follow one another. Documentary scenes build on auditory, visual and sensational details that stimulate the reader's senses yet in many cases the unembellished description solicits a reaction of rejection. The grotesque causes confusion and emotional disorientation resulting in discomfort, pain, distress, all while it solidifies the transgression typical of ecstasy (Tsur 2015, 284).[18]

For instance, the third chapter presents a drastic breech delivery of a calf, which is depicted with disgust-triggering details: Martta's father Juhani cuts the unborn calf into slices in the womb of the cow to save the mother. "It is dawn in the cowshed window, when father Juhani draws his bloody hand from inside the cow and sets the last piece of the dismembered calf onto a paper sack".[19] The cow's delivery is then followed by a description of a bloody human miscarriage, continuing the scene of violence in metonymic contiguity. A single mother, Ainu, who has been an object of abuse among the village men, bleeds to death with another unborn child. "Ainu was lying in the bed her legs wide open and moaning quietly. Her eyes were closed, she held her chest with both hands, and in between her legs, there was a shapeless premature baby".[20]

Blood continues as a theme during a reindeer roundup, in which the reindeer owners capture and butcher or earmark their animals. The roundup is portrayed as a merciless ritual of bloodletting, including grotesque descriptions of the mistreatment of animals.

[17] *L'Estasi di Santa Teresa* is s a sculptural group in white marble set in an elevated aedicule in the Cornaro Chapel of the church of Santa Maria della Vittoria in Rome. See also, Meadows' (2014, 190) analysis of this sculpture.

[18] On the centrality of grotesque in Mukka's oeuvre, see Mäkelä-Marttinen 2008, 53.

[19] "Aamu sarastaa jo navetan ikkunasta, kun isä-Juhani vetää verisen kätensä lehmän sisältä ja asettaa viimeisen palasen leikellystä vasikasta paperisäkin päälle navetan lattialle." (Mukka 1964, 20)

[20] "Sängyssä Ainu makasi jalat levällään ja valittaen hiljaa. Silmät olivat ummessa, kummallakin kädellään hän piteli rintaansa, jalkojen välissä oli muodoton keskonen." (Mukka 1964, 64)

The roundup then ends in an intoxicated festival of fight, blood and sexual abuse. Here, Mukka's description of the Sámi people is Othering, as it circulates and reinforces pejorative ideas of the indigenous people. In the novel, the Sámi are given the negative roles of random seducers and primitive creatures.[21]

While these scenes of violence and abuse do not directly depict ecstasy, the grotesque violation of the body envelope and the transgression of the moral order break with established cognitive categories and a sense of moral boundaries. The urgency and force inscribed in violent discomforting scenes splits the focus of attention and adds to the energy levels of the narrative in the same way as do other affective intensifiers.

Besides bloodletting, the incest taboo can also be listed among discomforting effects of narrative events that enhance a sense of border confusion. Child abuse and the perpetrator-victim relationship is a recurring theme in Mukka's works (e.g., Mäkelä-Marttinen 2008; Ovaska 2020). Throughout *Maa on syntinen laulu*, Mukka develops a disturbing, sexually tuned relationship between Martta's grandfather and the girl. Martta, who lives a transition stage from youth to womanhood and adjusts to the transformations of her body, sleeps naked in the same room with the grandfather. The grandfather gets annoyed and tells Martta to get dressed, while she asks the grandfather to come to under the covers with her. "Damn it...ho-hoo... if I did that what would happen then?"[22] The scenes that hint at a possibility of breaking one of the most prohibited cultural taboos, intensify the emotional effects and increase the narrative tension to an ultimate edge.

In Mukka's world, the force of graphic violence and its ecstatic effects is further increased through the extreme conditions of the Arctic environment. The combination of sub-zero temperatures and extreme poverty forces families and generations to remain for long periods together in small rooms, which gives rise to 'cabin fever', restlessness and irritation caused by the constant presence of other people. The lack of intimacy leads to upsetting situations, like the one between Martta and the grandfather. Aino's miscarriage and death provide another example: due to harsh weather, when Aino dies during a heavy frost, her small children are forced to remain inside in the only warm room they have and watch their mother bleed to death.

From High Energy to Emptiness and Merging

An ecstatic experience is generally described as a movement of energy between two extremes: from an increased energy to purgation of energy; from maximal to minimal emotions; from orgasm and fertility to relaxation, emptiness and self-oblivion created by the fusion of boundaries (Meadows 2014, 194–196, 211–212; Tsur 2015, 25–27). I now move to look at the other side of ecstasy beyond the peak of emotions: the

[21] Although Mukka (e.g., 2010, 481) publicly expressed sympathy for the Sámi people in his journal articles, through the 2024 lens, Mukka's story worlds are controversial.

[22] "– Sen saatana... ho hoo... kuinka kävis jos tulisin, hä?" (Mukka 1964, 58)

purgation and calming of energy towards an ecstatic state of merging and analyse the fusion-increasing techniques in the poems of *Maa on Syntinen laulu* and *Kyyhky ja unikko*.

In *Maa on syntinen laulu*, the tendency towards an ecstatic dedifferentiation is salient in the poems that precede the prose narratives. As exemplified by the opening poem analysed above, the use of blurred, unpredictable shapes and abstract tropes constitutes an important strategy in this respect. Instead of naturalistic, clear-cut details, the poems feature an archaic universe of myth and mystic obscurity that is rich in divergent images. They include blurred images of the cosmos and the Arctic wilderness. The insights to 'a chain of mountains', a 'boundless bog', 'the bogs', or references to 'the midnight sun' and to *kaamos*, the sunless period of winter in the Arctic North fuse established temporal categories and escape the limits of perception.[23] The spatiotemporal expansion, that is foregrounded in Mukka's images of a timeless universe and infinite wilderness, can solicit a sense of integration to one's environment and feelings of uplift and flow.[24] Spatial distance and infinity, and perceptual vagueness evoked by these images reduce certainty and intellectual control and reinforce a sense of transcendence, undifferentiation and ambiguity to enhance the ecstatic qualities of a text.

The rhythm of the poems also forms an integral part of the merging-increasing ecstatic techniques. Various forms of parallelism add rhythm to Mukka's poems which are of free meter. For instance, the poem preceding the chapter narrating Oula's proposal to Martta illustrates this tendency:

> Night creeps close to my shore, close to my woman, breathing white ecstasy, close to the fragrant reeds of my shore. Silence descends on the cusp of the night.
>
> My fog swims over the lake, my mist covers the shores. My woman moans in the reeds, heaven is torn in my night, my quiet is split by my woman's moan and the dance begins again.
>
> Yö hiipii rantaani lähemmäs
>
> liki naistani yö käy hengittäin valkoista hekumaa rantani tuoksuviin heiniin ja hiljaisuus saapuu kannoilla yön.
>
> Minun sumuni järvellä ui minun usvani rantoja peittää minun naiseni valittaa heinissä rannan minun yössäni repeää taivas
>
> minun hiljaisuuteni halkaisee naiseni valitushuuto ja tanssi taas alkaa. (Mukka 1964, 154)

[23] These insights and kaamos are also mentioned in the prose chapters.

[24] Phenomenological accounts of emotional qualities have confirmed that ecstasy-related emotions of joy, happiness and pleasure, are often characterized by a sense of uplift and flow (see Kraxenberger and Menninghaus 2016).

The poem, which explicitly refers to sexual ecstasy (in Finnish *hekuma*), is characterized both by emotional intensity and a sense of fusion. Syntactic and lexical parallelism are used amply (my fog, my mist, my woman, my night). The circulation of lexical, syntactic and phonetic elements creates an effect of regular pulsation, reduces elaboration on new details and refrains from new information. Mantralike, meditative repetition directs the attention to the present moment. Heightened parallelism interrupts linear temporality and may dim the reader's experience of time and location; which is likely to reduce the reader's 'intellectual' attitude. Thus, the ecstatic spells develop. Other devices work to add a trance-like hypnotic mood. A kind of 'double possessive' is used to add intensity, highlight the speaker's intimacy and will of possession. The Finnish original in expressions such as *minun naiseni*, 'my woman'; *minun sumuni*, 'my fog' includes an overlapping of the genitive and possessive.[25] The reference to the dance ("and the dance begins again") of the beloved woman, which is repeated in the poems, adds the sense of regular movement and ecstatic merging.

In some poems, alliteration or head rhyme, a technique stemming from ancient Finnish folklore, recurs in Mukka's stanzas (e.g., *su*mussa *so*utaa ja *la*ulaa *la*ulujen *la*ulaja, 'the singer of the songs is rowing in the fog and singing'). The references to shamanistic trance are part of archaic mentality of Mukka's dark ballad. In Mukka's novel, the 'sinful song' sung by the speaker of the poems compares with the *joik* of the Sámi people, the traditional form of Sámi singing: the speaker of the poems refers to a '*joik* of the swan' as an expression of the speaker's love passion.[26]

Sub lexical elements, phonetic parallelism in particular, can be listed among the ecstatic techniques in Mukka's work. Mukka repeatedly uses tender phonemes, likvidas and nasals, such as *l* and *m* and *n*. In phono-emotional studies, these phonemes have been connected to pleasant emotions and may respectively add to the pleasantness the reader experiences while reading.[27] The role of phonemes is a particularly salient technique in *Kyyhky ja unikko* to create the affective tone of the novel. Here are two examples.

> Minä päästän sinut lähtemään nyt kun yöt tulevat yhä kylmemmiksi ja lätäkköihin jäätyy vesi sydänyön tunteina. Jään tänne. (Mukka 1970, 7)
>
> I let you go now when the nights are getting colder and water freezes in puddles at the hour of midnight. I will stay here.

[25] In the Finnish language, the genitive is usually formed by adding a suffix to the word and the possessive pronouns are only used as determiners without an accompanying noun. While there is no corresponding idiomatic expression in English, the Finnish original in Mukka's texts emphasises the speakers' possession and affection.

[26] The trope can be interpreted as a reference to the poet's voice, as the swan is a classic symbol of the poet in cultural imagination.

[27] On tender and musical phonemes, see Whissel (1999, 19), Tsur (1992, 65). Rossi (2022) also discusses the phono emotional quality of Mukka's texts.

> Kyyristyvät hyppyyn sinun jalkasi kyyhky, kyyristyvät, etsivät paikkaa ponnistaa sinun jalkasi, pyhät pohkeet ja reidet – unessakin ne liikkuvat niin kuin ajatukseni, joilla on enää lepo vain itsessään. (Mukka 1970, 70)
>
> Crouch down on your feet dove, crouch down, your feet are looking for a place to jump, the holy calves and thighs – even in sleep they move like my thoughts that rest only in themselves.

Certain dark vowels, especially *ä (æ)*, *y* and *u*, are foregrounded in Mukka's style.[28] Phono-emotional studies have demonstrated that these phonemes are generally endowed with negative valence and dark emotional quality.[29] Their repetition adds a gloomy tone that is characteristic of *Kyyhky ja unikko*. The rhythm of the phrases and even prosodic level is also central here. Mukka's vocal text invites the reader to imagine the sound of the text or even silently 'hear' how the text is being read aloud. Mukka's phrases are vocal and gliding yet their articulation without breathing requires physical energy.[30] It is not easy to articulate a long phrase like "Minä päästän sinut lähtemään nyt kun yöt tulevat yhä kylmemmiksi ja lätäkköihin jäätyy vesi sydänyön tunteina" with one single breath.[31] In effect, the length and the lack of pauses in long phrases like the one quoted above are important strategies in creating the sense of the breathless, ecstatic style in Mukka's text.

Another example from *Kyyhky ja unikko* illustrates how ecstasy's purgation and a sense of dissolution towards feelings of melting, emptiness and even a sense of death are generated. In chapter 4, the young people of the village gather to spend time in the white Arctic summer night. This episode both depicts characters' experiences ecstasy and includes elements of his hypnotic-ecstatic style. The intoxicated young people sing and dance to the beat of the drum, as one of them is drumming a large, empty can. In conjunction with the description of the characters' trance-like states of mind, the narrative elaborates on ecstatic style. The protagonist, a young girl called Darja is intoxicated and sings a dark cradle song 'Pium paum' in a trance-like state of rapture (*hurmio*). This horror lullaby is a rewriting of a tradition of melancholic Finnish cradle songs, in which the depressed mother gently sends her child to death and praises the underworld as a paradise.[32] In Mukka's version, the speaker of the poem tenderly sends the beloved to death. Thus, Darja, who will later be killed by the narrator, Pieti,

[28] The phonetic quality of the Finnish original text is not easily transmitted in the English translation. In the Finnish language, phonetic analysis can be based on written texts, since the Finnish orthography strives to represent all morphemes phonologically, meaning that the sound value of each letter tends to correspond with its phonological value, although some discrepancies do exist.

[29] In the Finnish language, ä, (æ) recurs sometimes in a negative context (see Jääskeläinen 2013, 13).

[30] Even in silent reading, many readers report hearing an inner voice while reading (Clifton 2015, 3).

[31] My reading here has been inspired by Leo Spitzer's (2005) analysis on the 'delayed' style in Marcel Proust's work.

[32] On the intertextual of layers of the lullaby, see Lahtinen 2013, 214–215.

foretells her own death while singing without knowing it herself. Thus, the song serves as a *mise-en-abyme* hinting at Darja's death:

> – Pium paum, the cradle is swinging and mother is singing to her child. [– –]– Pium paum, the earth is flowering and the dove loves the poppy. Pium Paum.
>
> Pium paum, violins are whining and the bride dances with the groom.
>
> Pium paum, Death is cradling and the Dove possesses the Poppy. Pium paum.
>
> Pium paum, the clock is moving; it is time to travel to the dark land. Pium paum.
>
> Pium paum. The graveyard is flowering and the wind is blowing on the flower petals. Pium paum.
>
> – Pium paum, kehto heilahtaa, ja äiti lapsellensa laulaa. [– –]– Pium paum, kukkii maa, ja kyyhky unikkoa rakastaa. Pium paum Pium paum, viulut vingahtaa, ja sulho morsianta tanssittaa. Pium paum.
>
> Pium paum, vuodet vaeltaa, ja saapujia oottaa musta maa. Pium paum.
>
> Pium paum, tuoni tuudittaa, ja kyyhky unikkonsa omistaa. Pium paum.
>
> Pium paum, kello heilahtaa, on mustaan maahan aika matkustaa. Pium paum.
>
> Pium paum. Kukkii hautuumaa, ja tuuli kukan teriötä heiluttaa. Pium paum. (Mukka 1970, 27–28)

The poetic devices serve as trance-inducing techniques that not only transmit the characters' ecstatic experiences but also serve to evoke a sense of ecstasy in the implied reader. Mystical, blurred, divergent imagery enhances the sense of fusion inscribed in the linguistic elements. From the reader's perspective, the refrain of "pium paum" itself teases out a kind of hypnotic effect. According to Jääskeläinen (2013, 18), "pium paum" is an imitative, onomatopoetic word that draws the reader's or the listener's attention to the sound rather than to the sense. In addition, the phonetic parallelism of the dark back vowel *u* combined with the repetition of the tender nasal *m* may add to the hypnotic effect of the stanza and contribute to lulling and comforting the reader with a false sense of security, all while describing a path towards death.

The type of ecstasy that manifests itself in *Kyyhky ja unikko* is lower in terms of emotional intensity in comparison with that in *Maa on syntinen laulu*. In this novel, the high energy levels of ecstasy have already passed and what remains after the emotional peak is the merging and a sense of loss of voluntary control – an Oceanic melting with the world. The soft rapture that is evoked in the character's emotional experience extends to the affective tone of the novel in general yet this mood is less

'agonized' and more 'fused' than in Mukka's *Maa on syntinen laulu*. The reader enters a serene world of the Dark north, which generates aesthetic effects and even a surrealist, dream-like mood.

Ecstasy and Moral Oblivion

The poetic beauty of the dark North created in Mukka's novels is not without problematic implications from the perspective of narrative ethics. The dark charm of the aesthetically rewarding, ecstatic mood, a seduction of the tone, which, as Felski argues (2008), can overcome cerebral and analytical aspects of reading literature. The enchantment created by ecstatic techniques may invite the reader to neglect the ethically controversial situations represented in Mukka's novel. The ecstatic-hypnotic qualities can serve as practices of moral persuasion, which can even render the reader in "complete agreement with what the poet has said" to quote Snyder (1930, 1). Thus, the self-oblivion that is characteristic of ecstasy can extend to the ethics of reading. The phenomenology of enchantment, as Felski (2008) formulates is simple an intensely charged experience of absorption and self-loss. When aesthetic experience becomes foregrounded in reading, moral dilemmas tend to be overlooked.

An analytic close reading that goes beyond and against the spell of the mood, unveils how a series of controversial events and gendered situations permeate both novels. In the narrative of *Maa on syntinen laulu* physical and verbal violence against women is repeatedly described. Women and children lack protection in the social world that is as harsh as the outside Arctic environment. The poems embedded in the novel elaborate on the speakers' affective devotion to the beloved woman-land that frequently tends towards a celebration of painful passion. The speakers' eulogy of the earth-woman, who is weeping in pain, even intensifies towards the end of the novel. In the first poems, the speaker outlines the woman-nature as a voluptuous, grotesque figure, who laughs and dances boldly, swaying her hips and slapping her thighs. Later poems represent an innocent virgin, a child-woman who becomes an object of the speaker's desire. The woman now covers her breasts and sings with a soft voice. However, this fragility and shyness excites the speaker who projects his own desire to the child-woman: "my beloved approaches me like a child and wants to feel".[33] The speaker abandons the woman and gives her back to nature: "I abandon my love / I give my love / my bird is swimming after me".[34] Somewhat controversially, the woman's pain and finally death becomes a condition of the speaker's passion and ecstatic redemption. In the last stanza of the last poem, the speaker changes. In same way as in *The Song of the Songs*, the poem becomes a dialogue, as the male speaker changes to female. However, instead

[33] "Minun rakkaani lapsena saapuu ja tuntea tahtoo" (Mukka 1964, 192). When *Tabu* [Taboo] (1965) appeared, it was compared to Vladimir Nabokov's *Lolita* (Lahtinen 2013 71). However, many readings of Mukka's work have omitted these aspects until Anna Ovaska (2020, 199–200) raised them for discussion.

[34] "Minä rakkaani hylkään / Minä rakkaani annan / Minun lintuni jälkeeni ui..." (Mukka 1964, 193)

of divine love the last stanzas present us a grotesque image of lovers united in death: the woman is dead and decomposing, her hand is covered with moss, her thighs are decomposing. "I am the Earth. I am the Earth into which you want to melt".[35]

The combination of female suffering and ecstasy is central to *Kyyhky and unikko*, which is another narrative of abuse and violence. A mysterious outsider and dilettante, Pieti Kolström, returns to his childhood village in the North after years of an unsettled life in Southern Finland and enters a brief relationship with Darja, a 15-year-old girl whom he later murders. Their relationship is broken. Pieti kills Darja when they meet again after the separation. She is now pregnant by another man. Alienation, a sense of estrangement from self and society, has been considered as a central theme of the novel (Arminen 2009), which describes a mentally derailed outsider's obsession and passion for murder. *Kyyhky ja unikko* creates a layered reality that covers the past in a mystery, which also reflects a crisis of representation and challenges ideas of solid identities (Arminen 2009, 203–211).

Besides the hypnotic-ecstatic techniques analysed earlier, in *Kyyhky ja unikko* the narrative structure adds a sense of ambiguity and confuses the ethics of the told. The layered narrative alternates between external narrator and the first person-narrator, and between the present and the past tense, which splits the focus of attention. Their narratives include various gaps and controversies in both reporting and evaluating the events.[36] The novel begins with a prologue that is ambiguously entitled "instead of a prologue" by an external narrator, who presents himself as the writer of the story. The prologue, which invites the likeness of the implied author and the extradiegetic narrator, blurs narrative perspectives and dims the truth of events. For instance, the narrator of the prologue frames the novel as a love story, although the novel is about sexual abuse and murder: "I tell a love story of Pieti Kolström, 37, and Darja Paukku, 17".[37] He then hints at Pieti's madness; thus, the narrator persuades the reader to accept the murder as an act committed *non compos mentis* and imagines a tableau vivant on the shore of the Kemi River "where melancholic, lunatic Pieti Kolström sits, a naked girl in his lap".[38]

More ambiguity is created, when the narrator explains the novel's symbol which names Pieti as a representative of vice: according to the narrator the dove refers to the bird of goddesses of love, Venus and Aphrodite, whereas Pieti Kolström represents "a black euphoric poppy of the vice who takes Darja entirely".[39] In later chapters,

[35] "Olen maa. Olen maa johon tahdot." (Mukka 1964, 230)

[36] Both external and internal narrators can be considered as unreliable. On the various forms of unreliability, see e.g., Shen 2011.

[37] "Kerron Pieti Kolströmin, 37, ja Darja Paukun, 17, välisestä rakkaudesta." (Mukka 1970, 5)

[38] "jonka rannalla raskasmielinen, päästään sairas Pieti Kolström istuu kuollut alaston tyttö sylissään." (Mukka 1970, 5)

[39] Mukka himself referred to Axel Sandemose's ideas and works as a source of inspiration (Paasilinna 2002, 76). *Kyyhky ja unikko* is reminiscent of Sandemose's themes of mystery, complex anti-heroes and a surrealist, dream-like mood.

Pieti's intradiegetic narration complicates ethical perspectives and the interpretation of what happened. While a first-person narrative generally provides a limited view, what is more in Mukka's novel, Pieti's first-person narrative represents the perpetrator's perspective. His description of other characters' reactions and emotional states can be challenged; when Darja's experiences of sexual pleasure is told from Pieti's view, it can critically be interpreted as a projection of the abuser's desire. All in all, the layered, split narrative adds a degree of uncertainty and limits the reader's easy access to the narrative.

Conclusion

In this chapter, I have analysed Timo K. Mukka's arctic novels *Maa on syntinen laulu* and *Kyyhky ja unikko* from the perspective of the feeling of ecstasy. Mukka's novels, which have been considered as prototype examples of the Arctic hysteria tradition in Finnish literature, explicitly depict spiritual and secular ecstatic experiences and implicitly evoke ecstasy through verbal means that convert the feeling-content of ecstasy into emotional effects. In Mukka's poems, affective intensifiers, like apostrophes and oxymorons function as energy-increasing techniques that cumulate the energy typical of ecstasy. Divergent, blurred images stemming from the biblical subtexts and the Arctic environment of Mukka's work, add a sense of obscurity and ecstatic merging. Techniques of rhythm, such as mantra-like parallelism and the psychoacoustic, phono-emotional qualities such as dark back vowels, contribute to the dark North tone in Mukka's works.

Previous cognitive research on ecstatic literature has focused on poetry (Tsur 2006; 2008; 2015). However, here I have extended the study of ecstatic qualities into prose fiction in the light of Mukka's work, also looking at the broader textual schemata in the text-continuum. The interplay and arrangement of various textual elements in Mukka's collage novels, which combine poems and prose fiction, provides interesting material in this respect. The poems that precede the prose chapters elaborate and anticipate the mood towards the ecstatic, like the opening poem which tunes the extremity of emotional effects in the very beginning. The role of the naturalistic prose chapters in the creation of the ecstatic mood has also been examined. In addition to the description of characters' ecstatic experiences, the documentary of grotesque violence increases the narrative energy and a sense of undifferentiation in an indirect way. The force and urgency created by the aggressive scenes fuses cognitive and moral categories, imitating border transgression typical of ecstasy, thus contributing to the all-encompassing ecstatic mood of the novel.

In contrast to *Maa on syntinen laulu*, in *Kyyhky ja unikko* the sense of ecstatic dedifferentiation is not created by force and urgency. Instead, the stability of established categories is generated by hypnotic-ecstatic aspects of the lyric prose and the poem embedded in the prose narrative. In addition, in *Kyyhky and unikko*, the layered narra-

tive structure and unreliability of narrators are likely to disturb the reader's cognitive stability, which, in tandem with the lyrical, ecstasy-generating aspects adds the gloomy sense of mystery and the 'Nordic noir' tone of the novel. In *Maa on Syntinen laulu*, the mood is more agonistic and intense, whereas *Kyyhky and unikko* depicts and evokes ecstasy in terms of emptiness and oblivion, evoking an Oceanic, soft melding with the world. In both novels, the foregrounded feelings of spell and enchantment generated by ecstatic techniques may overcome a cerebral reading, and impact on the reader's evaluation of the characters and narrative events. Mukka's lyrical style may direct the readers' attention to the aesthetically rewarding aspects of the text and cloud ethically puzzling situations in the story worlds. Overall, the controversial combination of spell and shock form an integral part of Mukka's dark North fiction, which sustains their appeal to various audiences in Finland and elsewhere.[40]

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Emotion, Space and Gendered Nation in Rosa Liksom's *Everstinna*

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Introduction

Rosa Liksom's *Everstinna* (2017, transl. *The Colonel's Wife* 2019)[1] is a fictional autobiography based on the life narrative of Annikki Kariniemi-Willamo-Heikanmaa (1913–1984), one of the founding mothers of unorthodox female authorship in the Finnish North. Researchers (e.g., Gullichsen 1993; Kontio 1998) have previously approached Kariniemi's work as a global project of widening or transgressing the normative ideas of femininity and masculinity and gendered identity. In her oeuvre, Liksom has followed in Kariniemi's footsteps by creating sexually liminal, transgressive spaces that challenge solidified stereotypes, rigid categorisations and master narratives[2] of the North. By means of parody, satire and hyperbole, Liksom's work stages a carnivalistic celebration of feminine powers, including the freedom of self-expression. Her work refuses to be read as 'social porn' of the suffering, poor North (Kantokorpi 1997). Even

[1] The English title of the novel, *The Colonel's Wife* (2019), translated by Lola Rogers, emphasises the role of the protagonist as the wife of the Colonel. The original Finnish title, *Everstinna*, accordingly, is a gendered title affiliated with the husband's military rank. Even though the Finnish title *Everstinna* carries similar connotations of a social status achieved through marriage and the husband's professional position, it also emphasises the protagonist's role as an independent woman, as a female of rank: she keeps her title after the divorce and considers herself to be empowered by it.

[2] Master narratives (also grand narratives or dominant narratives) are totalising narratives or metadiscourses, which relate to ideologies, philosophies or world views of certain historical periods or traditions of Western thought, such as Enlightenment, Marxism, modernity or democracy (see e.g., Hyvärinen 2021, 18).

more, her grotesque style of writing rejects the romantic exoticisation of Northern nature familiar from the earlier periods of Lapland literature.

In this chapter, *Everstinna* is read as a counter-narrative[3] that addresses the violent, and often silenced, history of the Finnish nation before and after the Second World War. The novel stages the shame and horror endured by the nation because of the ideological marriage between Nationalist Finland and Nazi Germany. The protagonist-narrator symbolizes the beaten, raped and burnt Maiden of Finland (or Maiden of Lapland), who suffers at the hands of her Southern occupiers during the two nations' joint battle against the Soviet Union. In addition to feminist rewriting of gendered stereotypes and roles, Liksom's texts systematically resort to grotesque, shocking disclosure of sexual and physical violence. Her work addresses the silenced taboos that authors belonging to the Lapland tradition, often called writers involved in Arctic hysteria, have previously explored in their works. As stated by Mervi Kantokorpi (1997, 8–12), Liksom's early, postmodern texts parody both the mimetic tradition of the description of people in Finnish literature and the post-war modernist writing of Northern melancholia. In our view, her novel also parodies the violent tradition of Arctic hysteria through modifying the work of Kariniemi and Timo K. Mukka, among other Lapland authors. While portraying life on the margins of society, Liksom's work also resorts to a seriocomic style, characteristic of postmodern carnivalism: her texts mix elements from 'low' popular culture and 'high' literature, transgressing boundaries between folk culture and established, institutionalised art (cf. Jama 1995; see also Bakhtin 1984).

Our reading of Liksom's *Everstinna* begins by studying the interconnections between narrative form and emotion in Liksom's novel. We ask how narrative form, drawing from the myth of Arctic hysteria brings up familiar or altered patterns of emotional responses in readers and how these responses are connected to what feminist narratologist Robyn Warhol (1986) has called an 'engaging narrator'. We also ask how Liksom uses engaging narration as a device of satire and parody, while simultaneously addressing issues of nationality, ethnic minorities and social class in an ambivalent, thought-provoking manner. After the investigation of engaging narration and emotion in *Everstinna*, we examine how the geographical and spatial elements of the novel generate the emotional intensity that is typical to the narratives of Finnish North and also how the novel simultaneously overrides and reformulates the association between violence and the North. From there on, we will focus on the ways the novel domesticates violent fascist ideas and depicts the protagonist's emotional involvement in Nazi thought.

In our exploration of gender and northern space, we study how the emotional effects produced by engaging first-person narration relate to sexuality and normbreaking emotional expression. At first, we look at the gendered narratives of the swamp in the

[3] Counter-narratives are stories that reveal marginalised views, positions and power relations in narratives that are represented in and of the social world, including literary narratives. Counternarratives can also serve as means of investigating how certain narratives gain dominance over others and become master narratives (Lueg et al. 2021, 1–4).

tradition of Finnish literature and examine the ecstatic and primitive feelings depicted in and evoked by various swamp scenes in Liksom's novel. In its association to eroticism, we investigate how northern nature, more specifically the Arctic swamp, becomes in the novel a preferred space for the expression of transgressive and excessive sexuality, as well as for spiritual and primitive communion brought by the upholding of moral and social norms. In line with Arctic hysteria, the swamp is then approached as a mental and narrative threshold in the novel. We ultimately suggest that the complex emotions brought by the ecstatic feelings experienced in the swamp connect the narrator-protagonist to the grotesque and carnivalesque figure of the 'unruly woman' (Rowe 1995). This engagement with 'unruly femininity' is further explored in the final part of this chapter, as we turn to the patriotic symbol of the Maiden of Finland and other female tropes through which Liksom's work can be read as a counter-narrative of the idealistic-patriotic master narrative of Finnish history. We then investigate how apparently contrary emotions of love and hate can materialise in the nationalist project depicted in the novel and how they are illustrated in the association between the narrator-protagonist and Maiden of Finland.

Arctic Hysteria, Emotion and Narrative Form

Everstinna begins with a detached third-person narration, offering a bird-eyed view over a small Lapland village: "At the marshy, terraced edge of the great lake the beams of a fish weir creak and an upturned wooden boat screeches against the wall of the weir. If you turn toward the little village, you see that the houses are dark, their inhabitants gone to bed" (*The Colonel's Wife* = *C*, 3).[4] This short, matter-offact passage continues for a page and forms a narrative frame for the protagonist's more colourful monologue written in Northern dialect.[5] The protagonist-narrator's winding account of her 'four lives' creates an illusion of an intimate, spoken narrative, which is addressed to an anonymous and unspecified audience and ultimately to Liksom's readers. Before the protagonist, 'the colonel's wife', begins her first-person narration, the novel's third-person narrator briefly introduces the setting for her retrospective narrative. This scenic description, detached albeit slightly humorous, shows a frosty Lapland village with its inhabitants snoring, drooling or falling asleep in their cosy beds after smoking cigarettes or using an enamel pot. The bird's-eye view narration finally focuses on an old-fashioned, alpine-style cabin in which the solitary heroine

[4] "Suopenkereisen ison veden törmälle rakennetun kala-aitan hirret natisevat, sen seinää vasten kallelleen käännetty puuvene kirkaisee, ja kun kääntää katseen kohti pientä kylää, näkee että talot ovat pimeinä, niiden asukkaat käyneet nukkumaan." (*Everstinna* = *E*, 7)

[5] Liksom's Finnish dialect is mostly *meänkieli* (literally 'our language'), which has gained an official status as a minority language in Sweden. *Meänkieli* is spoken in the Northernmost parts of Sweden in North Bothnia and in the valley of the Torne River in Finland.

stays awake. She senses her approaching death as the closing frame of the novel later reveals.

The protagonist of *Everstinna*, Annikki Kariniemi, who bears some resemblance to the real-life author, begins her exploration by recounting her early years as a young daughter of a right-wing, wealthy Finnish family. At a summer camp of the Lotta Svärd[6] organisation in Kittilä, a sharp-eyed Lotta general teaches the Little Lottas their national duties as mothers of future soldiers. In one of the brief phrases that frame the different parts of the novel and the protagonist's coming-of-age story, the narrator points out her early patriarchal influences: "My father made me a daughter of the White Guard. The Colonel made me a Nazi" (*C*, 55).[7] The protagonist's sadistic upbringing and her marriage at times resemble a darkly atmospheric horror tale, as she repeatedly becomes an object of sexual and religious violence. As opposed to controlling patriotic-religious or fascist ideals, the protagonist finds a space of limitless freedom through "the tricks of the old world" (*C*, 10)[8], which she has learned from her grandmother Elve; a full-blooded Sámi, who belonged to a nomadic community of reindeer herders.

In accordance with the more recent research done on northern emotions, we suggest that Arctic hysteria is not only a thematic element of texts or a scale of characters' experiences as represented in narratives of the North (cf. Ihonen 1999). Texts also produce aesthetic *effects* in readers. Liksom's novel invites readers to feel with the narrator-monologist by portraying her feelings of ecstasy, which she goes through while also experiencing significant physical and mental pain. In her violent childhood and marriage with the Colonel, the protagonist becomes accustomed to, even addicted to, extreme emotions that blur the boundaries between self and world, between one's own will and others' tyrannical needs:

> After [the Colonel] beat me, we would always cry together like little kids. We'd cry about the horrible trap we were in, and then we'd pray for the agony to continue, sharp and alive. In his own sick way he loved me, so I didn't want to think about leaving him. If you have love, even a sick love, you have everything. (*C*, 109)

[6] Lotta Svärd was founded in 1918 to support the military efforts of the Finnish White Guard during the Civil War; the organisation was particularly active in the 1920s and 1930s. Only Finnish, Christian women were allowed to become volunteers of the organisation at this stage. During the Second World War, Lotta Svärd served as an auxiliary paramilitary organisation that worked in close co-operation with the Finnish army. The first Jewish members were accepted during this period. Voluntary civil defence work carried out by women in hospitals and air-raid positions helped to cover the decrease in the labour force due to men's service on the front lines in the war against the Soviet Union. The organisation was disbanded by the Finnish government after the war as was demanded in the Moscow Armistice of 1944.

[7] "Isä teki minusta valkosen Suomen tyttären, Eversti natsin." (*E*, 74)

[8] "Mie olin Elven lellikkikläppi ja se opetti mulle monet vanhan maailman kommervenkit." (*E*, 16)

> Aina joskus sen jälkheen ko soli hakanu minut, me itkimä yhessä ko pikkukläpit. Itkimä sitä kauheaa loukkua, jossa molemmat olima, ja rukkoilimma *kärsimyksen jatkumista yhtä eläväisen kirpeänä.* Kummalisella, saihrala tavalansa se rakasti minua ja siksi mie en halunu tai osanu *lähteä pois.* Ko ihmisellä on rakhaus, vaikka sairas, hänelä on kaikki. (*E*, 142)

The affective intimacy of the narrative situation in the monologue (addressing here addictive, painful love) is typical of the so-called engaging narrators (Warhol 1986), who create closeness by encouraging actual readers' identification with the narrator's addressee, or 'narratee', as Gerard Prince (1980) has called the recipient of the narrator's storytelling within the text.[9] The use of *meänkieli* (which appears in the English translation mainly as the use of colloquial expressions such as 'little kids' [*pikkukläpit*]), further intensifies the sense of intimate connection between the first-person narrator and her addressee by generating an 'endearing' (*hellyttävä*) effect (Kantokorpi 1997, 25). Combined with the low or vulgar registers of speech, the use of dialect also creates a comic tone. In the following excerpt, the blood-sucking eelworm, which the young protagonist finds poking between her legs in the northern wetlands alludes to (a potentially violent memory of) sexual intercourse: "I felt between my legs, because it was sort of stinging, and my hand felt something slick poking out and dangling there. I lifted up the hem of my skirt and saw it was an eelworm, sucking my blood, right next to my cooch." (*C*, 8)[10]

In her novel, Liksom modifies the themes and narrative structure of Kariniemi's novel *Poro-Kristiina* [Kristiina the Reindeer] (1952), which revolves around the protagonist's personal recollection of her past including her experiences of sexual and religious violence. After the third-person narrator's description of the Sompiovuoma village in Lapland, the reader meets Kristiina lying on her deathbed. Before her passing, the protagonist reminisces about her erotic awakening with Tuomas, a Sámi farm worker and her suffering in the hands of her violent husband, Mauno. This troubled, tyrannical man has arrived from the South of Finland to mine gold in Lapland. Finally, Kristiina ends up marrying Ville, the farm worker of the Old Kiesto farmhouse who has taken Tuomas' place. These three loves come to represent Kristiina's struggles in relation to herself and her community as she feels divided between two cultures: the one born under the influence of Christian religion as a charismatic reformation of the Lutheran church (Laestadian revivalist movement) and the forbidden, pantheistic beliefs of shamanism, described as originating from the indigenous Sámi tradition in the novel. Both traditions appear deviant or marginal from the perspective of Southern centres of power.

[9] In our analysis, the notion of 'addressee' refers to the narrator's addressee, that is, Prince's 'narratee', rather than to the implied reader.

[10] "Mie kosketin haaroitten väliä ko sielä niinkö kirveli ja minun käsi osu semmosseen roikkuhvaan limasseen pötkehlöön. Nostautin hamheen helmaa ja ymmärsin, että soli iilimato joka imi verta minun looranreunasta." (*E*, 14)

Published in the decade of conservative family values in the 1950s, Kariniemi's openly erotic novel is bold and radical in terms of its gender politics. Sámi people, including the famous poet Nils-Aslak Valkeapää, and some Finnish male critics have criticised the author for exoticising Sámi mythology for popular entertainment and romantic Lapland 'tourism', even though Kariniemi has also been praised for viewing the Sámi community in a positive light (see e.g., Kontio 1998, 81; Hytönen 2023, 185). In some respects, the overall effect of Kariniemi's early novel is similar to the hypnotic allure of Eric Blomberg's fairy-tale horror film *Valkoinen peura* [The White Reindeer] (1952) which attracted wide international audiences (see Tuominen 2013, 90). However, as a work portraying gendered and religious violence, Kariniemi's novel can hardly be called entertainment, even though some of her works belong to the neo-romantic tradition of Lapland nature writing. These works often portray the characters' complicated relationships with different traditions and cultures in the Finnish North.[11] Liksom's novel addresses these power relations in a humorous yet self-reflective manner by turning the adult, full-grown Sámi man, Tuomas, into a young Sámi boy.[12] As a victim, who falls under the spell of a powerful, witch-like enchanter, Tuomas resembles the young girls in the earlier tradition of Arctic hysteria, such as Milka in Timo K. Mukka's *Tabu* [Taboo] (1965).[13]

Engaging Narration

In addition to intertextual adaptation of narrative form, *Everstinna* draws from Kariniemi's enterprise of voicing marginalised female experience and sexuality in an exceptionally direct, sensuous manner.[14] By mixing low registers of speech with serious

[11] For instance, for a long time, marriages between the wealthier peasants of the Finnish North and the nomadic Sámi people were considered taboo. Many people of Sámi origin hid their ethnic background and gave up their mother tongue due to social shaming or structural oppression. Kariniemi was a daughter of a Laestadian agronom, Frans Emil Kariniemi, whose relatively poor family resided in the Lapland village of Kittilä. Annikki Kariniemi often represented herself as being of Sámi origin. In fact, she was born in Rovaniemi and her Sámi origin dated back to the 18th century (Hytönen 2023, 183).

[12] As Ridanpää (2010, 332) points out while writing about the transgressive gender politics of Liksom's fiction, "the beauty of Liksom's irony, as I see it, lies in how the reader is not necessarily sure whether her stories are about a modern form of northern romanticism, an emancipatorily charged criticism or a criticism of this criticism".

[13] Mukka's novel portrays the infatuation of a 13-year-old girl, Milka, with her mother's lover, a vagabond named Kristus-Perkele (Christ-Devil). The man abandons Milka after she becomes pregnant with his child.

[14] This type of free expression and carnivalistic celebration of one's sexuality as a gift of nature resembles a Karelian folk tradition that was born under several cultures in the same way as the indigenous cultures in the North. In particular, the vulgar register of speech and the 'lushness' of language are characteristic of carnal songs recited for the arousal of love (*lemmen nostatus*) in oral folk poetry. The academic collectors of the 19th century 'censored' this type of material from their compiled works such as *Kanteletar* (The Maiden of Kantele) or *Kalevala* (on the feminine power of 'cunt', that is, *vittu*

themes, the novel tends to generate mixed, simultaneously positive and negative emotions. The protagonist's story which lacks any shame, guilt or selfconscious censorship becomes a horrific yet strangely amusing story of the sexual healing of a woman who has been abused by her future husband since she was a four-year-old child. Her abuse has been silently accepted and even encouraged by the small village community including her family and parents. The addressee of the protagonist's story is potentially someone who understands the reasons for the unconventional choices the eccentric storyteller has made in her life including her disconcerting political affiliations: "The Colonel sealed my fate when I was four years old. / This is what became of me" (*C*, 42–43).[15] The narrator's audience also accepts the fact that she does not regret her choices and has come to a point in her life where she can forgive the deeds of her 'coloniser', as well as her own. Thus, she is able to finally find her equilibrium. Speaking and openly writing about her adverse experiences has been the key to her recovery:

> If I'd never written about my marriage to the Colonel, it would have been a sin and a crime. Keeping silent makes it so you can't get any food down your throat, or can't keep it down, so it just comes right out again at both ends. Keeping silent kills you from the inside out. Throughout the history of the world there have been those who tell and those who don't, because shame keeps them from speaking. Just think of Eva Braun. She never opened her mouth publicly, just went right on smiling behind her glass screen. Or the Führer's niece, the one who was a victim of sadism. She opened her mouth, and ended up killing herself. (*C*, 133–134)
>
> Jos mie olisin vaienu meän liitosta, se olis ollu synti ja rikos. Vaikeneminen tekkee sen, ettei ruoka men kurkusta alas, ja jos mennee, ei pysy mahassa vaan tullee samantien jommasta kummasta päästä ulos. Vaitiolo tappaa sisältä käsin. Läpitte maailman historian on ollu niittä jokka kertovat ja niitä jokka ei kerro ko häpeä estää puhumisen. Ajatelkhaapa vaikka Praunin Eevaa, joka ei koskhaan viralisesti avanu suutansa, hymmyili vain klasiverhon takana. Tai Vyyrerin siskontyttöä, joka joutu saismin uhriksi. Hän aukasi suunsa ja joutu hirttähmään ittensä. (*E*, 173)

Engaging narrative situations usually encourage actual readers' affective resonance or even identification, with the addressee as well as with the implied reader inscribed

in Finnish folklore outside these collections, see e.g. Apo 1995). The magical power of female genitalia is also reappropriated in the contemporary collection of feminist writing edited by Katja Kettu and Krista Petäjäjärvi, *Pimppini on valloillaan. Naisiin kohdistuva seksuaalinen vallankäyttö* [My Cooch is on the Loose. The Exercise of Power over Female Sexuality] (2012). The collection which deals with gendered power politics and sexual violence in the Finnish North includes a short prose fiction text written by Liksom.

[15] "Eversti sinetöitti minun kohtalon ko mie täytin neljä vuotta. / Tähän on tult." (*E*, 57–58)

in the text. Conversely, 'distancing narrators', as Warhol (1986, 812) calls them, discourage such identification: the affectively distancing effect is achieved by giving specific features to addressees which makes it more difficult for real readers to step into the shoes of the addressee. Firstly, distancing narrative situations may involve, for instance, addressees who are presented as overly judgmental. Secondly, they may appear as having limited abilities to empathize with others or comprehend things. Thirdly, addressees of distancing narrative situations can become subjects of narrators' jokes (Warhol 1986, 814). Real readers do not usually identify with these kinds of addressees. Therefore, it is also more difficult for them to become members of the 'authorial audience' (Rabinowitz 1987; Phelan 2005) as the recipients of the (implied) author's indirect communication. Distancing narrative situations are typical of works that use irony, parody or political/social satire by creating addressees (or characters) who are indirectly criticized for lacking empathy or an understanding of human nature. In comparison, engaging narrators directly and sincerely guide their audiences and implied readers to feel *with* characters (Warhol 1986, 812).[16]

The engaging narrative situation created in Liksom's novel differs from the earlier tradition of female writing including that in Kariniemi's work in which the narrator's addressee and the actual reader become silent listeners who can trust the sincerity of the narrator. The engaging narrators' ethical standing is revealed in relation to their fallible and humane characters. In Liksom's post-postmodern novel, the third person narration of the framing story remains restricted and the novel presents the eccentric monologist's own voice, her version of events. The addressee of the protagonist's monologue, respectively, does not have the luxury of ethical or ontological certainty. However, the ethical distance created by the satirical double-text repeatedly disappears as the addressee is invited to sympathize with the sexually empowered protagonist. Consider the way the narrator-monologist recounts her gradual growth into a powerful woman who comes from "better stock" (*C*, 129)[17] and who, after having built for herself a new sexuality, rebels against religious prejudice and social control:

> The people in the village had looked askance at us from the beginning. The whole atmosphere was like swimming in poison. When people heard from the school cook that I intended to marry Tuomas, they really threw a fit. It wasn't just the age difference or because Tuomas was a kid when I first let him into my bed. The way they saw it, my biggest sin was that I'd already

[16] Warhol's case study uses excerpts from realist and sentimental fiction, in which engaging narrators often address their audiences as 'you' or as the 'reader'. The direct address of the third-person narrator in George Eliot's *Adam Bede* (1859) is a fine example. The narrator earnestly asks the addressee to sympathize with the male protagonist's unwise infatuation with a heroine: "Before you despise Adam as deficient in penetration, pray ask yourself if you were ever predisposed to believe evil of any pretty woman".

[17] "Olema olheet aina, ennen ja jälkheen avioeron ja ikäerosta huolimatta samala viivala, paitti tietekki mie olen jo pelkästään syntyperältä korkeamalla ko Tuomas, jonka sukupuuta ei ole kukhaan piirtäny." (*E*, 167)

> been joined in the bonds of holy matrimony twice and gotten divorced – against the commandments of God – and now I had the gall to get married a third time, and to a mere child. Was there no limit to my shame? (*C*, 130)
>
> Kyläläiset olit kattohneet alusta asti meitä pahala silmälä. Ei se myrkyn kylväminen meän ikäerosta sinänsä johtunu vaan siittä, että Tuomas oli ollu kläppi ko molin päästäny sen sänkykamahriin. Ja sitte ko kyläläiset kuulit koulukeittäjältä, että mie aion viralisesti naia Tuohmaan, niin sitte net vasta oikein pillastuit. Niitten silmissä kaikista suurin synti oli se, että mie, joka olin ollu jo kaks kertaa avioliiton pyhässä satamassa ja eronu vastoin Jumalan määräyksiä, kehtaan mennä kolmannen kerran avioliithoon, ja vielä kläpin kanssa. Että eikö hävylä ole mithään raijaa. (*E*, 168)

By expressing her grievances against the villagers' double-standard, moral condemnation of her past marriages and divorces, the narrator implicitly also asks for her addressee's acceptance of her sexual relationship with Tuomas, a 14-year-old Sámi boy.[18] The Finnish word *häpy*, which Liksom uses in her serious and comic text literally means 'vulva' in addition to carrying connotations of shame or having no shame. The middle-aged narrator's relationship with Tuomas begins as a seemingly like-minded, equal affair between two kids. It seems to be an arrangement the boy finds agreeable which resembles the narrator's relationship with the colonel who seals her fate with his infatuation with a child. The narrator's attitude reminds us of far right or fascist ideology, in which the nationalist and colonialist deeds of hatred are justified by calling them acts of love (see Ahmed 2014): "I once asked the Colonel why he tortured me, / why hardly a month went by that he didn't try to outright kill me. He said, / You always hit the ones you love" (*C*, 99–101).[19] On the other hand, by telling her personal story, the narrator also wishes to give an account of her changed relationship with the past, violent ideology and her more loving understanding of the world at the moment of her approaching death.

North and South: a Geography of Violence

The protagonist's love affairs – the lustful engagement and violent marriage with the colonel and the relationship with the underage Tuomas – that are at the heart of

[18] *Everstinna's* monologue here resembles Annikki Kariniemi's own words about her relationship with her third husband, Taisto Heikka (later Heikanmaa), whom she met as a teacher in a book club for youngsters and children when he was sixteen years old: "Mitä ne sitä ihmettelevät, kun menin kolmekymmentä vuotta vanhemman miehen kanssa, kukaan ei sanonut mitään, eikös se ole sama" ("Why are they so amazed by this? When I went with a man who was thirty years older than me no one uttered a word. Why is this thing any different?"). Cited by Tuominen 2013, 98.

[19] "Kerran mie kysyin Everstiltä, että miksi se kiuttaa minua / ja suoranaisesti yrittää tappaa minut harva se kuukausi. Siihen se / vastasi, että sitä ruoskii ketä rakastaa." (*E*, 130–132)

Everstinna's plot development recreate the power dynamics of Kariniemi's novel *Poro-Kristiina*. As already suggested, the relationships of *Poro-Kristiina* reflect metaphorically the ideological, economic and cultural forces that are brought into contact in Finnish Lapland. Similar to characters in *Poro-Kristiina*, those in *Everstinna* embody different actors of the colonisation process; the colonel, a Southerner with continental training and aristocratic background, embodies the coloniser. In this relationship, the protagonist's role is to represent conquered Finnish Lapland; thus, it evokes the metaphor of woman as a land, a feature that has been previously observed in the oeuvre of Mukka (Lahtinen 2013). Thus, Liksom's *Everstinna* comments on the tradition of Arctic hysteria but does so in an ambivalent manner: In the latter part of the novel, the protagonist turns from victim to perpetrator, as she begins the relationship with the young Sámi, Tuomas. This arrangement seems to metaphorically indicate the awakening of postcolonial consciousness and the recognition of Sámi presence: instead of merely reimagining the traditional North-South dichotomy, *Everstinna* suddenly reveals the internal conflicts and power relations that reside within the North. The victimised North, embodied by the protagonist, initiates a new cycle of exploitation that is based on ethnic identity. As the colonised becomes the coloniser, readers are suddenly challenged to reflect on their identification and empathetic attitude towards the protagonist. Thus, the novel highlights the new level of complexity that is attached to regional identities in a postcolonial era.

The reformatory tendencies of *Everstinna* are not limited to the level of metaphorical relations between characters and geographical locations or counterparts of the colonisation process. Liksom's novel also regenerates the spatial repertoire of Northern Finnish prose fiction. Although the lush and aromatic swamps, the wilds and the fells of Lapland dominate the novel, the narrative geography of *Everstinna* is inter-regional and even international, to some extent. The beginning of the novel takes place in Kittilä, in western Lapland, where the protagonist is born into a rich family of local peasantry. However, already the beginning of the novel does stage the protagonist in multiple regional centres of Lapland: she participates in various ideological meetings in Kittilä, Kemi and Oulu and travels to Germany as a member of Lapland Girl Scouts. Similarly, the long engagement period between the protagonist and the colonel is divided between locations in Lapland (Rovaniemi, Kittilä, and multiple smaller towns and nature destinations) and trips to Helsinki, Germany, Poland and Russia. As the Continuation War ends and the marriage between the protagonist and the colonel is officiated, the newlyweds flee Lapland and retreat to Tammisaari, in southern Finland. The couple's return to Lapland takes many years and shortly after, the protagonist is finally able to leave their violent marriage. The final years of her life and the latter part of the novel take place in Kalmalompolo, a fictive location that can be situated in Western Lapland. The novel does not present an uncharted territory, which would be the viewpoint of the colonisers nor does it engage with the regionalist dreams of *Heimat*, the idyllic ideal of home or homeland in the German tradition (Eigler and Kugele 2012) or the indigenous perspective of the Sámi. Instead, the novel and its

imagination of Lapland evokes the postmodern metaphor of the network. The Finnish North of the novel materialises in multiple locations and during the journeys between them, an arrangement that is further emphasised by the increased mobility of the characters.

As Lyytikäinen and Rossi (2022) suggest, the tradition of Arctic hysteria has associated Finnish North with passions, violence and self-harm; in light of the trajectory discussed above, *Everstinna* can be read as a counter-narrative that also challenges the association between violence and the Finnish North. Although the relationship between the colonel and the protagonist is initiated in Kittilä, Western Lapland, their married life and the colonel's violence actually begins in southern Finland. Tammisaari, a small town on the south coast of Finland and a close neighbour to Hanko, the southernmost part of mainland Finland, is the backdrop for the scenes that depict the colonel's brutally violent attacks against the protagonist. Thus, the narrative suggests the violent tendencies of civilisation reside among the societies of southern Finland and the military communities of Hanko and Tammisaari. *Everstinna*'s geography reverses the Conradian journey from civilisation into the heart of darkness; ironically, the novel draws an analogy between the marriage of the characters and the colonial rulers' discovery of their innate brutality. The protagonist's and her husband's flight to the Finnish south is their journey to the heart of darkness.

The traditional notions of the romanticised Northern wilderness are depicted in *Everstinna* from the viewpoint of the colonel's brothers-in-arms, the German military but as the protagonist and her friends host German officers in the northern city of Rovaniemi, they quickly realise that the fascination with Northern wilderness proves to be terrifying rather than sublime for the Central-European soldiers:

> They make a big fuss about how enchanting the wilderness is, but they're afraid of the woods, afraid of mist and fog and silence, cloudy skies, hollows, fields and bogs, lakes and ponds, beetles and mosquitoes, bears and reindeer and blackflies. (*C,* 83)
>
> Erämaitten lumosta vouhottahneet kermaanit pölkäsit mettiä, outamaita, lunta, usvaa, sumua, hiljasuutta, pilvistä taivasta, matalia maita, peltoja ja soita, makeavetisiä järviä ja lampia, kärpäsiä, koppakuoriasia, sääskiä, karhuja, poroja sekä mäkäriä. (*E*, 108–109)

In the excerpt, the fright of the German soldiers gives way to the narrator's long list of elements of Laplandic nature. The scene that begins as a comic depiction of the German troops becomes a celebration of Northern nature as the narrator turns the gaze from haze in the low-lying areas and the beasts and the insects that populate the region. The long list and its repetitive form also invite the reader's response, as the listing of animate and inanimate natural objects creates a hypnotic, stirring effect. Ecocritical scholars have pointed out that enumeration, a narrative technique that applies lists and catalogues of various sorts, often appears in texts that address

nature and either its sublime effect or, to a growing extent, its vulnerability (see e.g., Heise 2016; Weik von Mossner 2017). Ursula Heise (2016, 55–86) suggests in her study *Imagining Extinction* that especially the loss of species is often addressed with enumerative forms of narration. In the case of *Everstinna*, the narrator's list evokes the overwhelming presence of Northern nature and stages how it subjugates the enthusiastic yet poorly prepared *kermaanit*, the Germans. In fact, the narrative technique seems to add a layer of ambivalence to the scene. Thus, the helplessness of the German warriors and the richness and power of Northern nature are questioned; as it is with species extinction, diversity does not equate perseverance. The unsubtle, centralised and masculinist ideology of the Nazi regime is contrasted with diverse Northern nature, which is also associated with femininity through the motif of swamp; as the excerpt states, the clash of these two not only reveals the hatred at the heart of fascist ideology but also the underlying fear.

Thus, *Everstinna* depicts Lapland and the North of Finland as a periphery of Europe, a region that relies on political, ideological and military imports yet the novel also highlights the role of both Lapland and its regional capital Rovaniemi as a node that connects Finland to its comrade-in-arms, Germany. A lengthy section (97–129) of *Everstinna* focuses on the Continuation War and the joint eastern front of Finnish and German troops. *Everstinna*'s focus on the active participation of Northern Finland and the Finnish extreme right can be interpreted as a counter-narrative that deviates from the Finnish government's official line that during and after the Continuation War interpreted Finland's relationship with Germany as a form of 'co-belligerency' instead of alliance (for different interpretations of Finland's and Germany's form of co-operation, see Hannikainen 2020).

Simultaneously, the novel depicts the protagonist's ideological awakening to Nazi thought. The protagonist's fascination with continental fascism can also be interpreted as a depiction of a colonialist relationship between Germany and Finland. This is recognized explicitly as the first-person narrator describes Finland as "the colony of Germany" (*C,* 23).[20] What begins as the protagonist's interest in homegrown fascism develops into a deep dive to the continental extreme right. The protagonist's fascination with German national socialism grows from her personal disappointment in Finnish nationalists:

> I remembered what my father used to say: that all the best things came from Germany – religion from Martin Luther, coffee from Paulig – and I added nationalism from Führer. I gave up on Finland's cheap, homegrown fascists and set my sights on the German variety. (*C*, 23)
>
> Mie muistin isän sanat, että kaikki hyä tullee Saksasta: uskonto Lutterilta, kahvi Paulikilta, johonka itte lisäsin, että nationalismi Vyyreriltä. Si-

[20] "Suomihan oli tuohon rakhoon Saksan siirtomaa [– –]." (*E*, 33)

> irsin katseen pois kehnoista raakaaihneista leivotuista Suomen vasisteista ja aloin tuijottahmaan yhä enempi Saksaa. (*E*, 32)

Besides the disappointment in the Finnish extreme right, the first-person narrator also recalls the earlier Finnish civil war (1918) and Germany's involvement in the conflict and suggests that her fondness for German ideas was evoked during that time. Thus, the protagonist's interest in German ideology is constructed as a natural continuation of Fenno-German relations and Germany's successful invasion of Southern Finland during the Finnish civil war. The narrator recalls seeing German troops in Oulu and describes a sensual experience of observing them:

> The train was brimming over with hundreds of Germans: officers and enlisted men, bicycle corps and infantry men who smelled so sweet I wanted to lick them. Some of them were carrying bags of wheat flour on their backs, some had sacks of rice. (*C*, 24)
>
> Junista pursui satoja saksalaisia: upseereita, alempaa päälystöä, munamankelimiehiä ja sotihlaita, jokka haisit niin sokkerisele, että minun teki mieli nuola niitä. Kellä oli sölässä nisujauhosäkki, kellä riisryynipussukka. (*E*, 33)

In the excerpt, fascism is depicted through the metaphor of baking; thus, fascism, a violent political ideology, is domesticated and transferred to the sphere of homemaking. The narrator, merely a young child during the scene, immediately takes a liking to the German troops that arrive with bountiful offerings. The large numbers of German soldiers are associated with the richness of the foodstuff they bring; instead of their rigor and dominance, they convey to the first-person narrator a sense of wealth and abundance; the tempting scent of sugar and the promise of freshly baked *nisu*, sweet buns appeals to her. These bodily cravings and mouth-watering sensory perceptions anticipate the protagonist's sexual appetite which later develops as she enters adulthood. The protagonist's first experience with Germans also continues the domestication of the extreme ideology and activates the metaphorical association between woman and land, as it is precisely the grain products and other agricultural goods that attract her attention. The fixation on grain products can further be understood as an allusion to the national socialist expression *Blut und Boden* ('blood and soil') which underscores not only the localist emphasis of national socialism but also the movement's idealised understanding of agrarian and rural life. The agricultural and rural associations that the narrator invites with these metaphorical expressions also form a stark contrast to the spatial trope of swamp which dominates the beginning and the end of the novel. The swamp, typically a wild and agriculturally infertile environment, appears during the protagonist's private and intimate moments, while the rural and agricultural spheres are activated during her most active involvement in the ideology: fascism and in her interpersonal relationship with the Colonel.

The association between agriculture and national socialism also draws from a regional perspective; traditionally, Laplanders have referred to inhabitants of Finnish south as *lantalainen*, 'people of the manure'. By referring to manure and its role in agriculture, inhabitants of the Finnish North distance themselves from the sedentary and agricultural life of the South and reinforce the association between hunting and herding and Lapland. The role that agricultural products and their richness play in the novel can thus be seen as an implied image of the colonial presence of sedentary and farming cultures in the global North. To that end, not only national socialism but nationalism and other forms of attachment to homeland have been associated with sedentary agricultural societies, as Yi-Fu Tuan suggests in his seminal work, *Space and Place* (1977).

Gendered Narratives of the Arctic Swamp and Ecstatic Feelings

In addition to the rural agricultural land that has been mentioned as a landscape portrayed in the novel, the Arctic swamp certainly stands out as it forms a spatial and narrative frame for the beginning and the end of the narrator's life recollection. The Finnish original of *Everstinna* opens with the word 'swamp' (*suo*), which appears in the compound expression *suopenkereinen*, referring to the swamp-like banks of a nameless pond. This is later followed by a deeper engagement with the swamp in the narrator's recollection of her childhood time as she recalls coming across "a boggy stand of pine" (*C*, 6)[21] on her way to a summer camp with the Lotta Svärd organisation. The narrator-protagonist's surroundings consist of various water formations that distinguish the "backwater" and the "pond [– –] all covered in waterweeds", from the "pretty little wild stillwater lake with sandy beach" (*C*, 6).[22] The multiple references to various types of wetlands in the novel testify to the narrator's engagement with her northern environment which culminates in her ecstatic and erotic encounter with a string bog (*aapasuo*) as an adolescent. Towards the end of the novel, the narrator-protagonist revisits the bog as a place of sexual (re)awakening in which she experiences extreme emotions.

Hence, the beginning of the novel gestures to the ecstatic swamp scene that takes place at an early stage of the novel and the protagonist's coming-of-age story; similarly, the latter parts of the novel repeatedly revisit the swamp as the protagonist makes peace with her past life and embraces a path towards recovery. As the swamp accompanies the narrator's multiple lives, it echoes what Margaret Doody suggests in *The True Story of the Novel*, when she states that "[t]he place where land and water

[21] "[K]ävelin kimpsuineni syäle methään, vetisen jokisuvanon ja järven väliselle kankhaalle." (*E*, 11)

[22] "Etelässä oli lampi, jota sammalikko valtasi koala vauhila, ja pohjosessa oikein nätti tyynivetinen erämaajärvi, jonka vesi oli puhasta ja eteläinen ranta hiekkanen." (*E*, 11)

meet is a place of genesis for a novel" (Doody 1996, 320). Similar to the fire that starts at the sixth match in the introductory pages of the novel, the narrator's life story is composed of many failed beginnings or, in her own words, involves life that has taught her that one can surrender "again and again" (*C*, 20).[23] Both wetland scenes are preceded by an introductory sentence that considers one's ability to both remember and overcome past sexual and physical violations and recoveries. Like the dark waters of the swamp that leave organic traces on the skin or the leech that sucks one's blood, the novel suggests that old wounds are not only preserved in that space but also healed and pleasures regained in that same environment. In terms of the novel's temporality, the ecstatic experience that takes place in the swamp is one of time suspension. The narrator does not have a past nor a future; she is completely taken in an absolute present time. When she later shares an erotic moment with Tuomas in the swamp, towards the end of the novel, their age difference disappears while he makes love like it is not his first time and her, once 'broken', aging body reconnects to her long-lost orgasms.

Swamps, bogs, wetlands and marshes are intermediate spaces that unite land and water, refuse dichotomies and escape classification. In the Western imagination, swamps have been sites not only of disease, horror and monstrosity but also fertile grounds that have been drained, reclaimed and developed. In his cultural history of wetlands, Rodney James Giblett (1996) acknowledges that Western thought especially 19th-century North American nature writing has also celebrated wetlands as sacred spaces and bastions of nature conservation. However, these sites have simultaneously been controlled, developed and erased by increasingly sophisticated and effective technologies. As wetlands constitute approximately one-third of Finland's land area, it is no surprise that they hold a canonical role in Finnish culture and literature. In the *Kalevala* (1849), the Finnish national epic, sage Väinämöinen defeats his enemy Joukahainen and sings him into a swamp. Väinämöinen's wisdom and knowledge of singing literally bury his opponent, as the swamp presents itself as a site of struggle and strife. This association is modified in the latter literary tradition, wherein the swamp is connected to the tradition of pioneer farming. Väinö Linna's eminent trilogy *Täällä Pohjantähden alla* (1959, 1960 and 1962, transl. *Under the North Star* 2001–2003) opens with a scene that depicts the protagonist's attempt to reclaim a swamp and turn it into a fertile field. The combat between the sage and the young man or the elderly and the younger generations, is revised into a struggle between civilisation and wilderness or man and nature. Besides being a place of struggle, the swamp has carried folkloristic associations with death and burial. These associations have been revisited by works of contemporary Finnish fiction, such as Marko Hautala's horror novel *Leväluhta* (2018), which is set in a well-documented archaeological water burial site of the same name located in western Finland.

[23] "Joku viisas on sanonu, että antautua voi vain kerran, mutta eletty elämä on näyttäny mulle, että aina voi antautua uuesthaan." (*E*, 28)

The author Rosa Liksom also reinvests this masculine tradition of representing wetlands as places of struggle and horror by establishing the swamp as a setting for blossoming, self-discovery and youth; these are all notions that cannot be detected in the masculinist and agrarian swamp tradition. In *Everstinna*, the swamp is a site of intimacy and transcendence: it is a nurturing environment that offers sensual pleasure and self-immersion. The masculine struggle of the folklore's swamp is refined into a spiritual and transcendental contention that is nevertheless grounded in the scenes' sensuality and eroticism. Thus, Liksom aligns with other Finnish female writers who have similarly challenged the dominant masculine representations of wetlands. For instance, in her analysis of the swamp in L Onerva's *Mirdja* (1908), one of the renowned works of Finnish decadence, Viola Parente-Čapková (2019, 146) suggests that the novel can be read as ironically commenting on previous patriarchal and patriotic imagery of the bog. Interestingly, *Everstinna* and *Mirdja* similarly portray a childless 'mad old woman' (Parente-Čapková 2019, 145) who has sensory communion with a northern swamp. Even though the outcome of this communion is different in the two novels, they both represent the swamp as an ambivalent place for intense sensory experiences and intimate encounters that challenge the united, dominant visions suggested in the masculine tradition.

In the course of the narrator's first ecstatic encounter with the swamp, she is taken by a sudden vision of future in which the world appears to her as both male and female. The blurring of gender distinctions opens a utopian world in which the primacy of sensations makes words obsolete and any conceptions of good and bad disappear. In the narrator's recollection, her sensory experience is intertwined with her physical surroundings in an indistinguishable continuity. In his study of the "imaginative creation to which [the] idea [of primitivism] has given rise", Michael Bell (2018) challenges the long-standing distinction between the inner world of feelings and the physical world of objects by mobilising the animist belief that humans live in continuity with their natural environment. As in *Everstinna*, the continuity between humans and nature also suggests the disappearance of morally motivated distinctions between good and bad as everything forms a whole that just *is*. Bell (2018) emphasizes that 'primitive sensibility' concerns ways of feeling rather than concrete objects. Therefore, it is the *response* to the external world that defines the 'primitive feeling' as it has been addressed in literary works. The described altered state of being that arises in connection with the northern environment is a central trope in discourses on Arctic hysteria; it has also been connected to 'primitive passions' (*alkukantaiset intohimot*) and extreme emotions such as ecstatic feelings (e.g., Lyytikäinen and Rossi 2022). In addition, the engagement with the northern swamp in *Everstinna* suggests that Arctic hysteria also concerns the copresence of contrary emotions, such as love and horror or pain, in the way the external world is experienced.

In the description of the swamp, the novel introduces a dual relationship to nature that is portrayed as both nurturing and terrifying. The feeling of horror is strongly expressed by the protagonist's uncle as he warns her of the swamp's terrors:

> He carried me across a muddy pine bog. [– –] He talked to me, told me that I should never go to the swamp alone, that people drowned there, and animals, too, and there were all sorts of diseases you had to watch out for, like the creeping crud, and stinging beetles that give you bad blood, and lung cancer, and there were desperate thieves and child murderers with nothing to lose hiding in there, and unwanted fetuses. (*C*, 11)
>
> Se porisi mulle, että yksin et saa koskhaan mennä tämmöselle upottavalle suole, suonsilhmiin hukkuu ihmisiä ja elläimiä ja suossa on kaikenlaisia vitsauksia joita pittää varoa, niinko perseruttoa, sittiäisiä jokka pistää ihmisen suohneen pahhaa verta sekä keuhkotautisia syöpäläisiä, täällä piilottellee itteänsä kaiken toivonsa menettähneet rosvot ja murhamiehet ja tänne on sullottu tapetut kläpit ja ei-toivotut sikiöt. (*E,* 18)

Through her uncle's description, the narrator understands that the swamp is charged with folk-beliefs and discourses that make it a place of horror and death, outside of law and order, full of secrets and difficult to comprehend. The narrator eventually reinvests the swamp through an emotional shift from fear to love that is made possible by engaging with her northern surroundings. Although the feeling of love is connected to eyesight, as she distantly faces the wetland to overcome her fear, the primitive feeling of ecstasy arises in a moment of blinding vision inside the swamp. She closes her eyes and lets her senses lead her.[24] By replacing the church as a place of (religious) ecstasy, the arctic swamp also becomes a space of an enhanced sense of sight, olfactory or tactile sensations. Thus, it offers an alternative form of spiritual communion outside the constraints of Southern and Western Christianity, to which the narrator is subjected by the dominant belief system of the time and, more strongly so, by its Northern variant, the Laestadian movement. Ultimately, the emotional engagement with the northern swamp challenges and reinvests gendered narratives. If the horror of Uncle Matti's swamp description coexists with the narrator's loving relationship to the same landscape, both portray the swamp as a place with a will of its own.

Transgressive Sexuality and Grotesque Laughter

If emphasized or impulsive sexuality has already been connected to Arctic hysteria (Ihonen 1999), our reading of the swamp scenes in *Everstinna* highlights the possible

[24] In this moment of total ecstasy, the narrator is depicted as being in a state similar to that of Bernini's Saint Teresa – the Carmelite nun who was shown with a collapsed head and her eyes half-closed, rolling back in their sockets in response to the overwhelming feeling that overtakes her. The comparison with St. Teresa serves to highlight the aura of sacred that surrounds the event. For St. Teresa and the narrator, the moment of ecstasy suggests a sensual encounter with a desired object, God for St. Teresa and the Arctic swamp for the protagonist. The spear in Bernini's sculpture and the battered body of the narrator in Liksom's novel also add a component of physical violence to the scene.

role of northern nature in representing excessive or transgressive sexuality, often in seriocomic ways. Furthermore, the story becomes a counter-narrative for those narratives of Arctic hysteria, in which sensuality and sexuality are darkened by religious and social anxieties, guilt and shame (cf., Karkulehto 2010). The close connection between religion and sexuality is both suggested and challenged in the narrator-protagonist's immersion into the northern wilderness as a young girl. As she is juxtaposed with a wild reindeer with sensuous instincts, her pleasurable selfloss is also compared by the narrator to religious ecstasies typical of the Laestadian movement. Liksom parodies these extreme emotions and behaviours with warm, playful humour as her monologist describes her younger self "whooping like a holy roller" (*C*, 7).[25] In Kariniemi's *Poro-Kristiina*, the protagonist experiences intense religious guilt and shame due to her sexual awakening in a Laestadian community. The young woman is torn between two different selves struggling within her, as if they were conflicting forces of nature and culture. One wants to behave like a good Christian and obey the orders of her religious grandparents, while the other is a witch or a shaman, who is consumed by constant appetites of sexual pleasures and wealth. This second self has emerged after her father has taken her to an old Sámi sacred place, *seita*. There she meets her ancestor who appears in the shape of a reindeer. The excess desires of her second self have a corrupting effect on the protagonist, at least according to her socially obedient self. The conflict between two sets of traditions and values feeds on the division of the self. Unity is found only in northern nature, which give her dizzying pleasures.

In *Everstinna*, the copresence of pleasure and pain, of sexuality and violence in the description of an ecstatic moment evoking sexual orgasms also connects the swamp scene to eroticism as defined by French philosopher and writer Georges Bataille. To him, eroticism is "the approval of life even in death", which means that it implies both the "exuberance of life" and, through sexual reproduction, an understanding of our own finitude (Bataille 1957, 13, our translation).[26] Similarly, the narrator experiences and expresses a sense of extreme sensual freedom that makes her welcome death: "I was so free and full and limitless that I could feel the sap running through me and I thought, if death came for me right now I'd welcome it with open arms" (*C*, 8).[27] The protagonist's bodily fusion and immersion into wilderness further highlights this erotic connection between ecstatic sexuality and death as this first swamp scene humorously evokes the feminine orgasm, also commonly referred to as 'the little death'. Such associations are replicated in the second swamp scene as the narrator's multiple orgasms have her comment that she thought she would die of pleasure as she expe-

[25] "Kiljahtelin kuin hihhuli" (*E*, 13). Hihhuli is a pejorative Finnish term, referring to a devoted religious person, usually a member of a revivalist movement.

[26] "De l'érotisme, il est possible de dire qu'il est l'approbation de la vie jusque dans la mort. [– –] bien que l'activité érotique soit d'abord une exubérance de la vie, l'objet de cette recherche psychologique, indépendante, comme je l'ai dit, du souci de reproduction de la vie, n'est pas étranger à la mort."

[27] "[O]lin niin vaphaa ja täysi ja rajaton, että minun sisältä valusi mahla ja aattelin että jos nyh kuolema tullee niin mie otan sen syli auki vasthaan." (*E*, 13)

riences her first sexual encounter with Tuomas. The upholding of moral distinctions brought by the primitive feeling of ecstasy and by the sexual intercourse between a minor and a middle-aged woman in the second swamp scene points to another dimension of eroticism, as presented by Bataille. To him, eroticism produces "a dissolution of the constituted forms" (Bataille 1957, 20, our translation),[28] which means that it exceeds rational knowledge and produces, as a transgressive experience, an inversion between the values of the "noble and the ignoble, of honesty and obscene, high and low" (Sabot 2007, 89, our translation).[29] As symbols of knowledge, the eyes often come 'under attack' through various forms of blindness or violence which physically illustrated this disruption. Notably, during her first ecstatic experience in the swamp, the narrator of Liksom's novel "squeeze[s her] eyes shut and drift[s], trusting [her] instincts" (*C*, 8).[30] As she shuts her eyes, her primitive feelings overcome her rational self. In relation to Arctic hysteria, this can be understood as a temporarily altered state of mind and body or as a momentary suspension of the moral and social order as experienced in the swamp.

In its relation to transgression, eroticism has been linked in literary history to an exploration of the limits of human experience and imagination. Literary works addressing Arctic hysteria, such as Liksom's novel, allow the unrestricted expression of violent impulses, taboo experiences and desires without upholding a clear distinction between right and wrong. In its association with eroticism, the novel's Arctic swamp becomes more than a background for sensual and ecstatic experiences; it is shown as a generative space that interacts with the protagonist. Because of its ambiguity and its association to a liminal space (Doody 1996), the swamp welcomes transgressive acts and triggers altered states of body and mind in relation to one's environment. This also translates to the narrator's life story as the wetland scenes occur at strategic points in her account. The first swamp encounter in *Everstinna* precedes the narrator's emerging extreme nationalism, while the second one initiates her taboo relationship with a boy. Thus, in the novel, the swamp functions as a mental and narrative threshold between different states of being.

Bataille's take on ecstasy highlights its role in awakening complex emotional responses as, for him, "ecstasy is born precisely from the conversion of the gaze to things below, to those darkest movements of existence which, instead of simple disgust or shame, provoke laughter as well as anxiety" (Sabot 2007, 90, our translation).[31] This shift of perspective is also at play in the carnivalesque tradition which combines and celebrates excess, the comical, the transgressive and popular culture. Similarly, the

[28] "Ce qui est en jeu dans l'érotisme est toujours une dissolution des formes constituées."

[29] "[...] dans la dimension transgressive de l'érotisme, une inversion des valeurs du noble et de l'ignoble, de l'honnête et de l'obscène, du haut et du bas."

[30] "Mie pistin silmät kiini ja leijuin etheenpäin pelkkien vaistoitten varassa." (*E*, 14)

[31] "Pour Bataille [– –], l'extase naît justement de la conversion du regard aux choses d'en bas, à ces mouvements les plus obscurs de l'existence qui, au lieu du simple dégoût ou de la honte, provoquent aussi bien le rire que l'angoisse."

protagonist's ecstatic and transgressive sexual encounter in and with the swamp offers a grotesque and powerful take on the 'bog woman', as identified by Parente-Čapková:

> The gendering of bog imagery in the work of Finnish decadent and symbolist male writers [– –] foregrounds the affinity of the bog with negative femininity, danger and otherness, as opposed to 'healthy' masculinity and the Finnish patriotic project. It also evokes the figure of the femme fatale often conceived as the protagonist's 'dark self'. (Parente-Čapková 2019, 146)

Everstinna mobilises and modifies the earlier tradition of the decadent *femme fatale* by portraying the witch-like protagonist's erotic immersion in nature as a young girl. Instead of her negative 'dark self', the erotic scenes narrated by the monologist in her story eventually show her as a sexually liberated, loving woman – a manifestation of the tender world of united opposites in the girl's early utopia. For readers who become the willing addressees of the narrator-protagonist's engaging narration as she shares her ecstatic experiences of sexual union with young Tuomas, Liksom's work offers a cathartic effect of sexual empowerment and intoxication, accompanied potentially by anxiety and amusement. Turned into "books that would sell" (*C*, 135),[32] the monologist's sensational life story presents her as a symbol of female empowerment: a priestess of sex who was considered to write in a revolting manner, like a man (see e.g., Koppinen 2017; Tuominen 2013, 92).

However, the gendered narrative of binary dichotomies is not simply reversed in the protagonist's monologue. As she frees herself from the social constraints that regulate her sexuality, she nevertheless remains a sign of feminine danger as a sexually untamed child or a crone-like *femme fatale* who revolts against the religious-patriotic regime of the nation[33]. Hence, Liksom's novel lays open the functioning logic of the 'bog woman' trope by investing the male decadent tradition with the narrative of an 'unruly woman' who, as Rowe (1995, 10) suggests, is "an ambivalent figure of female outrageousness and transgression with roots in the narrative forms of comedy and the social practices of carnival". The protagonist's excessive and even comical encounter with the swamp highlights the satirical aspects of Liksom's novel as a counter-narrative to early, violent portrayals of Arctic hysteria. It also suggests the work's reappropriation of negative femininity and female victimhood in that tradition.

[32] "Mie kirjoitin sitä mikä myi" (*E*, 174).

[33] In *Poro-Kristiina*, the protagonist kills her half-Sámi child born out of wedlock, whereas in *Everstinna* the protagonist involuntarily loses her unborn child due to the Colonel's violent attack. This could be read as a reappropriation of negative femininity as in *Everstinna* the loss of the child is the result of domestic violence within the context of a marital relationship.

From Maiden of Finland to Fallen Maiden

In line with Liksom's previous work, which has often parodied Finland's national grand narratives (Kantokorpi 1997), *Everstinna* gives voice to a controversial character whose personal account also unveils the nation's dark side and the blind spots of historical narratives. In addition to shedding new light on Finnish nationalism and Finland's history before and during the war, the narrator's coming-of-age story often intertwines with Finland's becoming a newly independent nation. As the protagonist grows to womanhood in a time of hatred and vengeance,[34] Finland knows a similar fate as its acquired independence is accompanied by a traumatic civil war. Similarly, the previously mentioned train scene depicting the narrator-protagonist's first encounter with a "real German" (*C*, 23)[35] not only foretells her future political engagements but can also be seen as symbolically contextualizing Finland's future decision to become an ally of Nazi Germany. This scene proves to be highly meaningful as it also introduces masculine and colonial claims over the northern part of Finland's territory that will develop dramatically throughout the novel. A child at the time, the narrator is reminded by her older sister Rebekka that the Colonel also disembarked that same train to "whip the wild, free North into shape and get it organized" (*C*, 24).[36] This also suggests a metaphorical association between Lapland and the narratorprotagonist as she will endure a similar treatment at the colonel's hands. Just like her relationship with the colonel or even Finland's relationship with Nazi Germany, the beginning of the "alliance" is presented as full of promises that will eventually prove to be destructive.

Similar analogies recur throughout the novel as they connect the narratorprotagonist's individual life story to wider narratives on nation and gender. The same way the novel refers to the Finnish Maiden to illustrate the nation's fate during the war, the narrator's life story, from young nationalist woman abiding by the feminine ideal to ravaged victim of domestic abuse, associates her to the Maiden. Furthermore, in the portrayal of a land that is slowly being colonised, then destroyed and burnt to ultimately relive, her life recollection is reminiscent of Lapland's fate during and after the Second World War. If the female protagonist in *Hytti nro 6* (2011, transl. *Compartment No. 6* 2014) is evocative of the muted Finnish Maiden, who is forced to accompany and tolerate the Big Bear of the Soviet Union in times of Cold War (as suggested in Chapter II of this volume), the protagonist-narrator in *Everstinna* is approached here as a 'fallen' maiden whose unrestrained words and shameless account complicates the dominant national narrative.

[34] "I was born in a time of anger. I grew to womanhood in a time of anger and vengeance" (*C*, 13–14). "Aika, jollonka mie synnyin, oli vihan aikaa. Aika, jollonka mie kasusin naiseksi, oli vihan ja koston aikaa" (*E*, 20–21). Unlike Lola Rogers, who has translated the Finnish emotion word *viha* as 'anger', we talk about hatred or hate in our analysis.

[35] "Mie näin saksalaisen omin silmin ensimäistä kertaa jo kesäkuun alkupäivinä vuonna kaheksantoista [– –]" (*E*, 32).

[36] "[Everstin] tehtävänä oli panna vilhiin ja vaphaasseen pohjosseen kuri ja järjestys" (*E*, 33).

Similarly, as the novel reinvested the negative trope of the bog woman with the empowering sexuality of a liberated woman, the positive symbol of the Finnish Maiden is negatively invested by the account of a woman who unveils the dark side of the nation. Unlike the Maiden, the fallen maiden reappropriates the Maiden symbolic and ultimately speaks to the nation's misfortunes instead of its grandeur. If "[w]oman as a national symbol was the guardian of the continuity and immutability of the nation, the embodiment of its respectability" (Mosse 1985, 18), the fallen maiden addresses the nation's turmoil and changing state, as well as its misdeeds. Similar to the unruly woman unveiled in the swamp scenes, the fallen maiden uses "mimicry or masquerade, a parodic performance of the feminine that 'makes visible' what is supposed to remain concealed" (Rowe 1995, 6). She is loud like the unruly woman in the sense that her speech is freed from the constraints of respectability and national shame due to a lost war and alliance with Nazi Germany. Ultimately, the fallen maiden is read as a powerful figure that has the potential to challenge the representation of women in national discourses.

Everstinna also reveals the consequences of the violence that remains hidden or are perceived as shameful vulnerabilities in the masculinist's narratives of war. Whereas the war stories embedded in Tapio's *Arktinen hysteria* novels [Arctic Hysteria] (1967–1968) emphasize the almost otherworldly rage and grit of Finnish soldiers, Liksom's novel highlights the active role of northern nature, which casts terror on the fearful Russian enemy. The protagonist of the novel also mocks the idea of Finland as a helpless 'little Maiden' who is in the need of outside support and protection. Rather, the Maiden Finland is the source of dread and dismay herself. The protagonist's contempt towards the moderate leaders of the country in her youth is accompanied by her more critical views of the enthusiastic spirit spreading in the country as the protagonist brags of Finland becoming one of the greatest nations of the world in only three months. Finnish leaders seek justification for the war and speak for German friendship and assistance to ward off the enemy:

> I was listening to the radio, and it occurred to me that the more German martial songs they played, the closer the war was getting. First they cranked up the distrust and hate for the Russians little by little, calling Stalin a mad dog, talking about the Great Bear threatening the little Maiden Finland and how pretty soon they'd be taking our territory. (*C*, 57)
>
> Mie kuuntelin ratiota ja hoksasin, että sielä alethiin soittahmaan sitä enempi saksalaisia sotilasmarsseja, mitä lähemäksi sottaa käythiin. Ensin viritelthiin päivästä toisseen aina vain syvempää epäluuloa ja vihhaa ryssiä kohtaan, haukuthiin Staalinia hulluksi koiraksi ja propakoithiin ja puhuthiin kuinka iso karhu uhkaa pientä neitoa ja kohta se viepi meiltä tilukset. (*E,* 76)

The Continuation War against the Soviet Union begins as the little Maiden follows in the footsteps of the great Third Reich. The nation's leaders naively trust in the

pact made with the Southern ally and even the most peace-loving men are urged to fight for their land and for the previously lost parts of Karelia. In the protagonist's account, the war-mongering of a young nation quickly turns into another surrender via an unjust peace treaty that leads to the destruction of Lapland. The narrator cites President Paasikivi's words on Finland being "the lamb" who has willingly "shov[ed] itself in the wolf's mouth" (*C*, 57)[37] and now faces the consequences of the unfortunate alliance.[38]

The narrator-protagonist's life story highlights her family's affiliation to the White civil guards and her involvement in the Lotta Svärd as they both play an important role in her formative years to fuel her extreme, fascist nationalism[39] and shape her understanding of women's function in the nation. Similarly, the Lapland girl scout and the Lotta Svärd memories combine traditional views regarding feminine qualities: "I learned that a girl ought to be hardworking to the point of self-sacrifice, obedient, always diligently preparing for her future role as a mother of soldiers" (*C*, 7),[40] to the violence of the narrator's political views: "After summer camp I was so buoyed up that nothing could hold me back. I was full of scouting and civil defense work.[41] They were both based on German idealism and the German feeling of superiority, plus hatred of the Russkies" (*C*, 15).[42] Both Nazism and Finnish extreme nationalism subject women to violence due to the disdain of femininity at the centre of that ideology. Marital love, in particular, is defined by obedience and self-sacrifice to a superior man in an analogy with war:

> I learned that [– –] men should have a dash of tyrant in them, and that they should be the moral superiors of women. That love is a battle that begins with hostilities from the man's side and ends with his moral victory, and a woman has to learn to accept that and still love the man purely and sincerely. (*C*, 7)

[37] "Lammas tukki itteänsä väkisten suen suuhun, niinko Paasikivi myöhemmin sano" (*E*, 76).

[38] The novel refers here to the secret Molotov-Ribbentrop Pact signed between Nazi Germany and the Soviet Union already in 1939 before the Winter War. The purpose of the pact was to define the borders and military interests of both imperia in several smaller nations, including Finland.

[39] The Lapua movement, mentioned in the novel, was a radical Finnish nationalist and eventually fascist, political movement led by Vihtori Kosola. The members of the movement held proGerman and anti-Communist ideas and participated in far-right activities such as beatings of political opponents and even murders. They considered their mission to continue the legacy of the Finnish civil war and the White Guard.

[40] "Mie opin, että naisen pittää olla ahkera aina ittensä uhraamisseen asti sekä tottelevainen ja valmistautua huolela tulehvaan ossaansa sotihlaitten äitinä." (*E*, 12)

[41] The Finnish text here refers to the 'Lotta ideology' (lotta-aatetta) and activities involving the Finnish White Guard (suojeluskuntahommaa).

[42] "Kittilän leirin jälkheen olin niin nostheessa, että minua ei ennää piätelly mikhään. Olin täynä lotta-aatetta ja suojeluskuntahommaa. Molemat perustu saksalaisele itealismile ja ylemmyyentunnole sekä ryssävihale." (*E*, 15)

> Että miehisseen olemukseen kuuluu sopiva määrä tyranniutta ja että miehen pittää olla moraalisesti ylivoimanen naisseen nähen. Että rakhaus on taistelua, joka alkaa miehen puolelta vihala ja päättyy miehen moralisseen voithoon ja naisen häätyy oppia hyväksyhmään se ja silti rakastaa miestä viattomasti ja puhtaasti. (*E*, 12)

The patriotic-patriarchal ideals of female sacrifice and tolerance of beatings, also passed on by the protagonist's religious mother, dramatically materialise not only in the narrator's marriage with the colonel but also in the social silence regarding the widely known abuse she suffers. The structural hatred of women (see Ahmed 2014, 52–57) and the neglect of their well-being is clearly exemplified by a doctor's response to the narrator's unwillingness to get an abortion after receiving the colonel's order: "You're a married woman. Your opinion doesn't matter" (*C*, 110)[43] or in another doctor's advice to protect her head when she is being kicked. Here again, the narrator's personal account resonates with the larger social, nationalist and transnational context in which her story unfolds. The starving, "disfigured body of the Maiden of Finland" (*C*, 102)[44] metaphorically illustrates the history of poverty and violence that has shaped the once "colonised" (*C*, 23)[45] nation. On the other hand, the monologist's life narrative challenges the master-narrative of the virginal nation and the purity of its intact body, which is protected by Finnish soldiers from the enemy outsiders for the love of the nation. During the war, the violation of the Maiden's body is strongly depicted not only through the destruction of Lapland by the retreating Germans but also metaphorically, through the hateful and dominating behaviour of the Southern Finnish colonel towards women. The conflict between different literary traditions of cultivation and destruction is strongly exemplified in the metaphorical remodelling of the maiden's hem and hips and a torn arm as a consequence of war, even more tragically so, in the rape and murder of a young Karelian woman by the Finnish colonel. The latter echoes the dramatic outcomes of the war for the inhabitants of Finnish Karelia who were violently dispossessed of their homes and land during the Second World War and were later relocated in other parts of Finland.

In *The Cultural Politics of Emotion*, Sara Ahmed (2014, 124) describes love as a "way of bonding with others in relation to an ideal", of which the figure of the Finnish Maiden, originating in national romanticism, is the symbol. Ahmed's understanding not only informs individual feelings of belonging but also highlights the potential for love to unite groups in a nation. Early in Liksom's novel, the nationalistic ideal of womanhood is presented to the protagonist in the form of love for one's people and "the holy trinity: home, faith, fatherland" (*C*, 9).[46] Similarly, "[a]llegories of the female form

[43] "Entä Eversti, kysy lääkäri ja jatko, että rouva everstinna, sinun mielipitheelä ei ole mithään arvoa." (*E*, 144)

[44] "Met päästelimme pitkin Suomineion puutheen runtelemmaa ruumista alaspäin ja saavuima Tammisaahreen" (*E*, 133).

[45] "Suomihan oli tuohon rakhoon Saksan siirtomaa [– –]" (*E*, 33).

[46] "Kaiken perustana oli kuitekki pyhä kolminaisuus: koti, uskonto, isänmaa." (*E*, 15)

inform and animate many of the myths which have, in constant interplay, enriched and reinforced, maintained and reshaped our present identities as the inheritors of classical and Christian culture" (Warner 2000, xxiii). If the Finnish Maiden informs the nationalist myth of patriotic love, in our reading, the 'fallen maiden' is mobilised as an allegory of the nation understood in connection to Arctic hysteria, whose mythical background has participated in portraying the North as an excessive and violent place. *Everstinna* suggests an artistic reappropriation of the concept that serves here to unveil the violence endured by the North and its resulting traumas. As national allegories speak to the ideals around which nations build themselves, we argue that the fallen maiden testifies to their downsides, which often comprise the violent means by which they come to materialise those ideals.

One way this violence is expressed in the novel is through the entanglement of love and hate, which often becomes physical. However, even if a woman allegorically represents the nation's core values, Warner highlights that "[o]ften the recognition of a difference between the symbolic order, inhabited by ideal, allegorical figures, and the actual order, of judges, statesmen, soldiers, [– –] depends on the unlikelihood of women practising the concept they represent" (Warner 2000, xx). This is substantiated in the novel as the nationalist values preparing the narrator to become an ideal woman are also the ones teaching her to tolerate the violence that will be directed towards her, as well as tolerating the violence perpetrated in the name of the nation's glory. In line with Warner's idea, she is also taught that women are mothers of soldiers, and not soldiers themselves. This ironically sheds light on the novel's title since *everstinna* refers to the female version of the word *eversti*, meaning 'colonel' and it only refers to a marital status by which the husband's profession defines his wife's social status. Even today, *everstinna* refers to a woman's marital status and not to her possible work title. Similarly, Kariniemi's *Poro-Kristiina* ironically plays with the occupational title *poromies* (Kontio 1998, 84) which translates as reindeer herder, only this time *mies* ('man'), is replaced by the female protagonist's name. Ahmed's work on love also comments on the entanglement of love and hate in a white supremacist group's rhetoric, as for them it is love for the nation that brings the hate towards those who are considered a threat. Thus, Ahmed suggests in her text that hate "cannot be opposed to love" as love is "the pre-condition of hate" (Ahmed 2014, 50). In line with this, if love is built around the home, faith and fatherland, the same triad is shown in the novel as also giving rise to hate and violence.

Conclusion

Rosa Liksom's *Everstinna* is a work of fiction that invites the reader into an intimate and seemingly candid narrative. From there, the novel explodes into a rediscovery of the tropes of Arctic hysteria, such as overt sexuality, rage and violence and the ecstatic connection with nature. As the novel delivers a haunting image of the union between

political extreme far-right ideologies and personal, intimate partner violence, it simultaneously employs narrative devices, such as an intertextual adaptation of narratives of Arctic hysteria and seriocomic tone of voice, that complicate the reader's identification with the first-person narrator. The narratives of Arctic hysteria are further challenged as the novel reimagines the Finnish North as a networked and nodal region and as the protagonist's fascination with fascism is served through the metaphor of baking and other similar domestic and homey imagery. If Arctic hysteria has been used to describe extreme realities associated with the North and the Arctic, the emotions of love and shame at play in the novel not only inform on Lapland through the metaphor of the woman as land but also refer to the South, here represented by the Germans and the southern Finns and their treatment of the North, including the Sámi minorities. Ultimately, *Everstinna* addresses the violent, masculine histories of nation-building and the possibilities for healing and reconciliation after war, destruction and domestic violence, both concrete and metaphorical.

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The Sense of November: Strange Emotions and Entanglements of the Self and the World in Tove Jansson's *Sent i november*

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Introduction

Sent i november (1970, transl. *Moominvalley in November* 1971) is the last novel in Tove Jansson's Moomin suite and it is often read as a book in which the writer is saying farewell to the Moomin world (see, e.g., Niemi 1995, 83; Karjalainen 2016, 232).[1] It is a story not only about autumn, loss and sorrow but also about creativity, hope and new beginnings.

In many ways, *Sent i november* is not a book that a reader would expect from the Moomin series. For one, the Moomin family is missing from the story and the familiar sunny and paradise-like environment that the readers know from earlier novels has undergone a strange transformation. However, at the same time the novel brings the suite to a closure, repeating many themes and motifs that Jansson had developed in earlier stories: unsettling changes of nature and the comfort and joy found in art and acts of creativity. As usual, Jansson's text can be enjoyed by a 'dual audience' of both child and adult readers although Jansson herself thought that the book was rather depressing and complicated and might not appeal to children (see Karjalainen 2016, 235).[2]

[1] After *Sent i november*, Jansson published two picture books: *Den farliga resan* (1977) and *Skurken i muminhuset* (1980) with photo illustrations by Per Olov Jansson.

[2] Karjalainen (2016, 235) notes that Jansson was very pleased when she received a letter from a girl who particularly liked the book. In fact, it is not at all unusual that child readers also enjoy the book. One contemporary reader (Kirjojen kamari 7.11.2014) describes a reading experience as a 9-year-old: "I still remember how as a child the melancholy of the book seemed to linger, in a way; it was simultaneously sad and sweet." (transl. A. O.) ("Muistan yhä, kuinka teoksen alakulo jäi lapsena ikään kuin leijumaan – se oli samaan aikaan sekä surullista että suloista alakuloa.")

The readers of *Sent i november* find both melancholy and consolation in the book. They speak of a strange combination of 'anxiety and safety' (Valkeajoki 2003, 101), how the book *feels like* autumn and how it brings light to those who are experiencing depression and anxiety during the darkness of November. This is visible, for example, in many literary bloggers' comments about the novel.[3] Some readers even return to *Sent i november* every autumn or they wait for a rainy, dark November day to read it: they curl under a blanket (as Mymble does in the book) and read about the solitary characters who arrive in the Moomin valley one by one in search of the Moomin family.[4] *Sent i november* could also be described as a highlight of Jansson's work as a modernist writer. She focuses on the subjective perspectives of the characters and on the complex relations between loss and creativity. The novel brings forth evocative experiences of melancholy and anxiety while also examining how these painful experiences can be turned into art. Moreover, Jansson emphasizes the interactions between the characters and the November valley which is in the process of change and which changes the characters in turn, as many academic readers have noted (see, e.g., Valkeajoki 2003; Ojajärvi 2007; Heinämaa 2018).

In this chapter, I am particularly interested in the atmospheres and emotions constructed in the novel and in readers' engagement with the text. What draws both academic and non-academic readers to read the novel again and again? How is the combination of 'anxiety and safety' that is persistent in the novel constructed?[5] How is this related to the way Jansson portrays her characters engaging with their environment? I use the term 'sense of November' to capture the overall atmosphere of the novel. It refers to the affective states that many readers of the book describe and it can also be connected to the difficult states of mind and collective emotions that are often characterized as 'arctic hysteria'. It is simultaneously an embodied and imaginary experience: a strange feeling of anxiety and melancholy that emerges in a subject's engagement with a northern environment and that is also a source of creativity. In what follows, I offer a close reading of the novel, looking at the narrative, poetic and visual[6] elements that create the peculiar atmosphere; furthermore, I supplement my own read-

[3] E.g., Lumiomena 7.11.2021; Kirjojen pyörteissä 10.10.2019; Mielikuvituksen melodiat 2.6.2015; Kirjakaapin kummitus 29.11.2014; Ellen lukee 28.11.2014; Lumiomena 26.11.2014; Kirjojen kamari 7.11.2014; P. S Rakastan kirjoja 5.12.2013; Muumittaja 9.3.2013.

[4] See, e.g., Ajatuspolkuja 19.12.2020; Kun taivaalta sataa valkoisia hiutaleita 16.11.2018; Hurja hassu lukija 27.12.2017; The Wilde Things 19.11.2017; Sivutiellä 6.11.2015; Kirjakaapin kummitus 29.11.2014; Kirjojen kamari 7.11.2014; P. S Rakastan kirjoja 5.12.2013; Järjellä ja tunteella 19.11.2013.

[5] Sari Valkeajoki (2003) has likewise searched for answers to this, drawing especially from existentialist philosophy.

[6] As Sirke Happonen (2003; 2007) has shown, pictures have just as important role in Jansson's works as the words: they add to the text, they move the story forward, they participate in the construction of the characters and they create atmosphere.

ing with other academic and non-academic readers' experiences and interpretations, constructing a dialogue with other actual readers[7].

First, I situate the novel in the Moomin series and discuss how Jansson bases the story in the northern environment. I also link her description of the entanglements between the characters and their material environment to phenomenological and embodied cognitive theories of the mind that emphasize how the mind is shaped by the world in which it is embedded (Merleau-Ponty 2002; Colombetti 2013). Secondly, I look more carefully at the strange emotions constructed in the novel and the overall atmosphere they create: on the one hand, there is the sense of safety that emerges when one gathers one's belongings and curls up in the warmth of a home when everything outside is cold, dark and threatening; on the other hand, the autumn environment evokes feelings of loss, anxiety, disgust, melancholy and anger. Finally, I discuss how Jansson's exploration of creativity and use of metafictional elements afford comfort in an environment that is otherwise distressing.

Tove Jansson's Narratives of the North

In the beginning of *Sent i november* – as well as almost throughout the book – it is raining. As Jussi Ojajärvi (2007, 324) notes, the rain begins, stops for a few moments, only to begin again, creating a background and mood for the story. The narrator describes the valley on the west side of the Moominvalley covered in mist and rain:

> Time passed and the rain went on falling. There had never been an autumn when it had rained so much. The valley along the coast sank under the weight of this water that was streaming down the hillsides and the ground rotted away instead of just withering. Suddenly summer seemed so far away that it might just as well have never been and the distances between the houses seemed greater and everyone crept inside. (*Moominvalley in November* = *MN*, 8)
>
> Tiden gick och regnet föll. Aldrig någon höst hade det regnat så mycket. Dalarna kring kusten blev sanka av allt vatten som rann ner över kullar och berg, och marken ruttnade istället för att vissna. Plötsligt var sommaren så långt borta som om den aldrig hade funnits och det blev mycket lång

[7] I have collected a corpus of 26 non-academic readings from blog posts written by Finnish readers between 2011 and 2021 (consisting of all posts that were available online at the end of 2021). Literary bloggers wrote actively about the novel, particularly during the centenary of Jansson's birth in 2014 and some of the posts reference each other. A common theme in almost all the blogs is the way the readers emphasize their embodied and affective experiences of reading. In literary studies, *Sent i november* has received considerable attention since the late 1980s. I focus here on analyses which, like the literature blogs, emphasize the reading experience. In addition to the experiences evoked by the novel, academic readers focus on questions of identity and entanglements of the self and the world.

Image 1. Lonely houses. Illustration: Tove Jansson, *Sent i november*, 7. © Moomin Characters™

väg mellan husen och var och en kröp in i sitt eget. (*Sent i november* = *SN*, 11)

There is a sense of social alienation and abandonment that is emphasized in Jansson's drawings which show no living creatures, only houses (see Image 1). After the description of this northern November world, the readers are led to peek under Hemulen's boat where we encounter little Toft, curled inside a coil of rope (see Image 2) and imagining the Moominvalley and its inhabitants. Jansson's drawing of solitary Toft creates a contrast to what he is imagining: "[– –] Toft would tell himself a story of his own. It was all about the Happy Family" (*MN*, 9).[8] His description of the valley offers an escape from the rain and the loneliness. He focuses on sensory details: he imagines the smells, colours and shapes of the valley and brings forth the Moomin world as it is usually remembered and imagined by its readers – as a paradise-like world of (almost) eternal summer and happiness (see also, Westin 1988, 276).

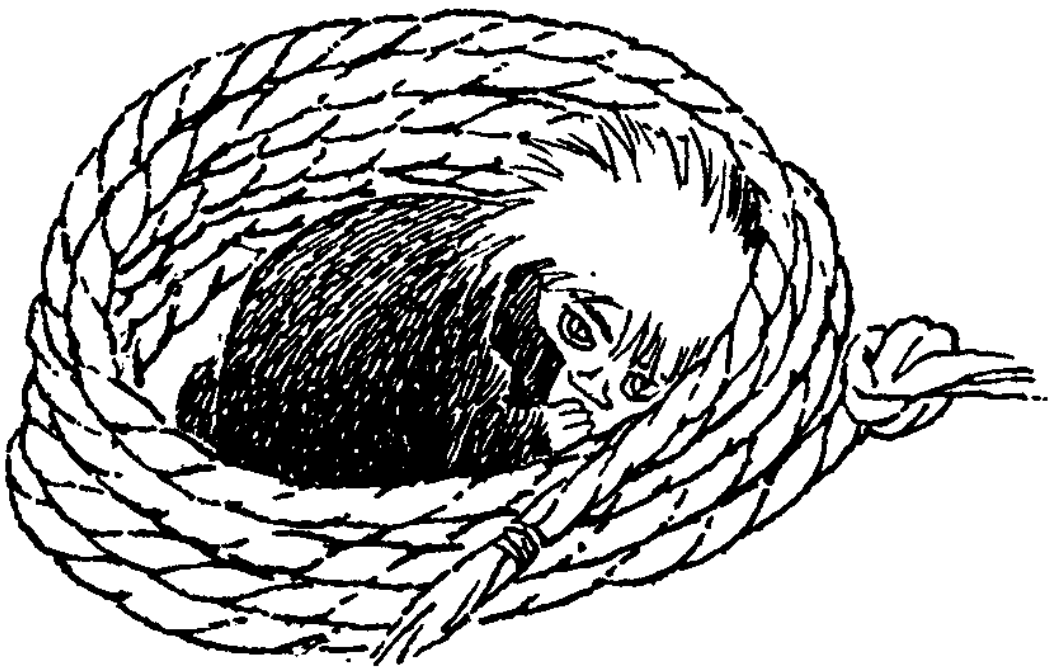

Image 2. Toft inside a coil of rope. Illustration: Tove Jansson, *Sent i november*, 14. © Moomin Characters™

Toft's story about the summer valley can easily be read as a metafictional comment about the Moomin world (see e.g., Westin 1996, 44; Kivilaakso 2003, 85, 90; Hap-

[8] "[– –] berättade homsan en egen historia för sig själv. Den handlade om den lyckliga familjen." (SN, 12)

ponen 2007, 239). Besides the feel of the environment, he captures some important, familiar elements of the storyworld: there are the fruit trees, the creek and the blue, lighthouseshaped house surrounded by Moominmamma's garden. Toft's story also taps into Jansson's readers' previous knowledge about the Moomin stories and their usual atmosphere: even though different catastrophes threaten the valley and the characters end up on dangerous adventures,[9] everything is enveloped in a sense of humour and warmth. We can especially recall Moominmamma who takes care of all the valley's large and small creatures and offers a source of comfort and stability.

In contrast to the story Toft is telling himself, *Sent i november* brings its readers to a world that is very different from what is usually recognized as the Moomin world. It might even seem surprising to connect the Moomin books to the notion of arctic hysteria and to literary portrayals of the north. However, as readers of Moomins know, there has always been a dark and melancholy side to the stories. The origins of the Moomin world are tied to experiences of anxiety and loss during the Second World War (see e.g., Niemi 1995, 83) and the upheavals of the first books – the comets and floods that threaten the valley – emerge from the unstable social environment in which the stories were written.[10] In later Moomin books, the 'upheaval' is no longer a natural catastrophe but rather a more ambiguous rupture that is portrayed especially through the changing seasons and the characters' experiences of their environments.[11] The themes that Jansson develops are typical in many narratives of the north: for instance, strong distinctions between interior and exterior spaces, variations of solitude and alienation (or cabin fever), a special relation to temporality (e.g., the stagnation of time) and psychological meanings of ice and coldness (see Kankkunen 2022, 113; Chartier 2021).

It is especially noteworthy in the last Moomin books that the characters' identities are tied to the spaces they inhabit. Many researchers note that there is a change towards

[9] This is a recurring theme especially in the first five novels of the Moomin suite: *Småtrollen och den stora översvämningen* (1945, transl. *The Moomins and the Great Flood* 2005); *Kometen kommer* (1946, transl. *Comet in Moominland* 1951); *Trollkarlens hat* (1948, transl. *Finn Family Moomintroll* 1950); *Muminpappans memoarer* (1950, transl. *The Exploits of Moominpappa* 1952) and *Farlig midsommar* (1954, transl. *Moominsummer Madness* 1955).

[10] Even though the Moomin world is a fantasy world that is largely independent from the actual world, it also has some clear connections to reality. From the map on the first pages of the eighth novel, *Pappan och havet* (1965, transl. *Moominpappa at Sea* 1966), the reader learns that the island where the Moomin family travels is situated on the Gulf of Finland. Jansson even provides the coordinates on the map: the island is situated a few kilometres to the south from Klovharu, an island where Jansson and her partner Tuulikki Pietilä spent their summers. Moreover, many drawings of rocks and cliffs in *Pappan och havet* are based on rocks and cliffs of Klovharu. Over the years, Jansson also modified her works and the nature of the Moominvalley became more Nordic: the palm trees and exotic animals of the first books disappeared from the reissues (see Happonen 2007, 290) and the final stories take place in an environment that very much resembles Finland during winter and autumn.

[11] As Sari Valkeajoki (2003, 106, 108) notes, the characters seem to be inhabiting an 'intermediate place': a strange, unfamiliar environment which reveals how the identities and worldviews of both individuals and societies have shattered.

the 'psychological', towards the inner lives of the characters as well as a change in the environment (see e.g., Westin 1988; Happonen 2003, 201; 2007, 14).[12] However, maybe an even more apt characterization would be that the stories take a turn towards what phenomenologists and theorists of embodied cognition describe as *experiential worlds* and *lived spaces* (see Merleau-Ponty 2002; Colombetti 2013; see also, Happonen 2007, 256).[13] Jansson examines the entanglements of the self and the world and focuses on how the experiences of the characters are shaped by their environments. For example, in *Trollvinter* (1957, transl. *Moominland Midwinter* 1958), the Moomintroll wakes up alone from hibernation and is confronted with a strange, cold winter world that he has never experienced before. The same motif is later repeated in a lighter manner in the short story 'Granen' (transl. The Fir Tree) in *Det osynliga barnet och andra berättelser* (1962, transl. *Tales from the Moominvalley* 1963). In that story, the whole family wakes up and learns about Christmas that is approaching, believing it to be some kind of a dangerous creature that needs to be appeased with presents and a tree. In *Pappan och havet* (1965, transl. *Moominpappa at Sea* 1966), in turn, the family and Little My leave the safety of the Moominvalley and begin a life on a deserted lighthouse island which becomes a life form of its own: an unruly place that shapes each character. *Sent i november* can be read as a highlight of this development: the book portrays six solitary characters who are deeply entangled with an unfamiliar, changing world and looking at it from different perspectives. It is almost as if they have never experienced autumn before; in fact, Jansson portrays November for the first time in any of the Moomin novels.

In a way, *Sent i november* seems to be situated after an upheaval or a catastrophe has already happened: as if the story was "a reaction to and a recovery from it" (*Tainan ja Tommin aarrearkku* 14.3.2020, transl. A. O.).[14] Furthermore, as Ojajärvi (2007, 324, transl. A. O.) puts it, "we are late, something is irrevocably in the past".[15] The enormous change in the storyworld is, of course, the fact that the Moomin family is gone. The readers who are familiar with the previous book, *Pappan och havet*, can perhaps imagine that they are at the lighthouse island (see, e.g., *Jokken kirjanurkka* 16.12.2013; *Muumittaja* 9.3.2013) but the characters of *Sent i november* do not know this. As many readers note, the family members are present in the book only through their absence and everything is reminiscent of them (see, e.g., Kauppinen 2020; Karjalainen 2016, 232; *Hurja hassu lukija* 27.12.2017; Rantakokko 10.3.2017; *Kirjakaapin kummitus* 29.11.2014).

[12] The change is usually located after the fifth novel, *Farlig midsommar* (1954). In *Trollvinter* (1957), the short story collection *Det osynliga barnet och andra berättelser* (1962), *Pappan och havet* (1965) and *Sent i november* (1970) the focus is much less on events and more on the experiences of the characters.

[13] See also, Herman (2011) on the way modernist texts build experiential worlds.

[14] "Välillä tuntuu kuin jokin järkytys olisi kohdannut Muumilaaksoa ja tarina on reaktiota siihen ja selviytymistä siitä."

[15] "[O]lemme myöhässä, jokin on peruuttamattoman oloisesti menneisyyttä."

The absence or the loss of the family can be seen as a central source of the atmosphere that is constructed in the novel. Each character – Toft, Fillyonk, Snufkin, Hemulen, Grandpa-Grumble and Mymble – is looking for something. Many of them awaken at the beginning of the book to a feeling that they need to become something other than they are.[16] They also believe that they will find what they are searching for from the Moominvalley and from the family but when they arrive, they discover that the house is empty. The absence of the family is heart-breaking especially for little Toft who in the beginning notices that he has become unable to imagine the Moominvalley: when he tells himself the story about the valley and the family, a strange mist appears before he can see them clearly and he falls asleep. He decides that he must travel to the valley to introduce himself to the family. Toft also offers a point of identification for the readers for whom the absence of the family is heart-breaking, too (see also, Westin 1988, 279).[17] There is a sense of betrayal: "He felt as though they had deceived him somehow" (*MN*, 42).[18] The experience is echoed in many readers' experiences. As one blogger writes: "[t]he heart of the place is lost" (*Hurja hassu lukija* 27.12.2017).[19] Another puts it even more bluntly: "I think this [the absence] caused quite a tear and I didn't really like it" (*Lintusen kirjablogi* 24.11.2014).[20]

Such experiences of loss and grief as well as the ambivalence of identity are often listed as key themes of the book by academic readers (see, e.g., Valkeajoki 2003; Kivilaakso 2003; Ojajärvi 2007). In both academic and non-academic readers' experiences, the strange atmosphere is tied to the absence of the family and the changes the environment and the characters undergo. A key question for the characters is how they experience their existence in this strange, new environment, which is not at all what they were expecting and even threatening: how are they able to find comfort and safety in their surroundings, or, using the terminology of embodied cognition, how are their affective states environmentally 'scaffolded' or supported by the material world, other people and their interplay (Colombetti and Krueger 2015, 1157)? This is also an important question when considering the readers' experiences of the novel.

[16] Mymble is an exception. As will be discussed later, she seems to have no need to change. She arrives at the Moominvalley to visit her little sister My (or perhaps because she doesn't want to clean at home) but is not at all upset that the family is not there: she just finds her old room and things and makes herself comfortable while at the same time observing the other characters. On Mymble's role as a stable character who functions as a commentator for the others, see Valkeajoki 2003, 109–112.

[17] Toft's story about the valley also makes him the 'metatextual narrator' of the novel (see Kivilaakso 2003, 83).

[18] "Han tyckte att de hade lurat honom." (SN, 40)

[19] "[P]aikan sydän on teillä tuntemattomilla."

[20] "Tämä oli omasta mielestäni aikamoinen repäisy, enkä itse pitänyt siitä erityisesti."

The Autumn World: Spaces of Safety and Anxiety

> The quiet transition from autumn to winter is not a bad time at all. It's a time for protecting and securing things and for making sure you've got in as many supplies as you can. It's nice to *gather together everything you possess* as close to you as possible, to store up your warmth and your thoughts and burrow yourself into a deep hole inside, *a core of safety* where you can defend what is important and precious and your very own. Then the cold and the storms and the darkness can do their *worst. They can grope their way up the walls looking for a way in, but they won't find one*, everything is shut, and you sit inside, laughing in your warmth and your solitude, for you have had foresight. (*MN*, 3–4, emphasis added)
>
> Höstens lugna gång mot vinter är ingen dålig tid. Det är en tid för att bevara och säkra och lägga upp sö stora förråd man kan. Det är skönt att *samla det man har* så tätt intill sig som möjligt, samla sin värme och sina tankar och gräva sig en säker håla längst in, *en kärna av trygghet* där man försvarar det som är viktigt och dyrbart och ens eget. Sen kan kölden och stormarna och mörkret komma bäst de vill. *De trevar över väggarna och letar efter en ingång men det går inte*, alltihop är stängt och därinne sitter den som har varit förtänksam och skrattar i sin värme och sin ensamhet. (*SN,* 6–7, emphasis added)

The novel begins with several descriptions of the autumn that has arrived. One of these is focalized through Fillyonk (the focalization turns to Fillyonk from Snufkin who is leaving the Moominvalley for the winter, as he always does, and walking past her house, trying to avoid her the best he can). Through Fillyonk, the narrator describes a process of prepping for the winter and learning to make one feel safe in a space that is dying. There is a sense of safety that is emphasized by the familiar objects: Fillyonk gathers her possessions around her and creates a "core of safety". Her actions could be, at first, seen as a form of 'practical anxiety': a positive anxiety that helps one to prepare and act in the face of an uncertain threat or a difficult situation (see Kurth 2018, 16). From an embodied cognitive perspective, Fillyonk's experiences are extended into her home environment which creates an affective scaffolding for her: her actions, thoughts and emotions are supported by her familiar material surroundings.

For the readers, in turn, the book itself can function as an affective scaffolding: it can shape our emotions and help us to cope with the winter darkness.[21] Moreover, the environment in which the readers read scaffolds the reading and shapes the reading

[21] Similarly, Jussi Saarinen (2019) has suggested that paintings can function as affective scaffolds for their creators.

experience.[22] The novel even invites reading in a certain environment: as noted, many readers purposely read *Sent i november* in November and some even imitate characters like Mymble who later curls under a blanket in Fillyonk's bed at the Moominhouse (see *P. S. Rakastan kirjoja* 5.12.2013; also *Wilde Things* 19.11.2017). As another reader writes: "It makes one feel safe; also there everything is grey and stormy but everybody is taken care of" (*Ajatuspolkuja* 19.12.2020, transl. A. O.).[23] Thus, the novel invites reflection on the ways people are entangled with their worlds and how our experiences are shaped and supported by the spaces and objects around us.

Fillyonk's fear and anxiety

However, in addition to "the core of safety", the fear of the 'worst' that the cold and the darkness could do comes through in the text: "They can grope their way up the walls looking for a way in [– –]". (See the quotation above.) The readers get a first glimpse of Fillyonk's fear and anxiety which is initially negated ("[– –] but they won't find one") but will grow in the following chapters. As Jansson wrote in a short story 'Mörkret' (transl. The Dark) in her first book for adults, *Bildhuggarens dotter* (1968, transl. *The Sculptor's Daughter* 1969), a few years earlier: "Nobody is safe and therefore it is terribly important to find a hiding-place in time".[24] There is a threatening undercurrent: safety is a mere illusion.

The description of cold and darkness "groping their way up the walls" anticipates how the feeling of anxiety becomes overwhelming and how Fillyonk is forced to leave the safety of her home. Whereas in the first books the Moomin valley was portrayed as a home of not just the Moomin family and their friends but also different kinds of happy little creatures, for Fillyonk in *Sent i november* even the small creatures, the insects, are becoming a threat (see also, Happonen 2007, 270, 277). One day, she decides to clean the attic windows but suddenly notices something that unsettles her:

> It *looked like* a little bit of cotton fluff but Fillyonk knew immediately what it was: it was a horrid chrysalis and inside it was a pale white caterpillar. She *shivered and drew in* her paws. Wherever she went, whatever she did, she always came across *creepy-crawly things*, they were *everywhere*! (*MN*, 14, emphasis added)
>
> Det *såg ut* som en liten bomullstott men Filifjonkan visste genast vad det var; det var en otäck puppa och inne i den fanns en blek vit larv. Hon *ryste*

[22] See also, Kuzmičová (2016) on the ways physical spaces affect reading and Kortekallio (2021) on reading during winter depression. Evgenia Amey (2021) has studied how readers experience actual spaces in Finland through their connections to Tove Jansson's works.

[23] "Tulee turvallinen olo – sielläkin on harmaata ja myrskyää, mutta kaikista pidetään huolta."

[24] "Ingen går säker och därför är det så viktigt att hitta et gömställe i tid." (*Bildhuggarens dotter*, 18)

> *till och drog* tassarna åt sig. Var hon än gick, vad hon än gjorde så råkade hon ut för *det som krälar och kryper*, det fanns *överallt* ! (*SN,* 17, emphasis added)

The narrator offers a detailed portrayal of Fillyonk's experience of disgust: her body reacts automatically and there is an effort to move away from the thing that is perceived as disgusting. The thing *looks like* something clean and comforting (a cotton fluff) but is actually *something else*: something that moves and fills the space in an unsettling way; it *creeps* and *crawls* and is *everywhere*. She pushes the insect out of the window but when she then climbs to the wet roof to clean the window from the outside, she starts sliding and is unable to get back.

In Jansson's drawing of the scene, we see Fillyonk on the roof, glued to the window, shaking and anxious (see Image 3). Fillyonk's own emotions and movements on the roof begin to resemble a crawling creature (see also, Happonen 2007, 276):

> Fear *crept* through her and stuck like an inky taste in the throat. [– –] Fillyjonk made an agonized *creeping* movement upwards, her paws *groped* over the slippery metal roof but she slid back again and ended up where she had started from. [– –] With her eyes tight shut and her stomach pressing against the roof, Fillyjonk *crawled* round her big house [– –]. (*MN*, 16–17, emphasis added)

> Rädslan *kröp* igenom henne, den satt som en bläcksmack I halsen. [– –] Filifjonkan gjorde en ångestfull *kryprörelse* uppåt, tassarna *famlade* över den hala plåten och hon gled tillbaka igen och alltihop var likadan som förut. [– –] ögonen hårt slutna och magen pressad mot taket, så *kröp* Filfjonkan runt sitt stora hus [– –]. (*SN*, 18, emphasis added)

She crawls and crawls and ultimately, she herself becomes something else: "Now she was nothing at all, just something that was trying to make itself as flat as possible and move on" (*MN*, 18).[25] In the middle of the panic, she also makes a promise to herself: "I shall be something quite different but not a fillyonk ... " (*MN*, 19).[26] Finally, she manages to drag herself back inside. After the incident, she is shaken. The whole world is seen in a new light; everything looks different and nothing seems to matter anymore. She notices that she owns too many things and later she realizes that she has lost one key feature of her identity: her ability to clean. On the spur of the moment, she decides that she must go to visit Moominmamma.

Fillyonk's experience invites psychopathological frames of reading: one could argue that her anxiety begins to manifest itself as disgust. In psychoanalytic terminology, she encounters an abject creature, a thing that is between categories in an unsettling way:

[25] "Nu var hon ingenting alls, bara nånting som försökte göra sig så platt som möjligt och komma vidare." (SN, 20)

[26] "Jag ska bli nånting helt annat än en filifjonka ..." (SN, 21)

not alive but not dead either, not part of her but not external from her either, familiar, yet strange. It is something that needs to be pushed away like scraps of food, bodily fluids and other liminal things (see Kristeva 1982, 2–4). As Sara Heinämaa (2018, 57–58) points out, particularly movements that are felt as alien and unpredictable and growth that seems excessive elicit horror and disgust. Fillyonk's solution is that she tries to find a new place of safety from the Moomins' but when she arrives, the house is cold and empty (even though the other characters are there) and she begins to feel that the creatures are following her: hiding in cupboards and crawling everywhere under the wallpaper. What used to be a familiar, warm and safe home has become *unheimlich*, something uncanny and horrifying (see Freud 1978b).

Different Perspectives to the Autumn World

The different characters have different perspectives on the autumn world and the abandoned house, but there are also deep connections: on the one hand, there is the strangeness of the autumn that requires seeking shelter and comfort; on the other hand, there is a sense that the Moominvalley and the house are not at all what they were supposed to be. Let us see how this becomes visible in Snufkin's, Hemulen's, Grandpa-Grumble's and Mymble's experiences and in Toft's stories.

As we saw, Fillyonk was initially looking for safety by gathering the objects around her and curling up and then by going to visit the Moomins. Meanwhile, Snufkin, who has walked past Fillyonk's house and continued towards the south, observes how everything around him is dying yet at the same time vigorously alive. There is the rain and the nature that is rotting and decaying, as well as a new, strange growth:

> The forest was heavy with rain and the trees were absolutely motionless. Everything had withered and died, but right down on the ground the late autumn's secret garden was growing with great vigor straight out of the moldering earth, a strange vegetation of shiny puffed-up plants that had nothing at all to do with summer. (*MN*, 23–24)
>
> Skogen var tung av regn och träden alldeles orörliga. Allting hade vissnat och dött men nere på marken växte senhöstens hemliga trädgård med rasande kraft rakt upp ur förmultningen, en främmande vegetation av blanka svällande växter som inte hade någonting med sommar att göra. (*SN*, 25)

The November forest has become a hostile, dying environment in which strange new plants are growing; yet, at the same time, Snufkin sees the incredible colours of autumn:

> The late blueberry springs were yellow-green and the cranberries as dark as blood. Hidden lichens and mosses began to grow, and they grew like a

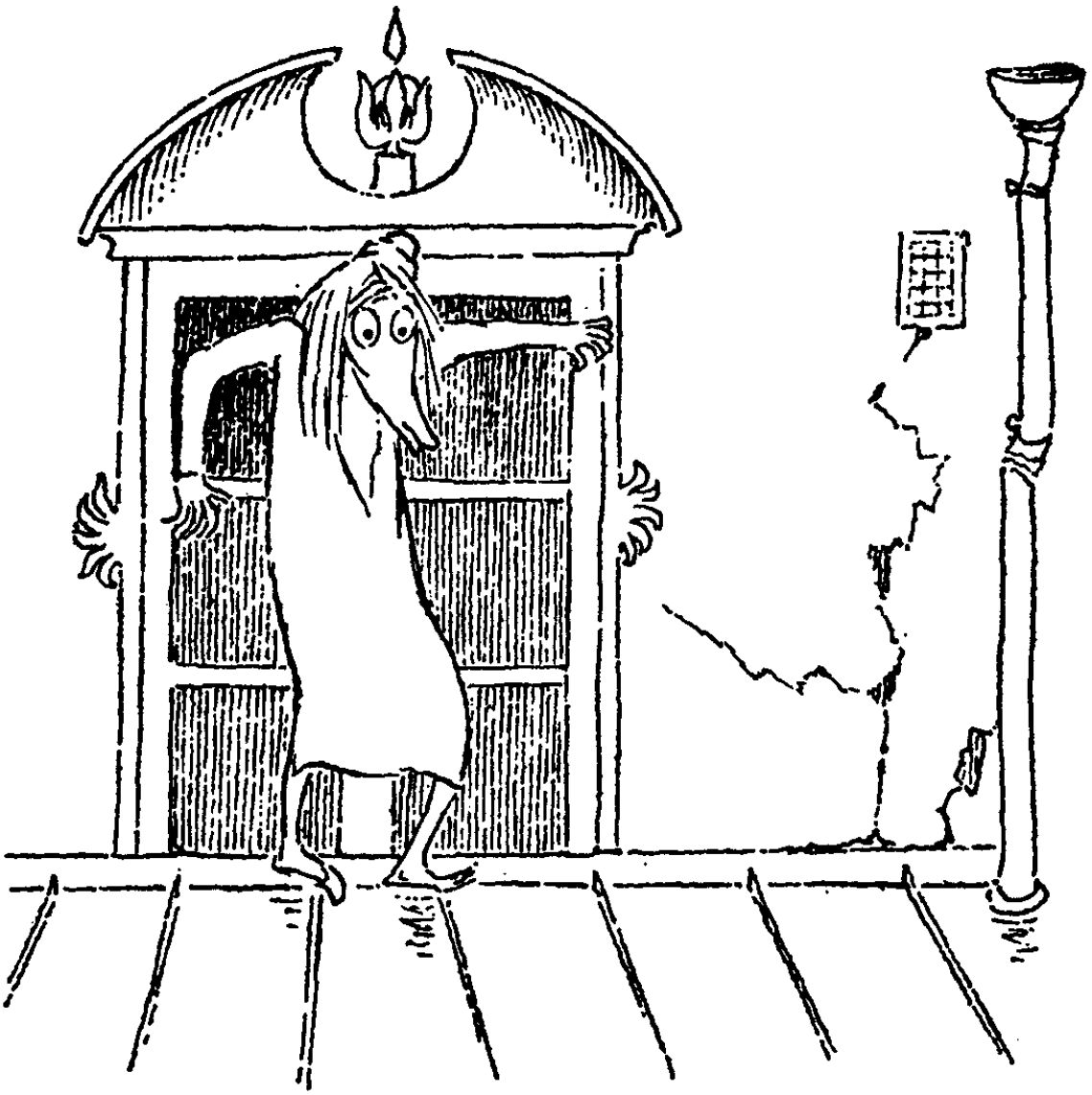

Image 3. Fillyonk on the roof. Illustration: Tove Jansson, *Sent i november*, 19. © Moomin Characters™

> big soft carpet until they took over the whole forest. There were strong new colours everywhere, and red rowan berries were shining all over the place. But the bracken had turned black. (*MN*, 24)
>
> Det nakna blåbärsriset var gulgrönt och tranbären mörka som blod. Undanskymda lavar och mossor började växa, de växte som en stor mjuk matta tills de ägde hela skogen. Det fanns nya starka färger överallt och överallt på marken låg röda rönnbär och lyste. Men ormbunkarna var svarta. (*SN*, 25)

On some level, he enjoys the changed world and the rain but when he decides to write a song about the rain, he realizes that he has lost his notes. This leads to a sudden experience of meaninglessness (similar to what Fillyonk went through earlier) and an existential question: "But what did the rain mean to him as long as he couldn't write a song about it?" (*MN*, 25).[27] The ability to create is more important to him than reality and he realizes that even though he had already left the valley for the winter, he must return to look for his missing five bars.

Hemulen and Grandpa-Grumble, in their respective corners of the Western valley, do not actually even really remember the Moominvalley very well but they also realize that they have to go there. Everything is a little hazy and it might even be that they have imagined the whole valley. The narrator conveys this doubt about the existence of the valley through Grandpa-Grumble and offers a metafictional hint: "It was just possible that he had only heard about this valley or perhaps he had *read* about it, but it made no difference really" (*MN*, 45–46, emphasis added).[28] Hemulen, in turn, seems to anticipate readers' experiences of the way the valley has suddenly changed. When he arrives, he does not at first realize that it is autumn; everything just feels very strange:

> Something wasn't right. Everything was the same but somehow not the same. A withered leaf floated down and landed on his nose. How silly, the Hemulen exclaimed. It's not summer at all. It's autumn! In some way or another he had always thought of Moominvalley in summer. (*MN*, 31)
>
> Det var någonting som inte stämde. Det var likadant och ändå inte likadant. Ett visset löv singlade ner och fastnade på hans nos. Nej så dumt, utbrast Hemulen. Det är ju inte alls sommar, va. Det är höst! På något vis hade han alltid tänkt sig sommar i Mumindalen. (*SN*, 31)

Finally, Mymble is the last to arrive and she too notices the change. For her, there is a sense of unreality in the autumn. The Moominvalley has become a strange, deserted landscape that resembles a stage decoration:

[27] "Men vad brydde han sig om regnet så länge han inte kunde göra en visa som handlade om regn." (SN, 26)

[28] "Det fanns en möjlighet att han bara hade hört om den där dalen eller kanske läst om den men det gjorde ju alldeles detsamma." (SN, 42)

> She stared out of the window absentmindedly at the garden, which the autumn had changed and turned into a strange and deserted landscape. The trees were like grey stage decorations, screens standing one behind the other in the wet mist, all quite bare. (*MN*, 62)
>
> [– –] hon betraktade förströtт den stora trädgården som hösten hade förändrat och gjort till ett främmande och övergivet landskap. Träden liknade grå kulisser, skärmar som stod den ena efter den andra i regndimman, alldeles tomma. (*SN*, 55)

The characters embody different relationships to the environment, and they seem to complement each other. Snufkin, Hemulen, Grandpa-Grumble and Mymble emphasize the aesthetic and imaginary sides of the changed nature. The ambivalent relationship between inner and outer worlds and extreme emotions are thematized particularly through Fillyonk and Toft. Whereas for Fillyonk, there is something abject and disgusting in the changed world, for Toft, the experiences of loss and sorrow gradually turn into anger; he particularly feels anger towards Moominmamma who has 'deceived' him. At the Moomin house, he starts to read a book about strange creatures called 'Nummulites'.[29] He hopes that the book would tell him where the family is but instead a completely new story begins to take shape in his mind; it is a story about a Creature that is growing and becoming angry: "It became so big that it almost didn't need any family ... " (*MN*, 97).[30]

Three Interpretive Paths

In past research, different interpretations have been given to the main themes and motifs of the novel. For example, Ojajärvi (2007, 324) interprets the constant rain in the novel as crying, and sometimes *Sent i november* is described as a first book in a trilogy about sorrow (see Karjalainen 2016, 230–232).[31] It is easy to connect the way Toft misses Moominmamma to the death of Jansson's mother Ham, Signe Hammarsten-Jansson, in the summer of 1970 when Jansson was writing the book. As readers familiar with the origins of the Moomin world know, Ham was the role model for Moominmamma and Toft bears a resemblance to Tove in many ways, beginning with the name (see, e.g., Westin 1988, 111, 279, 282; Karjalainen 2016, 232, 235). A biographical reading would suggest that Jansson is writing about the loss of her childhood world and her mother.

In addition to the biographical reading, the text also offers itself for psychoanalytical readings: if the rain is deep sorrow and grief, the decaying nature could be seen

[29] As Westin (1988, 283) notes, 'nummulite' is almost an anagram for liten mumin ('small Moomintroll').

[30] "Det blev så stort att det nästän inte behövde nån familj ..." (SN, 86)

[31] The other texts are the short story 'Regnet' (transl. Rain) in *Lyssnerskan* (1971, transl. *The Listener* 2014) and *Sommarboken* (1972, transl. *The Summer Book* 1974).

as an inability to mourn. In Sigmund Freud's (1978a) famous distinction, mourning is a 'healthy' response to loss, whereas in melancholia what is lost is incorporated inside oneself as an eternal source of sorrow. Similarly, if read through Julia Kristeva's (1982) theory of abjection, the lost becomes the 'abject', neither subject nor object but something in between, a disgusting, unsettling thing that needs to be pushed away. At the heart of Kristeva's theory is the idea that abjection is a process of separating oneself from the maternal body and creating borders between the self and the other. It is necessary but painful. Creativity, in turn, is a way of responding to both melancholia and abjection: it is a way of turning the experiences of loss and unsettling separation into words, images and symbols, hence alleviating them (see Kristeva 1982; 1989).

However, following a third interpretive path through a kind of a 'surface reading' (Best and Marcus 2009), the rain, the decaying nature, and the absence of the family can just as well be read as what they are: as portrayals of the autumn and a family that has moved away. This is a mode of reading that has been adopted especially by many non-academic readers. As Juha Kauppinen (2020) states: "When the family is gone in *Sent i november*, my reading is that the family is gone. Not a story about depression, nothing symbolic. The family is gone and will not return".[32] The readers can simultaneously hold on to all these readings whether of loss and melancholia or unsettling abjection or just matter-of-fact absence and change. Boel Westin, for example, sees both sorrow and hope in the book's description of the autumn:

> In late November, the rain falls, as if it is washing away the image of the summer valley and the happy family. The paradise-like garden fades away, but in its stead something new is growing. (Westin 1988, 277, transl. A. O.)[33]

The rain creates a sense of cleansing: it washes away the past. At the same time, it creates a space for new things that are growing. It appears to be a matter of perspective whether the changes and new forms of growth are interpreted as something frightening and disgusting (death, decay, rot) or as something comforting (new beginning).[34] According to Jansson's notes, three other possible names for the book were *Det övergivna paradiset* (The abandoned paradise), *Dröm i november* (Dream in November) and *Den lyckliga familjen* (The happy family) (see Westin 1988, 276). These can all be seen in the relationships that the different characters have with the Moominvalley and the family and which also different readers adopt. There is a sense of 'paradise lost' and a

[32] "Kun perhe on poissa Muumilaakson marraskuussa, luen sen niin, että perhe on poissa. Ei kertomus masennuksesta, ei mitään vertauskuvallista. Perhe on poissa, eikä enää palaa."

[33] "I den sena november faller regnet, liksom tvättar bort bilden av sommardalen och den lyckliga familjen. Den paradisiska trädgården tonar bort, men i dess ställe växer något nytt."

[34] As Sara Heinämaa (2018, 54, 58) notes, horror and disgust also emerge from excess growth. Fillyonk and Toft are facing a similar problem: their imagination is becoming dangerous and creativity is becoming something threatening.

dream-like quality but also the memories (or the imaginings) of the happy family that participate in the construction of the peculiar atmosphere.

Metafiction and Spaces of Creativity

As the story progresses, the feelings of anxiety, disgust and melancholia gradually begin to fade away: they make room for more positive emotions, forms of creativity and new changes in the characters. As we saw, Snufkin had lost his five bars and returns to the Moominvalley to look for them but he cannot find them, as Heinämaa (2018, 62–63) has suggested, until he is able to create an intersubjective connection to the other (five) characters. There is a need not just for objects and spaces but also other living beings to create an affective scaffolding.

Gradually this begins to happen to all the characters: they create connections to one another and find new ways of perceiving the world. For example, one evening Fillyonk is at the kitchen door and listens to Snufkin playing outside. The narrator describes how the light is directed at her and how she is susceptible to whatever could be threatening her from the outside. However, she does not think about any of this:

> She listened breathlessly. She forgot all the awful things; tall and thin, she was silhouetted against the lighted kitchen, an easy prey to all the lurking dangers of the night. But nothing happened. (*MN*, 111)
>
> Hon lyssnade andlöst, hon glömde sina hemskheter, stor och mager avtecknade hon sig mot det upplysta köket, ett lättfångat byte för all nattens farlighet. Men ingenting hände. (*SN*, 97)

It is in fact the readers who are situated where the dangerous creatures could have been: *we* are looking at Fillyonk from the shadows (see Image 4). As Happonen (2007, 202–206) has shown, Jansson's way of composing her pictures has an important role in the construction of atmosphere and she paid special attention to the questions of seeing and being seen. We, for example, do not often see the same things as the characters. Here the readers became part of the dark, autumn forest that is no longer dangerous.

Especially the metafictional features of the novel emphasize the theme of creativity and the aesthetic frame that creates a sense of safety and can alleviate the readers' experiences of sorrow and loss. Researchers have listed different metafictional and self-reflexive motifs in the book. For example, the absence of the Moomin family can be read not only as a portrayal of loss but also as a comment about the suite coming to an end and as an effort to invite the readers to think about the fictional Moomin world in new ways, as Katri Kivilaakso (2003, 83–84) has suggested. We can also recall Hemulen's, Grandpa-Grumble's and Mymble's experiences of the fictionality of the Moominvalley (see also, Kivilaakso 2003, 87–88) or the way Toft's stories about the

summer valley and the Nummulites creates both connections to earlier books and mise-en-abyme structures that reflect the construction of the novel itself (see also, Westin 1988, 283; Kivilaakso 2003, 90–91).[35]

Moreover, to balance the mood of the story, Jansson uses comic elements, parody and irony (see also, Kivilaakso 2003, 97). She creates comedy through the rhythms of the text: punctuation marks, changes of paragraphs and the organization of the dialogues. The portrayal of the actions and movements of the characters, the way the characters speak to each other and the ways they rush and blunder in both the texts and drawings contribute to the atmosphere of the text (see also, Happonen 2003, 200–201; Happonen 2007, 24). The characters also often become metafictional parodies of themselves. For example, when Hemulen arrives at the house and no one opens the door, he mimics a policeman and tries to scare the family, telling them to "open in the name of the Law" (*MN*, 32).[36] The comic effect relies on the fact that readers know that hemulens are the policemen of the Moomin world (see also, Ojajärvi 2007, 335).

The Party

The metafictional and self-reflexive elements are particularly strong in the party scene which is the culmination of the novel. During the party, the characters come together and begin to function as a group, as Heinämaa (2018, 60) has suggested: an interpersonal component of affective scaffolding is found. Each character performs something that characterizes their situation in the novel (see also, Rantakokko 10.3.2017). The first to perform is Hemulen who has written a hyperbolic and highly intertextual poem about how "life is only a dream".[37] After Hemulen's poem, Mymble dances and interrupts the sense of stagnation that otherwise permeates the text, as Happonen (2007, 143) has noted.[38] Grandpa-Grumble takes the other partygoers to see the ancestor with whom he has been talking since he came to the house and who is actually only his own reflection in a faded mirror. Toft, in turn, reads aloud about the Nummulites and shares his inner world with the others for the first time. Finally, Fillyonk shows a shadow-play, "The Return", in which we see the Moomin family sailing back to the valley (see Image 5).

[[e-n-elise-nykanen-arctic-hysteria-and-other-strang-6.png][**Image 5. The Shadowplay. Illustration: Tove Jansson, *Sent i november*, 138. © Moomin Characters™**

[35] A reader could also think, for instance, about another homsa (or a 'whomper' in some of the English translations) in the short story 'En hemsk historia' (1962, transl. A Tale of Horror) which thematizes the pleasures and dangers of the imagination. Furthermore, there is a third very similar homsa in Farlig midsommar (1954) who is threatened by the objects and stage decorations in a theater because they are deceptive and nothing is what it seems to be.

[36] "Öppna I lagens namn!" (SN, 32)

[37] As Westin (1988, 275) notes, the poem is based on Calderón's *La vida es un sueño* (1636, transl. *Life is a Dream*). Hemulen dedicates the poem to Moominpappa and in it he compares happiness to sailing although he has never taken his own boat into the water.

[38] On the overall sense of stagnation in the novel, see also, Rantakokko 10.3.2017.

Image 4. Fillyonk at the door. Illustration: Tove Jansson, *Sent i november*, 96. © Moomin Characters™

The performances at the party emphasize how art, creativity and imagination can function as sources of comfort and safety. This becomes particularly visible through Fillyonk's experience: the party ends in a bit of chaos because after the shadow-play is over, Fillyonk cannot find matches and the group ends up blundering around in darkness. When the light is lit again, everybody leaves and Fillyonk remains alone in the kitchen in the middle of all the leftovers and debris. She takes a bite of a sandwich but then just leaves everything as it is and goes out. Suddenly the disgusting "creepycrawly things" are no longer there and there is only the rain: "It was raining outside. She listened carefully but could hear only the rain. They had disappeared" (*MN*, 163).[39] She then takes Snufkin's mouth organ and begins to play:

> She played Snufkin's songs and she played her own; she couldn't be got at, nothing could make her feel unsafe now. She didn't worry whether the others could hear her or not. Outside in the garden all was quiet, all the creepy-crawly things had disappeared and it was an ordinary dark autumn night with a rising wind. (*MN*, 164–165)
>
> Hon spelade Snusmumrikens visor och hon spelade sina egna, hon var onåbar och inne i en fullkomlig säkerhet. Hon tänkte inte på om de andra hörde henne eller inte. Därute it trädgården var det tyst, allt som kröp var borta, det var bara en vanlig mörk höst med ökande vind. (*SN*, 144)

As Ojajärvi (2007, 336) writes, creativity takes a hold: "one thing leads to another". During the night, Fillyonk forgets all the norms that usually guide her and her efforts to keep things uncontaminated and unambiguous: to be diligent like a fillyonk, or calm and warm like Moominmamma.[40] Early the next morning, Fillyonk begins to clean the whole house and when the others arrive, the action becomes contagious; everyone except Grandpa-Grumble participates (see Image 6).

The Forest of Anger

After the autumn cleaning, the first snow falls. Mymble and Fillyonk leave, GrandpaGrumble goes into hibernation and only Toft, Snufkin and Hemulen are left. The story is almost over, as the narrator states: "They were waiting for their story to come to an end" (*MN*, 179).[41] Ultimately Toft is alone waiting for the family and it is his turn

[39] "Nu regnade det därute igen. Hon lyssnade noga men hörde ingenting annat än regnet. De hade gått sin väg." (SN, 143)

[40] Throughout the story, Fillyonk has tried to imitate Moominmamma, usually with bad results. As Mymble notes after a failed picnic: "'Listen, Fillyonk', said Mymble seriously. 'I don't think moving the kitchen table outdoors makes one a moominmamma'" (MN, 131). ("Hördu filifjonka, sa Mymlan allvarligt. Jag tror inte att man kan bli en Muminmamma bara för att man flyttar köksbordet utomhus." (SN, 115))

[41] "De väntade på sin berättelses slut." (SN, 157)

Image 6. The cleaning. Illustration: Tove Jansson, *Sent i november*. 147.
© Moomin Characters™

to see the valley in a new light (but we can also recall Hemulen's, Grandpa-Grumbles and Mymble's earlier perceptions of the valley):

> The whole of Moominvalley had somehow become unreal, the house, the garden and the river were nothing but a play of shadows on the screen and Toft no longer knew what was real and what was only his imagination. He had been made to wait too long and now he was angry. (*MN*, 192)
>
> Hela Mumindalen hade blivit overklig, huset och trädgården och floden var ingenting annat än ett spel av skärmar och skuggor och homsan visste inte vad som var riktig och vad han bara hade tänkt. Han hade fått vänta för länge och nu var han arg. (*SN*, 167)

In addition to offering a space of safety in a world that is otherwise threatening, the book affords a space to experience negative emotions. Toft ends up in a strange forest behind the house where Mymble has said that the Moomins go when they are angry. Earlier Toft hasn't believed Mymble but now he is ready to change his perspective:

> It was a different world. Toft had no pictures and no words for it, nothing had to correspond. No one had tried to make a path here and no one had ever rested under the trees. They just walked around with sinister thoughts, this was the forest of anger. He grew quite calm and very attentive. With enormous relief the worried Toft felt all his pictures disappear. His descriptions of the valley and the Happy Family faded and slipped away, Moominmamma glided away and became remote, an impersonal picture, he didn't even know what she looked like. Toft walked on through the forest [– –] thinking nothing at all [– –]. (*MN*, 193–194)
>
> Det var en ny värld. Homsan Toft hade inga bilder och inga ord för den, ingenting behövde stämma. Här hade ingen försökt göra en väg och ingen hade någonsin vilat under träden. De hade bara gått omkring med mörka tankar, det var vredens skog. Han blev alldeles lugn och mycket uppmärksam. Med oerhörd lättnad kände den bekymrade homsan hur alla hans bilder försvann. Hans berättelse om dalen och den lyckliga familjen bleknade och gled undan, mamman gled undan och blev avlägsen, en opersonlig bild, han visste inte ens hur hon såg ut. Homsan Toft gick vidare genom skogen [– –] han tänkte på ingenting alls [– –]. (*SN*, 168–169)

"The forest of anger" offers one last cleansing experience. Toft realizes that sometimes Moominmamma has also been angry and has wanted to be alone and he gives up the images he has created in his mind. The text thematizes the dangers of imagination, of letting "things get too big" (*MN*, 127),[42] as Snufkin has warned Toft, and

[42] "Du ska akta dig för att låta saker bli för stora." (SN, 111)

shows the way creativity offers comfort, a safe place to be angry or whatever one needs to be. Fiction creates a place where aggressions can be dealt with; this is something that Jansson emphasized as a children's book author but it is likewise an important message for adults (Jansson 1961; see also, Kivilaakso 2003, 82).

The Open Ending

Perhaps the most important metafictional element in the story is its open ending. As the characters say their goodbyes to one another and as the readers also prepare to say goodbye to the valley, we are invited to tell a new story (see also, *Tainan ja Tommin aarrearkku* 14.3.2020). Author Johanna Venho captures this in her recent novel about Jansson, bringing to mind Toft's stories:

> It always feels like a miracle when a story is reaching its end and the best ending is also a new beginning. Nothing really ends and the reader knows that at this point a new story begins: a story which one can tell oneself. (Venho 2021, 70, transl. A. O.)[43]

A close reading shows that *Sent i november* is filled with themes and motifs that are repeated from Jansson's earlier stories especially in the collection *Det osynliga barnet och andra berättelser* (1962) and creates new variations of them. For example, Fillyonk's story in the novel resonates with the short story 'Filifjonkan som trodde på katastrofer' (transl. Fillyjonk who believed in disasters) which is about a fillyonk who is afraid of something that she is unable to articulate but is finally released of everything when a hurricane destroys all her possessions. In 'Hemulen som älskade tystnad' (transl. Hemulen who loved quiet), Jansson created a story about a rainstorm that goes on and on and washes away everything. In 'En hemsk historia' (transl. A Tale of Horror), she explored how something imaginary and horrible can become something very real in a little *homsan*'s mind. 'Vårvisan' (transl. The Spring Tune), in turn, is about the loss and discovery of creativity. Finally, 'Berättelsen om det osynliga barnet' (transl. The Invisible Child) is – among other things – about the importance of being able to become angry. These connections to other texts that function as links within the Moomin world offer another scaffold for the readers; we can always return to the stories, read again from new angles and see things in a new light. This is also how Jansson, as a modernist artist, created the Moomin world: she painted a picture of the 'Happy Family' again and again but, as Westin (1988, 275) notes, changes the lighting, colours and forms. There is always a new perspective.

Moreover, what appears as important for many Nordic readers of *Sent i november* is the evocative portrayal of the November atmosphere: the comfort, the warmth and the ways to survive the darkness and the cold even though it is threatening. In some readers' experiences the intertextual links even extend into the real world. The events

[43] "Tarinan hakeutuminen loppuunsa tuntuu aina ihmeeltä, ja paras lopetus on myös uusi alku. Mikään ei oikeastaan pääty, ja lukija tietää, että siitä kohtaa alkaa uusi tarina, jonka saa kertoa itse itselleen."

described in the novel such as curling under a blanket, lighting candles and eating sandwiches become actions in reality:

> In a way, the book also offers advice on how to survive the darkest time of the year – it is worth resting a little under a sweet eiderdown blanket, reading a book about wonderous things in candlelight and sometimes it is even good to decorate one's home with paper lanterns, make warm cheese sandwiches and drink a glass of wine with friends, to celebrate good companionship. *(P. S Rakastan kirjoja* 5.12.2013; see also, *Wilde Things* 19.11.2017. Transl. A. O.)[44]

Conclusion: the End and the Return

> I will tell a story about how dream is more important than reality. (Jansson's note on *Sent i november*, quoted in Westin 1988, 275, transl. A. O.)[45]

At the very end, as Toft gives up the images and the stories that he has created of the Moomin family, he finally lets the family be what they are (as Snufkin and Mymble have pushed him to do). His recognition can also be tied to Jansson's overarching idea about freedom:

> I have tried to tell [a story] about a very happy family. The Moomin family is happy in such an obvious way that they themselves don't even realize it. They are comfortable with each other and give each other freedom. Freedom to be alone, to think in one's way, to keep one's secrets until one is ready to disclose them. Not to give each other a bad conscience and to be able to experience responsibility as something fun and not just a duty. (Jansson's lecture in 1983, quoted in Westin 1988, 18, transl. A. O.)[46]

Jansson's stories about the Moomins emphasize the freedom involved in letting each person find and maintain what one 'really' is and *Sent I november* offers a final variation on this theme. The characters begin by wanting to become something other than they are but they end up finding their authentic selves, as many academic readers

[44] "Omalla tavallaan se myös antaa vinkkejä siitä, mitä kannattaa tehdä selviytyäkseen vuoden pimeimmästä ajasta – kannattaa lepäillä vähän suloisen pehmeän haahkanuntuvapeiton alla, lukea kynttilänvalossa kirjaa, joka kertoo ihmeellisistä asioista, joskus kannattaa jopa koristella koti paperilyhdyillä, tehdä lämpimiä juustovoileipiä ja juoda lasillinen viiniä ystävien kanssa hyvän toveruuden kunniaksi."

[45] "Jag ska berätta om att drömmen är viktigare än verkligheten."

[46] "Jag har försökt berätta om en mycket lycklig familj. Muminfamiljen är lycklig på ett så självfallet sätt at de inte ens vet om det. De trivs med varan och de ger varandra frihet. Frihet at vara ensam, frihet att tycka på sitt eget vis och få ha sina hemligheter ifred tills man får lust att dela dem. Att inte ge varan ont samvete och kunna uppleva ansvar som något roligt och inte bara plikt."

point out (see Valkeajoki 2003; Heinämaa 2018). This is also what Mymble seems to emphasize when the whole group gathers for the last time:

> And why should it be different? Mymble asked. A hemulen is always a hemulen and the same things happen to him all the time. [– –] "Will you always be the same?" Fillyonk asked her out of curiosity. "I certainly hope so!" Mymble answered. (*MN*, 171)
>
> Och varför skulle det vara olika? frågade Mymlan. En hemul är alltid en hemul och det händer honom bara samma slags saker [– –] Kommer du alltid att vara likadan? frågade Filifjonkan nyfiket. Det hoppas jag verkligen! svarade Mymlan. (*SN*, 149)

There is safety and comfort in repetition and sameness: in the same stories, characters and themes. The ending is not an ending but a new beginning. Letting go is about creating freedom to experience, to imagine and to find what one wants to be.

In the final passage of the novel, the narrator describes how Toft sees a boat far away:

> And then Toft saw the storm lantern Moominpappa had hung up at the top of the mast. In threw a gentle, warm light and burnt steadily. The boat was a very long way away. Toft had plenty of time to go down through the forest and along the beach to the jetty, and be just in time to catch the line and tie up the boat. (*MN*, 195–196)
>
> Och nu såg homsan Toft stormlyktan som pappan hade hängt i masttoppen. Den hade en mild varm färg och den brann stadigt. Båten var mycket långt borta. Homsan Toft hade god tid på sig att gå ner genom skogen och följa stranden till båtbryggan, precis lagom för att ta emot fånglinan. (*SN*, 170)

In Jansson's last illustration, we see Toft at the swimming hut (see Image 7). When reading the last words and looking at the last picture, we can also remember Fillyonk's silhouette of the Moomin family returning (see Image 5 above). As Happonen (2007, 26) notes, Jansson's vignettes can – among other functions – move the story forward. Here the last vignette can be read as referring to the future: it extends the story to times and spaces that are not described in the text. Readers never learn if the family really returns; the ending could also be just a reflection of the shadow-play (see also, Karjalainen 2016, 232). As Westin (1988, 285, transl. A. O.) writes: "We get to see only their shadows – the reader is left outside of the return itself".[47] Nevertheless, it is important that what readers see last is Toft waiting for them, ready to reach for the mooring rope. The open yet comforting ending can be seen as the final element that creates the sense of safety that is emphasized by both academic and non-academic readers.

[47] "Det är bara deras skuggor vi får se – själva återkomsten står läsaren utanför."

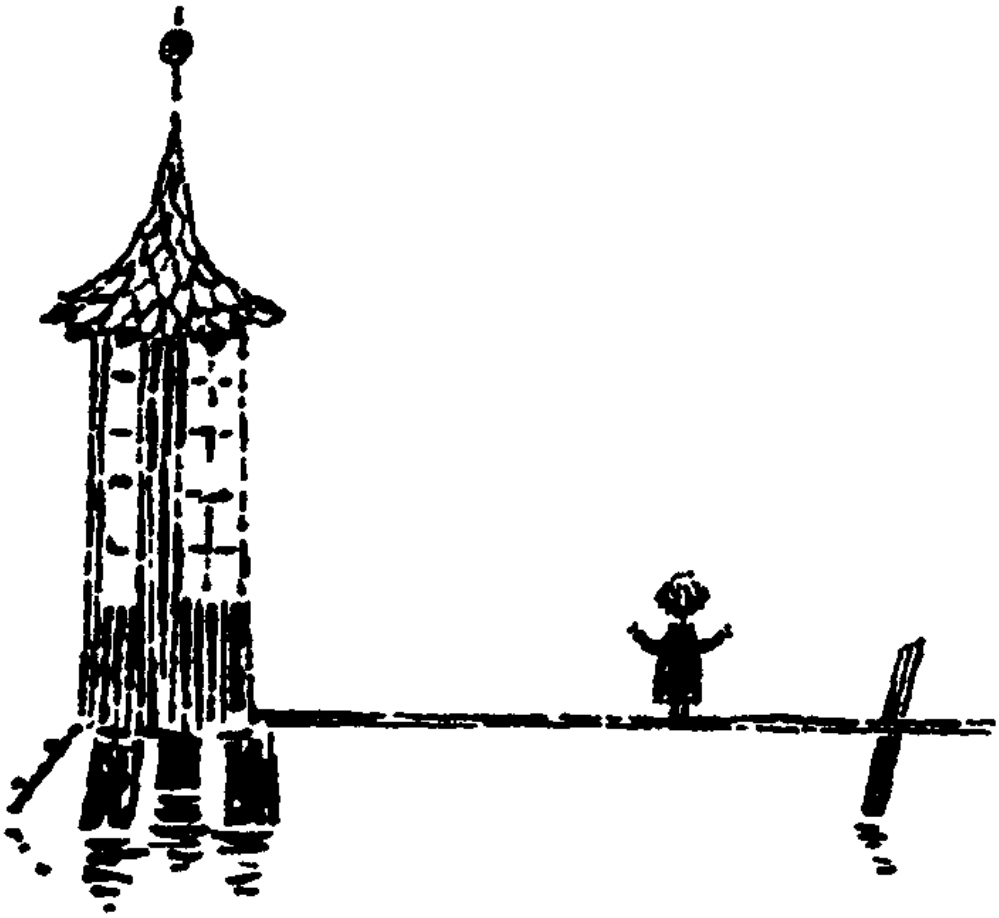

Image 7. Toft at the swimming hut. Illustration: Tove Jansson, *Sent i november*, 170. © Moomin Characters™

Sent i november was Jansson's last Moomin novel. The environment has changed, the Moomins are gone, the house is empty and cold, it is raining and nature is dying and decomposing. At the same time, the valley is depicted as a safe space where the characters can undergo painful experiences of anxiety, disgust, fear, grief and anger. They can break the norms that cause them suffering. They can imagine themselves and the worlds around them in new ways and they can also surrender these stories and images when they become too large and real. The novel is simultaneously about losing the valley and saying goodbye to it. There is pain evoked by the loss and an understanding of the fictional nature of the valley: an embodied experience of sorrow, disgust and anger as well a sense of fictionality, creativity and agency. Both are brought forth in the 'sense of November': loss and death but also something new growing from the decay.[48]

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On the Edge: Spatial and Emotional Extremes in Finnish Contemporary Prose Fiction

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Introduction

This chapter explores the junction of emotion and space in three contemporary Finnish novels. The selected material involves two narratives of Finnish Lapland and a narrative of the outer archipelago. The selected works are Ulla-Lena Lundberg's *Is* (2012, transl. *Ice* 2016), Tommi Liimatta's *Autarktis* [Autarctic] (AU, 2017), and Hanna Hauru's Jääkansi [Deck of Ice] (*JK*, 2017). Besides spatial extremes, the selected novels also cover some of the linguistic variability of Finnish literature, as the original language of Lundberg's novel is Swedish and the two other novels have been written in Finnish. The corpus thus includes imaginations of both southern and northern extremes of Finland: spaces and communities that exist far away from the centres of power and those that are close but still out of reach.

In the following analysis, the approach of this chapter draws from the ideas of the spatial turn, especially from the notion of the social understanding of space but will likewise highlight the interrelations between literary characters and literary landscapes. What is often referred to as the spatial turn of the humanities and social sciences, is an intellectual movement that has highlighted the social and relational nature of space as opposed to the absolute and naturalized understanding of Euclidian space (Casey 2009 (1993); Tally 2013). As scholars of humanities have taken an interest in spatial matters, those in geography have also been engaged in cross-pollination. In *Emotional Geographies*, Liz Bondi et al. (2005, 3, 9) suggest that the viewpoints of humanities have established a new attentiveness for the interrelation between spaces and their inhabitants and have accentuated the relationships among imagined, social and material spaces.

In the geography of emotions, emotions are understood as socially shared and spatially mediated (Bondi et al. 2005, 3). This perspective opens new approaches for literary scholars: the study of emotion has often been reduced to the study of characters'

emotions but the spatial understanding of emotion can significantly broaden the examination of literary works and their emotion effects. In his seminal work *Landscapes of Fear* (1979), geographer Yi-Fu Tuan lays out a multidisciplinary view of human fears and their spatial preconditions and manifestations. As Tuan (1979) points out, human emotion and environment are in constant interaction and even those anxieties that concern distinctly external and spatial phenomena such as avalanches, famines or getting lost in an alien city are, in fact, related to the presence or absence of other people: "The first nurturing environment every human infant explores is its biological or adoptive mother. [– –] People are our greatest source of security, but also the most common cause for our fear", Tuan (1978, 8) writes. These viewpoints are revisited in the last subsection of this chapter, which looks at the elements of spatial horror in the three novels.

This chapter asks, in which ways do contemporary Finnish novels imagine North and how are these imaginations connected to the tradition of Arctic hysteria? A special emphasis will be given to the interplay between literary space and emotion and the way these two emphasize the extremity of one another. Both novels by Hauru and Liimatta were recently published in the 2010s, and they are reimaginations of Lapland and the Finnish North: they challenge the idea of Northern wilderness and give particular attention to the social relationships that extreme environments produce and nurture. Lundberg's *Is*, on the other hand, takes place in the Finnish South but employs elements of Arctic hysteria and imagery of Finnish North; a considerable part of the novel describes winter in the archipelago, its harshness and joys but also its ever-present threat to human life. Thus, Lundberg's novel evokes winter as "a temporary North", as Daniel Chartier (2018, 2021) claims. Chartier's (2018, 2021) notion of a temporary North highlights the relative and subjective nature of cultural and geographic imaginations, a perspective that is also imbued in the spatial turn. Inspired by Chartier (2018), this chapter recognizes that literature and other forms of art can produce discursive and cultural Norths of their own; hence, they modify the experienced geographies of everyday life. In this way, Lundberg's South-Western archipelago overlaps with the Arctic of the narratives of Arctic hysteria.

The selected novels are analysed in the context of Arctic hysteria in Finnish literature and with the help of Chartier's viewpoints on imagined North and its study. Moreover, I will also employ analytical tools from the multidisciplinary study of emotions, especially in relation to experiences of literary space in the novels. The study of emotions has suggested that there are certain universal variables in the physiological symptoms of emotions; one of these is that coldness is related to fear or sadness or that emotional states that involve the two are felt as 'cold' in the lived body (Scherer and Wallbott 1994). All three novels can be read as tragedies or in the case of *Autarktis*, at least tragic, and this is not an unanticipated revelation for a reader of narratives of Arctic hysteria; it is perhaps more surprising that horror or fear are also important components of the narratives. The selected novels suggest that not only the coldness but also the great distances produce the imagined Finnish North. The sense of isola-

tion, be it social or geographical, can either destroy the human spirit, as in Hauru's *Jääkansi* or become an empowering escapade, as in Liimatta's *Autarktis*.

This chapter also engages with Chartier's call to 'recomplexify' the cultural Arctic in a sense that the chosen novels represent marginal voices: Lundberg's view is that of a linguistic-cultural minority, Finland-Swedes, and Liimatta and Hauru are writers of the Finnish North. Hauru comments on the male-dominated canon of Arctic hysteria with her female gaze and by placing the female body at the centre of the narrative. Liimatta, after a successful career in progressive rock, has a become a niche author, a teller of grotesque stories and the unofficial memoirist of the Northern rock scene. As a winner of the Finlandia Prize 2012, Lundberg's novel has received wide recognition, while Hauru's and Liimatta's grotesque aesthetics have appealed to a smaller readership.[1] As reimaginations of Finnish literary peripheries, the three selected novels involve both extreme conditions and extreme emotions that are related to Arctic hysteria: fear in the face of societal change, religious zeal, erotic desires, loneliness, shame and anger. As the chapter demonstrates, Ulla-Lena Lundberg's *Is* a multifaceted depiction of the South-Western archipelago that grows into a tragic trial of strength of the young pastor, whose fate is to yield to the powers of nature. Tommi Liimatta's *Autarktis* develops a utopian idea of a self-sufficient North, while the story exposes the discontinuities of male communities and re-establishes them through escapes to the wilderness. Hanna Hauru's *Jääkansi* revisits the tradition of a naturalist depiction of poverty but emphasizes the bodily aspects and extends the opposition of interior and exterior spaces, which is a typical feature of narratives of the North as Chartier (2021) claims, to concern bodily interiors and exteriors.

I will first introduce and analyse the individual novels separately and then continue with a section that examines the similarities among the three novels.

Lundberg's Insular Origins

Ulla-Lena Lundberg's *Is* (2012) is an independent sequel to the novel *Marsipansoldaten* [The Marzipan Soldier] (2001), which follows the life of the Kummel family during the Second World War. *Is*, a novel that takes place in the 1950s, centres around Petter Kummel, the eldest son and follows his move to the outer archipelago. The novel begins with the arrival of the Kummel family, provides a detailed description of Petter Kummel's travel to the mainland, presents the drowning scene as a segment of Petter Kummel's homeward bound, and draws to its end with the Kummel family departure. While closely examining the pastor's life and development, the novel simultaneously presents a portrait of the community that receives him. The narrative consists of multiple voices and sources of focalization that result in a polyphonic view of life in the community; among these voices, the most central is that of the postman, Post-Anton.

[1] Hauru's *Jääkansi* and Liimatta's *Autarktis* were, however, shortlisted for the Finlandia Prize of 2017.

The central role of a mediating figure, the postman, underscores the significance of connection and reveals the symbolic value that is inscribed to the role of a messenger. The Örlands present themselves as a safe haven, as in the case of the Russian emigrant, the doctor, (*Is*, Chapter 3), who has fled the Soviet Union but also as a desolate colony, as for the schoolmistress, who has been drawn to the islands by the siren call of a male heartbreaker (*Is*, 64–66).

At the opening of the novel, Petter Kummel has accepted a posting as a village pastor in the remote Örlands and together with his young wife and toddler establishes a new life in the archipelago and the peculiar community of fishers. The isolated Örlands and their weather- and sea-dependent life come to signify a much-needed sanctuary and a renewed interest in spiritual life for the young pastor, who immediately feels a connection and a growing fondness for his first posting. These idyllic themes are echoed by the pastor's wife, Mona, who cares relentlessly for the needs of her family and embodies the pragmatic optimism of post-war Finland. The same spirit is also reflected in the village community's attempts to set up a health station and build a bridge between the isolated islands. However, the optimism of reconstruction and a sense of belonging are overshadowed by the community's war trauma and the figure of the postman, whose presentiment of the underlying danger beneath the waters adds an otherworldly presence within the otherwise down-to-earth narrative. Finally, the postman's premonition fulfils itself: the young pastor faces a tragic death as the sea ice breaks under him. As the much-awaited bridge finally opens, the survivors of the Kummel family leave the islands on their way to a changed life.

Thus, in *Is* Lundberg uses the trope of the paradise island or summer island, an idealized insular site that has multiple models in Finnish literature but can be traced back to Antiquity (Laakso et al. 2017). Besides depicting idyllic scenes of summer, Lundberg's novel highlights the changes of the season and dwells on scenes that depict winter's harshness. The climax of the novel, the dramatic death struggle of the young pastor, is a violent and sudden event, an abrupt change in the narrative that mostly relies on pastoral harmony and the optimism of reconstruction. The winter turns the Örlands into a temporary North (on the concept, see Chartier 2021), which is violent and brutal. The narrative reverses the reader's expectations with the death of the protagonist; pastor Kummel, the beacon of hope, faith and civilization, is annihilated by the hostile sea ice. The friendly, inviting sea has been transformed into something else by the icy touch of winter; the paradise islands of South-Western Finland are suddenly transformed by Arctic hysteria.

The Finnish canon has a long tradition of depicting the development of society in the context of wilderness. These attempts often resulted in primitivist imaginations that highlighted the uncivilized and unrefined nature of 'the Finnish national character' and worked as a means of identity formation (Rossi 2020, 16–19). Aleksis Kivi's *Seitsemän veljestä* (1870, transl. *Seven Brothers* 1929) juxtaposes the forest wilderness of Impivaara with the civilized and cultured realm that awaits the brothers as soon as they mature into responsible and cooperative members of the society. The novel

has often been interpreted as an allegory of the Finnish nation and its development. Similarly, Ilmari Kianto's *Punainen viiva* (1909, transl. *The Red Line* 2014), a novel of the first parliamentary elections in Finland, takes place in the deep forests of Kainuu, presenting the democratic process in the middle of an impoverished wilderness. In *Is*, the construction site of the bridge and the health station are symbols of post-war reconstruction, development of the welfare state and the modernization process that finally reaches the peripheries of the country. In this sense, the novel has an ambivalent message: the material and social construction of the infrastructure of modernity is a success yet the spiritual aspect of this change also seems to result in the loss of the mainland and the victory of the local traditions. *Is* can be seen as a novel that develops from an idyll to a tragedy. The archipelagic setting in itself suggests an association with the Homeric tradition, as the journey of Odysseus is also an island journey. Petter Kummel's strong attachment to the Örlands resonates with the Homeric tales of *nostos*, homecoming of the war hero; this association is further strengthened by the fact that return from war defines both the world of Odysseys and the community of the Örlands. The idyllic scenes of finding home in the Örlands give way to the scene of a full-blown tragedy as the young pastor drowns in the sea. Interpreted in light of the modernization process, *Is* can be seen as a tragedy of modernity: it is a plain and unassuming narrative of a process of change that consumes its victims.

The death scene of pastor Kummel and the Örlands' transformation into a temporary North, a North of Arctic hysteria, is a dramatic yet not fully unexpected plot development. Both the death and the sudden change in the novel's mood are anticipated throughout the narrative. Next, I will illustrate how Lundberg's novel makes use of spatiality to depict the clash between modernity and primitivity, Christianity and paganism or the mainland and periphery.

As already stated, the character of Post-Anton highlights the novel's emphasis on distance and intermediate spaces. Post-Anton is the only character that has an epithet in the novel, a detail which associates his character with mythological connotations, as epithets are a common device in epic poetry. Anton functions as a link between the continent and the Örlands: he carries the mail but also brings the visitors and news from the continent. In the opening passage of the novel (*Is*, 7–8), Anton brings along the protagonist, pastor Kummel and his family to the Örlands; in the finale of the novel (*Is*, 362–365), it is Anton's focalization that follows the departure of the pastor's wife and children. With Post-Anton's character, the novel not only dramatizes the climactic scenes of arrival and departure but also the space of in-betweenness, the sea. As Kristina Malmio and Kaisa Kurikka (2020, 4–5) suggest, the in-betweenness seems to be a defining feature of contemporary Nordic literature in general; according to them, the negotiation between the global and local relations and the ensuing sense of in-betweenness can be called a key feature of contemporary Nordic literature. In *Is*, this negotiation takes place between the continent and the Örlands.

The opening of the novel introduces Anton but does it through an interesting set of literary devices that underline the entwined nature of characters and landscape:

> No one who's seen the way a landscape changes when a boat appears can ever agree that any individual human life lacks meaning. The land and the bay are at peace. People gaze out across the water, rest their eyes, then look away. Things are what they are. In every breast there is a longing for something else, and everything we long for comes by boat. It's enough that what comes is me, Anton, with the mail, for I might have anyone at all in the cabin. Expectation sweeps across heaven and earth when they first catch sight of me. The landscape is no longer quiet, there's movement everywhere when the news goes around. Some are already running, shouting, "Here they come!"
>
> It's the same with those who, ancient and invisible, exist beyond our range of vision. (*Ice*, 9)
>
> Den som har sett förändringen i ett landskap när en båt kommer in i synfältet kann aldrig hålla med om att ett enskilt människoliv saknar betydelse. Det ligger en sådan frid över vatten och land. Folk later blicken glida över hamnviken, vilar ögat och tittar bort. Det är som det alltid är. I alla bröst längtar man efter något annat, och allt vi längtar efter kommer med båt.
>
> Det behövs bara att det är jag som kommer, Anton med posten. I ruffen kann jag ha vem som helst, och en förväntan drar genom himmel och jord när den första får ögonen på mig. Landskapet är inte mera stilla, allt rör sig när budet går runt. Några springer redan och ropar: nu kommer dom!
>
> Så är det också med dem som är osynliga och uråldriga vistas utanför synkretsen. (*Is*, 7)

The arrival of a vessel is narrated in an iterative manner, which means that a frequent event is narrated once; the first paragraph underlines the repetitive nature of these events and depicts how they receive a universal reaction. Thus, the iterative functions here as an 'informative frame', a term coined by Gérard Genette (1980, 117). The scene begins with an idyllic depiction of a serene landscape, which, nevertheless, seems to contain concealed emotions: "In every breast there is a longing for something else", the narrator summarizes. In this paragraph, as well as in the beginning of the excerpt, the narrator associates the landscape with its human inhabitants: the narrator speaks of changes in the landscape, although they refer to the reactions of the inhabitants. As the boat draws nearer, the narrator remarks: "Landscape is no longer quiet, there's movement everywhere when the news goes around". Again, the human reaction is represented as a movement in the landscape. This narrative strategy naturalizes the people and anthropomorphizes the landscape, a tradition that can be traced back to the depictions of folklife in early 20th-century Finnish literature; for instance, in the works of F E Sillanpää.

However, the narrator of *Is* breaks away from the genre tradition with the next paragraph, which introduces supernatural elements: "It's the same with those who, ancient

and invisible, exist beyond our range of vision". In this instance, the narrator suggests that the association between the human and the spatial is not only a literary device but also a reflection of the animistic worldview. Life in the Örlands is controlled by the elements, seasons and weather. During summertime, open waters call the inhabitants on boats and fill the archipelago with yachtsmen but the wintertime and sea ice truly bring the community together. The wilderness, weather and the inhabitants of the Örland Islands are intertwined in ways that ought not be disregarded, the narrative suggests:

> When you are a suckling babe, mama's teat is the first thing you know about. The second is the weather. They talk about it all around you all the time. About the outlook, about how long it will last. (*Ice*, 168)
>
> När du är ett spenabarn är mammas tiss det första du vet om. Det andra är vädret. Det pratar de om runt omkring dig, hela tiden. Vad det ser u tatt bli för väder, hur länge månn tro det ska stå sig. (*Is*, 137)

Thus, it can be seen that he islanders' sensitivity towards weather and landscape is a recurring theme in the narrative. It also fascinates the young pastor, who interviews the postman to understand better the communal world view:

> He sounds, how should I put it, reverential. "You mean you know these parts so well you can see the tricky spots ahead of you?"
>
> "That, too. But also that I can see how it's going to be."
>
> "Do you have what they call second sight?"
>
> "Yes, nearly everyone does in my family. There's nothing special about it. You see what's going to happen. You can't change it. I knew my old lady was going to die. Signs and warnings everywhere, but nothing I could do anything about. When I'm going out on the water it's a little different. Then it's more active, like a collaboration. I keep my eyes open and I'm told how things are. Then it's up to me if I pay attention to what I've seen or just do what I want." (*Ice*, 96)
>
> Han later, hur ska jag säga, vördnadsfull. "Du menar att du känner krokarna så bra att du ser svåra ställen framför dig?"
>
> "Det också. Men att jag också ser hur det kommer att bli."
>
> "Är du vad man kallar synsk?"
>
> "Jo, det är vi nästan alla i min släkt. Det är inget särskilt med det. Att se hur det ska gå. Man kann inte ändra på det. Jag visste att min gumma skulle dö. Varning och varsel hur många som helst, men inget jag kunde göra något åt. När jag ska ge mi gut är det något annat. Då är det mera aktivt, som ett samarbete. Jag håller ögonen öppna och får veta hur det

ligger till. Sen beror det på mig om jag följar det jag sett eller bara går efter eget huvud." (*Is*, 77–78)

In the passage, the thorough knowledge of the landscape or seascape, to be specific, ("you know these parts so well you can see the tricky spots ahead of you?") is associated with intuitive or supernatural knowledge of the future ("I can see how it's going to be"); again, this is associated with intimate communication between the human agent and the hidden forces of the seascape ("When I'm going out on the water it's a little different. Then it's more active, like a collaboration".) Thus, the ability to read the seascape and the weather is conflated with premonition and cooperation between human and supernatural: space, weather and time are fused and the ability to navigate through them presents itself as a sensitivity or a form of communication, a birthright that falls only on the islanders. It is also noteworthy that the first thorough explication of the animistic world view is presented in dialogue; this can be understood as a reference to the oral tradition which is the source and medium of these beliefs.

The village community and the Örlands are associated with the idea of premodernity and primal societies in general: the characters of the village community are attached to the surrounding environment in a way that naturalizes the human characters. This suggests that the people of the village community are closer to nature; hence, they are more primitive or authentic than the pastor and his wife, who are mainlanders. Two other elements, the animistic worldview of the villagers and the importance that is given to oral communication, both underscore the irrational, unscientific and nonliterate state of members of the Örlands community. The temporal and spatial otherness of the Örlands resembles many narrative strategies that often arise in the literary depictions of Finnish North. The evocation of animistic worldview, the mystification of oral folk wisdom, the anticipation of supernatural horror and other elements of primitivist aesthetics associate the novel with popular imaginations[2] of Finnish Lapland.

The extremity of the Örlands is constructed through associations and elements that underline both the temporal, spatial and social differences between the Örlands and the mainland. Pastor Kummel and his family are representatives of the mainland; as his occupation suggests, this association is also of a religious and spiritual nature. The islanders stand for local, ancient, pagan and animistic, whereas Petter Kummel comes from the realm of the metropolitan, universal, erudite and Christian. Kummel's separation from the village community is a symbolic representation of the distance between the elite and the common people. By highlighting the differences between the Swedish-speaking fishing communities of coastal Finland and the Swedish-speaking upper class of Borgå and Helsingfors, Lundberg's novel illustrates the disparity that exists between the seemingly united minority group. The character of Post-Anton plays the part of a messenger between the realms of the Örlands and the mainland, the village

[2] Erik Blomberg's film *Valkoinen peura* [The White Reindeer] (1952), for instance, represents the animistic and pagan realm of Lapland and juxtaposes it with a southern character whose inability to accept and affirm the local worldview leads to his defeat.

community and the priest or the realms of the spirits and that of the humans; thus, he is shaman-like. For the young priest, Post-Anton functions as link to the Örlands' customs and the pre-Christian belief system (*Is*, 77–80). Despite his guide, the priest is an outsider, both spatially, culturally and spiritually and his death and his family's departure, as Post-Anton confesses, is "best for everyone" (*Ice*, 444), in the final words of the novel.

Another component that connects *Is* with narratives of Finnish Lapland is the problematic relationship with sexuality. As Markku Ihonen (1999, 231–232) suggests, narratives on arctic hysteria often foreground sexuality and discuss it in the context of revivalist Christianity. Representations of overt yet suppressed sexuality are a recognized element in Timo K. Mukka's and Rosa Liksom's prose about Lapland and Northern Finland (for Mukka, see Ovaska 2020; for Liksom, see Chapter V). *Is* also employs the theme of suppressed sexuality, although in a less explicit manner than Mukka's and Liksom's often grotesque works of fiction. A flashback of the first years of marriage between Petter and Mona Kummel (*Is*, 69–73) reveals that the young pastor has a past among a revivalist sect, *Oxfordrörelsen* and that he has been on the verge of both religious and sexual arousal: "Yes, people's feelings ran away with them. Yes, the atmosphere was thoroughly overheated" (*Ice*, 89).[3] The scene is an allusion to the association between Christian revivalism and profuse sexual excitement, a particularly recognizable feature of the prose of Arctic hysteria. The protagonist's struggle with his sexuality continues, as he leaves the safe haven of the Örlands. Petter Kummel's only trip away from the Örlands ends up in a catastrophe, as he is forced to face his sexual abuser, house servant Hilda (*Is*, 199–223). As in the case of the Russian emigrant, the Örlands are yet again represented as a place of refuge: for Petter Kummel, they signify a stronghold of marital love and the mainstream Evangelical Lutheran Church. Although the encounter between Petter and Hilda does not take place in the peripheral setting of the Örlands, the events nevertheless add up to the character development of Petter Kummel and represent him as a person who employs suppression as a defence mechanism against past trauma. Hence, his death through the breaking of sea ice can be seen as a symbol of the human psyche and its powers of suppression and the yielding of those powers. At the end of the novel, the extreme conditions of the Örlands and the animistic presence of the seascape finally overcome pastor Kummel.

Liimatta's Autarchy: Self-sufficiency and Communality in the Male North

Tommi Liimatta's novel *Autarktis* is a story told by three alternating narrators, all men, unravelling their lives in the North of Finland during the post-war years, in the 1960s, and in the 2000s. *Autarktis* involves multiple scenes that can be understood

[3] "Jo, känslorna har skenat iväg. Ja, atmosfären har varit duktigt överhettad." (Is, 72)

as bouts of Arctic hysteria: episodes of irrational behaviour in the middle of Arctic nature, and attempts at shunning the society of others. These depictions can be linked to the literary tradition of Finnish North but the self-awareness and irony of *Autarktis* connects it to the works of Rosa Liksom, Hanna Hauru, Katja Kettu and other postmodernists of Finnish fiction (for postmodern Arctic hysteria, see Karkulehto 2010). Compared to Liksom, Hauru, and Kettu, Liimatta is particularly explicit in *Autarktis* in its deconstruction of the concepts of North and Lapland. One could even say that the novel does the very work Chartier (2018) calls for in his ethical principles for the study of the North: it is a polyphonic, multi-perspective, inclusive, deconstructive and 'recomplexifying' narrative that shuns easy answers and grand narratives. The following examination will begin with the opening of the novel, which delivers the reader right in the middle of discussion.

The opening section of the novel seems to concern itself with spatial coordinates but also provides temporal cues. The section involves two quotations from an encyclopaedia, and a third element that fuses them:

> **autarky** (< Greek) self-sufficiency, the ability of a state or other region to survive with their own production without import trade. – Spectrum Tietokeskus 14, WSOY 1981.
>
> **Arctic** The region of North Pole [which] consists of the seas, islands and coastal areas around the North Pole of the Earth whose southern boundary is 10 Celsius degrees isotherm in July. The Arctic Circle, 66º33' northern lat., is the geographical southern border of the Arctic region. – Spectrum Tietokeskus 1, WSOY 1976.
>
> **Autarctic** The self-sufficient North.
>
> **autarkia** (< kreik.) omavaraisuus, valtion tai muun alueen kyky tulla toimeen omalla tuotannollaan ilman tuontikauppaa. Spectrum Tietokeskus 14, WSOY 1981.
>
> **Arktis** Pohjoisnavan alue [joka] käsittää ne maapallon pohjoisnavan ympärillä olevat meret, saaret ja rannikkoseudut, joiden etelärajana on heinäkuun 10°C isotermi. Pohjoinen napapiiri, 66°33' pohj. lev., on arktisen alueen maantieteellinen etelärаja. – Spectrum Tietokeskus 1, WSOY 1976.
>
> **Autarktis** Omavarainen pohjoinen. (*AU* 5, transl. S. K.)

The excerpt above provides etymologies of two concepts that constitute the title of the novel, *Autarktis*. As the section discloses, the compound *Autarktis* derives from the Greek concept of *autarky*, which means self-sufficiency, and the region of the Arctic. Put together, they signify a self-sufficient North. Besides providing an explanation of the title, the etymologies offer the reader a vague sense of the temporal setting of the narrative. The beginning of the narrative suggests that the point of comparison to

the novel's multiple temporal settings is to be found somewhere in the late 1970s and 1980s; this is revealing, as two of the three storylines of the novel take place before that, during the post-war reconstruction and the 1960s. The beginning, in other words, highlights the role of Puhuva tikkataulu ('Talking Dartboard'), the protagonist of the 21st century storyline, whose childhood years take place in the 1970s and 1980s. The opening of the novel and particularly its last section, the one that coins the definition of 'Autarctic', can be read as a pseudofactual element, which, according to Barbara Foley, consists of "parodic imitation of nonfictional discourse" (Foley 1986, 107). In this way, *Autarktis* gestures to the long history of the novel; as Foley has suggested, the pseudofactual fiction is a 17th and 18th-century predecessor of the modern novel. This also happened to be the golden age of the encyclopaedia.

The quoted *Spectrum encyclopaedia series* (1976–1987) stands as a memorial to the times before the Internet revolution; in the Finnish context, the decades of 1970s and 1980s were the most prolific period of encyclopaedia production. The same decades were in many ways also the heyday of the Finnish welfare state project. Hence, the opening of the novel activates the sentiment of nostalgia: it is simultaneously an illustration of the changing nature of knowledge and a symbol of a lost period, one which defined the Finnish society for the following years. In this way, the scene oscillates between what Svetlana Boym (2001, 41–56) has coined as the two poles of nostalgia: restorative nostalgia, which is a political, active, unquestioning force that resides in symbols and fuels religious and nationalist movements; and reflective nostalgia, on the other hand, which relies on meditative self-reflection, ambivalences, details, irony and emotions. The encyclopaedia can be linked with both: it is a symbol and a representation of hierarchical knowledge that may suggest a restorative nostalgic function but since the quotations are accompanied with a third element, the notion of 'Autarctic' and its conceptualization, which is imaginary and does not appear in encyclopaedias, irony and humour are called into question. This would suggest a reflective nostalgic attitude. By referencing the encyclopaedia, the section also implicitly questions the notion of 'Autarctic': the ideals of autarky and the image of Arctic are represented as derivates of old, even outdated, knowledge. At the very least, the section emphasizes the presence of multiple temporalities in an understanding of the North or Arctic: the cultural and shared images of today are built on the assumptions of yesterday. This is also echoed in the narrative's structure that criss-crosses from one decade to another.

This section focuses on one of the three storylines, the one narrated and focalized by Tikkataulu. As the analysis of the opening of the novel above suggests, Tikkataulu's character and narratorial voice hold a special role in the narrative. He is the epicentre of the events, the central figure, the successor of the other two first-person narrators. More importantly, he is the only first-person narrator who involves himself in the tedious task of defining North, Lapland or the Arctic. As the opening of the novel implies, the notion of 'Autarctic' is Tikkataulu's concept or, perhaps, his fantasy. Therefore, this section focuses on the conceptual work that Tikkataulu's character does around the

notions of North and Arctic and elaborates on his character and how it relates to the tradition of Arctic hysteria in Finnish literature.

Besides the opening of the novel, Tikkataulu's storyline involves multiple accounts in which Tikkataulu attempts to provide a definition of Finnish Lapland. In these accounts, the Finnish North is juxtaposed with southern regions of the country and the metropolitan area of Helsinki. In the following excerpt, the first-person narrator observes the tourism in Lapland:

> As much as the magic world of the Stockholm ferry, with its special offers and Schlager pieces, tries to pleasantly mask the stark truth that one is in an iron jar on a cold sea, casually hanging around above one's possible tomb, Lapland tourism, on the contrary, tries to constantly remind customers of their location, which is equally cold and deadly. But this coldness is Northern, and romantic. Even southern Kemi tries to cash in on Santa Claus, although Lapland is nowhere near Rovaniemi either. No, Rovaniemi is only a refuelling station on the way to the ski resorts. The crowded *slalom centre* is not a site; it is merely a stage or rather, one of the suburbs of the metropolitan area with the exception that the inhabitants change every week.
>
> Siinä missä ruotsinlaivan taikamaailma pyrkii tarjouksineen ja iskelmineen miellyttävästi hälventämään sitä kolkkoa tosiasiaa, että ihminen oleksii rautapurkissa kylmällä merellä mahdollisen hautansa päällä, pyrkii Lapin matkailu päinvastoin jatkuvasti muistuttamaan asiakasta tämän sijainnista, joka sekin on kylmä ja tappava. Mutta se on romanttista, pohjoista kylmyyttä. Jopa eteläinen Kemi yrittää ratsastaa joulupukilla vaikkei Lappi vielä Rovaniemelläkään häämötä. Rovaniemi on vasta tankkausetappi hiihtokeskuksiin. Ruuhkainen slalom center on paikkana lavastus ja oikeastaan yksi pääkaupunkiseudun lähiöistä sillä erotuksella että asujaimisto vaihtuu viikottain. (*AU*, 135, transl. S. K.)

The excerpt juxtaposes not only north and south but also multiple northern locations among themselves. The northern-ness and Laplandish-ness of the cities of Kemi and Rovaniemi is questioned, even denied; the imagined North is contested and relative, a moving target, as Chartier (2018) suggests. Moreover, the social aspect of regional identity is evoked as the tourist-populated northern attractions are declared "suburbs of the metropolitan area". The excerpt examines how the commercial image of Lapland, one that is produced by the recreation industry, fuses romanticized notions of wilderness and extremity with the ever-present Christmas mythology and describes how this commercialized notion of north effectively trickles southwards, reaching locations such as 'southern Kemi'. The excerpt implicitly expresses concern over the threat posed by southern regions: the slalom centre is coined as 'a set', a choice of words that highlights the artificial and illusory qualities of the place. Thus, the slalom centre gains qualities

that can be linked with Marc Augé's (1995) famous notion of the non-place, by which he refers to places that lack an identity of their own and therefore do not permit the development of communality.

Despite his critical attitude towards the image of Lapland, Tikkataulu does produce a definition of Lapland:

> And when is it Lapland? When the puddle freezes up in August. When the spruce does not grow. It is a shade plant and does not tolerate the relentless sunshine of the summer midnight. The pine does and that is why the pine can be found farther north than the spruce. The pine migrated as far north as Inari nine thousand years ago and is very common as a Christmas tree. The viper only lives as far as the Saariselkä region.
>
> Ja milloin on Lappi? Kun lätäkkö jäätyy elokuussa. Kun kuusi ei kasva. Se on varjokasvi eikä siedä kesäisen keskiyön hellittämätöntä paistetta. Mänty sietää ja kasvaa kuusta pohjoisemmassa. Inarin korkeudelle mänty kulkeutui yhdeksäntuhatta vuotta sitten ja on joulupuuna aivan tavallinen. Kyykäärme loppuu Saariselällä. (*AU,* 136, transl. S. K.)

Tikkataulu's definition is simultaneously intimate yet cool and detached. The first-person narrator's experience of puddles freezing in August signals his first-hand experience of the region but as the passage progresses, these intimate details are supplanted with encyclopaedic information about spruce, pine and viper. The excerpt makes use of contradictory emotional registers, as the definition expresses affection, intimacy and personal experience but quickly resorts to simple data of the distribution of certain species. The shift from one register to the other can be interpreted as a means of emotion regulation: it is a form of attentional deployment, which, as Kateri McRae and James J Gross (2009, 338) suggest, can be understood as a method with which the agent directs attention to a specific target in order to regulate their emotions. More specifically, the narrator's resort to the encyclopaedic register is a distraction that "focuses attention on unemotional aspects of the situation" (McRae and Gross 2009, 338). The purpose of this textual emotion regulation is twofold: it not only simultaneously represents the first-person narrator's mental processes but also invites the reader to identify with him and his state of mind; in other words, it produces certain emotions and then strives to reduce the emotional sensitivity of the reader.

The passage begins with a question that fuses the temporal and spatial: "And when is it Lapland?" The temporal element – the interrogative 'when' – of the question is semantically conspicuous, as the more common phrase would be "where is Lapland?". Nevertheless, the overall effect of the sentence is not temporal but spatial: by asking "when is it Lapland", the narrator implicitly suggests a trajectory from south to north: a car drive, a train trip, a hike or merely a gaze that is directed from south to north. In this context, the question "when is it considered Lapland" is only reasonable, as it translates into a question of "whether our journey has already reached Lapland or

not?" Aside from the narrator's choice of words, the passage offers an alternative to the industrydriven and tourist-centred definition of Lapland. This alternative relies on natural phenomena: the floristic regions and their characteristic plants, the habitats of certain animal species, and the perceivable indicators of temperature, such as water freezing. The illusory and artificial aspects of tourist-Lapland are contrasted with biological knowledge and visible and concrete changes in the environment. The passage suggests that the preferred understanding of Lapland relies on environmental and ecological information and observation rather than the experience provided by commercial actors. Simultaneously, the passage reminds the reader of the complex task that knowing a certain region – imaginary or not – is and concretizes the process of knowing with few easily understandable yet particular and precise details. By challenging the monomyths of tourism and giving voice to perceived and felt understandings of Lapland *Autarktis* showcases the recomplexifying of North that Chartier (2018) has emphasised.

With the protagonist's lengthy monologues and stern lectures, the storyline assumes a restrained, almost detached attitude towards the expression of emotions. Tikkataulu's storyline is loaded with geographical, political, historical and microhistorical information on the region. These involve the visual layout of an encyclopaedia entry and narrative acceleration, as in Tikkataulu's account of the prehistory of Finnish Lapland, a section that takes up altogether four pages but extends from the ice age to the post-war years of the 1950s (*AU*, 256–259). The presence of encyclopaedic quotations and the first-person narrator's constant urge to recite detailed information on various subjects can be seen as methods of emotion regulation, as they invite the reader to consider the status of factual text within a fictional novel. This relationship, as Foley (1986, 107–142) suggests, does not necessarily suggest the validity or truthfulness of a novel but rather evokes a parodic and ironic attitude. The reader, in other words, receives a cue to read Tikkataulu's storyline, which is tragic in many ways, also through the lens of irony. Unlike Lundberg's *Is* or Hauru's *Jääkansi*, *Autarktis* provides the reader some comic relief.

Although the storyline employs emotional detachment through knowledge and cool irony, the processes of contradicting the dominant image of Lapland and producing a competing definition are loaded with emotion. As the first-person narrator depicts how the Lapland he knows is in the process of trickling southwards; "Even the southern Kemi tries to cash in on Santa Claus although Lapland is nowhere near Rovaniemi either", (*AU*, 135) he eventually depicts the process of losing Lapland. The critical stance of the scene is due to a process of occupation and conquest and the biting tone of the first-person narrator can be seen as an emotional and cognitive resistance to colonial enterprises.[4] As such, the scene also carries the implicit memory of Lapland

[4] A plethora of Finnish writers of the late 20th century have depicted regionalist problematics and ensuing (negative) emotions, such as bitterness, hatred and fear. These authors include Timo K. Mukka and Pentti Linkola. The structural change of Finnish agrarian society inspired authors especially in the 1960s and 1970s; see e.g., Mäkelä (1999).

as the homeland of the Sámi people, although the colonizing developments depicted in the novel have no clear references to the problematics of indigenous rights. In *Autarktis*, the colonizing power is the power of the capital: capital as the capital city and capital in the meaning of equity capital. These excerpts are also depictions of fear: fear of losing one's home and fear of becoming a stranger in one's own land.

The three first-person narrators of *Autarktis*, all men living in the Rovaniemi region of northern Finland, have all become strangers to themselves. Tikkataulu himself is an outcast of the late modern society: he is enabled by the welfare state but remains mostly isolated in his cabin. The character's life is balanced between home chores, which he approaches as five-finger exercises for self-sufficiency and excursions to town, which often result in binge drinking and heartfelt socialization. The second protagonist, under the pseudonym Ruottikuume ('Sweeden Fever')[5], experiences the great migration of the 1960s and 1970s and is among the 300,000 Finns who emigrated to Sweden for economic reasons. His strangeness is the strangeness of an emigrant, immigrant and returnee. The storyline of the third protagonist, Kaataja ('Slaughterer'), begins during the Second World War but focuses mainly on the postwar years, the rebuilding of Lapland and living with war trauma in the middle of the developing society. His unfamiliarity stems from the trauma that renders everyday life unimaginable and slowly but surely detaches him from the people around him.

Although the three men represent three consecutive generations, they are not related to each other nor do they cross paths during the narrative. Thus, *Autarktis* can be seen as a variation of the immensely popular Finnish family saga (on the genre, see Nagy 1986): the succession of three men directs the reader to look for relations between them but in the world of the novel, such do not exist. The three first-person narrators of the novel inhabit different time- and storylines within the narrative. As they are solitary and abandoned by their spouses, the men of *Autarktis* are similarly cut off from multigenerational continuity. Interestingly, this solution is a spatial one: instead of temporal continuities, the men are united by their spatial coordinates: their Laplandish homes, workplaces and social circles. Liimatta's novel seems to suggest that despite the generational differences and large discrepancies in their daily lives, personal histories, ideologies and values, these men are still somehow united by their place of residence.

The present moment of Puhuva tikkataulu's storyline takes place between 2000 and 2010 but a series of flashbacks presents his childhood, school years and early youth (*AU*, 49–53, 63–71, 85–93, 109–110). In the present moment, Puhuva tikkataulu lives a life of solitude in his small cabin, monitors world's events via the Internet and is occasionally drawn to the local pub and its groups of misfits and other socially marginalized people. The taxi driver on these excursions, Clement, "a black man" (*AU*, 29), is a loyal companion of Tikkataulu and his friends. Tikkataulu's rambling monologues suggest that he is not only a marginalized person and unemployed but also a critical thinker;

[5] The Finnish original contains a linguistic feature that can be interpreted as a dialect expression or a spelling mistake.

even his pseudonym, although originally a detail of an intoxicated conversation (*AU*, 157–159), can be understood as a satirical comment on his role within Finnish society, as the unemployed and socially excluded are often the 'talking dartboards' of official and common parlance.

The underclass outsider as a dissident is a figure that runs through the Finnish literary canon. Also known as the derelict philosophers, characters such as Juutas Käkriäinen in Joel Lehtonen's *Putkinotko* (1919–1920) and Konsta Pylkkänen in Veikko Huovinen's *Havukka-ahon ajattelija* [Backwoods Philosopher] (1952) engage in cultural criticism from the margins of the society. Their withdrawn personalities and deep-seated love for the wilderness positions them outside the social and cultural spheres of life, simultaneously providing them critical distance. As Riikka Rossi (2020, 29–30, 228) claims, the rural or agrarian underclass outsider of the Finnish novel can be understood as a manifestation of an 'emphatic primitivism' that challenges modernity and civilization and finds value within the primitive, be it underclass, rural or agrarian. In *Autarktis*, too, Tikkataulu voices the concerns of the underclass of peripheries and produces a sharp-sighted criticism of modernity. Tikkataulu assumes the role of a seer or a modern-day shaman: in his monologues, he presents insightful visions of the cultural and political identity of Rovaniemi and the Finnish North (*AU*, 132–137), the ice age and its traces in the Rovaniemi region (*AU*, 256–259) and the globalization and its direct and indirect presence in his Arctic life (*AU*, 10–12). These critical addresses can also be understood as a re-entry to the narratives of Lapland wilderness and their often-masculinist ethos (Lehtola 2019; Ridanpää 2010). As Veli-Pekka Lehtola (2019) has pointed out in his study of Finnish Lapland literature, the literary imaginations on Lapland have always involved an element of criticism towards the southern civilization, often cited as *Lannanmaa* ('The Land of Manure') as opposed to the hunting cultures and reindeer husbandry of Lapland. Tikkataulu's individualist lifestyle and critical attitude separate him from society, although Liimatta's postmodern interpretation of the backwoods philosopher presents him as a receiver of social security benefits and connected to the Internet and the transnational production chains. Thus, the secluded life of a derelict philosopher is brought under scrutiny in *Autarktis* and raises the question: to which end can one live an independent life in a networked society?

Although Tikkataulu's storyline mostly involves episodes of extreme seclusion and withdrawal, the narrative does in fact present him in the company of his friends. His storyline involves multiple flashbacks that depict his childhood experiences with his group of friends: their education, musical interests but above all, their excursions on bikes (*AU*, 87–90). The present moment of the storyline develops the excursion motif and finally involves a climactic depiction of a typical excursion that is carried out by Clement's taxi (*AU*, 174–182). The episode is narrated in an iterative manner, which further highlights its importance. The first-person narrator depicts the taxi ride, the destination, which is a cabin in the wilderness and the routines of alcohol consumption and sauna bathing. The motivation for the excursions, on the other hand, is described as follows:

> I had sat on the back seat among the other restless people and ran away dozens of times every year since my period in Oulu had come to nothing and I dropped out of school after discovering an unbridged abyss between the degree requirements and my own resources. The disappointment in myself turned into a rejection of all external control. I wasn't alone in this. [– –]
>
> We tried to get away from masters, authorities, wives and mothers. We wanted to remember them – as we could not forget them – in a different light. We trapped ourselves by ourselves. The flight was successful until the bottle cap was thrown.
>
> Olin istunut takapenkille toisten rauhattomien sekaan ja lähtenyt pakosalle kymmeniä kertoja vuodessa siitä lähtien kun Oulun-kauteni epäonnistui ja keskeytin opinnot havaittuani silloittamattoman kuilun tutkintovaatimusten ja omien resurssieni välillä. Pettymys itseen kääntyi ulkoa suuntautuvan kontrollin torjunnaksi. En ollut tässä yksin. [– –]
>
> Pyrimme loitolle herrojen, viranomaisten, vaimojen ja äitien silmistä. Halusimme muistaa – unohtamaan emme kyenneet – heidät toisessa sävyssä.
>
> Joka kerta ajoimme kohti ansaa. Pyydyksen heitimme itse eteemme. Pakomatka onnistui pullonkorkin heittämiseen asti. (*AU*, 174–176, transl. S. K.)

The restlessness of the first-person narrator is associated with sense of disappointment and an urge to abandon external control and gain independence. These emotional needs cannot be met among the family or other forms of everyday communality; therefore, the men are driven to venture into the wilderness together. Tikkataulu's group of friends can be understood as an emotional community in the sense that Barbara Rosenwein (2002, 842) describes: it is a social group that shares similar emotional states, tolerates and regulates them in a unified manner and develops other shared systems of feeling, such as binge drinking, to express and perform certain emotional states. The exclusion of women and attachment to the wilderness are the key components of Tikkataulu's emotional community: these components of homosocial bonding in the midst of Lapland wilderness can be related to the so-called *jätkä* tradition of Finnish forestry. *Lapin jätkä* ('Lapland chap') and *jätkäkulttuuri* ('chap culture') refer to the forest labourers of Northern Finland: loggers, log rafters and other workers who travelled after work and spent their time in desolate logging cabins, often in all-male company.[6] The *jätkä* masculinity was built around forest work, manual labour and the idea of independence; it also involved a strong sense of mutual trust and a sentiment of regional and vocational pride. However, the postmodern reimagination of *jätkä* masculinity is satirical in a sense that Tikkataulu's friends are a group of unemployed

[6] For general account on the *jätkä* phenomenon, see Väisänen and Etto (1964).

barflies; *Autarktis* develops a juxtaposition of the forest workers, who were part of the traditional male communities of Lapland and the contemporary jobless.

Moreover, Tikkataulu's storyline and the emotional community it presents provides a stark contrast to the two other storylines of the novel. They both revolve around the shared trauma exhibited by previous generations of the region. These traumas include the war, which is the trauma depicted in the storyline of the Slaughterer and the great migration to Sweden, which is depicted in the storyline of Sweeden Fever; both experiences have shattered the local communities. The excursions of Tikkataulu and his friends can be understood as symbolic performances that strive to overcome the regional traumas of the past. With their excursions, Tikkataulu's group of friends revives the broken male communities and escapes from the changing social reality to the wilderness, which is safe and remains stable even in the midst of societal change.

During the excursions, Tikkataulu also carries out a ritual of his own: he abandons the group and ventures into the wilderness until the others start looking for him. In this excerpt, Tikkataulu describes his first experience of this kind of a disappearance:

> I got punched of course, for scaring the bejesus out of them, but the more important lesson had been given to me behind the stone in the forest: it was there where I came to learn the delights of disappearance. An independent disappearance is an effective trick indeed, a means to gain attention, a way for the invisible to turn themselves visible, a transformation from indifference into someone that is longed-for. It's the best if the magazines start to report the issue and one can read the reports safely in one's hiding place.
>
> Sain tietysti turpaan kun menin tuolla lailla pelottelemaan, mutta tärkeämpi oppi oli tapahtunut metsäkiven takana: opin tuntemaan katoamisen viehätyksen. Omaehtoinen katoaminen on tehokas huomiotemppu jolla näkymätön taikoo itsensä näkyväksi ja yhdentekevä muuttuu kaivatuksi. Parasta on, jos lehdet alkavat kirjoitella ja juttuja pääsee piilopaikassa lukemaan. (*AU*, 178, transl. S. K.)

The protagonist's acts of disappearance are the culmination of these irrational excursions. His need to 'gain attention' and to discard his 'invisibility' seem to reflect his position in society rather than his role within the group of friends. Being unemployed and isolated, he is considered an outcast of society. Tikkataulu's voluntary disappearance can be seen as an expression of his social marginalization. Thus, the novel continues the tradition of representing male hysteria as an expression of societal inequalities, a line of reading initiated by Marko Tapio's works (for Tapio, see Chapter II in this volume).

The theme of alienation and detachment culminates in the novel's final scene, which is the first and last occasion where the focalization is fixed on Clement, the taxi driver, a companion and witness to Tikkataulu's adventures. The scene consists of only one

sentence: "My situation is never just my situation" (*AU*, 272, transl. S. K.).[7] With this statement, Clement, the driver and "the black man" of the novel, effectively negates the social interest that is suddenly directed at his character; it is as if the character refuses further examination and chooses to remain silent. Compared to the character of Puhuva tikkataulu, a character who, as his epithet claims, talks and talks, Clement's silence and refusal to narrate (or focalize) creates a stark contrast. Tikkataulu has been presented as the marginalized and the socially excluded one but as the final scene of the novel suggests, he has something that Clement does not: the ability to speak without being reduced to a stereotype. The fear that has directed Tikkataulu's journey, the fear of losing one's home and becoming an alien, materializes in Clement's character.

Hauru's Tactile and Sensory North

Jääkansi, Hanna Hauru's eighth work, is a return-to-home narrative that consists of two storylines that alternate in different eras. The first storyline is the protagonist's comingof-age story in the post-war Finnish North. The storyline begins as the protagonist is taken to the railway station to welcome returning soldiers where she learns that her father, whom she has been expecting back from the war is not coming; instead, her mother welcomes a strange man as her stepfather. The protagonist immediately names the stepfather Paha*,* 'The Evil'. The life of the stepfamily is burdened by extreme poverty, dysfunctional family relations and Paha's severe war trauma. By living in the natural world surrounding their home and occasionally throwing herself on the mercy of the wilderness, the protagonist survives from one day to another. Finally, she escapes her tragic home by getting a job at a nearby mental asylum but soon after an unwanted pregnancy she is admitted to the hospital as a patient. The second storyline describes the protagonist's return to her decaying family home. The poetic description follows her as she makes her way from the cowshed to the house, to the sauna and towards the frozen nearby lake into which she throws herself. As in Lundberg's *Is*, also in *Jääkansi* it is the wintertime and the treacherous lake ice (sea ice in *Is*), that completes the tragic fate of the protagonist, a victim in many ways. As Chartier (2008) has pointed out, spatial elements of winter weather, such as snow and ice, are often feminized and thus othered: in *Jääkansi*, the lake ice does the deed of the female protagonist, as she chooses suicide. The tone of *Jääkansi*'s drowning scene is decidedly different from that of the scene in *Is*, where the male protagonist's death is either an accident or the victory of peripheral and primordial forces.

The coming-of-age narrative of *Jääkansi* bears a close resemblance to Timo K. Mukka's influential and sometimes infamous narratives on Arctic hysteria. *Jääkansi*'s focus on problematic family dynamics and the sexual awakening of the daughter alludes to Mukka's break through *Maa on syntinen laulu* [The Earth is a Sinful Song] (1964).

[7] "Minun tilanne ei ole koskaan vain minun tilanne."

Moreover, Hauru's style, which includes grotesque detailing, sensory and sensual description yet minimalistic syntax and an emphasis on short main clauses, can also be interpreted as reimaginations of Mukka's naturalistic narratives on Lapland. However, *Jääkansi* is rather a revisitation and a complete reinvention of Mukka's romanticized fantasies, which, as Rossi (2020, 229–230) suggests, can be read as a new wave of the early 20th-century primitivism in the Finnish literature of the 1960s. Hauru's *Jääkansi* emphasizes the female perspective, and presents the first-person narrator as an active agent rather than a hysterical female, torn between her 'natural' instincts and suppressive Christianity, which oftentimes is the image of Mukka's female characters. By doing this, Hauru's fiction engages with the ironic rewriting of the tradition, something that her previous novel *Utopia eli erään kylän tarina* [Utopia, or the Story of a Village] (2008) has done, as Sanna Karkulehto (2010) suggests in her reading of *Utopia*. In the following, I illustrate how *Jääkansi* develops into a socially critical take on the narratives of the Finnish North and how the novel emphasizes spatial elements and bodily sensations in its attempt to revisit the myth of female Arctic hysteria. Interestingly, *Jääkansi*'s female perspective on Arctic hysteria emphasizes the relationship between the mother and the daughter and ends with a somewhat hopeful tone of forgiveness.

The novel involves multiple detailed descriptions of the physical and emotional abuse of the child protagonist. As the first-person narrator of *Jääkansi* visits her childhood home, she not only relives the neglect, violence and extreme poverty of her childhood but also narrates the events in a detached manner. In the excerpt below, the protagonist recounts what happened after the adults of the stepfamily abandoned both her and her newborn sister:

> Little sister was buried under the red and yellow-orange leaves that were still being piled up by the autumn winds. The sow lay down on its side; the baby had crawled into its lap, trying to escape her hunger. The pig let the little sis suck its teat. When the baby was full, she tumbled into the warm heap of leaves in the pigsty.
>
> I tried to get into the same warm heap, but the sow grunted me away.
>
> Pikkusisko oli hautautunut punaisiin ja kellanoransseihin lehtiin, joita syystuuli edelleen työnsi kasaksi. Emakko makasi kyljellään ja vauva oli ryöminyt nälkäänsä pakoon sen syliin. Sika antoi pikkusiskon imeä nisiään. Kun vauva oli täynnä, se kellahti lättiin lehtikasan lämpimään suojaan.
>
> Minäkin yritin päästä samaan lämpöön, mutta emakko röhki minut pois. (*JK*, 20, transl. S. K.)

The descriptive and minimalistic style of the excerpt creates a stark contrast with the content, which is the abandonment and its consequences, the starvation and freezing of two young children. The abandonment is staged by representing the children at the mercy of the elements and nature: the leaves, the autumn wind, the sow. Moreover,

the grotesque arrangement of a child sucking a sow's teat is complemented by the protagonist's final rejection, as even the sow refuses to comfort her. The scene serves as a good example of Hauru's narrative technique that involves simple syntax and the lack of narratorial judgement. The minimalistic and laconic language evokes the child narrator and adds to sense of urgency, hence heightening the emotional intensity of the scene.

The scene draws intensity from its careful selection of elements that produce disgust: Firstly, it involves the act of eating and suckling, which are directly associated with oral organs. As Paul Rozin et al. (2009, 121) point out, disgust is a response that derives from a food rejection mechanism, which also means that imagery of eating is particularly effective in creating disgust. Secondly, the scene involves a transgression of human-animal boundaries, as the human baby is suckled by the pig. Theories on disgust vary greatly on their interpretation of the human-nature relationship. Framing a more traditional viewpoint, Rozin et al. (2009, 121–122) suggest that animals and animality function as a reminder of the mortality of humans, which elicits rejection and thus disgust. However, as William Miller (1997, 40–50) proposes, it is far too simplistic to say that human relationships with animals merely consist of disdain and rejection. Rather, he (1997, 40–50) claims, people tend to approach animals and the animality of the human body with respect and admiration. Using faeces as an example, Miller (1997, 49–50) proposes that the strongest disgust is with the human rather than the animal. The *Jääkansi* scene is also ambivalent: the pig offers the children nurture, nourishment and warmth and fulfils the needs their parents do not; hence, the real beast of the scene is not the sow but the absent mother.

The family homestead, the centre of the narrative, is situated in an unspecified location in Finnish Lapland. The narrative offers a claustrophobic depiction of an isolated house in the middle of a ruthless Northern landscape that torments its inhabitants with extreme frost, lack of sunlight and weeks of grey weather. The presence of a community and society is suggested by few societal institutions, which include the school the protagonist attends, a municipal official who takes the protagonist's sister into custody and the mental asylum. However, although these institutions of social care bring the protagonist momentary relief, the only means that brings her some solace is her continuous flights to nature. These episodes of escape sometimes reach fantastic proportions, as the narrator describes how the protagonist lays herself on the ground and stays there until the season changes (*JK*, 17–18). During these flights, the protagonist lies on the ground, ceases all movement and action and remains in a drowsy state of apathy. The flights often take place after a conflict with the family members and are presented as a strategy of avoidance.

The title of the novel is a compound word made of two nouns; the first one is the Finnish word for ice, *jää*. The second noun adds ambiguity to the title, as the Finnish word *kansi* can refer either to a lid, a cover of a container or a deck, as in a ship. *Jääkansi* can thus be understood as a 'lid of ice' or a 'deck of ice', two options with opposite connotations. Ice, in itself, is an element of ambivalent connotations: As

Chartier (2008, 36–38) suggests based on his corpus of nearly 2,000 narratives on the imagined North, ice is often associated with treachery and slyness: ice can break under the trespasser and assumes antagonistic functions; ice can hurt within a narrative. Besides these negative connotations, ice holds a specific temporality: as a preserver and keeper, it relates to eternity (Chartier 2008). In the case of Hauru's *Jääkansi*, these ambivalent connotations are united. The final scene of the novel depicts the protagonist breaking the thin ice of a lake and the narrator describes her pain as the sharp ice cuts her. The breaking of ice can be interpreted as an act of transgression and a cathartic performance: after telling her coming-of-age story, the protagonist breaks the ice, as if the eternal and preserving element would contain her pain and secrets. On the other hand, the final scene does suggest that the protagonist is in the process of committing suicide, which does away with some of the cathartic potential of the scene. Of the two different meanings of the novel's title, 'lid of ice' carries associations of repression, which is a form of emotion avoidance: the symbol of a lid refers to the content that is sealed and hidden under the lid. The notion of repression dates back to Sigmund Freud's theory of psychoanalysis (see e.g., Brewin 2009), in which Freud emphasised the need to recover repressed emotions and traumatic events. Similarly, the ending of Hauru's novel highlights the healing aspects of the first-person narrator as she reminisces about her childhood and revisits the family home, as the scene depicts the shattering of the lid of ice. The narrative ending of the novel explicitly mentions the act of suppression: *tukahdutettu hiljaisuus* ('suppressed silence') (*JK*, 117) are the last words of the first-person narrator. However, the title does suggest an even more hopeful interpretation, as the 'deck of ice' carries a connotation of spaces that open up between locations as the natural bodies of water freeze. Moreover, normally a deck is a structure that carries and supports.

The spatial description of *Jääkansi* relies heavily on sensory perception and especially tactile and bodily experiences. Hauru's agonizing narrative emphasises pain and painful contacts between the human subject and the surrounding landscape. The first-person narrator of *Jääkansi* describes multiple times how different components of the wilderness 'scratch', 'scrape' or 'tear' her body (*JK*, 116–117). The wilderness of the novel is represented as physically adjacent and intimately present for the protagonist; there is no distance between the human subject and the wilderness.

The centrality of tactile and bodily sensations overshadows the role of visual sensation. Traditionally in Western literature, visual sensation has been connected to reason and the philosophical and intellectual ideals of the Enlightenment (see e.g., Levin 1997); the rejection of the visual can be seen as a departure from a rationalist and civilized state. By highlighting the tactile and embodied aspects, the narratives subordinate reason and foreground the senses, emotions and instincts as the foundational components of im-placement.

Jääkansi opens with a scene in which the first-person narrator observes a dilapidated barn and enters it. Next, the narrator describes how the protagonist manoeuvres in the barn:

> The ladder is still collapsed near the trapdoor and the rope is lying in the hay. I take the rope and throw it over my shoulder. I lift the ladder and climb to the loft of the cowshed. Half of the ceiling has collapsed; the winter sky shows itself beautifully. The kittens that Evil hanged have been forgotten on the beam. When dried, they tasted just as edible as rats. I take one of the kittens and bite its flank. The meat has been dried and frozen so that it doesn't have any taste to it. I put the kitten back on the beam and spit out the mouthful.
>
> Tikkaat ovat edelleen kattoluukun kohdalla kaatuneina ja heinissä lojuu hirttoköysi. Otan sen ja viskaan olkani yli. Nostan tikapuut ja kiipeän navetan ylisille. Puolet katosta on romahtanut ja talvitaivas näkyy sieltä kauniina. Orrelle ovat unohtuneet Pahan ripustamat kissanpennut. Ne maistuivat kuivattuina ihan yhtä syömäkelpoisilta kuin rotat. Otan yhden kissanpennun alas ja puraisen sitä kyljestä. Liha on kuivunut ja pakastunut mauttomaksi. Nostan pennun takaisin orrelle ja sylkäisen suupalan pois. (*JK*, 5, transl. S. K.)

The scene is a combination of menacing symbols, such as the rope with the noose and macabre details, such as the dried and frozen kittens that are juxtaposed with a sudden element of visual beauty, the view on the wintery sky. The most striking element of the scene, the dried kittens, also becomes the object of a revolting yet somehow contemplative act: the protagonist bites one of the kittens, evaluates the taste of the meat and returns the kitten to the roost while spitting out the morsel. Eating is an act of integration: food is digested and processed in the body. The visual beauty of the winter sky is smeared with the act of devouring a kitten; the body's need for nourishment overrides the more cerebral aesthetic pleasure. The act of tasting the kitten consists of a series of actions including absorption and ejection: the flesh of the kitten is first bitten and tasted by the protagonist, then spit out. The body of the protagonist swallows up the abject, the meat of the kitten but ejects it quickly, although apparently not out of disgust. In this case, the narrative evokes feelings of disgust by depicting the act of tasting the kitten but also by emphasizing the protagonist's lack of disgust. As Winfried Menninghaus suggests, disgust is based on "the experience of nearness that is not wanted" (Menninghaus 2003, 3); by representing a scene of eating a disgusting object, *Jääkansi* creates an effect of transgression, although unlike in the lake ice scene, this instance of a transgressive act does not suggest a cathartic outcome. The scene depicts the protagonist consuming something that violates the cultural norms of eating and categorizing animals as edible or non-edible; the aversive effect of the scene is further emphasized by the fact that the kitten is whole and has not been processed as food (on the relationship between processing and disgust, see Korsmeyer 2011, 63 and 78–79). The kitten, a domestic pet, belongs to the realm of the household and home; thus, the protagonist's transgression can be seen as either a violent act of devouring home or as a curious interest in "tasting" of domesticity.

As the tactile and bodily sensations overwrite the visual, they also highlight the juxtaposition of inside and outside in terms of the human body. The presence of wild space and natural elements is, in all three narratives, constantly brought into direct contact with the sensitive human body in a way that transgresses the borders of that body. In the kitten scene, this juxtaposition is activated through the image of the protagonist devouring an object of disgust. Many other scenes in the novel depict how wilderness is a force that invades the human body, tests its openings and may even cause damage. The final scene of *Jääkansi* presents the protagonist in the process of diving into and possibly drowning in a frozen lake (*JK*, 117). A similar kind of closeness can be read from Lundberg's *Is*, which culminates in the drowning scene of the village pastor (*Is*, 289–292). In the scene, the young, handsome pastor, a symbol of development and hope, spirituality and community, is suddenly captured by the deep waters of the untamed sea. The character literally drowns in the wilderness; in the scene, the wild space materializes into a substance, the sea water that fills the pastor's lungs and hinders the movement of his limbs. His death is an unholy union between human and nature, Christian and pagan and culture and wilderness; moreover, it is also a depiction of how the human body is seized on and occupied by outside space.

The juxtaposition of inside and outside of the body is a factor that has been widely related to the experience of space. In his discussion on architecture, Edward S Casey claims: "In fact, only insofar as we successfully resolve the tension between inner and outer at the level of our lived bodies are we able to deal with it effectively in the experience of architecture" (Casey 2009, 124). Although this remark concerns architectural places, it highlights well the centrality that the phenomenological thought places on the dialogue between inner and outer in the experience of place and space. According to phenomenological perspectives, the distinction between being outside and being inside is associated with the distinction between inside and outside the body, because the bodily presence is the precondition for all spatial experience. Casey (2009, 124), especially, emphasises not only the contrast between inside and outside but also the intermediary spaces between these two poles. Just as the body orifices are essential for the human being, liminal spaces that blur the distinction between inside and outside, such as porches and garden, are important for spatial experience. Hauru's and Lundberg's narratives do not emphasise built liminal spaces but instead they create a dialogue between the inside and the outside within the wild space. Both novels highlight a liminal space of wilderness: the sea ice, as in *Is* and the lake ice, as in *Jääkansi*. The liminality of ice is due to its temporal and transformative nature: it is a momentary phenomenon that transforms the phenomenology and accessibility of a given place. In the narratives, the dramatic event of the ice breaking further highlights how the order of things is broken; the tension between the inside and the outside is resolved through an act of transgression. Chartier (2021) has suggested that narratives on the imagined North often reinforce the opposition between interior and exterior spaces, whereas the narratives on the imagined South lack this distinction. Based on a reading of *Jääkansi*,

one could posit in Hauru's poetics, that this distinction is extended to the inside and outside of the body.

Both tactile and bodily experiences can be associated with the thematic of individualism. Pain, intimate physical contact between the body and the wilderness and alternating changes of weather, temperature and light that directly translate into sensory experiences are aspects of experience that foreground the individual, the particularity of the suffering, shivering, bare human subject. By focusing on the ailing and sensing body, the narratives focus on the protagonist in a way that accentuates their unique perspective and rejects the more distanced, generalized, and collective points of view. In Hauru's prose, especially, the use of limited first-person point of view and lack of narratorial commentary results in a very limited perspective; even more so, as the first-person narrator is a child. The reader of *Jääkansi* is not offered the reassuring presence of an adult version of the first-person narrator; instead, they are forced to identify with the child that is experiencing neglect and cruelty. This results in a hyper-individualism of sorts: the reader, along with the narrative, is detained in a micro-perspective, within the bodily ailments and skin scratches of the characters. This narrative strategy resonates with the works' thematic focus on the empty, desolate landscapes and the experience of geographical and social isolation. The narration of the works is confined to the micro-perspective of the characters, which reflects the characters' isolation and lack of alternative human perspective in the middle of vast and empty spaces. This strategy is opposite to the mechanics of language that Elaine Scarry describes in her chapter on the structure of war; as Scarry (1985, 66–69) suggests, the language of war actively renames and redescribes physical injury and the human bodies that are involved in acts of injuring or being injured. The renaming and concealing of the human body works as a rhetorical device that not only does away with the physical harm but perhaps dis-individualizes the human subjects that are involved in the acts of war. *Jääkansi*, *Autarktis* and *Is*, which all discuss the after-effects of the Second World War in Finland, choose the opposite strategy and emphasize the bodily presence; thus, they emphasise the individuality of their protagonists. Moreover, the three novels represent the wild space as the source of bodily injury, an effect that will be examined in the next section.

Besides bodily experiences, the novel emphasizes the experience of shame. In the narrative, shame is constructed through acts of comparison and in relation to authorities. In her study on the cultural politics of emotion, Sara Ahmed (2004, 103– 104) determines shame as a series of acts of concealing and being exposed. As she claims, "in shame, one desires cover precisely because one has already been exposed to others" (Ahmed 2004, 104). Being exposed can be associated with the act of being consumed by the looks of others or by being devoured and defenceless in front of other people. In *Jääkansi*, the protagonist is exposed multiple times: first in the eyes of the villagers, then in front of the social worker and the schoolteacher and finally in front of the mental asylum staff. She is seen as poor and neglected, as a fallen woman and finally, as a patient. Considering all the violent exposures the protagonist endures, one can

no longer wonder about the title of the novel: *Jääkansi*; 'lid of ice' is the only and final cover she finds. The mechanics of concealment and exposure define not only the protagonist's development in the narrative but also Hauru's poetics on a larger scale. *Jääkansi*'s macabre scenes and themes that range from child neglect to mental illness expose topics that the reader is not willing to see: Hauru's works, as stylized as they are, produce events and descriptions that alienate rather than fascinate the reader.

However, as Ahmed points out, shame is not merely a negative relation: Ahmed associates shame with love and claims that "we feel shame because we have failed to approximate 'an ideal' that has been given to us through the practices of love" (Ahmed 2004, 106). Shame thus affirms ideals and norms but it also carries a memory of love. In the case of *Jääkansi*, it is clear that the narrative idealizes the welfare state, middle class and family life, although all of these are represented through their negation. In an equal manner, the novel represents positive emotions through negative ones. The centrality of parenting, family attachment and love is highlighted in the ending of the novel:

> Thin ice breaks like a windowpane, rattling. I wade into the slowly deepening lake until the edge of the ice scratches my throat and leaves marks on it. I dive in and unable to swim, I sink quickly. Betti arrives with a quiet apology. And then, only a repressed silence lingers in my closed eyes.
>
> Ohut jää rasahtaa kuin rikki helähtävä ikkunaruutu. Kahlaan hitaasti syvenevään järveen, kunnes jään reuna raapii kurkkuuni naarmuja. Pulahdan ja uimataidottomana vajoan nopeasti. Betti käy lausumassa hiljaisen anteeksipyynnön. Sitten suljetuissa silmissäni on enää tukahdutettu hiljaisuus. (*JK*, 117, transl. S. K.)

In the scene, bodily aches and wounds depict the protagonist's mental sores. Moreover, the scene can be paralleled with the aforementioned kitten scene: at the beginning of the narrative, the protagonist devours or at last tastes the symbol of home and innocence, the kitten, whereas at the end of the narrative, the protagonist herself is being devoured by the wilderness surrounding the home, the icy lake. The acts of drowning oneself and covering oneself under the ice and water are, naturally, the dramatic highlights of this scene yet somehow the appearance of Betti and her apology to the protagonist is the most cathartic element of the scene. As Aaron Ben-Ze'ev (2000, 334) has suggested, forgiveness is a process of terminating certain feelings; thus, Betti's apology gives the protagonist the opportunity to disengage from the emotional turmoil and cruelty of her coming-of-age narrative. The apology is open and unconditional: neither Betti, the protagonist, nor the narrator specify what is it that requires her apology. Nevertheless, the appearance and apology of the mother at the moment of the daughter's supposed death confirm that it is the failure of love that is at the heart of the narrative. As it presents the act of apology, the narrative ends with some sense of hope: as Ahmed claims, the apology and recognition of failure affirm that an ideal exists, if not in the world of the narrative, then at least in the minds of the characters.

Spatial Horror: Spaces Taking Over

Although set in the peripheries of Finland such as Finnish Lapland and the outer archipelago, the three novels discussed in this chapter do not overemphasize the effect of coldness. They do, naturally, depict wintery scenes; snow, frost, and ice but also equally emphasise other seasons. Instead of coldness, it is the isolation that produces the extremities in all three narrative settings. As the protagonist of *Autarktis* states: "Once again I recalled that moderation beats going from 0 to 100; the soul that is isolated by snow is anyway prone to extreme thought and action" (*AU,* 30, transl. S. K.).[8] Extreme distances, rather than extreme weather, are the focal element of these literary spaces. That being said, coldness is, of course, one of the factors that builds distance: a similar distance between two points in space can be experienced very differently depending on the temperature. For a human subject, coldness, as well as all extreme temperatures, adds to the experience of distance, as it makes the journey physically more demanding.

Of the narratives discussed, all depict distances and isolation with slightly different emphases. Hauru's works typically present isolated communities and family units. In her *Jääkansi*, the language draws its intensity from the laconic expression and a limited perspective of a first-person child narrator, which together evoke a narrow, sometimes even claustrophobic mood. Liimatta's *Autarktis,* on the other hand, is focused on isolated individuals. When the characters of *Autarktis* spend time with other people, they often do that on the pretext of journeying into the wilderness; by foregrounding the social and communal importance of these journeys, the novel places a special emphasis on the act of travelling – and distance. Similarly, in *Is*, the act of travelling plays a central role in the plot development, as all the significant events of the novel take place in the context of an arrival or a departure.

As narratives on the extreme peripheries of North and South, continental and insular, all three novels depict not only spatial and climatic but also emotional extremes. Liimatta's *Autarktis* crystallizes the interconnection between external conditions and emotional states as follows:

> Night is the amplifier for thoughts. Night is a drug one does not know one has taken. Night makes the emotions stronger and makes one yearn for sugar, warmth and something to squeeze into one's hands.
>
> During the night, there are just the two of you: you and the night.
>
> After retreating alone to the room beyond the snow, I have gained new independence. Unless I do, the deed remains undone, haunting.

[8] "Muistin taas, miksi kohtuus voittaa nollan ja satasen: hankien eristämä sielu on muutenkin altis ääriajatteluun, ääritoimiin."

> Yö on ajatusten vahvistin. Yö on huume jota ei tiedä ottaneensa. Yö vahvistaa kaikki tunteet ja saa kaipaamaan sokeria ja lämpöä ja käsille jotakin puristeltavaa.
>
> Yöllä on yön kanssa kaksin.
>
> Peräännyttyäni kaiken jälkeen yksin hankientakaiseen huoneeseen on itsenäisyys pakosta vahvistunut. Ellen tee, teko jää tekemättä ja kummittelemaan. (*AU*, 8, transl. S. K.)

As the excerpt from *Autarktis* suggests, the arctic night, lack of sunlight, darkness and nocturnal themes constitute a large part of the description of peripheral northern spaces. In the excerpt, the feelings of horror stem from the social and physical isolation, which is strengthened with a reference to the extreme weather: the room is *hankientakainen*, 'beyond-the-snow'. The intensity of this setting is highlighted with the narrator's remark that represents night as an 'amplifier' of thought and emotion. The eerie arrangement is completed with a reference to the act of haunting, although one must consider that in this instance, the haunting is brought about by the protagonist himself: "Unless I do, the deed remains undone, haunting". Contrary to traditional ghost stories, in *Autarktis*, it is the lack of human agency that results in haunting.

The tactile and intimate contact between the human subject and the wild spaces develops in the works of all three authors to the direction of anguish and even horror. The elements of horror are subtle and do not suggest that the works would fall in the category of horror fiction; however, they do indicate that the works share the postmodern trait of multigenericism. Fear, the emotion that powers horror, is universally linked with the sense of cold or coldness (Scherer and Wallbott 1994). As already stated, in all three novels, the effect of horror is related to the spaces and places. In the following, I will analyse two motifs that can be linked to the effect of 'spatial horror'.

The first example is the motif of drowning. As already stated in the previous section, in *Jääkansi* and *Is*, both protagonists are captured by the wilderness – the icy waters – an experience that results in their deaths. Liimatta's *Autarktis* stages a similar scene, as the protagonist reminisces about the death of his friend's younger brother (*AU*, 48–49). The senior upper secondary school student takes his life by walking on a frozen river and lying down in the middle of the night. "The snowmobiler found the boy on the ice: he was covered in blizzard snow but could be recognized as a person. The river has been the last refuge for many. Raped maidens had walked into to the river with stones in their apron pockets" (*AU*, 49, transl. S. K.).[9] Although Liimatta's postmodern version of the motif of drowning maiden re-envisions the female protagonist with a male counterpart and replaces a lake with a river, the scene nevertheless refers to the classic motif. In Finnish folklore, suicide by drowning has been associated with female figures especially, a connotation which crystallizes in the Aino figure of the *Kalevala*

[9] "Moottorikelkkailija löysi pojan jäältä, tuiskulumen peittämänä mutta ihmiseksi tunnistettavana. Joki on monelle ollut se viimeinen turva. Jokeen on kävellyt maattuja neitoja kiviä esiliinantaskuissaan."

and draws from a long and universal mythological tradition of water spirits such as Rusalkas of the Slavic, Nixes of the German, and Selkies of the Celtic mythology. As the narrator of *Autarktis* suggests, the narratives make use of the association between water and death and suicide and death. Thus, the lake, the river and the sea of the three novels draw their potential of horror from the mythologies of death and animistic and totemistic belief systems that equip a given body of water with spiritual presence. In these cases, the effects of horror stem not solely from the descriptive elements of the texts; rather, they also seem to be connected to the cultural historical associations that the narratives activate.

The second manifestation of spatial horror is the motif of disappearance. In *Autarktis*, the motif emerges from Tikkataulu's excursions and his 'voluntary disappearances', the acts of abandoning the company of his friends and venturing into the wilderness. These episodes resemble the flights that the protagonist of *Jääkansi* carries out. Both novels present protagonists' mysterious and innate need to hide themselves within wilderness.

In *Autarktis*, a second pattern of disappearance is depicted in the subplot of Tikkataulu's storyline. The subplot follows Tikkataulu's fascination for a series of disappearances that seem to be connected to a closed mine. The protagonist follows the news coverage of the disappearances closely and develops his own theories of the case. The mine, turned into an adventure park, is managed by a local entrepreneur, who recovers from the trauma of losing a customer in the mine by introducing a new set of souvenirs: painted mine rocks. In the excerpt below, the protagonist's thoughts move from the souvenir mine rock to his views on the disappearances:

> I treasure the stone because the stone has a story, a story that was put in motion by the traveller lost in the mining tunnel. The story isn't over yet, because another missing person has been found in the exact same place as one of the disappeared. The site is located 400 kilometres from the adventure mine. This one, too, is a woman in her twenties. As the police do not comment the case, one has to read between the silences and I, I spell the silence and conclude that someone, a person yet unknown, has taken her life. The officials keep quiet, but the discussion boards tell me that another tourist has gone missing in the mine, in this site that is only a hundred kilometres from this room.

Why do I think that the missing one is a young woman? That is, if she ever existed.

> Säilytän kiveä koska kivellä on tarina, jonka kaivostunneliin haihtunut matkalainen käynnisti. Eikä tarina ole välttämättä päättynyt, koska nyt on jo toinen kotoaan lähtenyt ihminen löytynyt täsmälleen samasta paikasta kuin eräs aiempi kadonnut. Löytöpaikka sijaitsee neljänsadan kilometrin päässä elämyskaivoksesta. Tämäkin löytynyt on parikymppinen nainen.

> Kun poliisi vaikenee, rivit on luettava hiljaisuuden välistä ja sieltä olen lukevinani, että joku, vielä tuntematon, olisi riistänyt hänen henkensä. Ja olen lukenut keskustelupalstoilta – virallisesti asiasta on vaiettu – että tuossa kaivoksessa, jonne tästä huoneesta on tuskin sataa kilometriä, olisi jälleen kadonnut turisti.
>
> Miten minusta tuntuu, että hän on nuori nainen. Jos häntä oli olemassakaan. (*AU*, 27, transl. S. K.)

The scene is ambiguous, as Liimatta's prose always is and the narrator seems to refute his own narrative by suggesting that the existence of the woman might be questionable. The motif of missing young women points towards the genres of mystery and crime fiction and their numerous configurations of quests that are initiated by a discovery of or search for a young woman's corpse. These genres have their roots in Gothic fiction and its Nordic adaptations, which have recently been examined in *Nordic Gothic* (Holmgren Troy et a., 2020). The narrated nature of the events is highlighted by the fact that the narrator, in the excerpt above, repeats the word *tarina*, a story; this suggests that the truth value of the events is less important than the narrative the protagonist develops based on the events. In this narrative, the closed mine which is repurposed for the demands of the experience tourist economy represents itself as the labyrinth of Minotaur: previously the economic powerhouse of the region, it is now empty, abandoned and depreciated. Just as the result of the queen Pasiphaë's sin, the monstrous Minotaur, the mine and its memory have been closed and out of sight but only with the help of continuous human sacrifice. Although the story of the mine is a minor subplot in the novel, the story gains importance because it is introduced at the beginning of the novel and revisited towards the end of work. Between these two instances, a change of attitude takes place: the dramatized version of the mine narrative – suggestions of a series of murders – is negated by the narrator. The narrator associates the disappearances with the structural change of demographics in the region:

> Was she ever searched for? Did I not hear the growl of the engine, did they not hurry past the house, the search party, many in number?
>
> Every year girls flock to leave the county. In tens, and hundreds. They can be found from the university cities and agree to return home only on Christmas.
>
> Etsittiinköhän sitä kadonnutta naista? Etten ollutkaan kuullut moottorin ärinää sisälle taloon ja tuosta oli painallettu useamman etsijän voimin?
>
> Joka vuosihan maakunnasta tyttöjä lähtee. Kymmenittäin, satoja. He löytyvät silmät kirkkaina opiskelukaupungeista ja suostuvat tulemaan takaisin vain jouluksi. (*AU*, 269, transl. S. K.)

The story of the missing women is now set in a different context; what began as speculation about mysterious crimes is now associated with the phenomenon of

migration. Thus, *Autarktis* conjoins elements of horror, crime fiction and mythology with socio-political affairs of regional politics and structural change. The horror, which at the beginning of the novel seemed to be connected to the dark northern landscape and its psychopathology, perhaps even the masculinist ethos of Lapland narratives (see Ridanpää 2010), reveals itself as a by-product of the process of modernization and the ensuing structural change.

Both drowning and disappearance as motifs of spatial horror can be seen as demonstrations of agency that the spaces assume. Lundberg's *Is* manifests this trait most clearly, as the character of Post-Anton explicates the hidden forces that, according to him, reside in the sea and land (*Is*, 137–139, 157–159). Post-Anton's monologues are in an accentuated role in the narrative, as his focalization is always italicized and often takes place at the beginning or the end of individual chapters. Moreover, his focalization both initiates and concludes the whole novel. In this way, the narrative suggests that Anton's views, esoteric and undefined as they are, are central for the understanding of the novel's outer archipelago. Therefore, the sea and the islands of *Is* are to be understood as being alive and inhabited by sentient spirits in a manner that furtively assumes a post humanist ethos. In Hauru's and Liimatta's works, the depiction of the wild spaces does not reach equally fantastic heights and is less explicit. Nevertheless, in Hauru's *Jääkansi*, the wilderness's tendency to touch, disturb and hurt the human body as well as its ability to overcome the protagonist, to devour her during her flights and to drown her in the final scene assigns the wild space implied agency. Liimatta's *Autarktis* employs the same effect: the wild spaces have the ability to transgress bodily boundaries and assimilate the human subject, but these actions are mainly developed through the motifs of disappearance. In all three novels, wild spaces present themselves as active, uncontrollable and potentially deadly.

Conclusion

This chapter has explored three contemporary narratives on the Finnish North from the viewpoint of space and emotion. All three narratives showcase how Northern landscapes have been and still are associated with extreme emotions: on the one hand, bursts of anger, violence and irrational behaviour and on the other hand, experiences of being consumed or devoured by the wild space. I have also pointed out that although climatic extremes are present in all three novels, it is rather extreme distances than extremely low temperatures that dominate the narratives. The experience of isolation is, as Liimatta's character Puhuva tikkataulu explicates, the door to extreme emotions. This opens interesting points of enquiry for the spatially oriented reader of contemporary Nordic fiction: perhaps the study of literary spaces ought to consider spaces of solitude and isolation as well as the numerous instances of urban and densely habited spaces. The postmodern views on Finnish peripheries presented by Lundberg, Hauru and Liimatta showcase that the imaginations of spatial and temporal (seasonal)

Northern locations revolve around the problematics of autonomy, independence and self-sufficiency. All three works of fiction that have been analysed in this chapter thematize societal and structural change: they are narratives of war and reconstruction, wealth and poverty, inclusion and social exclusion. Moreover, they are narratives that foreground care and nurture or the lack of it, as Hauru's *Jääkansi* does and the presence of community in the lives of its members whether they are the broken male communities in Liimatta's *Autarktis* or the premodern community on its way to modernity in Lundberg's *Is*. In the novels, acts of care or neglect are just as urgent as external conditions: storms, darkness, distance and coldness.

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Negative Environmental Emotions in 21st Century Finnish Fiction

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Introduction

Dystopian fiction has boomed in Finland since the 1990s, offering visions of undesirable societies that arise as a response to the worsened environmental conditions (see Isomaa and Lahtinen 2017). Many works use the conventions of dystopia, apocalypse and post-apocalypse to imagine a darkening future but sometimes subgenres of fantasy are also included. In the 2000s, climate fiction has joined to portray a contemporary or future Finland where climate is changing or has changed radically, the cold Northern climate with its specific fauna and flora has become a part of the past and the environment is rapidly transformed in the process. The effects of environmental change on the human psyche are also mapped in some works. Some recent novels even focus on the psychological consequences of climate change, making visible the vulnerability of not only the environment but also of the human psyche. Such works typically portray inconvenient character emotions that arise as a response to the changing environment; some works even depict psychological character development that leads to a mental breakdown and subsequent self-destructive behaviour. The depicted mental states and phenomena bear some resemblance to those that are discussed elsewhere in this book in the frame of Arctic hysteria. However, the discourse around Arctic hysteria does not offer sharp conceptual tools for giving sensitive descriptions of the various environmental emotions portrayed in these novels. Furthermore, neither the novels nor their authors evoke the discourse of Arctic hysteria in the novels or elsewhere; therefore, we employ concepts of emotion studies in our analysis.

In this chapter, we continue mapping the problematic relationship between literary characters and their Northern habitat. In our approach, the characters are viewed as possible persons whose emotions can be taken seriously and analysed as psychological reactions to their environment. Instead of using the concept of Arctic hysteria in our analysis of literary characters, we approach them from the perspective of con-

temporary, multidisciplinary research into emotions. Modern research offers sensitive, neutral concepts for analysing their environmental emotional responses. In practice, we emphasise the mimetic dimension of literary characters as theorised by James Phelan (1989; Phelan and Frow 2022) by analysing their emotions with reference to recent multidisciplinary discussions of environmental and other emotions.

Despite this friction with the concept of Arctic hysteria as such, we think that the analysis of these most recent forms of environmental emotions in Finnish fiction adds to the present discussion by connecting environmental emotions to societal criticism. Our goal in this chapter is to describe the prevailing negative environmental emotions portrayed in each novel and learn how such affective features engage critically with the negative possibilities latent in contemporary risk societies. More generally, we map some of the new emotions that recent Finnish novels have imagined with reference to the climate crisis. Being a medium of cultural meaning-making, literature has cultural power in making sense of the world around and its imaginations of the future worlds and their emotional structures are noteworthy as socially shared representations.

In the history of dystopian fiction, negative character emotions have already been portrayed in classical dystopias that often motivate the genre-typical action, an uprising against an authoritarian or a totalitarian society, with the negative emotions the society evokes in the characters (see Isomaa 2020). However, in this chapter we argue that recent dystopian fiction expands the range of negative emotions by portraying negative environmental emotions that arise as a response to environmental decline. Recent studies in eco-psychology have mapped and named previously unnamed environmental emotions such as environmental grief and solastalgia that are responses to undesirable changes in the natural world (see e.g., Albrecht 2007; Pihkala 2020). We argue that similar emotions are also portrayed in such recent Finnish fiction as *Memory of Water* (2014) by Emmi Itäranta, *Lupaus* [Promise] (2018) by Emma Puikkonen and *Maa joka ei koskaan sula* [The Land that Never Melts] (2021) by Inkeri Markkula that focus on mapping the emotions and affects of their protagonists that must face undesirable and irreparable changes occurring not only in their beloved home environment but also globally. Whereas the first Finnish novel of climate fiction, *Sarasvatin hiekkaa* (2005, transl. *The Sands of Sarasvati* 2008) by Risto Isomäki, has been perceived as action-oriented and populated with stereotypical characters (see Lahtinen 2017), the aforementioned novels focus more on psychological or eco-psychological depiction, combining the genre of the psychological novel with conventions from dystopian fiction.

However, negative character emotions are not always a direct response to the environmental change as such but may be focused on those institutions that bring about the changes or mediate access to the environment. In the post-apocalyptic novel *Korpisoturi* [Wilderness Warrior] (2016) by Laura Gustafsson, the negative emotions of the protagonist, a Finnish man in his thirties named Ahma, arise as a response to late-modern capitalist institutions that he perceives as untrustworthy; these emotions are part of the motivation that prompt him to adopt a survivalist ideology and move to the wilderness to live a self-sufficient life. Despite the critical – comical and parodic

– treatment of survivalism in the novel, it still offers a serious analysis of experiences that may alienate an ordinary person from society (see Isomaa 2022). In *Korpisoturi*, the reasons can be found in capitalist institutions that trade ethics for profit and produce food and construct buildings in an unsustainable, short-sighted manner. The untrustworthiness of the institutions motivates the protagonist to abandon organised society and try to live in a premodern manner in a rural setting. Similarly, in the post-apocalyptic novel *Memory of Water* by Emmi Itäranta, the protagonist's feelings of oppression and anxiety arise from living under the rule of a military junta that restricts the availability of essential resources necessary for survival such as water and intellectual resources such as information.

It is worth asking whether there is something specifically Northern or Finnish in the emotions that the novels portray. After all, the genres of dystopian fiction are basically transnational in that they occur in many literatures and their generic repertoires in these literatures are so similar that the genres can be identified as forming transnational genres. Furthermore, dystopian works often adopt a transnational or global perspective on the state of the world: the dystopian societies are often world states and the apocalyptic cataclysm that occurs in apocalyptic and post-apocalyptic fiction usually affects the world transnationally or globally. In this sense, a national perspective is alien to dystopian fiction. However, literature cannot escape being part of and portraying a culture or cultures. The portrayed emotions are localised in the narratives but also imagined by Finnish writers, which connects them to Finnish culture. Nevertheless, there are indications that inconvenient environmental emotions are perhaps a central part of the contemporary mentality or structure of emotions in Finland and elsewhere and the novels analysed in this chapter contribute to making them visible and understandable for the community of their readers.

Historically, the field of dystopian fiction itself seems to have arisen as a reaction to modernity that not only produced the technological tools for creating high-tech dystopian societies but also worsened environmental conditions; these dynamics are portrayed in Aldous Huxley's *Brave New World* (1932) and George Orwell's *Nineteen Eighty-Four* (1949). To understand the literary genres in their broad historical context, an analysis should connect dystopian fiction to two concepts, the Anthropocene and risk society, that have been used to describe contemporary modern society. The Anthropocene refers to a proposed geological epoch, beginning at the end of the eighteenth century or after, that is characterised by large-scale human effects on the planet, such as anthropogenic climate change. Climate fiction participates in imagining what the epoch is or will be like (see Isomaa, Korpua and Teittinen 2020, xiv–xvi). Risk society is a sociological concept, coined by the German sociologist Ulrich Beck and further developed by sociologist Anthony Giddens and others and refers to a "society that is increasingly preoccupied with the future (and also with safety)", as Giddens and Pearson (1998, 209) describe. The concept has been referred to in recent discussions of dystopian fiction (see e.g., Lahtinen 2013, 95–96; Isomaa and Lahtinen 2017, 9–10). Risk society is not necessarily more dangerous than some previous forms of social order;

its inhabitants are just more aware and focused on possible negative future events and consequences of human action than perhaps earlier peoples were. Historically, Giddens and Pearson (1998, 208) consider transition to risk society having occurred around the 1940s and 1950s, when people began to worry more about what they were doing to nature more than what nature could do to them. The concept of *manufactured risk* refers to risks that are created by human development, especially by science and technology (Giddens and Pearson 1998, 210). Since dystopian fiction is focused on imagining negative futures for humankind, it can be considered to participate in the mapping of risks that characterise a risk society. In this vein of thought, dystopian fiction can also be perceived as critical of the modernity that the development of science and technology has produced. Only now do humans have the technological tools that not only enable large-scale environmental destruction but also present effective ways to govern and control the everyday life of millions of people (see Isomaa and Lahtinen 2017, 9.) Dystopian fiction focuses on showcasing the negative possibilities latent in the current social, economic and environmental realities.

Dystopian fiction, especially in its more speculative forms, critically defamiliarizes the everydayness of technological civilization. Speculative works situated in the ruins of technological civilization, such as Itäranta's *Memory of Water*, focus on the material waste and environmental destruction effected by modern societies: dried-out river valleys and toxic wastelands and the persistent plastic dumped in landfills and repurposed by future tinkerers. The criticism in dystopian fiction might also contain seeds for meaningful ways of living with environmental destruction. In *Lupaus*, the main character gradually learns to accept and tolerate the fact that the world is changing irreparably; her new attitude is evident when she learns to appreciate the sound of dripping water, a manifestation of global warming. In *Memory of Water*, the main character seeks an affective and spiritual alliance with water. The spiritual practice in *Memory of Water* also arises from the particular material conditions of the Arctic and thus highlights what can be considered 'Northern' or 'Finnish' even without reference to nationalism. In addition to learning to live with environmental destruction, characters in these dystopian novels must also come to terms with life in a risk society, as will be seen in the next section.

Escaping the Untrustworthy Risk Society in Laura Gustafsson's Korpisoturi

Korpisoturi by Laura Gustafsson is a curious hybrid of speculative and realist fiction. It joins the tradition of realism by recounting the life of an ordinary Finnish man who loses his faith in organised society and relocates from the capital city of Helsinki to the north-eastern countryside to live a self-sufficient life as a hermit. Depiction of ordinary Finnish people (*kansankuvaus*) is one of the great traditions of Finnish liter-

ature that began with the works of the Finnish national poet Johan Ludvig Runeberg in the 1830s and continued in different forms and styles to the present. The *kansankuvaus* tradition is evoked in the novel by intertextual references to previous literature and the portrayal of a reclusive character that abandons the community to escape amidst nature. In earlier Finnish literature, the protagonists of the most lauded novel in Finnish, *Seitsemän veljestä* (1870, transl. *Seven Brothers* 1929) by Aleksis Kivi, abandoned their village community and chose to live self-sufficiently in the wilderness far from the benefits and demands of an organised community; in this novel Ahma follows their lead (see also Isomaa 2022).

However, in *Korpisoturi* the realist motifs are mixed with conventions of the post-apocalyptic novel. Ahma has adopted a survivalist ideology that offers him a way of perceiving and coping with a complicated reality; the latter half of the novel follows the pattern of the post-apocalyptic novel as it portrays the consequences of an international trade embargo that causes the rural community to run out of food supplies, resulting in a post-apocalyptic struggle to survive. Elsewhere (Isomaa 2022) a more detailed analysis of the post-apocalyptic features of the novel, including its rich intertextuality have been presented. Here it suffices to say that the compromise between the two traditions is innovative but also requires formal compromises; the cataclysm typical of post-apocalypses is diminished in scale to satisfy the criterion of realism and to keep the focus on societal analysis and commentary instead of the future speculation that is typical of science fiction. However, the combination of the traditions enables *Korpisoturi* to offer an interesting analysis of contemporary society and the emotions it may evoke in some of its members. Fleeing from society is an old way to cope with difficult emotions for characters in Finnish literature but in this novel Laura Gustafsson updates a view of the psychological motivations behind such a choice. As Juha Raipola (2019) has shown, *Korpisoturi* offers a critical, mainly parodic and comical portrayal of Ahma's survivalist ideology. However, the novel still puts forth a serious societal analysis of why he chooses the survivalist ideology in the first place.

Ahma's reasons for abandoning organised society relate to his problematic relationship with the capitalist institutions around him. As a young man, Ahma worked as a construction worker but he quit after his superior demanded that he coat a wet concrete structure of a school even if that action was likely to produce a serious mould problem in the future. In Ahma's eyes, the company could not be trusted, as it focused on producing short-term profit without taking serious responsibility for the quality of the product in the future. To emphasise the theme, the reader learns that Ahma's studio flat in Helsinki is also structurally damaged, suggesting the idea that Ahma's experience of the building company was not an exceptional case but rather indicative of a more general ethos in the sector. Ahma also voices his lack of trust for other institutions that mediate access to the environment, mentioning global problems such as fields being coated with glyphosate, rainforests being levelled and deserts being irrigated. In short, Ahma is critical of the operating principles of businesses around him

and globally to the degree that he wishes to give up his reliance on them and become self-sufficient.

This analysis of the untrustworthiness of contemporary business and societal institutions has also been mentioned by Allison Ford (2020) who has analysed the American self-sufficiency movement from a sociological and socio-psychological point of view; she argues that the experience of the untrustworthiness of institutions is an emotional motivation for many in the movement to adopt a self-sufficient lifestyle. In fact, the choice is a way to regulate the negative emotions that arise from living in a risk society. In *Korpisoturi*, Ahma's psychological depiction as a survivalist is realistic in that his motives and emotions resemble those of real-life preppers who try to disengage their dependency on social institutions and look forward to a future world in which organised societies no longer exist. Living in an untrustworthy capitalist society is emotionally frustrating and taxing. In Ahma's case, however, his insecure childhood also motivates his desire to find emotional security in the survivalist ideology and its preferred lifestyle (see Isomaa 2022).

Korpisoturi differs from some older Finnish classics – such as *Seitsemän veljestä*, *Noitaympyrä* [Vicious Circle] (1956) by Pentti Haanpää and *Jäniksen vuosi* (1975, transl. *The Year of the Hare* 1995) by Arto Paasilinna – in that its protagonist does not return to the organised society after a period in the wilderness but seems to be permanently settled in the chosen location and self-sufficient lifestyle. It is noteworthy that Ahma's settlement was not very remote in the beginning despite its forest setting, since he is able to ride a bike to a hardware store and other people live on nearby farms. In comparison, the brothers in Kivi's novels relocate to a primaeval forest that they own and Pate Teikka in Haanpää's *Noitaympyrä* (1956, written in 1931) lives in a remote location in Lapland for a year with magister Raunio; both novels imagine a genuine separation from other people. Ahma is not a similar settler in that he buys an old cottage near a village instead of building a house in a previously uninhabited place. This is an understandable choice of a setting for a novel that obviously intends to comment on human relations and social dynamics: other characters, especially those who have lived in the area for their whole life, are needed to communicate and clash with the protagonist who 'immigrates' to the area for the novel to function as a 'social laboratory'. Furthermore, having Ahma choose an old cottage that represents a much older, even 'premodern' lifestyle enables the author to contrast the past and present and serves the novel's critique of modernity (see also, Isomaa 2022).

More generally, Ahma inhabits a much later fictional Finland than the characters in earlier fiction since his Finland is part of the European Union and faces the challenges typical of the 2000s. The context in which he makes his life choices is very different from the context of the characters in Kivi's and Haanpää's novels. Kai Laitinen has noted that urban and industrial milieus have gained more ground in Finnish literature only after the Second World War; earlier, the general direction in Finnish fiction was movement from the forest to the city (see Laitinen 1984, 11–15, 17–19, 22). Ahma goes against the grain when he returns from the capital city to the countryside to

live a retro lifestyle characterised by self-sufficiency. Modernity and its city life do not represent progress and shelter from the harsh natural conditions for him, as it did for some previous generations; rather, Ahma seeks shelter from modernity in nature and chooses a more primitive lifestyle without modern amenities and services than dependency on immoral, capitalist institutions. Ahma's survivalist, hyper-masculinist ideology is criticised and even ridiculed in the novel but the emotionally taxing side of technological modernity is still made visible.

This escape from modernity has been called 'inverted quarantine' by Andrew Szasz (2007, 4–5) in his view of social action in which individuals decide to isolate themselves from the environment or surroundings that they consider illness-inducing or toxic. This is the opposite of a more traditional quarantine in which the community isolates an ill individual. Szasz (2007, 5–6) claims that well-off citizens purchased their way out of (socially) threatening surroundings already in the nineteenth century by moving to the countryside or living behind gates and walls, using private carriages and visiting only wealthy neighbourhoods. Even nowadays the inverted quarantine typical of risk societies is consumerist by nature: it manifests in the ability to buy more expensive goods that are assumed to shield the individual from the environment that has proved to be polluted and dangerous, even as the sun causes skin cancer and air and water contain impurities. Such expensive products include organic food, ecological hygiene products and makeup, organic textiles and building materials and home appliances, such as air and water filters (see Szasz 2007, 1–2, 7). Similarly, Allison Ford (2019, 127) has used the concept of inverted quarantine in her analysis of the American self-sufficiency movement. She considers 'prepping' and 'homesteading' as forms of inverted quarantine that not only help people to cope with the polluted environment and the emotions it induces but also offer a source of pleasure doing such chores as gardening.

Ahma also quarantines himself invertedly to protect himself from the problematic society and to prepare for the consequences of its assumed future collapse. Szasz's emphasis on consumerism directs attention to the monetary resources that Ahma needs to possess to be able to protect himself from the 'toxic', untrustworthy urban society. After all, he has to buy the cottage legally and without inherited funds he would not be able to afford it. Furthermore, living in a traditional way requires resources such as farming equipment, a work horse and seed grains, and renovating the cottage also requires funds or a free workforce network. In a sense, Ahma also buys or negotiates for himself the shield behind which he can hide from the risks he fears. He recognizes the contradiction that becoming self-sufficient requires resources and consumption. Nevertheless, owning the cottage gives him power over others, because he can command the others to leave after becoming upset with them and the others respect his ownership of the cottage. In this general sense, Ahma is clearly a part of the organized, capitalist and consumerist society that he despises while he also benefits from it. His relationship with others is ambivalent: he both needs them and wants to isolate himself from them.

A somewhat similar but narrower concept has been discussed in literary studies, namely 'inverted Crusoeism', that refers to characters who – in contrast to Robinson

Crusoe – deliberately isolate themselves on a remote island. The term was coined in the literary works of J G Ballard and scholars such as Simon Sellars (2012) and Vicente Bicudo de Castro and Matthias Muskat (2020) have used it in literary research. Bicudo de Castro and Muskat (2020, 255) distinguish three stages to characterise the experience of being isolated on a remote island in previous research: the character 1) has an entrapping experience, has to adapt to the new environment, then 2) has a healing experience, discovers themself and creates new social relations and finally 3) has an empowering experience, having survived (see Bicudo de Castro and Muskat 2020, 255–256). While there are also Finnish robinsonades and depictions of island recluses, many of the recluses in Finnish literature maroon themselves in the wilderness. For instance, the seven brothers in Kivi's novel isolate themselves in the Impivaara forest that they own and Junnu in Juhani Aho's short story 'Maailman murjoma' (1890) is a tenant farmer living on a forest plot. Only some of the Finnish recluses have the experiences of healing and becoming empowered; a subarctic forest with dark, cold winters and wild beasts may not be as benevolent a milieu as an island in a tropical climate.

In *Korpisoturi*, Ahma chooses inverted quarantine when he purchases the cottage as his site for survival and begins to prepare for a cataclysm. Despite his efforts to block other people from entering the property, several people trespass for different reasons and he reluctantly communicates with them. Adapting to the new environment takes some time and Ahma is not at all as self-sufficient as he wishes to be as he needs to buy food, wood and appliances and must ask for help with some minor renovations. The portrayal of his self-proclaimed reclusiveness is not serious but presented as rather comical. The three phases constituting the typical experience of inverted Crusoeism do not characterise his story in any clear way, unless the two last are seen to take place at the very end of the novel, when a fellow survivalist, a young woman named Lynx comes to save his life. The arrival of Lynx marks the end of Ahma's secluded life and he seems to join the ranks of reclusive male characters of the Finnish *kansankuvaus* tradition that live with a family but treat others with suspicion.

At the end of the novel, Ahma is portrayed as beginning a family with Lynx, who saved him from starving to death and agreed to live with him on his property. The description has idyllic features but the novel does not fully believe in the anarchist, anticultural 'new Eden' that the two survivalists create. The ending can be interpreted in the context of post-apocalyptic fiction in that it portrays survivors of a cataclysm founding humankind anew (see Isomaa 2022).

However, the *kansankuvaus* tradition is also present in the appreciative depiction of the characters. Kai Laitinen (1984, 15–16) has claimed that the *kansankuvaus* tradition of Finnish fiction portrays common characters appreciatively from their level and with empathy. The narrator does not evaluate the characters but perceives the world through their eyes and allows readers to draw their own conclusions. However, this does not prevent the characters from also being portrayed in a critical light, sometimes even comically. However, the tradition still abstains from portraying common

people as comical clowns or primitives that are paraded in a novel for local colour or for comical effect. Laitinen sees this emphasis on human dignity as resembling that of the classical Russian novels and suggests that the Finnish novel has from the very beginning been strongly and devotedly democratic with a narrator that almost whispers to the reader: "it could be you" (Laitinen 1984). *Korpisoturi* also continues the Finnish tradition of *kansankuvaus* in this respect. Despite the comical aspects and the critical framing of Ahma's story, the narrator is still somehow empathetic towards him and sees his dignity as a person.

Eco-anxiety as a Psychological Response to Climate Change in Lupaus

The protagonist of Emma Puikkonen's *Lupaus* (=*L*), a single mother named Rinna, also engages in survivalist action in an effort to regulate her negative emotions: she builds an underground bunker in her yard to prepare for possible future catastrophes. Living in a country house in Eastern Finland in the first decades of the 2000s, Rinna suffers from negative emotions that the declining environmental conditions, most importantly climate change, evoke in her. An underlying factor for her distress is the lack of an adequate social safety net. However, Rinna's survivalist preparation is a response not only to imagined or mediated future risks but also her daughter Seela's health issues as she falls ill with tick-borne encephalitis, or TBE, that has spread to their home area because of global warming. Nevertheless, *Lupaus* gives a literary expression to a much-discussed new form of ecoanxiety, namely climate anxiety. As a literary work, the novel brings together realism and speculative fiction by letting the characters reminisce about a recognizable Finland of recent decades while also imagining a dystopian world of the late 2020s that is characterised by political unrest and environmental change.

Certain aspects of Rinna's state of mind become understandable when read against Ford's (2020) analysis of the emotions typical of a risk society. For instance, her survivalist preparation for a future cataclysm can be read as an attempt to manage the difficult emotions triggered in a risk society that is overly conscious of what could go wrong in the world in the future. Rinna's underground shelter is her version of risk management. However, some of her psychological dilemmas have been discussed in climate psychology that focuses on examining the effects of climate change on the human psyche. Climate anxiety (or climate change anxiety) is often considered as synonymous with eco-anxiety, that has been described as "heightened emotional, mental or somatic distress in response to dangerous changes in the climate system" (Climate Psychology Alliance 2022, 22). Also Ahma's emotional landscape in *Korpisoturi* encompasses the fundamental aspect of eco-anxiety, namely "a chronic fear of environmental doom" (Climate Psychology Alliance 2022, 22). Whereas Ahma does not worry much about

climate change but ponders other environmental issues such as the problematic policies of mass-market food production, Rinna suffers a psychological reaction to global climate change that also concretely affects her everyday life. It can be called solastalgia in the broad meaning of the term. The concept of solastalgia was coined by Glenn A Albrecht in 2003 to refer to the complex human emotion that people experienced in circumstances where a beloved home environment was changed and distressed. In later studies, the concept has been broadened to refer more to the lived experience of negative environmental change (Albrecht 2020, 10–14).

In addition to solastalgia (as environmental grief), Rinna also suffers from a gendered version of 'global dread'. Global dread is defined by Albrecht (2019, 199) as "the anticipation of an apocalyptic future state of the world that produces a mixture of terror and sadness in the sufferer for those who will exist in such a state". Rinna's dread is related to her motherhood as it is triggered by the thought that her daughter Seela will have to face the future world without her, since Rinna is likely to die before her daughter. We suggest that Rinna's version of the emotion could be referred to as 'mother's dread' or 'parental dread'. Rinna also has other personal worries that intensify and contribute to her mental breakdown but her fear of the consequences of global warming is foregrounded in the story.

Whereas *Korpisoturi* portrays the emotions of a young man who looks forward to a future cataclysm, *Lupaus* imagines the mindset of a single mother whose sense of security is severely shaken by the environmental and social consequences of global warming. The impact of motherhood on Rinna's emotions and mental health issues is emphasised in *Lupaus* and in this sense the novel offers a gendered portrayal of climate anxiety. Motherhood is one of the traditional frames for portraying female characters in Finnish fiction and *Lupaus* adds a new layer to the treatment of motherhood by imagining how a mother reacts to climate change and what her survivalist preparation is like.

A central turning point in Rinna's mental health is Seela's TBE infection. Rinna and six-year-old Seela live together in Rinna's childhood home, an idyllic countryside house situated by a lake and surrounded by a garden. The environment has changed so much in the past few decades that Seela contracts tick-borne encephalitis, or TBE, when playing outside. There were no ticks in the area in Rinna's childhood and she and her brother Robert were safe even when playing naked in the woods (*L*, 50–51). Seela belongs to a later generation whose living conditions have worsened considerably. Ticks are spreading to new environments due to climate change and there are more of them every year: Rinna finds them crawling in her hands in the evening and wakes up at night to find one in her navel (*L*, 57). The ticks have invaded not only Rinna's garden but also her body and house and made the environment unsafe, as they are carriers of severe diseases such as TBE and borreliosis. It is difficult to protect oneself against ticks, because they are almost everywhere and difficult to spot due to their small size. Like melting glaciers, the ticks function as a motif and a metaphor for environmental change and the more dangerous environment it creates. The ticks suck blood and

contaminate it, which makes the insect a suitable metaphor for the vitalityreducing effects of climate change. The spreading of ticks is an unwelcome change in the home environment, making the insect one of the sources of solastalgia. The tick bite is for Rinna a similar turning point as the negative experiences in the building company are for Ahma: their trust is severely shaken.

Having lived in the same house since childhood, Rinna is also able to note other changes that are taking place in the surrounding environment: the lake becomes more eutrophic and malodorous every year, the number of mosquitos increases, catkins appear at the wrong time of the year and white hares are easily spotted in the winter since there is no snow to camouflage their white fur (*L*, 59). Each of the changes is a potential trigger of solastalgia. The surroundings of the idyllic childhood home are changing and a child is no longer safe from serious infections in the garden. The changes in weather conditions are also worrisome for Rinna, hinting at the category of meteoranxiety or anxiety triggered by the threat of "increasing frequency and severity of extreme weather" (Albrecht 2017, 293). Similar negative changes are occurring world-wide in the form of a mass distinction of species and Rinna is painfully aware of them. She feels anxious when Seela asks her about the mass extinction of species and hopes that she forgets about it soon. Letting her child find out the truth about the world is difficult for Rinna and she tries to protect her from it to an unhealthy degree and eventually falls ill herself.

Seela's TBE leads to Rinna's anxiety and unhealthy emotion management and coping habits. Seela falls severely ill after the tick bite, spends three weeks in the hospital and only gains full mobility several weeks later. Despite promises, Seela's father Leo does not come to support them in the hospital, Rinna's brother Robert is abroad and Rinna's father is in a care home. During the winter following Seela's TBE infection, Rinna feels that her life splits in two, as if it consisted of two transparent layers of fabric. She acts like she is leading a rather happy, normal everyday life but at the same time she is terrified inside, the terrible side of the world appearing to her in nightmares and insomnia. She lives in a dual reality against her will. (*L*, 115–116.) After reading a newspaper article in which researchers warn about a dystopian future, she loses her ability to keep the two sides of her perception of the world separate. She feels that she can finally think clearly, without deceiving herself and intense grief and a feeling of powerlessness overcome her. She cannot bear the thought that one day she must tell the truth about the environmental condition to Seela. In this anxious state of mind, she decides to build an underground bunker. (*L*, 188–121.)

Rinna finally acknowledges that nature is being destroyed and it leads her to experience grief that is caused by losses in the natural world. Douglas Burton-Christie (2011, 29) has noted that environmental grief is nowadays a common part of personal and collective emotional landscapes. Rinna's grief is anticipatory mourning in that it occurs before the loss (see Braun 2017, 83). According to Sebastian F Braun (2017, 84), the grief over the loss of our environment (Albrecht's solastalgia) is also mourning the loss of the human species. The emotions overcome Rinna and her decision to build

an underground bunker can be seen as an attempt to regulate the difficult emotions. In Ford's (2020, 126) analysis, self-sufficiency practices serve as emotion management strategies and the underground shelter with its emergency food storage and gas filters is Rinna's attempt to be self-sufficient in case of a cataclysm. Having been unable to get social support from others previously, an effort to survive on her own is an understandable choice.

Rinna's underground shelter can be perceived as a form of inverted quarantine. Building the bunker is not simple for Rinna, because as Ahma before his inheritance, she does not have the required funds to purchase the expensive bunker. She asks for money from her father but also empties Seela's bank account, which is a morally questionable act that Rinna justifies by thinking that she is building the shelter for Seela's benefit (*L*, 156). The shelter complicates the close relationship between Rinna and her brother Robert, because Rinna fells Robert's dear climbing tree and erases the tomb of their childhood cat, as well as their mother's old vegetable patch without telling him beforehand. Robert considers Rinna's building project as lunacy and feels that Rinna has ruined his childhood and made him both homeless and sisterless (*L*, 156–161). Rinna's survivalist preparations have altered their childhood home irreparably and it triggers deep solastalgia in Robert in the narrow sense: losing one's beloved home environment rather than the larger collective environment. Robert sees Rinna's actions from a different perspective: he cannot see a need for an underground bunker and considers her choice to destroy the most beautiful features of the property as crazy. He cannot fully understand why he takes the destruction so hard but his reaction shows what strong emotional ties people have to their surroundings and that losing them can cause intense grief. Robert finds it hard to forgive Rinna but they manage to start rebuilding their relationship in one phone call before Robert vanishes on a trip to Greenland. Robert's disappearance is another blow for Rinna's well-being. She loses an important person that helped her maintain Seela's sense of security.

Even though Rinna spends time in the shelter and also makes Seela live there when her level of anxiety increases, the shelter is never used for its original purpose. It is useless, serving only as an emotional comfort for the emotionally unstable and insecure Rinna. The novel is critical towards the security business that profits from people's anxieties and insecurities. Rinna's decision to buy the underground shelter saves the young female entrepreneur Tuuli who started the shelter business after being made redundant as a letter carrier. Tuuli has recently bought a beautiful flat with her husband Petri and is desperate to make her business idea work. Rinna is her first client and Tuuli manages to create enough publicity for her business by bringing social media influencers to the building site, that people start buying underground bunkers for themselves. Rinna's distress and Seela's innocence are brutally used for business purposes and one of the social media influencers even shows Rinna's touching speech about her love for her child in his YouTube video, editing it and adding pictures of zombies and severed heads to it (*L*, 190–192). After seeing the video and the blogs, many families decide to also have a 'plan B'. Soon Tuuli sells tens of bomb shelters

each month, becoming a wealthy, privileged person and finally even a media celebrity that makes light entertainment out of real fears and mental health issues, warning people also of zombies and farting husbands (*L*, 191–193, 265).

Fear proves to be a good business but later Rinna feels that by carving the shelter in the ground she also carved fear inside her: it weakened her mental health. The disappearance of Robert in Greenland pushes Rinna deeper into mental health problems: she begins to have delusional or paranoid ideas of how her smallest actions, like taking too long strides when walking, might cause Robert's or her own demise (*L*, 230). She sits in the shelter in the darkness and loses her sense of time. It comforts her, because she feels that in the shelter, she is an outsider to everything that takes place in the world, such as search parties looking for Robert. However, it is obvious that the coping mechanism is not healthy but prevents her from dealing with the emotion of loss. The underground space of the shelter is like a grave that enables Rinna to be emotionally dead to the unbearable truths and facts concerning her reality and the world at large. Rinna needs to be numb and descends to the grave-like shelter where she can pretend that the world has stopped and nothing is happening:

> In the shelter I am separated from everything that is happening.
>
> There is no glacier, no search party, no camp where Seela is running in circles while playing dodgeball, no climate change and statistics about how the new climate affects the crop. There is only darkness. The ground around gives the auditory impression that something is moving and rustling silently.
>
> I sit all day in the dark, there are no moments of time, nothing is happening outside, nothing is happening.
>
> Suojassa olen syrjässä kaikesta mitä tapahtuu.
>
> Ei ole olemassa jäätikköä, ei etsintäpartiota, ei leiriä, jolla Seela juoksee ympyrää pelatessaan polttopalloa, ei muuttuvaa ilmastoa ja tilastoja siitä, miten uusi sää vaikuttaa satoon. On vain pimeys. Maa ympärillä kuulosta siltä kuin liikkuisi ja rapisisi hiljaa. Istun koko päivän pimeässä, kellonaikoja ei ole, ulkopuolella ei tapahdu mitään, mitään ei tapahdu. (L, 230–231, transl. S. I.)

The shelter offers a way to escape actual reality instead of facing the overwhelming emotions related to Robert's disappearance (*L*, 230–231). Rinna's unhealthy emotional responses and coping mechanisms include avoidance, escape and emotional paralysis in the silence of the shelter.

Rinna's final mental breakdown takes place during her shopping trip to a new mall some time after Robert's body is found. For Rinna, all the stimuli at the mall, fortified by her new mal-functioning hi-tech eye lenses, are too much to process and manage. Her distress grows when the sellers cannot answer her detailed, ecologically super-aware

questions about the origins and manufacturing processes of the products. Suddenly, people around Rinna do not have facial features but only skin that is tightened around their skulls, making them resemble worms. Rinna tries to run away but cannot. She hallucinates, bangs her head on advertising kiosks and eats products in three shops before she is captured. Her last thoughts concern her preoccupation with saving her daughter and being saved herself, as well as the idea of promises that should be kept.

Rinna's behaviour can be perceived as a psychotic episode in which she loses touch with reality and acts irrationally. The setting of the episode, the new mall, is fitting, because the consumerist paradise lacking ecological awareness reveals that little has changed in the way people live, driving the fragile Rinna to lose touch with reality. Her hallucination of people having worm-like faces can be read as communicating her negative view of the weak powers of individuals and her inability to connect to other people as unique individuals. Additionally, the worm might also be a reference to what people are like or become when they live in an underground shelter: they lose their humanity and resemble worms. Rinna's perception of worms around her instead of human faces communicates her twisted mindset.

Rinna is taken to a hospital, where she is still delusional as different ideas cross her mind. She is revealed to have read about survivalism and thinking that one should not reveal to anyone about preparing to avoid people coming to ask for help when the cataclysm takes place. She imagines hearing her father's voice, asking whether such a life is worth living (L, 272). Worst of all, Rinna cannot see anyone's faces, only wormlike heads. She is first hospitalised for two weeks and then accepted to nature therapy that consists of taking care of a vegetable patch. Rinna begins to feel better and she also takes part in an experiential form of therapy in which the participants plant trees in a forest. Despite environmental destruction, nature still exists and can be taken care of. Most of the participants are mothers. The anxious mothers nurture nature as an essential part of their therapy, serving as a metaphor of how nature should be treated.

Rinna's future is left open. At the end of the novel, Seela, who has been doing fine in foster care comes to visit and for the first time since her psychotic episode Rinna sees a person with a face. During the visit, Rinna also seems to find a new way to react to the dystopian reality around her, because she thinks that despite the amount of carbon dioxide increasing and its inevitable consequences, she can still be just where she is, breathing, watching, and seeing what is happening. She even thinks about a fairy-tale in which Seela's future grandchildren play outside and she has turned into a tree; Seela also turns into a tree after her death and comes to tell her what happened to humankind. The novel ends with the remark that Seela has tears in her eyes and her hand is warm. The ending suggests that Rinna finds a way to accept the inconvenient truth of the negative changes taking place in nature without becoming anxious, which could be read as a signal of the successfulness of the therapy. References to Seela's happy grandchildren also communicate a belief in a relatively happy future. Seela's

tears are more ambiguous, as tears are not tied with a particular feeling but can occur with both positive and negative emotions.

Emotional Detachment as Coping in Memory of Water

In *Lupaus,* Emma Puikkonen uses the culturally powerful image of melting glaciers to convey contemporary fears about futures transformed by climate change. Emmi Itäranta's climate fiction novel *Memory of Water* (=*MW*) imagines one transformed future. The glaciers are present as phantoms, in redrawn coastlines and bare, arid mountain tops. Itäranta imagines the inevitable result of runaway climate change: an Arctic without ice and snow. The novel also presents a main character who, as a means of coping, responds to environmental and social hardships with emotional detachment. Such detachment is developed through contemplative practices that also serve to highlight the uncontrollable aspects of environmental processes and water circulation in particular.

The events of the novel are situated in a rural village somewhere in the Scandinavian Union, north of the city of Kuusamo. The frame of the narrative does not give specific dates but projects its speculative fantasy some hundreds of years in the future, after an unspecified environmental cataclysm and the 'Twilight Century' that followed. Both the environment and society have been transformed: the most significant features of the storyworld are a temperate climate, a scarcity of water and a totalitarian control of all resources, ruled by the remote but powerful New Qian empire.

Throughout *Memory of Water*, bodily experiences and affect are articulated through the metaphoric field of water. A combination of environmental catastrophes and military control over essential resources has led to a severe scarcity of fresh water: as aquifers, springs and rivers have dried up, the population subsists on purified sea water and occasional rain, though all water use is heavily regulated by the corrupt rulers. Itäranta's worldbuilding details drought-related features in the story world, such as the meshed hoods that people use to protect their faces from swarms of biting insects and drought-resistant staple crops: amaranth, sunflower and millet. In the tea master's privileged garden, one also finds tea bushes, gooseberry and a variety of root crops. These elements circumscribe the material and political reality of water in the storyworld, which is in stark contrast with the present reality of Finnish politics and ecosystems. Currently, Finland is known for its rich freshwater reservoirs and is routinely dubbed 'the Land of a Thousand Lakes'. In the Finnish context, regions north of Kuusamo are especially known for heavy snowfall and cold winters. The flora of the region is subarctic, with a growing season of less than four months. Politically, Finland is a democratic state with a low tolerance for open institutional violence.

In *Memory of Water*, water gains a spiritual aspect that also serves to estrange the expectations of contemporary Finnish readers. Water is used in tea ceremonies that resemble the traditional Japanese ceremonies. Such traditions are not common to contemporary Finnish culture and tea is culturally far less prominent than coffee. The traditional philosophy and practice of Itäranta's tea masters reveres water as the essential element of life and the tea masters use it in quantities that would be luxurious for the common citizens of the storyworld. The novel's focalizing narrator is Noria Kaitio, the daughter and successor of the village tea master. The formal tea ceremony is repeated several times in the course of the novel as the passages serve as structural elements that mark turning points in the narrative. The passages also form the philosophical core of the novel, as they provide a detached and contemplative frame to the social and personal dramas in the plot.

In the ethical code of the tea masters, water is respected on its own terms. It is believed to have agency and to be able to remember all the events of the world. On the day of Noria's graduation as a tea master, her father shows her the *fjell* spring that their family has kept hidden from the world for generations and which also provides water for the family household. After passing on the guardianship of the spring, Noria's father gives her this lesson:

> Water understands the movements of the world, it knows when it is sought and where it is needed. Sometimes a spring or a well escapes of its own will, withdrawing into the cover of the earth to look for another channel. Tea masters believe there are times when water doesn't wish to be found because it knows it will be chained in ways that are against its nature. Therefore the drying of a spring may have its own purpose that must not be fought. Not everything in the world belongs to people. Tea and water do not belong to tea masters, but tea masters belong to tea and water. We are the watchers of water, but first and foremost we are its servants. (*MW*, 91)

The idea that springs dry out for a reason challenges the image of humans as masters and rulers of nature: "Not everything in the world belongs to people". When it comes to water, the right thing to do is to accept its passage. The central ethical dilemma of the narrative is whether to adhere to this traditional code of conduct, when secretly using the spring gives Noria a remarkable privilege over the other villagers who struggle to find sufficient water for bare survival and when sharing the spring would diminish their suffering. After a string of civil protests against the rule of the empire, military officials punish the villagers by dealing out water only in minimal rations. Seeing the villagers suffering for lack of water, Noria eventually shares her wealth with them at the fatal price of being discovered, confined and starved to death by the military officials. The secret spring eventually becomes the property of the military.

The ethical dilemma draws the young tea master to an affective and introspective process. When considering her role as a keeper of tea master traditions, for example, she

articulates her participation in the tradition in terms of material processes and bodily habits: the "echoes of tea masters that had come before" in her body, the iteration of their words and movements and the handling of the same water. She perceives this "curious feeling" of iteration as both supportive and confining (*MW,* 94–95).

In such articulations of bodily feeling, Noria's agency appears as permeated by two other agencies: tradition and water. At times, these agencies are in conflict: tradition dictates that the spring should be kept hidden, under the guardianship and control of the tea master, while the nature of water itself would be to run free. This conflict also underlines the corruption of the tea master traditions; while the ethics of Noria's father considers tea masters primarily as servants of the water, most contemporary tea masters in the novel's world draw on their privileged access to water as a means of accumulating personal wealth. Corruption also tempts Noria as in her thoughts and words, she often slips into thinking of the spring water as her personal possession.

Throughout the novel, affects are articulated as forces that flow inside and pass through the body, often literally as water, or sometimes air: "I thought of the silence of the earth, but air and water flowed under my skin still, and I had to make use of the brief daylight hours while they lasted" (*MW,* 114); "I can feel water wanting to leave me" (*MW,* 222); "Breath passed in me hastily, raggedly" (*MW,* 225); "My breathing sang, stuck in my tense throat" (*MW,* 226). Sometimes the flow is expressed only through verbs or references to the movements of blood or other bodily flows: "An unexpected shudder ran through me" (*MW,* 120); "Blood rushed to my face" (*MW,* 132): "Blood weighed in my feet" (*MW,* 226). Keeping a secret is likened to water that churns in underground passages, eroding the rock until it finds a way to the light (*MW,* 161, 167, 184). In moments of crisis, Noria stops to listen to her own breath and the flow of blood in her veins (*MW,* 223, 226).

Such articulations can be interpreted as a marker of the tea master's Zen-inspired worldview: what matters most is not the individual mind but the ceaseless circulation of non-personal elements and energies. They also challenge the model of ego-centred control of resources exemplified by the corrupt tea masters and military officials: the individual appears as a site of affect, life and water, not as the master or owner of them. Eventually, following the way of the water leads Noria to her death, which is conceptualized in terms of water exiting the body, leaving behind only dust.

In contrast to Gustafsson's *Korpisoturi* or Puikkonen's *Lupaus* analysed above, *Memory of Water* offers a contemplative view of societal and environmental collapse. In doing so, it challenges the individualist tendencies of self-sufficiency practitioners, as discussed by Ford (2021). Rather, it resonates with the writings of certain influential collapse thinkers, such as Carolyn Baker, who have stressed the importance of introspective work when preparing for and encountering collapse.

Baker, in her book *Sacred Demise: Walking the Spiritual Path of Industrial Civilization's Collapse* (2009), argues that collapse will lead most citizens of industrialized countries to experience the collapse of their egos, in one way or another. This is simply due to the transformation of their habitual ways of life; thus, their identities as

"professional person[s] with money in the bank" or "solid citizens" (2009, 62–63) will be transformed. Drawing on Jungian psychoanalysis, she explains the persistent denial of collapse through the cultural base myth of heroism combined with American exceptionalism, that is, the self-understanding of Americans as a 'chosen people' that will always triumph in the end. For Baker (2009, 44), heroism is a fundamental aspect of the American ethos; to be defeated in any way "implies a deficiency of character". However, admitting defeat is an essential step on Baker's spiritual path of collapse:

> [I]t is precisely our willingness to encounter defeat, despair, hopelessness, powerlessness, loss, and other so-called 'negative' emotions which could paradoxically offer 'salvation' – not salvation *from* collapse, but salvation *from continuing to deny that collapse is happening all around us* – and salvation from the toxic legacy of empire. (Baker 2009, 46, emphases original)

It could be argued that such heroism is characteristic not only of the American mind but also of the ethos of imperialism more generally. Empires are built on the expansion of frontiers or a continued succession of successful conquests. By imperial standards, Itäranta's Noria is no hero: not only does she tread on murky ethical ground in keeping her secrets but remains rather passive throughout the story. Despite relieving the suffering of the villagers for a short moment before her solitary confinement and death, her actions do not challenge any enemy. Indeed, judged by the end result of her death and the loss of the spring, those actions might be considered foolish and definitely a defeat.

However, Noria is a martyr for a cause greater than herself: the preservation of truthful history. In exploring the archives of her tea master elders, she finds a hidden log that details the findings of a long-vanished expedition troupe. The recordings point to the possible existence of a source of fresh water in Northern Scandinavia. Noria and her friend Sanja listen to the recordings and transcribe them for posterity; they even prepare for a Scandinavia-bound expedition of their own. While their travel preparations come to a tragic halt that separates the friends, they succeed in preserving the historical and scientific data. In the resolution of the plot, this fact is presented as a source of hope for the future. Simultaneously, the resolution does not encourage readers to imagine freedom from the oppressive imperium of Qian – not in the near future, at least.

Thus, the dominant structure of feeling in the novel remains within the realm of detachment and defeat. It presents life in a climate-changed world in terms of the strict confines of drought and oppression, in which the emotions and actions of individuals need to be kept in check and, in Noria's case, compartmentalized through contemplative practices. For a novel mostly interpreted as young adult literature, such complexity of affect is both subtle and remarkable.

Solastalgia and Eco-nostalgia in the Arctic

Maa joka ei koskaan sula (=*MJEKS*) by Inkeri Markkula portrays environmental emotions by depicting the life story of Unni, a Finnish female glaciologist who studies the Penny Icecap in Nunavut, Canada. However, the novel differs from the other novels analysed in this chapter in that it also discusses the historical treatment of the indigenous peoples of the North and portrays the psychological consequences of the assimilation politics of the latter half of the twentieth century, that traumatised several generations of Sámi and Inuit people in Eurasia and North America. As such, the novel touches upon phenomena that were in the early 1900s discussed in the frame of Arctic hysteria but offers a very different analysis of them. The title of the novel is a translation of the name Auyuittuq, referring to the area where the Penny Icecap is situated. The name of the area is no longer accurate in a globally warming and melting world and it makes visible the negative environmental change that is taking place in the fictive world. However, the melting of ice seems to serve also as a metaphor for traumatised characters that begin to recover from their trauma, which is a positive change. Creation of parallels and metaphors is a part of the novel's poetics.

The novel is psychological in its focus on the emotions, thoughts and motivations of the characters; it is also evident in the careful depiction of Unni's childhood experiences, which have been split between two places and realities, Lapland and Southern Finland. Unni was born to a Sámi father and a Finnish mother who lived somewhere in the Kaldoaivi area in northmost Finland but her parents divorced in her childhood and her mother moved with Unni to a little town by the sea in Southern Finland, which made her life miserable. Unni was bullied cruelly at school but luckily, she was able to spend very happy summers with her father in Lapland before her run-away trip to the north in the winter resulted in her losing two fingers and being denied meeting her father. Before the unlucky incident, her father gifted her a fawn that she named Martti after the Finnish name of the wild goose in Selma Lagerlöf's children's novel *Nils Holgerssons underbara resa genom Sverige* (1906–1907, transl. *The Wonderful Adventures of Nils*). Nils Holgersson travels to Lapland with Martti and wild geese and Unni also feels that she is part of two worlds: she constantly misses Lapland, which is her beloved home of freedom and nature and tries to wash the traces of her life in the south from her skin.

The novel gives Unni's traumatic childhood and feelings of not belonging more generality by creating a thematic parallel between the historical assimilation of the Sámi people and what Unni's mother did to Unni by separating her from her home in Lapland against her and her father's will. Even as an adult living in Helsinki, Unni feels that her real home is in the north; that is her place of origin. However, as a glaciologist Unni knows and perceives that the Arctic area is rapidly changing due to global climate change, which produces solastalgia and eco-nostalgia in her. Unni's deep connection to her childhood home in the Arctic and her experiences of losing it first due to social factors and then due to environmental change become central topics of

the novel; her individual fate echoes the historical experiences of the Sámi and other indigenous people more generally.

Internationally, the novel can be compared to a renowned Danish novel, *Frøken Smillas fornemmelse for sne* (1992, transl. *Smilla's Sense of Snow* 1993) by Peter Høeg: it touches upon several similar themes and the narrators are alike. Høeg's novel is centred on the assumed murder of a small boy, Esajas, whose parents are members of the Greenland Inuit tribe. The narrator is his neighbour, a 37-year-old glacier specialist Smilla, whose mother was a Greenland's Inuit and father a Danish millionaire. Like Unni, Smilla has also been forced to move away from her northern homeland as a child and made to live in a southern city, learning the Danish culture and forgetting parts of the Inuit culture. Both Smilla and Unni feel distanced from the southern culture, missing the Northern habitat and constantly compare the two cultures. They perceive the dominant culture (Smilla's Danish and Unni's Finnish) from mostly an 'outsider's' perspective – that of Inuit and Sámi – and their narration also includes words from their native languages. Snow and ice are constantly mentioned and sometimes anthropomorphised in their discourses. Both characters are critical of colonialist history and exploitation and live close to nature: Smilla has a special sense of snow and Unni feels a close connection with glaciers. Despite the differences of genre, both novels focus on the tensional history and present between the minority and majority cultures of the depicted countries and imagine the North from the perspective of characters who live between two cultures.

Unni's feeling of eco-nostalgia is expressed in her depiction of her visit to a *palsa*, a bog characterised by permafrost mounds, near her childhood home. Unni tells her assistant Isaac that as a child, she used to pick cloudberries in the *palsa* area and knew it very well; the mounds serve as landmarks for her. When she visits the area as an adult fifteen years later, she first thinks that she has become lost because the scenery is very different. Then she realises that the permafrost has melted and the mounds have collapsed like animals that have been cut open. She is not sure what to think about it. She had thought that her childhood home would never change but she now realises that only the house will remain as it is while the world around it is melting and twisting into an awkward position (*MJEKS,* 54). Solastalgia differs from eco-nostalgia in that in solastalgia a person has lived experience of the process of change in the home environment, whereas in eco-nostalgia a person returns to a place that has been transformed or changed during an absence by development or climate change; thus, the changes trigger melancholia (see Albrecht 2011, 54). Previously, when living in Helsinki, Unni always missed the coldness of the north and the sensory perceptions, sounds and colours typical of sub-zero temperatures along with everything else that can be perceived and experienced in the north (*MJEKS*, 55). These qualities or characteristics were the object of her homesickness. However, as the characteristics of the environment are changing as a consequence of climate change, what will happen to Unni's emotion? Will it persist? The changes occurring in her home environment are emotionally difficult for her. The memory of her childhood home in the North was a

source of happiness for her in her miserable childhood years in southern Finland but the consequences of climate change are now emotionally confusing for her. The world seems to be changing irreparably and it creates an identity problem for a person who is emotionally attached to an environment that was experienced earlier in life.

Unni also expresses her environmental worry and grief in discussions with other people. For instance, when justifying her need to travel back to Canada for her thesis supervisor, she compares the changes occurring in her childhood environment to an uninvited guest spoiling a painting of it with the wrong colours. Environmental change is not just an object of research for her but also something personal; she wants to personally document the change (*MJEKS*, 248). The adjective 'wrong' is repeated in her depiction of the change. The reason for her not moving back to live near her childhood home is that she does not want to study the environmental changes of her home area as they feel too personal to her and there is little else to do for work in the area (*MJEKS*, 56–57). For Unni, studying glaciers abroad is emotionally easier. When talking to her future boyfriend Jon for the first time, she motivates her choice of researching the disappearing glaciers by wanting to gather the knowledge of history they carry in their layers (*MJEKS*, 19). There is obviously also an aesthetic aspect motivating her research on the glaciers: as an adult, she perceives the glaciers almost as living beings that sing about the northern countries with cold winds and long winters, as well about the rhythm of the sun and melting waters inside the glaciers (*MJEKS*, 43, 56–57). Furthermore, Unni feels empathy for the Penny glacier and thinks that neither of them have ever been on the winning team (*MJEKS*, 258).

In addition to contemplative environmental emotions such as the different forms of longing or nostalgia, fear is also discussed in the novel. Unni's assistant Isaac confesses that in recent years, he has begun to feel fear when walking on the glaciers. The rapidly changing ice has become alien to him and he gives a metaphorical description of his experience by comparing it to alexia, an experience of losing one's ability to read. Isaac feels that he is suffering from an 'environmental alexia', an inability to 'read' the environment:

> 'I have walked on the glaciers since I was a child', Isaac continues. 'Here in Penny and over there on the sea ice. But I have begun to feel fear only in the past few years'.
>
> 'Fear of what?'
>
> 'Crevasses, melts, currents. Anything suddenly appearing, that I cannot foresee. One should relearn to know the ice. But it takes time. Maybe the feeling is a little like having to relearn to read. The letters are the same, but you don't know them anymore'.
>
> "Olen kulkenut jäällä lapsesta asti", Isaac jatkaa. "Täällä Pennyllä ja tuolla merijäällä. Mutta vasta viime vuosina olen alkanut pelätä".
>
> "Pelätä mitä?"

> "Railoja, sulapaikkoja, virtauksia. Kaikkea mikä tulee eteen yhtäkkiä ilman että osaan ennakoida. Pitäisi oppia tuntemaan jää uudelleen. Mutta ei sellainen tapahdu hetkessä. Ehkä se tunne on vähän sama kuin jos sinun pitäisi nyt yhtäkkiä opetella lukemaan uudestaan. Kirjaimet olisivat samat, mutta et osaisi niitä enää." (*MJEKS*, 53–54, transl. S. I.)

Despite her traumatic childhood experiences, Unni knows her parents and has retained a connection to her childhood home and Sámi roots; she even actively studies the history of the Sámi. The man with whom Unni falls in love, Jon, is not as lucky. Unni meets Jon at the Penny glacier and they become lovers only to depart over a week later when Unni has to travel back home from Canada. Jon does not reveal his life story to Unni but his backstory is revealed to the reader by an external narrator that gives glimpses of his life before he travels from Denmark to Canada to meet his biological father. Jon was adopted as a baby and he feels rootless because he does not know his biological parents and background. When working as a paramedic, he constantly meets people who are sorry when they are not able to say farewell to their close relatives killed in accidents. In contrast, Jon was not given an opportunity to even know who his biological parents were, leading him to wonder whether some of the strangers he meets as a paramedic could be his biological relatives.

To emphasise a person's right to a biological family and connection to the place of origin, the novel seems to suggest that a baby learns to know the environment and the people around him even before birth. This idea is developed in the portrayal of the pregnancy of Jon's mother Alasie and in Jon's curious reactions to the environment in Auyuittuq where his mother lived while pregnant. As an adult visiting the place for the first time, Jon feels that he has visited certain places there before. Furthermore, as a newborn baby, he rejects the adoptive mother as if he recognised that she is not the person who carried him under her heart before. The early experiences seem to have affected Jon: he remembers having carried a deep sorrow in him since childhood and he uses that feeling to explain his overuse of alcohol. Ethnic stereotypes also bother him. He suffers from people treating him as an ethnic Other due to his dark appearance and they ask about his ethnicity, projecting stereotypical beliefs about his nature; sometimes they want him to give an opinion on some political question as a representative of his ethnicity. His ethnic looks have also aroused the interest of women and some people have envied him because he is indigenous but Jon feels it disconcerting that people emphasise his looks so much in their appraisal of who he is, especially when he himself considers his appearance as irrelevant in that context (*MJEKS*, 83–95). In the thematic composition of the novel, the issues of Jon deepen the theme of belonging to a place and to a family, as well as the question of the treatment of indigenous people in Western societies.

The shocking fact about Jon's background is revealed little by little in the novel: he was stolen from his married Inuit parents by Canadian authorities when he was born in a hospital in 1970 via C-section. The hospital staff lied to his mother and

told her that the baby had died at birth. In reality, he was given for adoption to a childless white couple, Helen and Liam, as the authorities thought that indigenous people were incapable of bringing up good citizens. In Jon's story, the novel lays bare the history of racist assimilation politics of Canada, especially the so-called Sixties scoop spanning from the 1960s to the 1980s during which child welfare authorities took children from their indigenous parents without consent and placed them for adoption to white families. To emphasise the historical context, a short description of the Sixties scoop is included in the printed edition of the novel as part of the end matter, along with a list of historical resources that the author used to create the fictional story.

Research is a theme in the novel as well, as Jon's adoptive mother Helen began to research Jon's background already in the 1980s and she uses the concept of genocide to make sense of the real nature of the Sixties scoop. According to the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court (an international treaty that establishes core international crimes) that is referred to in the novel, genocide can take the form of forcibly transferring children out of one group to another group (*MJEKS*, 159, 292). In Helen's eyes, Jon's fate is to be understood in that conceptual context: he and his parents are victims of genocide. Having studied history, Helen also knows of racist science that has historically appraised the indigenous peoples of the North as "immoral, retarded, stunted and large-skulled, the kind that could, in the context of menagerie, be mistaken as representing a missing link between the humans and the apes" (*MJEKS*, 154, transl. S. I.).[1]

In a sense, Jon and Unni share similar disturbances from their childhood that are also manifest in their adult lives. Unni also studies the history of indigenous people and she finds similar sources as Helen had found that affect her interpretation of her father's life. Despite its fictionality, the novel relies on historical sources and gives a fictional interpretation of the past. The indigenous peoples of the Arctic have suffered from the assimilation politics of the nation states but they also suffer from climate change that transforms their home environment irreparably. The novel makes both visible.

Despite complications, *Maa joka ei koskaan sula* still has a hopeful ending. Unni cannot forget Jon and she tries to find him. Due to lucky coincidences, she ends up in the Danish hospital where Jon is treated for falling from a roof and nearly dying and finds him there after going to offer comfort to a woman, Helen, who is wailing loudly in the hospital corridor. Unni and Jon understand each other in a special way and the novel hints that Jon recovers at least to some degree from his injuries and Unni and Jon end up being together. Helen decides to find and contact Jon's biological mother. The novel ends with a scene in which Helen walks to meet Jon's biological mother Alasie, who is outside her home repairing a window and gives her an envelope that

[1] "Toista ovat seinän takaa kuullut keskustelut, toista ovat itseään tutkijoiksi kutsuvien miesten kirjoittamat teokset, joissa pohjoisen alkuperäiskansoja kuvattiin moraalittomiksi, jälkeenjääneiksi, kitukasvuisiksi ja suurikalloisiksi, sellaisiksi, joita voisi villieläinnäyttelyyn vietynä kuulla kauan sitten kadonneeksi renkaaksi ihmisen ja apinan välillä."

contains two photos of Jon. The wrongs that the institutions of the state have done in history cannot be repaired by individuals. For instance, the marriage between Jon's biological parents ended after they lost their baby 33 years ago and that past cannot be changed yet the characters can still learn the truth of what happened and reveal it to those involved. Thus, some closure can be attained.

In a sense, the novel portrays a quest for truth on two fronts, the history of glaciers and of assimilation politics. The fictional characters are able to gain information of what has happened in both areas via systematic study. For the readers, the novel offers a literary view to the traumatic history of assimilation politics, as well as to the consequences of climate change. The emotions of characters make sense of how the historical events affect human communities and individual lives. By focusing on portraying indigenous minorities, the novel also offers an experiential way of imagining their lives, even if some of the aspects, such as the social meaning of the traditional Sámi coat that Unni's father takes to the attic, are not explicated. The novel imagines the North and the emotions of the fictive characters that range from deep love for the North to solastalgia and to the varied emotions related to assimilation politics.

The novel's discussion of adoption tends to lean on emphasizing the biological rather than the social aspects, which is also understandable considering that the novel portrays cultural genocide in which children are taken from their loving parents without consent and with the help of death and birth certificates fabricated by the state authorities. However, the novel does not portray all racialised people as saintly and others as evil in a tendentious manner but offers a more balanced representation of individuals making moral choices in their lives. Especially Jon's adoptive mother Helen is a central character in uncovering the traumatic history and finding the concealed truth about Jon's birth and adoption.

Maa joka ei koskaan sula is dedicated to the North, *pohjoiselle*. In many ways it focuses on portraying and empathising with the life and history of circumpolar peoples. In contrast to *Korpisoturi* and *Lupaus*, Markkula's novel is not oriented towards imagining possible near futures but rather reappraising the past. As such, it can be considered as part of the twenty-first century Finnish trend of historical novels by mostly female writers that reappraise twentieth-century history from new perspectives and treat collective traumas by offering an experiential view to the events (see and cf., Korhonen 2013, 271). Such works include *Käsky* [Command] (2003) by Leena Lander; *Puhdistus* (2008, transl. *Purge* 2010) and *Kun kyyhkyset katosivat* (2012, transl. *When the Doves Disappeared* 2015) by Sofi Oksanen; *Kätilö* (2011, transl. *The Midwife* 2016) and *Rose on poissa* [Rose is Gone] (2018) by Katja Kettu, and *Margarita* (2020) by Anni Kytömäki. Especially Kettu's *Rose on poissa* can be mentioned here, since the novel focuses on retelling the recent history of native Americans from a critical perspective, also offering literary portrayals of the many kinds of violence native American children experienced in boarding schools. Markkula also depicts the violence that Jon's biological parents experienced as indigenous children in a boarding school. Both Kettu

and Markkula make visible the violent treatment, even cultural genocide, of indigenous people in certain Western nation states.

Maa joka ei koskaan sula portrays fictional events that take place between 1962 and 2003. However, climate change began to occur as a theme in Finnish literature mainly after the publication of Risto Isomäki's novel *Sarasvatin hiekkaa* in 2005 and environmental emotions triggered by it have become an object of interest in Finnish novels only in the 2010s; *Lupaus* is possibly the first novel that focused on the psychological consequences of climate change. Markkula's novel may portray past decades but its poetics and themes are typical of its time of publication, 2021.

Conclusion

Hopefully, this analysis has shown that environmental emotions are an important aspect of the 21st-century Finnish novels analysed here. Ecological themes have been a trend in literature of the new millennium and Finnish literature has also begun to imagine future worlds and the experiences of individuals that live in ecologically declining environments. This creates new literary emotions in Finnish literature, most of them negative and in desperate need of emotion management. Nature still offers emotional refuge for some of the characters but some resort to new, posthuman forms of spirituality. Some experience psychotic episodes that could have been perceived as Arctic hysteria by previous generations; in this case, the trigger is not the Northern climate as such but the unpredictably changing local and global climate and environment. What is noteworthy in the analysed novels is that they also pay special attention to how environmental change may affect individuals in different social positions, such as a mother, or a member of an indigenous group.

Thus, the novels imagine a diversity of possible new environmental emotions and participate in mapping the psychological consequences of negative environmental change. The outdated concept of hysteria is being given an updated eco-psychological interpretation in the novels.

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Abstract

Arctic Hysteria and Other Strange Northern Emotions

Case Studies in Finnish Literature

Edited by Riikka Rossi, Sarianna Kankkunen and Elise Nykänen

Arctic Hysteria and Other Strange Northern Emotions: Case Studies in Finnish Literature opens a new perspective on the thriving area of research on the imagined North by studying emotions in the light of case studies in Finnish literature. The volume addresses the cultural history of Arctic hysteria and maps other strange emotions depicted and evoked in literature of the Finnish North. The volume comprises seven case studies which range from the works of internationally renowned authors, such as Rosa Liksom, Emmi Itäranta and Tove Jansson, to the affectively controversial and provocative writings of Timo K. Mukka, Marko Tapio and Pentti Linkola. Drawing from the study of the imagined North and theories and tools in the study of literature and emotions, the analyses show how such moods as melancholia, ecstasy or a

peculiar sense of November are generated in texts and how literary emotions entangle with the Northern environment they depict. By focusing on the imagined North in Finnish modernism and contemporary literature, the authors offer original views on experiences of late modernity merging with the changing Northern environment in the age of the Anthropocene.

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