They Do Things Differently There

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Essays on Cultural History

Edited by

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Cultural History — Kulttuurihistoria 9
Turku, Finland

Published by
k&h-kustannus
Cultural History
University of Turku
20014 TURKU
FINLAND

http://www.culturalhistory.net

ISBN 978-951-29-4656-3
ISSN 1458-1949

Cover Photo by Hannu Salmi
Cover Design by Henri Terho
Typeset by Harri Kiiskinen
Printed in Finland by Uniprint Turku

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Preface

The articles appearing in this collection originated in a book called *Kulttuurihistoriallinen katse*[1]. In that book, the authors discussed the principles of cultural history, not confining themselves to the obvious question 'What is cultural history?', but moving beyond it to investigate both the premises and the results of cultural history. How did cultural history to come into existence? How does it look at its objects? As such, the book was a continuation of the introspective process at the Department of Cultural History, the previous expression of which was the book *Kulttuurihistoria. Johdatus tutkimukseen*[2].

This introspection is a consequence of the strong anti-dogmatic traditions of the Department, in which each researcher is encouraged to formulate his/her own answers to the question 'What is cultural history and how it should be conducted?' Unsurprisingly, such a question has no single answer. Research fields – be they popular culture, spatial practices, or constructions of identity – carry their own jargon and conceptual categories, the nuanced expressions of which often escape those not well versed in them; and research traditions regarding different eras and geographical locations, be they sixteenth century England, nineteenth century Finland, classical antiquity, or the American south-west, carry with them their own grand narratives that need to be appropriated, challenged, contested – or rewritten. Therefore, 'What is cultural history, and how it should be

1 'The Gaze of Cultural History', edited by Heli Rantala and Sakari Ollitervo, Turku, k&h, 2010.

2 'Cultural History. Introduction to the study', Immonen & Leskelä-Kärki, Helsinki, SKR, 2001.

conducted' is a question that receives different answers according to the context in which the researcher is working. Cultural history is different for someone who is studying gendered constructions of identity in sixteenth century Prussia as compared with someone studying the everyday spatial practices in a South American metropolis of 21st century. And yet, each of these researchers will recognise the 'cultural history' in the works of the other.

It is perhaps because of this introspective process that it was decided that an international version of the book should also be produced, not so much to impress on others our own view of cultural history, but more in order to invite others to take part in these discussions. The authors of the original book were invited to express their interest in preparing an English-language version of their article. An anonymous board of referees then helped the editors to choose a selection of essays that should be included in the final book; my thanks go to the members of that board who took on themselves the thankless task of choosing which of the excellent contributions to leave out and which should be included. At this point, Prof. Bruce Johnson was invited to take part in the editing process. The individual essays were then submitted to further peer review, the results of which are seen in the eight articles appearing in this book. Consequently, this is not the same book as the the one edited by Heli Rantala and Sakari Ollitervo but nonetheless it would not exist without its Finnish-language predecessor. This collection of essays did not emerge out of thin air, but from a 'point of convergence' which was provided by the excellent editorial work on the original articles. Our grateful thanks to Rantala and Ollitervo for their work.

Without Bruce Johnson, this book would be much less of a book than it is. His experience, vision and enthusiasm set the standard for book production very high, and I feel privileged to have been a part of that production process. Thank You, Bruce, for everything!

Harri Kiiskinen

List of Contributors

Mervi Autti (PhD) is working now at the Unit for Gender Studies, University of Lapland, Rovaniemi. Her doctoral thesis on art 'Women on their Own: Single Female Photographers of Rovaniemi at the Beginning of the 1900s' is multidisciplinary and interdisciplinary. She has developed a special method of historiography that utilizes expressions of art – historical documentaries and photographic exhibitions. She has published several articles on the topic of microhistorical study of female photographers. Her interdisciplinary approach has its background in her previous profession as a photographer.

Ritva Hapuli (PhD) is docent in Cultural History. She acted as the supervisor in the project *A Pen of One's Own – Cultural History of Women's Writing, 1880-1950*, funded by The Finnish Academy, 2001-2005. The project concentrated on the spiritual and material conditions of women writers, concerning their private and published materials. Her own studies deal with Finnish female travel writers and theirs texts: *Ulkomailla* (*Abroad. The World between the two World Wars Seen by the Finnish Female Travellers*, 2003) and *Matkalla kotona* (*Study on the Writer and Translator Kyllikki Villa's Travel Diaries*, 2008). Her most resent research interests focus on questions what kind of textual strategies (travel) writers use to represent their presence and roles as eyewitnesses even at the most terrible actions against other people. What are ethical consequences of these descriptions; or are there any?

Bruce Johnson formerly a Professor in English, is now Adjunct Professor, Contemporary Music Studies, Macquarie University Sydney; Honorary Professor, Music, University of Glasgow; Visiting Professor, Cultural History, University of Turku. His current research lies in acoustic cultural history and the role of sound in the emergence of modernity. A jazz musician, broadcaster, record producer and arts policy advisor, he was prime mover in the establishment of the Australian Jazz Archive, and is co-founder of the International Institute for Popular Culture based in Turku. His publications include *The Oxford Companion to Australian Jazz*, and most recently (with Martin Cloonan) *Dark Side of the Tune: Popular Music and Violence* (2008), and an edited collection *Earogenous Zones: Sound, Sexuality and Cinema* (2010).

Marjo Kaartinen (Ph.D.) is professor of cultural history at the University of Turku. She has published especially on English early modern cultural history. She has won an award for her work against racism, and was the Scholar of the Year in Finland in 2006. Her books include *Religious Life and English Culture in the Reformation* (Palgrave 2002). She has also written on women's history, and racism in Finland. Her current projects include the history of childhood and emotions, friendship, and the history of the body on which her monograph *Cancer in the Breast. The Cultural History of an Eighteenth-Century Illness* will soon be published.

Kari Kallioniemi (PhD) is docent of cultural history and lecturer in Cultural History, University of Turku. He has specialised on the history of popular culture, and is currently writing a book on the history of stardom.

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on as a research group within the International Institute for Popular Culture, http://iipc.utu.fi/. His PhD work-in-progress is about the stadium rock stage design, stardom and aesthetics. During 2006 he spent six months as a Research Fellow in Institute of Popular Music, University of Liverpool, UK. He has written articles and edited several books on cultural history, popular music studies, and cultural integration, and is the editor of IIPC Online Series. He is based to Department of Cultural History, University of Turku. Visit his homepage at http://users.utu.fi/kierka/.

Harri Kiiskinen (MA) is doctoral student in cultural history, University of Turku. He is preparing his PhD-dissertation in the production and commerce of pottery in the area of Roman Etruria during the first centuries CE. His research interest include GIS and quantitative methods in cultural history, practices of trade and commerce, and economic activities in general.

Maarit Leskelä-Kärki (PhD) works at the moment as a post-doctoral researcher at Turku Institute for Advanced Studies at the University of Turku. She is a cultural historian, and her thesis in 2006 dealt with the literary lives of three Krohn sisters. Her main research areas focus on the history of women's writing, gender history, autobiographical sources and methodological questions concerning life-writing research. Currently, she works with women's biographical tradition in Finland between 1890 and 1980. Besides her thesis, she has edited several books and published articles in international and domestic journals and anthologies. Her most recent articles in English are 'Songs of comfort and lamentation. Autobiographical connections in the texts of ageing Aino Kallas' (in *Aino Kallas. Negotiating with modernity*, SKS 2011) and 'Narrating life-stories in-between the fictional and the autobiographical' (*Qualitative Research*, 2008/8).

Asko Nivala (MA) is doctoral student in Cultural history, University of Turku. He received his MA degree in 2007. His research focuses on the German early Romanticism and especially on Friedrich Schlegel, who was one of the most famous members of Jena Romanticism movement in the 1790s. In his study, Nivala disentangles

cultural implications behind the early Romantic philosophy of history. One of his essential research methods is the metaphorological analysis of philosophical concepts. His PhD-research is funded by Finnish Cultural Foundation. His other research interests include the philosophy of history, the German Enlightenment and the recent discussion on political theology. Besides his academic work, Nivala is also an internationally acknowledged performance artist as a member of Finnish performance group MRCVE.

Heli Rantala (MA) works at the Department of Cultural History at the University of Turku as a coordinator and researcher. Her research interests include 19th century conceptions of culture in Finnish discourse. She is finalising her doctoral thesis on Johan Wilhelm Snellman's historical thinking.

Marja Tuominen is Professor of Cultural History at the University of Lapland in Rovaniemi, Finland. Her research interests range from post-war counter culture movements and generational dynamics and cultural history of the Byzantine sacred iconography to the cultural history of Northern societies. Her methodological approach is to be found in the field of psycho history, history of mentalities and micro history. As researcher and teacher at the University of Lapland she has focused on Northern issues and promoted study and research of Northern cultural history. She has been a director of research projects in the field of Northern identities and mentalities and Northern micro history and the interaction of art and research. She is author and editor of several books and articles on the cultural history of Northern Finland and Barents area.

Kirsi Tuohela (PhD) works as Postdoctoral Research Fellow in Cultural History at the University of Turku. Her current research project investigates autobiographical accounts of mental illness in the modernizing Finland, 1850-1950. Her doctoral thesis examined the lived and narrated melancholia of three women writer's of late nineteenth century Scandinavia using autobiographical material like letters, diaries and auto/biographical fiction.

Introduction

Bruce Johnson

Most readers will recognise the source of the title we have assigned to this collection as being the second half of the opening sentence of L.P. Hartley's 1953 novel *The Go-Between*:

> The past is a foreign country; they do things differently there.[1]

In view of the explicit reference to 'the past' in the opening, why choose the lesser known second half as our title? The most pragmatic reason is that the first half has already been appropriated as the title of more than one study in the field. The second half of the sentence is therefore an allusion to both the novel and an acknowledgement of those predecessors in the field of cultural history, reminding us that the past is indeed heard as distant echoes of both itself, and of those who have engaged with it as historians. The past can never directly represent itself to us, but, in the words of another writer seeking illumination, is perceived as 'through a glass darkly'. There is a further appeal in that second half of the sentence. It invokes action and process – 'doing things' – as opposed to the stasis of 'is a foreign country'. Late twentieth century developments in historiography have familiarised us with the proposition that the past is not fixed, but is in process through the mediations of historians, a constant 'doing things differently'. To that extent, Hartley's use of the present tense in this introductory sentence has an elliptical appropriateness. The past is present, in two senses: that our history never leaves us, never relinquishes its hold over our sense of what is possible now and in the future, and it is present

1 Hartley 1975, 7.

in the sense that the past is still in flux through acts of memory: it has not finished its 'doing'.

But our allusion to Hartley's novel has an aptness that goes well beyond its opening sentence. Along with *Anna Karenina* and *Moby Dick*, the opening lines of *The Go-Between* are familiar to a great many who have never read the work they introduce. Yet if we remind ourselves of what this novel is about, we find it has an extraordinary resonance with the role of the cultural historian. The whole novel invites analysis as a literary embodiment of the task of the cultural historian: the problems and revelations, the cryptic messages, the complex narratological relationships between the present and the past. Indeed, although the novel's narrator Leo does not know who Sir Thomas Browne is, Hartley makes pointed reference to that great seventeenth century reader of the past (Hartley 1975:48), who was in so many ways a fore-runner of the micro-cultural historian. Peter Burke spoke of one of the abiding problems in cultural history:

> Why is it that individuals from different cultures often find communication difficult? Why does one individual or group find absurd what another takes for granted? How is it possible to translate every word in a text from an alien (or even a half-alien) culture, yet to have difficulty in understanding the text?[2]

At the most obvious level as disclosed in its title, the novel describes exactly what a cultural historian is: a go-between, a mediator between mentalities that are more or less enigmatic, yet in which are inscribed various forms of coherence. Like Leo, the cultural historian is mediating texts and practices which are entirely meaningful on one side, meaningless on the other. Leo's reflections on the past, on the messages he carried and how that episode relates to the present, are very like the mental processes of the cultural historian, who will surely recognise the following ambivalent experience: 'I did, however, impose on my errands to and fro a meaning of my own – several meanings indeed – for I could not find one that satisfied me.'[3] At one point a particularly theatrical interpretation of the evidence suggests itself.

> This, being the most sensational, was also my preferred solution to the problem. But it did not really satisfy me … and it struck me as inadequate as the others. … Behind my instinctive wish to find an imaginatively

2 Burke 1997, 165.

3 Hartley 1975, 103.

> satisfying explanation, there lurked a sneaking curiosity … to find the real one. … I suspected that if I found out the real reason I should be disappointed. And so it proved: I was.[4]

The whole narratological scheme of Hartley's novel has instructive parallels with the task of the contributors to this collection. Its narrator may in fact be regarded himself as a cultural historian: the self in the present seeking a dialogue with a past that made him, through its everyday tokens, its quotidian archives haphazardly stored in a box. The opening pages could be taken as a description of the materials of the cultural historian and the problems they present - an assorted collection of mementoes that include papers, letters, photographic negatives and a diary. In this collection of essays we find cultural historians engaging with these kinds of material embodiments of the past and its meanings. These objects have acquired an auratic resonance in their own right: photographs through which the narrator seeks to reconstruct his own partly forgotten past, and the diary, meaningful both as an object and for what may have been written in it, all evoking an epoch, reawakening identities now long lost or dormant. Leo is fascinated by the diary's liminal existence, somewhere between public and private:

> My attitude to the diary was twofold and contradictory: I was intensely proud of it and wanted everybody to see it and what I had written in it, and at the same time I had an instinct for secrecy and wanted nobody to see it.[5]

And, like many of our cultural historians in this collection, he recognises the problem of veracity in such liminal documents as letters, photographs and diaries which seem to promise truth and candour but which are also crafted and edited for an audience, as in his own letters from school to his parents.[6] Like Leo, our contributors fossick through remnants of the lives of ordinary people, seeking to make sense of them, inviting them to speak to us in the twenty-first century. And, again like Leo, they have to coax them into utterance, prepared to be misled, deceived, or enlightened with a sudden radiant gestalt.

But while these enquiries fall into the general category of cultural history, they are conducted within an instructively distinctive tradition. These essays emanate from the Department of Cultural History at the University

4 Hartley 1975, 104.
5 Hartley 1975, 11.
6 Hartley 1975, 95.

of Turku in Finland, and there are also two articles from its partner department at the University of Lapland. It is appropriate to provide a sketch of that context, since Finnish intellectual culture is so little known in anglophone and much European scholarship, and even within the Nordic region it is distinctive. The main reason for this is that, in the words of distinguished Finnish historian Hannu Salmi, 'Finnish historical research has long remained behind the language barrier'.[7] This is particularly so for Finnish cultural discourse, which has been closely linked to the rise of the Finnish language as a vehicle of Finnish identity. As a linguistic 'outsider' I can say that to me at least the Finnish language, spoken by a population of fewer than five and a half million people (as of 2009), is fiendishly difficult. It is part of a language group, Finno-Ugric, spoken by only two other countries, Estonia and Hungary, as well as the Saami language spoken in Lapland, none of which is of itself comprehensible to Finnish. Put simply, only five and a half million people in the world can be assumed to have a direct knowledge of Finnish cultural traditions.

It will therefore come as something of a surprise to most readers that Finnish cultural historiography is highly distinctive in a number of ways, including that it has the oldest genealogy in the Nordic region, and created some of the world's earliest university chairs in the field. In this volume, Heli Rantala has provided a detailed account of the history of Finnish cultural discourse. As her account as well as Salmi's indicate, there are a number of reasons for which cultural history has enjoyed such a strong and longstanding presence in Finland. Throughout written history Finland had been a province of Sweden. But then in 1809 it became part of the Russian Empire, thus throwing into new relief the question of a separate Finnish identity. This, however, could not be differentiated in political terms, by which the country was simply identified as part of Russia. Under such conditions, it was culture, including language, literature and local history, that provided a site for the definition of national identity. Again, using

7 The phrase is taken from Salmi's essay 'Finnish Traditions of Cultural History' (Salmi 2010). The following account of Finnish cultural historiography and of the Department of Cultural History, University of Turku, is based primarily on this and a later and more fully developed essay, 'Traditions of Cultural History in Finland 1900–2000' (Salmi 2011), and I wish to express my gratitude to its author for providing me with an as yet unpublished copy of each.

Salmi's terms, the history of the people provided a narrative of nation that was occluded by the history of the state (Salmi 2011). The attentiveness to cultural history was also strengthened by the fact that German thinkers, among whom notions of 'culture' were first debated in Europe (Burke 2008:17-18), exercised a strong influence on Finnish intellectuals, and particularly that of the culturally-oriented Johann Gottfried Herder and, later, Karl Lamprecht whose work was discussed in the Finnish academic history journal *Historiallinen Aikakauskirja*, inaugurated in 1903.

In the early twentieth century, Finnish historians Gunnar Suolahti and U.L. Lehtonen, were both influenced by Lamprecht in their emphasis on what we might today refer to as 'mentalités', not 'a thing or a force, but rather … the relation between beliefs, which is what makes them into a system'.[8] Suolahti initiated a four volume *Suomen Kultturihistoria* (*A Cultural History of Finland*) in 1933, the year of his death, and the work was completed by his students, some of whom went on to become major scholars in the field in the 1960s and 1970s. The understanding of culture as expressed in the preface is a strikingly early precursor to the formulations of British cultural historians such as Raymond Williams decades later. It embraced 'the different phenomena of both material and spiritual life from business and trade and social conditions, from the everyday life of lower and upper classes to the highest expressions of the human mind, art, science and religion'.[9] This is an arrestingly early prefiguration of the 'anthropological' turn in cultural history, which is more usually associated with the 'New Cultural History' from the 1960s.[10]

The University of Turku has played a significant role in the academic institutionalisation of cultural history. Founded in 1920 as the city's Finnish speaking university (the other, Åbo Akademi, is Swedish speaking), its interest in cultural history was becoming formalised throughout the 1960s, simultaneously with the expansion of the Finnish university system to accommodate the baby boomers. Part of this expansion was reflected in a change to the profile of history departments, which had traditionally held two chairs, one in General History and one in Finnish History.

8 Burke 1997, 170.

9 Cited Salmi 2010.

10 See for example Burke 2008, 32.

Now, new chairs were being established in such fields as Economic and Contemporary History and the History of Science and Ideas. At the University of Turku the push was towards Cultural History, for which both a Department and a chair were created in 1972, the latter filled in 1978 by Veikko Litzen, who articulated his conception of culture as 'comprised by those solutions and ways of action that people of the past have developed as answers to the challenges from their environment (social environment included). These habitual reactions, patterns of the answers as well as the answers themselves – both tangible and intangible – create the whole that is called culture'.[11]

When Litzen was appointed Director of Institutum Romanum Finlandiae, the Finnish Institute in Rome in 1983, his successor Keijo Virtanen took a particular interest in popular culture, continuing to apply a broad and generous understanding of the more general field, which he defined as 'those plans, habits and deeds, through which people of the past formed their relationship with their lives and through which they communicated with their environment'.[12] Virtanen presided over the rapid growth of the Department, which was accompanied by a continuing interest in defining its own field of enquiry, in such important books as his *Kultturihistoria: Tie Kokonaisvaltaiseen Historiaan* (*Cultural History: Towards a Comprehensive Understanding of History*) in 1987, and *Mitä Kulttuurihistoria On?* (*What is Cultural History?*), 1981, edited by Kari Immonen, who would succeed Virtanen on the latter's appointment as Rector (Vice Chancellor) of the University in 1997, which position the latter still holds as I write. Immonen also developed further the conceptualisation of the discipline in his influential 1996 study *Historian Läsnäolo* (*The Presence of the Past*). In 2006 Immonen was succeeded by Hannu Salmi who also served as the Head of the whole School of History (comprising the Departments of General, Finnish and Cultural History), until the end of 2009.[13] During this period, the Department of Cultural History became increasingly

11 Cited Salmi 2011.

12 Cited Salmi 2011.

13 The narratives by Salmi which I have cited modestly cease at this point in the Department's history, though he presents the statistical graphs from which I extrapolate information below. What now follows in this account is based on informal discussions and on my own experience of the Department since the early 1990s.

internationalised in a range of ways, at both student and staff levels (the latter through staff exchanges and visiting fellowships, involving links with Glasgow, Brighton, Siegen, Cracow, Mainz and Sydney). It has developed Nordic and European research projects and pre-existing distance learning programmes in collaboration with other departments, and staff are increasingly publishing in languages other than Finnish (see for example http://www.hum.utu.fi/oppiaineet/kulttuurihistoria/en/publications/) There is also a Department of Cultural History at the University of Lapland in Rovaniemi, as mentioned by Marja Tuominen in her contribution to this collection. Originally, this was an open university degree, but it developed into a unit of its own. Cultural history started there in 1996, and although they do not have a Masters degree, students can pursue basic studies and intermediate studies in the field. They also have PhD students, one of whom, Mervi Autti who was awarded her doctorate there in 2009, is represented in this collection. The Department's Professor, Marja Tuominen, took her doctorate in 1991 at the University of Turku's Department of Cultural History, on Finnish counter-culture of the 1960s.

With Bruce Johnson, Hannu Salmi co-founded, and is now Director of, the International Institute for Popular Culture which was formally inaugurated in 2006, involving partnerships with a number of Finnish universities and over twenty universities in Africa, Asia, Australia, Canada, Europe/UK/Scandinavia, Israel and the US. Salmi also became the founding Chair (2008-2011) of the International Society for Cultural History. From the beginning of 2010 major changes in the Finnish university system manifested themselves at the University of Turku in the merging of four Schools and it is too early in this restructuring process to form an adequate assessment of its impact on the development of cultural history either locally or nationally.

The success and growth of the Department can be qualitatively illustrated through its programme completion figures. From no more than five MA theses per year up to the mid-1980s, from 1999 the annual figure never dropped below twenty, with a peak of forty-one in 2009. Similarly for completed doctorates. Over the decade 1988-1997, the total number of doctorates awarded was around five; over the following decade the cumulative total rose to close to thirty-five, about as many as Finnish History, Art History and Political History combined over the same period.

Of course, a doctoral dissertation is the outcome of many years' work and therefore a reflection of cumulative stewardship by many successive Heads of Department. In addition, the increased output also reflects a significant increase in available research funding from the late 1999, following the severe economic depression. Even so, year by year, in comparison with other cognate disciplines and in other Finnish universities, Cultural History at the University of Turku has been one of the most productive history departments in Finland since the 1990s. There have been two periods of dramatic expansion in cultural historiography in Finland: the 1930s/1940s, and again from the 1990s. In a country which has in many respects led the way in the discipline, the Department of Cultural History at the University of Turku has been a transforming influence from the late twentieth century.

One of the purposes of this collection is to exemplify the range of research that is conducted in that Department. There is a distinctiveness in Finnish historiography that lies deeper than its historical trajectory, and which goes to its cultural and linguistic bedrock. This collection may therefore be regarded as both part of the international discourse of cultural history but contributing in a way that reflects what is distinctive in the field in Finnish scholarship. These essays were first published in Finnish and therefore intended for finnophones, part of the same linguistic 'interpretive community' as the authors. As we have attempted to translate these essays into English for an international audience, we have become acutely conscious of one of the contentious issues in cultural history itself: how to find a balance between full intelligibility for an international readership and respect for the integrity of the source culture. This is not something so straightforward as specific words which do not have an English equivalent. As one of the few Finno-Ugric languages, Finnish manifests certain distinctive cultural sensitivities which do not always resonate with the scholarly *lingua franca*.

The distinctiveness of Finnish cultural history is embedded in the language itself, ranging from the question of whether punctuation is 'oral' (based on breathing) or 'written' (based on grammar), to the kinds of tropes deployed for states of knowledge and feeling. To take just one example that strikes me as a native English speaker, I find Finnish more pervasively attuned to sonicity than English. Peter Burke discusses the

importance of metaphor in constructing communities and their discourses (179-82). I would add to his account a reference to the scopic metaphor for authoritative knowledge and the community of belief that deeply pervades the English language, from the 'perspectives', 'speculations', 'reflections', 'points of view' and 'insights' of great scientists and artists, to the demotic 'Nice to see you' and 'See you later' of everyday salutations. By contrast, in English auditory metaphors are attached to trivial forms of knowledge and suspect and unreliable groups within a community – 'gossip', 'scolding', 'nagging', 'lip service', 'Chinese whispers'[14]. In Finnish, however, a standard greeting 'Mitä kuuluu' means literally 'What do you hear?' and is related to the word 'to belong': 'kuulua': those who hear the same thing, community defined through audition. In nearly every aspect of Finnish life, and most notably where it seems most richly invested by local traditions, I am struck by the respect shown for the auditory realm, as compared with anglophone cultures.

As cultural historians have increasingly recognised, representation does not simply reflect, it constructs reality.[15] Many of the essays in this collection are based on this 'constructivist' insight, and some of them in themselves self-reflexively and explicitly manifest the point that a community's cultural history is not just expressed through, but is in many ways constructed by its language. We become even more conscious of this in the process of translation. Walter Benjamin pointed out that 'a translation comes later than the original' (Benjamin 1970:78). An obvious enough observation, but some reflection leads to the argument that translation in itself, no matter what the topic, is therefore both an example of cultural history and a form of cultural historiography. When the translation is from a language as distinctive as Finnish, and is being deployed as a medium of essays in cultural history, the translator's problems are amplified. In practical terms what this means is that to produce the most fluent and seamless English, we would often have found it necessary to elide nuances within which the 'Finnishness' of these essays resides. To take the original essays 'all the way' to an English reader is impossible without expunging much of their own cultural identity and specificity. Benjamin, again,

14 See further Johnson and Cloonan 2008, 40-47.

15 Burke 2008, 77.

makes a parallel point: 'Fidelity in the translation of individual words can almost never fully reproduce the meaning they have in the original'.[16]

It is a truism that all translations are compromises. It is important to have preserved something of a 'Finnish accent', rather than to carefully expunge it according to some international standard. We have neither self-consciously cultivated that 'accent' but nor have we felt it desirable to suppress it at all costs. The outcome will therefore incorporate what might feel like some minor 'dissonances' which reflect both the anglophone reader's comfortable expectations of a familiar discourse, but which are also instructive reminders of the heterogeneity and specificity of local cultural histories and historiographies. Milan Kundera has recorded his irritation if he hears a translation of his work 'praised for its 'flow'', insisting that 'a translator unafraid of odd-sounding language will not only render the author's style and thinking more accurately but also enrich the target language'.[17] The editorial process has included close, prolonged and detailed consultation with each author, and when the anglophone reader finds what feels like an occasional stylistic lurch, it is almost certainly purposeful. And it is no bad thing, incidentally, to have one's expectations of what should be there disrupted. As Francis Bacon and later the Royal Society understood (and much recent literary theory rebarbatively exemplifies), established stylistic fluencies and rhetorical structures are often barriers to new insights.

The more neatly these essays fit established expectations of how culture is discussed, the more we may be reasonably regarded as having allowed a dominant anglophone discourse to colonise and repress local identity, and in so doing, to obstruct potentially new ways of perceiving culture. As Raymond Williams famously observed on separate occasions, culture is 'ordinary', yet the meaning of the word itself is one of the most complex in the English language. In any one language, the term is both problematic yet at the same time refracts 'ordinariness' in a way that must necessarily be local – or it would no longer be 'ordinary'. Attempting to conduct cultural discussion across cultures (temporally and spatially) is inevitably a fraught affair. In her essay in this volume, Heli Rantala writes:

16 Benjamin 1970, 78.
17 Star 2002, 492.

> Conceptual models are however historically specific. The distance between the nineteenth century writer and the present reader cannot be ignored. In some cases we have to translate the terms so that they become understandable. For example 'the spirit of the nation' sounds odd to our ears without the historical context and perhaps some kind of translation to a modern idiom. The danger is, however, that when recognizing something familiar from the past, we begin to translate it into our terms to the extent that the actors of the past would no longer recognise themselves in our interpretations.

Thus, far from being irritations to be edited out to produce a more facile Esperanto of cultural history, it is precisely these small discursive displacements that assure us that we have done something to preserve the distinctiveness of a local cultural discourse. All these essays were originally written and published in Finnish. The most testing aspect of translation them into English has been finding a compromise between the cosmopolitan and the local: producing English prose that works internationally, but without surrendering those markers of locality without which the reader would learn little or nothing about what is distinctive in Finnish cultural scholarship.

A brief foreshadowing of the essays that follow will signal some of these potential insights and also illustrate the range of approaches to cultural history represented in this collection. Heli Rantala's essay exemplifies one of two categories we have defined for this collection, that is, broadly speaking, studies that are as much about cultural historiography as about cultural history – not simply 'the story', but how the story is told. Rantala's survey of the history of cultural discourse in Finland argues that in a country very much under the influence of German approaches to historiography and cultural discourse, the French influence has been overlooked, suggesting the need for a significant reconfiguration of our understanding of Finnish historical orientations. As just discussed, ways of writing cultural history are heterogeneous and therefore mutually illuminating, especially in relation to the tropes that dominate the discourse in different times and places. As historians such as Hayden White have argued at length, these metaphors are themselves shaping principles in the way history and culture are conceived.[18]

18 Eg, White 1973, passim.

The point is taken up by Asko Nivala in his overview of dominant tropes in the work of influential theorist of German Romanticism Friedrich Schlegel. Modelling the modern epoch in chemical rather than mechanistic terms, Schegel's work illustrates the point that 'the cultural system of metaphors can reveal how a particular culture interpreted and made meaningful its reality by drawing analogies between different things'. This echoes the comment made above about the pervasiveness of scopic metaphors in English, and Nivala recognises that these tropes can 'colonise' the past in a misleading way. I would argue that the paradox of our scopism (mis)constructing the multi-sensuous Italian Renaissance as a primarily visual phenomenon, finds an echo in Nivala's observation that, for example, 'Herder was self-contradictory, in that while he believed one should always evaluate different eras according to their own criteria, at the same time he criticized the modern epoch by using organic criteria foreign to it'. Nivala's larger argument is to do with historiographical discourse in general:

> History cannot present human actions, conceptions, experiences and feelings using a language that is purified from sensory content and metaphors. In this respect, cultural history has two aims when studying the age of Romanticism. First, the different metaphors that Romantics used are a topic of research for cultural history. Second, the Romantic conception of metaphors as a necessary component in the study of history offers something instructive for the consideration for contemporary scholars.

The way history is written is itself a necessary object of study, as it is implicated in, and an agent of, power relations, a point made very poignantly by Marja Tuominen in her analysis of the way Finnish cultural history has in many ways written Lapland out of the national discourse, or at the very least helped to create and perpetuate a centre/margins model of nation which represents a form of internal colonialism. While her subject is the particular location of Lapland within the Finnish imaginary, it raises much larger issues, as in the transition from specific to general in her comment:

> What kind of (hidden) colonialism does the tourism industry of Lapland produce and how could its strategies be deconstructed through research? And on the other hand, how effectively does, for example, postcolonial and orientalist discourse help us understand and conceptualise the encounters,

> oppression and survival strategies of the ethnic and social groups of the Arctic region? What generally is or should be the role of theory in interpreting the past and present experiences of living in the world and encountering regional and local polyphonic and multiethnic communities that scarcely conform to theoretical models that were once considered to be universal?

Some of these essays therefore point towards new genealogies of cultural historiography. The surprise that anglophone readers are likely to experience on discovering that in Finland the field was developing a discourse as early as the nineteenth century is related to the way ownership of cultural history has often been taken over by the English cultural studies movement of the late twentieth century, as documented by Kari Kallioniemi and Kimi Kärki in this volume. Their study is both a survey of that movement, yet also an implicit critique, locating interstices in the established narrative within which there reside lacunae and anomalies that have obscured the origins of British cultural studies. As Kallioniemi and Kärki put it,

> A question hanging over this article is: what can the cultural studies researcher … do at the beginning of the new millennium to return to the roots of that research in social justice agendas, in the face of the apparent triumph of a neo-liberalism that consumes and recuperates all manifestations of critique, whether in everyday 'popular' social practices or in academic discourse? This will raise the question of the relationship between cultural history and cultural studies.

They identify an eagerness to locate the origins of Anglo/US cultural history (and particularly popular culture) in the work of Raymond Williams and Richard Hoggart, and as a reaction against the approach of F.R. Leavis. In citing the under-recognised work of Tom Steele, however, the authors point us towards a longer and more complex genealogy than is commonly recognised. And on the demonisation of Leavis by late twentieth century 'culturalist' scholars, it is also worth noting proposals which Leavis himself made for a projected (but aborted) BBC radio series that are preserved in the BBC Written Archives. He refers to a 'recent change in critical fashions'.[19] Among these he addresses the question of language: 'If there hadn't been that English Language there wouldn't have been Shakespeare. This point could be very effectively developed and illustrated – Cultural

19 Mackillop 1995, 234.

history and 'practical criticism' together. Noting the dearth of published work in the field, Leavis then goes on to discuss the importance of addressing the history of English popular culture.[20] This is Leavis, proposing a 'cultural history' and one which recognized 'popular culture', in 1940, nearly twenty years before Raymond Williams' *Culture and Society*, often held to represent the beginnings of British cultural history.

The other category of contributions which structures this collection may be described as essays in cultural history. The breadth which characterises what has become known as the New Cultural History since the late twentieth century[21], was already implicit in Finnish scholarship's pluralisation of the understanding of 'culture' as early as the work of Suolahti in the 1930s (see above). That tradition is reflected in various ways in the essays here, including in their attentiveness to material culture, the history of the body, of the senses and of the emotions. All three of the last-mentioned have a vivid presence in Marjo Kaartinen's examination of early modern breast cancer, exploring a possible connection with Julia Kristeva's concept of the abject as a potential analytical tool in the study of cultural history. The implications are far-reaching and multi-faceted, raising questions about how we conceive the relationship between the body and culture, between disease and gendered identity:

> Similarly, we can recognize the body's role as a focus of endless attempts of naturalization. Thus it is also as a cultural sign. In this case, the body as a cultural sign speaks of the culture in reversed terms. It is my belief that the breast-cancerous body defied attempts at naturalization. And if it were abject, in the end, the naturalization process would have been rejected because of the sheer horror of the disease. Could the body become, if not inhuman, then beyond the boundaries of gender identities? If bodily beauty can be seen extremely gendered in early modern culture, the abject could be seen as the opposite. Could we indeed think that abject might produce a state in which one's sex and even gender become invisible?

Illness of a different kind is also the subject of Kirsi Tuohela's study. Melancholia has been a significant thread in the history of pathologies, shifting its location back and forth between the body and the mind, and frequently

20 Mackillop 1995, 234–5.

21 See eg. Burke 2008, 32

coming briefly to rest at some liminal point between the two. As such, it has strong explanatory potential in attempts to trace the changing relationships between notions of culture and nature. Tuohela provides an opening overview of salient aspects of that history, as well as the historiography of the pathology, but then uses these as a context within which the nature of cultural history itself comes under scrutiny.

> The very idea of history involves changes over time, and instead of charting structures and solid definitions I find it important to analyse processes, changing patterns that can be slowed down for analysis and contextualization. After the linguistic turn and the growth of social and cultural constructionism I find it impossible to see language simply as a mirror of 'the real'. The role of language is more complex, both in the texts we read and the ones we produce. In creating the worlds that have gone, in composing historical narratives, we need to acknowledge this.

These comments reflect the general shift in the way historians address the representations of the past which constitute our primary data. This shift derives from a general questioning of the traditional idea of an objective reality, associated with modernism and modernity emerging in the arts, science and philosophy. A movement in linguistics - the study of one of our most complex forms of 'representation' - increasingly recognises that language itself cannot be regarded as simply a reflection of 'reality', but to a large extent constructs it. This 'constructivist' approach which characterises the New Cultural History[22] informs a number of the essays that follow. Mervi Autti, and the essay by Maarit Leskelä-Kärki and Ritva Hapuli, for example, are specifically interested in the way women represent themselves in personal documents like photographs, letters and diaries.

These repositories of cultural history are made more richly complex by their liminal locations on the border of public and private. In the 1920s the two Autti sisters, who are also professional photographers, produce photographs of themselves that are apparently personal mementoes. But in a place and time in which photograph albums are also placed in the entry area of a household for visitors to peruse, just who are imagined as the viewers of these images? What messages are they intended to convey

22 See for example Burke 2008, 77.

to the future – and to their own descendants - about for example the construction of gender?

> The basis of feminist analysis of women is to be aware of the politics of representations, including photographs. The way women are represented is remarkable both for their cultural image (how women are seen) and for their self-image (how they see themselves). The 'innocence' of album pictures can reveal what constitute propriety and decency. The power of photographs is that they can also *produce* the past. If photographs are emotionally intense, and they are repeatedly displayed, they can even change history.

Likewise, we tend to think of personal letters and diaries as private and therefore artless and entirely candid records of the past. But if, like the Autti sisters, the writers have professional aspirations in their fields, exactly what 'reality' are they seeking to create and for whom? These are some of the questions addressed by Maarit Leskelä-Kärki and Ritva Hapuli and, like Mervi Autti, focussing on Finnish case studies, with their own historical and cultural specificity:

> For us, the private texts of professional women writers have nevertheless become particularly interesting because of the shifting and contradictious borders between public and private writing. These kinds of texts can illuminate how women have negotiated their relationship with the public sphere at different historical times. The complexity of even such 'artless' forms of expression as a personal diary or letter – the constraining force of deeply internalised conventions in what is felt to be a spontaneous activity. For a researcher, it is challenging to analyse the boundaries between the personal and culturally learned. Particular expressions reveal what is held to be 'natural and normal' during a certain period of time. On the other hand, the researcher cannot be absolutely certain whether this is the case so she must consider the boundary between the public and private realms.

In the ways that all these essays explore their respective fields of enquiry, we believe that there are valuable lessons to be learned about cultural history in general, and in its specifically Finnish inflections.

* * *

Finally I thank all those who have helped to bring this collection into existence, including of course those who produced the original Finnish version, as summarised in the Preface. Above all, I wish to acknowledge

the sterling work of my colleague and co-editor, Harri Kiiskinen, who prepared that Preface, but who has also been working on this project since its Finnish inception, well before I became involved in the English version. Apart from various forms of input and advice to both me and the contributors throughout my own involvement, he has taken on the necessary but generally thankless task of checking and regularising all aspects of presentation format, all of this while also pursuing his own doctoral programme. Indeed, he generously relinquished his own contribution to the collection so that he could focus more fully on editorial work. Kiitos paljon, Harri.

We also wish to thank Hannu Salmi, Head of the Department of Cultural History during the preparation of this collection, for continuing advice on a range of matters, and information about the history of Finnish cultural history and of the Department itself. I personally also express my deep appreciation to all those who contributed essays to the project, above all for their forebearance upon discovering that work they believed they had completed for a Finnish version, was then opened up for further extensive attention by an anglophone editor with a great many difficult questions about the translation process. Your patience has been exemplary.

Others who have provided invaluable advice and assistance over a wide range of issues are:

Rainer Brömer, Michel Chaouli, Hartwig Frank, Marja Jalava, Margaretta Jolly, Veli-Pekka Lehtola, Ludger Müller-Wille, Justin O'Connor, Tutta Palin, Jennifer Radden, Leena-Maija Rossi, William Sewell, Liz Stanley, Tom Steele, Ludwig Stockinger, Gillian Swanson, Eva-Helen Ulvros, Kustaa Vilkuna. To all these, our thanks. If I have inadvertently omitted any name from this list, the oversight is mine alone, and my apologies.

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I

Essays in Cultural Historiography

On the origins of 'culture'*

Heli Rantala

> It is undeniable, that the newer Europe has been enchanted by its victorious civilization, it has diverged from the higher intellectual strand that laid the first foundations of its present culture; that its ambitions (interests) little by little were directed towards the economic benefits rather than to the real cultivation of the soul, to a harmonious development of the most beautiful tendencies of the humanity.[1]

These words were written by Johan Jakob Tengström[2], a Finnish, Swedish-speaking scholar working in the Academy of Turku. Published in 1818, it is the earliest example of a text by a Finnish scholar in which the concept of culture was extensively discussed.[3] How was 'culture' understood in nineteenth century Finland? In this article I will examine the meanings of 'culture' in Finnish scholarly discourse. I will begin with Tengström's text,

* I would like to thank those colleagues who provided input during the Publishing in English workshops led by Professor Bruce Johnson in the Department of Cultural History at the University of Turku. I'm also grateful to the anonymous referees who provided very useful suggestions to my article draft.

1 Tengström 1817–18, 101–102. Translation by the author. Original: 'Onekligt är äfven, att det nyare Europa förbländadt och intaget af sin öfverträffande civilisation, afvikit från den högre ideela rigtning, som lade första grunden till dess nuvarande cultur, att dess sträfvande småningom mer rigtades på merchantila och ekonomiska fördelar, än på verklig själsförädling, harmonisk utveckling af menskligheten skönaste anlag.'

2 1787–1858.

3 I have no knowledge of any earlier text in which the concept of culture was central. Latin texts are excluded from this study. Latin was an academic language but not a language of the wider public sphere.

then extend my survey to other texts from the first half of the century. My article seeks to illustrate how culture was conceptualized in Finland and how the meaning of it changed over just a few decades during the nineteenth century. After this conceptual history of culture I will examine how 'culture' was discussed in the context of historical thinking in the same period.[4] I argue that in nineteenth century Finland it was common to view history through cultural perspectives. This discourse also included explicit reference to the cultural history of a certain epoch or nation. The texts that I'm analyzing were written in Swedish, the language of the Finnish academic and cultural elite of that time.

The word 'culture' (*kultur* or *cultur* in Swedish language) was introduced in Finland in a newspaper in the early 1780s.[5] These early references no not include any wider discussion on the term. The word 'Kultur' was a newcomer not only in Finland but also in its place of origin in Germany. At that time the concept of culture already had a long history, having its origin in classical Rome and the Latin word 'cultura'.[6] As an independent and abstract noun, that is, as a modern concept, it became common in the second half of the eighteenth century. The formation of the modern concept of culture has been viewed as a multidimensional process.[7] First, there has been an extension from the individual level to the collective level. Today we understand culture as a social concept. In the eighteenth century 'culture' could refer to the abilities of an individual.[8] Second, there has been a shift from the location of culture in specialized and particularized activities such as agriculture, education or knowledge, to conceiving of culture as manifested in all human activities. The third

4 My focus is not so much on historiography as an academic discipline, but on more general conceptions on history as the past and ways to understand it.

5 Prior to that the term had been confined to scholarly discussion in Latin. Riikonen 2000, 58–59.

6 The term 'culture' has its origins in Latin, in a verb 'colere' from which the noun 'cultura' is derived. The old meaning of the word referred for example to habitation and cultivation of the soil. Fisch 1992, 680–688.

7 I have here outlined this process very briefly based on Jörg Fisch's treatment in Geschichtiche Grundbegriffe and Raymond Williams in Keywords: A Vocabulary of Culture and Society.

8 For example Immanuel Kant's use the word Kultur refers to an individual. Geuss 1996, 154–155.

element of this formative process is a change from an event or process (cultivation) towards the end of the process, such as the cultivated human or the product of culture.[9] I shall now turn to the Finnish context, which also reflects this more general history of 'culture'.

Tengström and the concepts 'culture' and 'civilization'

In 1809 Finland had become a Grand Duchy of Russia, severing its official ties to its former motherland Sweden. To the academic elite the change was not a disaster. There were some incidents, such as violent confrontations between the students and Russian soldiers, but overall, Finnish scholars adapted comfortably to this new political situation. Although Finland now was under the autocratic rule of the Russian Tsar and public sphere was controlled by strict censorship, the change brought with it some conceptualizations, especially in terms of national identity. In scholarly circles it initiated a discussion on the future of Finland, its own Finnish language and culture. Tengström played a significant role in these debates. He worked as a teacher and librarian in the Academy of Turku.[10] Although not a man gifted with great visionary or radical ideas, during his long academic career he was in close touch with the younger generation as a teacher and mentor. Tengström taught Hegelian philosophy, but he was also a follower of a broader German tradition of idealism and neo-humanism. The echoes of this intellectual background can be heard in his writing, published in the years 1817 and 1818 by a literary society called *Aura*.[11]

In his essay 'On some obstacles to Finland's literature and culture'

9 Fisch 1992, 705, 707. See also Williams 1976, 77–80.

10 The Academy of Turku was founded in 1640 and it was at that time the only university of Finland. In 1828 the university was moved to the new capital Helsinki where it received the new name of the Imperial Alexander University of Finland after the Tsar Alexander. In Helsinki Tengström continued his academic career as a Professor of Philosophy.

11 The society was founded by some scholars of the Academy of Turku and it had a Romantic background. The society did not survive long, publishing only two volumes. Manninen 1987, 25–26. Aura is also the name of the river that flows through the city of Turku.

(Swedish original 'Om några hinder för Finlands litteratur och cultur') Tengström called for a public debate on the state of Finnish literature and culture. Finland needed an educated class that would be able and willing to promote the national cause. On a large scale this meant a comprehensive process of modernization of Finnish society, the building of social and political institutions and educating the ordinary people. This process was understood as having to begin from above, so that the first task was to educate the upper classes regarding their role in this modernization process. Tengström's writing opened up this discussion, to be followed by contributions by other scholars. In Tengström's text the concepts of culture and civilization were widely discussed. It also demonstrated the internationalist perspective of Finnish cultural discourse, and Tengström's article needs to be examined in the wider context of European intellectual traditions.

How did Tengström write about 'culture' and what kind of meanings did he assign it? Tengström does not provide a simple answer, giving no clear definitions and using various terms in confusing ways. Tengström is writing primarily about the 'higher culture' or 'intellectual culture'.[12] Culture is thus connected to literature, philosophical thought and education. Culture has to do with grace, with the very best that the humankind can achieve. On the other hand culture can also present drawbacks. Tengström is worried about 'the new cultural system' (*det nya Cultur systemet*). According to him this system, which had its roots in French culture (manners, education), had gained popularity among the members of the upper class. This was especially the case in Sweden but Finns were also in danger of being infiltrated by this new cultural system. Tengström refers to King Gustav III, who was known as a great admirer of French education (and who wanted to introduce this new way of life among his own people). Tengström also recognizes some positive features in this new system, as for example a more liberal atmosphere in public life and lowering of class barriers.[13] The benefits however did not compensate for the drawbacks that the French culture had brought with it, namely egocentricity, a short-

12 At times Tengström explicitly writes about 'higher culture' or 'intellectual culture'. See for example Tengström 1817–18, 71, 77, 89, 94.

13 Tengström 1817–18, 79–80.

sighted utilitarianism that had no appreciation of historical traditions or the achievements of different cultures:

> One nation disdained the culture and literature of another insomuch as it considered itself to have ascended to a condition of enlightenment. Ultimately, each individual thought that when he had made himself a part of the milieu (and its effects), and had completed his education (bildning), he could ignore everything that was beyond his own horizon.[14]

Tengström uses various terms in heterogeneous ways. Along with 'culture' he writes about 'enlightenment' (*upplysning*) and 'education' (*bildning*). Sometimes he uses the terms as synonyms; *kultur* and *bildning* in particular appear to be sometimes interchangeable in his thinking.

What is this 'new cultural system' Tengström criticizes? Obviously it was something very clear to Tengström's contemporaries because he does not give any names or specific targets of his criticism. Tengström associates 'the new cultural system' with French Enlightenment and a French way of thinking in general. One practical reason for this antipathy probably was the fact that Napoleonic France was defeated by Russia, of which Finland was now also a part. Besides this political fact there is another aspect which has to be taken into account. Tengström was, from top to toe, a humanist. The humanities had been highly valued in the Academy of Turku already in the 18th century, not least by Henrik Gabriel Porthan (1739–1804), a famous and honoured Professor of Eloquence, and the heritage of this era also influenced Tengström. Appreciation of broad scientific knowledge reaching all the way back to the ideals of classical Greece was central in this tradition, as well as a critical attitude towards a one-sided emphasis on utilitarianism.[15]

14 Tengström 1817–18, 84. Translation by the author. Original: 'Den ena nation föraktade den andras cultur och litteratur i den mån hon ansåg sig sjelf hafva stigit i upplysning. Och slutligen äfven hvarje enskild trodde sig, sedan han lätt gjort sig delaktig af denna tidehvarfvets tillhörighet, hafva fulländat sin bildning och kunna förakta det, som låg utom hans horizont.'

15 Matti Klinge and Juha Manninen for example have emphasized this tradition of humanism at the Academy of Turku. Klinge 1987, 704–718; Manninen 2000, 139–145 and passim. It is impossible to explicate Tengström's reasons for his attitude in detail in this article. Tengström himself was a supporter of a moderate nationalism and he avoided conflicts with the ruling power. In his essay he clearly wanted to

Tengström writes about false enlightenment or false culture. This critique is primarily directed towards the French enlightenment which he felt to be superficial, hypocritical and egocentric. His views were in line with arguments that were popular among German thinkers, philosophers of romanticism or *Neuhumanismus*. According to a contemporary scholar Frederick Beiser this critical attitude did not mean the abandonment of all the values of the enlightenment or *Aufklärung*. Many of its fundamental values, such as the right to think for oneself, the right to self-determination and the value of education were subscribed to also by the critics. The negative comments were related to the hedonism, materialism and utilitarianism of the French enlightenment. Beiser points out that the most significant reason for this negative attitude was the fact that according the critics the followers of *Aufklärung* had undermined the ideal of *Bildung*.[16] This is what Tengström is also stressing. He writes that the French style enlightenment cannot provide substance to the real *bildning*. Here the Swedish word *bildning* can be considered as a synonym for German *Bildung*. His critique becomes evident also on a conceptual level. The opposite of 'culture' clearly is 'civilization'. Tengström wrote that the conception of civilization entertained by his contemporaries was in fact an obstacle to a true culture. 'Civilization' was driven by a simple quest for comfort and superficial knowledge, and it should be distinguished from the actual 'intellectual culture'.[17] This higher or intellectual culture is something that goes beyond the individual. Civilization deals with the condition of external/superficial life, such as the wealth of the state, economic benefits and entertainments. The highest purpose of the state is however something else, it is 'culture, that is the constantly increasing ennobling of the humanity'.[18] This is the only point at which Tengström explicitly defines the concept of culture – and he draws here a strong parallel between *kultur* and *bildning*.

highlight the difference between Sweden and Finland. Finns weren't't so enamoured of French ideas; they were loyal to the new regime.

16 Beiser 2006, 46–47; Bollenbeck 1994, 149–150 and passim. Tengström's views come close for example to the critique that Herder directed towards the ideas of the enlightenment. Herder [1774] 2002.

17 Tengström 1817–18, 89.

18 Tengström 1817–18, 99.

The distinction between 'culture' and 'civilization' is very well established in the German intellectual tradition. In his book *Über den Prozess der Zivilisation* (1939) Norbert Elias articulated a distinction between *Kultur* and *Zivilisation* in the German language. Before him Thomas Mann had already characterized culture through the concepts of 'soul', 'freedom' and 'art', and on the other hand civilization with 'society', 'franchise' and 'literature'.[19] Elias underlined the distinctiveness of the German concept of culture. According to him it began to develop as a contrast to the concept of civilization around the end of the eighteenth century. His interpretation of culture incorporates heavy emphasis on national differences. In the French or English languages the concept of civilization can be multifaceted, including political or economic, religious or technical, but also moral or social. Elias claims that in the German tradition the concept of civilization refers to 'the surface of human existence', while *Kultur* touches on higher values, such as the intellectual, artistic and religious realms. The German concept of culture also has a national dimension: it includes a reference to national differences and the distinctive identities of particular groups.[20] Subsequently, Elias' interpretation has been considered to be a simplification.[21] In Tengström's case his interpretation seems to work, however. It is notable how completely Tengström has adopted the approach of the German critics of the Enlightenment and how passionately he wanted to distinguish culture from civilization.

Culture and cognate concepts

Tengström's piece of writing shows the complexity and sometimes nebulousness of different concepts: they are ambiguous and overlapping.

19 Bollenbeck 1994, 22–23.

20 Elias [1939] 1976, 2–9. Underpinning this critique Elias identifies the social situation of Germany in the late eighteenth century: the rising German bourgeoisie and its critical attitude towards the French speaking aristocracy.

21 Fisch 1992, 725–730. It is also doubtful whether it is appropriate to consider this complex relationship merely as a German phenomenon. According to Raymond Williams, in the English language culture and civilization could also be understood as contrasting concepts in the 19th century. Williams 1976, 81.

Tengström, like many of his contemporaries, had a very flexible way of using different terms. It is difficult to translate these terms into a modern understanding without losing their historical meanings. There are many terms cognate with 'culture'. This becomes evident especially in the German intellectual tradition, where *Kultur* is related to concepts like *Bildung* and *Geist*, civilization and humanity. This holds true also for Finland, where German literature and philosophical thinking were well known. At the beginning of the nineteenth century the term *kultur* was not so common, especially compared to the widely used *bildning*.

Bildung itself has a long and complex history, which is beyond the scope of this article. It needs to be said, however, that in the nineteenth century the Swedish word *bildning* incorporated all the main elements of the German concept of *Bildung*. It could mean education or so-called high culture, but most fundamentally it was about self-formation of the individual.[22] *Bildung* does not have a counterpart in other languages, as has often been noted.[23] This untranslatability may apply in the case of, for example, English or French languages, but the Swedish language does have a counterpart, and that is *bildning*. Like *Bildund*, also *bildning* also has many facets and may be used in many ways. In many respects *bildning* mirrors the German conceptual tradition. It shows how strongly the educated classes (the academic elite and also the members of the upper class or bourgeoisie) were influenced by the German literature and intellectual life.[24]

At the end of the eighteenth century both the German *Kultur* and the French word *culture* were still comparable to *Bildung*. 'Culture' could mean the advancement of cultivation, the collective process of fulfilment that became evident especially through art, science and religion.[25] In Tengström's writing 'culture' is mainly cultivation of the soul, or 'higher cultivation' as he also writes. Culture as a development or fulfilment of

22 According to Koselleck, this English definition, Bildung as self-formation, comes closest to the idea of the German concept. Koselleck 1990, 14. Self-formation refers here to an active and conscious process of development by the individual.

23 Koselleck 1990, 13–18 and passim; Bollenkeck 1994; Beiser 2006, 26.

24 Jonas Hansson has dealt with this conceptual tradition in Sweden in his dissertation Humanismens kris (1999).

25 Fisch 1992, 705–709.

the humanity, has been a part of the Finnish understanding of the concept of culture. The relationship between German *Kultur* and *Bildung* has also been described by defining culture as a medium for *Bildung*. Mikko Lehtonen has stated that in this tradition culture has the function of realizing *Bildung*.[26] 'Culture' thus is the whole/totality of human actions, which makes the process of *Bildung* possible (mostly science, arts and religion). This statement captures something essential about Tengström's way of using the concept of culture.

Culture is a central concept in the modern world. It also is an exclusionary concept – it's about us and them. This becomes evident also in the Finnish context. In 1819 J. G. Linsén,[27] Tengström's contemporary and colleague, stated in his essay on Finnish nationality that the development of culture produces higher levels of differentiation as compared to the 'wild state'. He uses 'savage nations' as examples: according to him they are all alike. It is culture that brings out the uniqueness and individuality of a single person or a whole nation.[28] Linsén's 'wild state' is a state of nature, from which a man (first and foremost a man) has developed to culture. Nature has (indeed) been set up as an antonym to culture in modern Western discourse. The distinction is not absolute, however. Despite the oppositional nature of the concepts, culture can also be implicated with physical nature. In fact this was common during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries.[29] Tengström praises Finnish nature, its rivers and lakes, mountains, hills and forests. This natural beauty he intertwines with the character attributes of the people, such as sincerity, autonomy and reliability. The characteristic of the nation is bound to the physical environment, writes Tengström. He even makes a comparison between the Finns and Greeks – a nation that he highly venerated – although he had to admit that these forefathers of humanity had to some extend a milder and more fruitful climate than the inhabitants of Finland. A harsh climate, and its restrictions on the means of livelihood, presents some

26 Lehtonen 1994, 70. More specifically, Bollenbeck 1994, 126–127 and passim.

27 Johan Gabriel Linsén (1785–1848) taught Latin at the Academy of Turku. Later in Helsinki he became a Professor of Eloquence, that is Latin.

28 Linsén 1819, 237–238.

29 The belief in physical and geographical factors ('climate') determining the lives of nations/ civilizations was commonplace since Montesquieu. Berlin 1980, 148.

obstacles to the advancement of 'higher culture'.[30] When describing 'culture' Tengström often uses a metaphorical language. The most prominent metaphor is cultivation, which refers to the old meaning of the concept as cultivation of the soil. Tengström draws a parallel between human development and the growth and flowering of the plant.[31] These kinds of organic metaphors were widely used in the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries.

I wish to argue that later in the nineteenth century there were changes in the meaning of 'culture'. To exemplify these changes I will use the ideas of Johan Vilhelm Snellman (1806–1881). He was a well-known journalist, teacher and thinker, who held a central position in the national discourse during the nineteenth century. He also was a close student of Tengström. In Snellman's texts *kultur* could refer to a social condition or wholeness in general. When writing about the 'culture of European nations', 'modern culture' or 'Roman culture' Snellman did not include a moral aspect of the German concept of *Kultur*.[32] The notions could rather be understood through the concept of civilization if it is used to describe a social process or state of affairs in general.[33] Snellman does not use 'civilization' as an antonym for 'culture'. Compared to Tengström, he uses the term 'culture' in a broader sense. Besides the 'high culture' he also writes about the culture of the people. In 1844 Snellman wrote in his newspaper *Saima*, that the culture of the people appears not only in the intellectual education (*intellektuela bildning*), but also in the social institutions of the nation.[34]

It is clear that the Finnish concept of culture can (and must) be under-

30 Tengström 1817–18, 70–71. Others who followed Tengström in making this parallel between the climate and the characteristics of a nation included Zacharias Topelius. Mikkola 2006, 428.

31 Tengström 1817–18, 71. On the history of metaphors in this connection, see Asko Nivala's chapter in this volume.

32 These examples are from Snellman's writing 'Modern French literature' from the year 1848. JVS: SA VI 1996, 214, 216. The abbreviation JVS: SA refers to Snellman, Johan Vilhelm: *Samlade arbeten*. My interpretation of Snellman's thinking is based on the research for my ongoing PhD project.

33 According to Lehtonen this was the common currency of the concept since the 1830s. Lehtonen 1994, 54, 77.

34 JVS: SA IV 1994, 264.

stood in the context of the German tradition of *Bildung*. On the other hand the Finnish concept of *bildning* also had a meaning that comes close to our modern concept of culture. Snellman gives various examples of this kind of use of the term. He used the term *bildning* regularly when referring for example to the ways of thinking and practices of the people. In his book *Läran om staten* (Doctrine of the State) in 1842 he presented his ideas about the national identity, stating for example that the individual is embedded within a national language, but also within 'the external and internal/inner *bildning* of the folk tribe, that becomes evident in its physiognomy and character'.[35] In 1856 Snellman wrote in another newspaper *Litteraturblad* that the history of human development (bildning) is about 'the foundation of the events, the beliefs and customs of the historical people, and the manifestation of these facts in laws and institutions'.[36] *Bildningshistoria* thus was not confined to the history of high culture, science and arts. The parallels between *bildning* and culture become clear in historical writing of the era. The concept of *Bildung* became an essential part of historical thinking in Johann Gottfried Herder's writings. In *Ideen zur Philosophie der Geschichte der Menschheit* (1784–1792) Herder wrote a *Bildungsgeschichte* of humankind. This included more than just the highest manifestations of human development, but also sought to understand human life as a whole.[37]

It has become clear that when reading nineteenth century texts one has to be careful with the different terms. They do not always carry the same meaning over the period of time. The Swedish word *bildning* for example could also carry sociological meanings. It was elastic enough to stretch a great distance from its idealistic origins, and sometimes could be translated as 'culture' in the modern understanding of the term.

35 JVS: SA V 1993, 305. Translation by the author. Original: '…jemte språket, äfven en för stammen egendomlig både yttre och inre bildning, såsom folkslags-fysionomi och karakter, är inympad på individen…'.

36 JVS: SA VII 1996, 261. Translation by the author. Original: '… händelsernas grund, de historiska folkens öfvertygelser och seder samt om dessas framträdande i lagar och institutioner.'

37 On Herder's concept of Bildung see Bolleckeck 1994, 119–126.

Capturing the spirit of the nation

I have tried to show the diversity of the nineteenth century concept of culture in Finland. One needs many words in order to catch the meaning of one concept, most especially with the concept of culture, which sometimes seems impossible to disentangle. Studying the nineteenth century conception of culture has caused me to wonder just how far the meaning of one concept can be stretched. One concept can open a whole worldview, as in the case of *Bildung*. On the other hand a concept such as culture cannot be properly understood without the wider semantic field and other proximate concepts. The traditions from which it was formed cannot be ignored.

The history of 'culture' can also be examined by tracing the conceptions or understandings of culture without the explicit use of the actual term.[38] In Finland's case the nineteenth century discourses of nation provide extensive material for this kind of approach. Especially in the first half of the century, the understanding of nation was based on cultural factors (language, customs and popular folktales, history) rather than on political criteria. The idea of 'Finnishness' was extrapolated from the history of Finnish language, by collecting folklore or by debating on the elements of Finnish nationality.

During the first decades of the nineteenth century the substance of nationality was discussed by the scholars of the Academy of Turku. One factor driving this discourse was the breaking of the bond between Finland and Sweden. Tengström modelled nationality through geography, shared history and language.[39] His colleague J. G. Linsén included language, literature, religion and laws in his conception of nation.[40] A. I. Arwidsson – one of the most radical advocates of the national cause – emphasized the character of the people and the spirit of the nation. Together with climate, state (governance), religion, history, manners and language they formed a basic typology of the nation.[41] The importance of language emerges repeatedly in these writings. This view is connected to a theory

38 See for example Burke 1997, 2–22.
39 Tengström 1817–18, 70–75 and passim.
40 Linsén 1819, 239.
41 Arwidsson 1821, 49–50, 54.

that language is understood to be a bearer of collective identity. E. G. Ehrström's[42] and Elias Lönnrot's views for example reflected a Herderian theory that language is a historical form of socialization. A human being always grows into and through a certain language tradition from which he can't break free.[43] For Ehrström a mother tongue and a national language were inseparable, and nationality was determined by the language.[44] Lönnrot considered folk poems as expressions of the collective subject called nation.[45]

For Snellman nationality was to a great extent the collective knowledge and customs or practices of the nation.[46] An individual was determined by the environment, the historical conceptions and practices around him. In 1845 Snellman wrote in his newspaper *Saima* that nationality is to be considered as a form of *bildning*. This could be seen not simply as affection for the fatherland but also for the mental identity of the nation, its ways of thinking, its practices, national language, customs and laws, history of the nation.[47] The simplest definition of nationality that Snellman gives is that 'nationality is the social life of the people'. In his unpublished draft of an article that was written in German Snellman writes:

> If we understand history as present, as a true and present life of the people, in which its past and future, are united; then it [the nationality] is equal to its social life in the family, in civil society, in internal and external governmental actions, in scientific, literary and artistic production.[48]

42 Ehrström was a lecturer in Russian language at the Academy of Turku. He was known as a follower of Romantic ideas. In the 1820s he gave up his academic career and became a clergyman. He died at the age of 43 in 1835. Wassholm 2008, 6–8 and passim.

43 On the Herderian theory of language and its impact in nineteenth century Finland, see Karkama 2006.

44 Wassholm 2008, 126–127

45 Saarelainen 2009, 89.

46 Snellman defined the nature of nationality in Läran om staten (1842), JVS: SA III 1993, 305. In addition Snellman wrote regularly on nationality in his newspapers and other writings.

47 JVS: SA IV 1994, 416.

48 JVS: SA XI.1 1998, 446. Translation by the author. Original: 'Wenn man aber die Geschichte als präsent, lebendig dieses wirkliche, gegenwärtige Leben eines Volkes auffasst, in welchem seine Vergangenheit und Zukunft sich zusammendrängen, dann ist sie Eins mit dem socialen Leben desselben in der Familie, in der bürgerlichen

Snellman has a very cultural view of human existence.[49] For him an individual is always to be examined in the context of the collective to which he/she belongs.

Nationality was also defined through the 'spirit of the nation'. In Swedish the term is *nationalanda*, in French *l'esprit general de la nation*, in German *Volksgeist*. The term has various overtones, including also somewhat mystical connotations, but the 'spirit' can simply refer to a totality of certain historical unit (for example nation or epoch). In 1846 Snellman wrote about the knowledge that a historian should possess in order to be able to describe the spirit of the nation:

> It is about the knowledge and practices of the people, their customs in society and family life. For a historian these are manifested in the religious cult and creed, in all their social legislation, in the educational system, in the means of livelihood, in local county systems, in language, folk songs, adages, in the tradition of their festivities, family lives and work methods.[50]

In tracing the tradition of cultural history Peter Burke has emphasized the idea of a culture as a totality, which means for example the idea of connections between different arts and disciplines or a pursuit to describe a historical era as a whole.[51] An attempt to grasp the spirit, a general profile of a certain nation or epoch, is a central theme in nineteenth century historical writing. Historical works promised to present the total history. The French historians François Guizot and Jules Michelet, for example, sought to delineate the characteristic of a whole epoch.[52] In

Gesellschaft, in seiner Wirksamkeit im Staate nach Innen und Aussen, in seinem wissenschaftlichen, litterarischen und artistischen Produciren und Geniessen.'

49 This has been argued for example by Tuija Pulkkinen and Marja Jalava. Pulkkinen 1989, 45; Jalava 2005, 174–175.

50 JVS: SA V 1995, 252–253. Translation by the author. Original: 'Detta är folkens vetande och handlingssätt, deras sed i samhällslifvet och familjen. För historieforskaren uppenbara sig dessa i folkens religiösa kult och bekännelse, i hela deras medborgerliga lagstiftning, i undervisningsväsendet, i näringarne, i kommunalordningen, i språk, folksång, sentenser, i traditionen om dess fester, hemlif och arbetssätt.'

51 Burke 1997, 16–22.

52 Guizot lectured at the University of Sorbonne on the history of French and European civilizations in the 1820s and 1830s. These lectures were also published and were very popular. Michelet tried to build a portrait of the spirit of the French nation from a range of collective spirits. Klinge 1998, 113, 115, 199–202 and passim.

Sweden E. G. Geijer represented a view that history basically was the history of humanity (*menskligher*).[53] Herder for his part wrote a history of humankind in his *Ideen*. All these names, Guizot, Michelet, Geijer and Herder (among others) were known in Finland where their views were influential on historical understanding.

Culture and history

In his article 'New Cultural History' Professor Kari Immonen has identified Gunnar Suolahti (1876–1933) and his early followers as pioneers of Finnish cultural history.[54] Suolahti was a Finnish historian, who mapped totalities in history; he wanted to depict for example the mentality or spiritual life of an era.[55] Pertti Haapala also identifies the beginning of the twentieth century as a starting point for early Finnish cultural history. At the time Karl Lamprecht's views on collectivity also inspired Finnish historians.[56] One can also find, as for example Matti Viikari and Max Engman have suggested, a continuum from 19th century ideas to the practices of the early 20th century historians. In both cases there was a strong will to understand Finland as an entity of its own and an emphasis on nation and its folklore and way of life.[57] It is thus arguable that the origins of Finnish cultural history can already be found from the nineteenth century. The nineteenth century conception of culture has not, however, been studied in detail. Nor has this early tradition been thoroughly elaborated within the Finnish discipline of cultural history. When referring to the nineteenth century ideas on cultural history, we do not talk about formal schools or research methods, but a very basic set of assumptions about how history could and should be understood and written. In addition to the assumptions on the nature of history, which can be described as

53 Henningsson 1961, 143.
54 Immonen 2001, 14–15.
55 Klinge 1993, 471–472.
56 Haapala 2007, 52–56
57 Viikari 1984, 35–41; Engman 1994, 51–55. Haapala also mentions this earlier 19th century tradition behind the 20th century historians, but he does not call it cultural history.

cultural, the explicit term 'cultural history' was in use in the nineteenth century. I will now detail my argument with the help of Snellman's views on history.

Snellman was already celebrated in his own lifetime as a leader of the Finnish national movement and the theorist of Finnish discourses of nation. This 'great man', however, did not attach much importance to histories of great men. In his articles and reviews he continually reminded his readers that history was not about the actions of the states and their heads, nor about the records of ruling families and battles fought.[58] These kinds of data only touch on the surface of the historical events, which a true historian should be able so see through. Advice that historians should let the events speak for themselves should in fact be forgotten: 'in fact a history book is empty and dumb if we can only learn from it how war lead to peace and how peace gave birth to war; and if it sees the rulers, ministers and warlords as causes of wars and acts of peace …'[59]

Snellman was pleased to write reviews on historical works (usually ending up explaining how the work could have been improved). In 1844 he declared that one could not find descriptions of the ordinary life of the people in the history books. He was keen to introduce a new kind of historical narrative in which society was observed from a broad perspective.[60] In 1848 he described a new direction for historical writing, which located political events in a more general perspective, and which went even further, examining also

> judicial conditions, the state of literature, to set out the conditions of business and livelihoods, local institutions, practices of the masses and their intellectual standpoints, as well as the ruling religious spirit, so that it [historical writing] could draw from all these facts a conclusion about

58 JVS: SA V 1995, 252–253; JVS: SA VII 1996, 38–39.

59 JVS: SA VII 1996, 261. Translation by the author. Original: '… i sjelfva verket är en sådan historiens bok stum och sluten, i hvilken man endast lärer, huru kriget förde till freden och freden ammade kriget, och ser regenter, ministrar eller fältherrar uppträda såsom krigenas och fredslutens upphofsmän …'

60 JVS: SA IV 1994, 16-18, 391–394. In this connection Snellman also referred to the works of French politician and historian Adolphe Granier de Cassagnac. *Histoire des classes ouvrières et des classes bourgeoises* (1838) and *Histoire des classes nobles et des classes anoblies* (1840) were translated into Swedish in 1843. Hokkinen 1994, 697, 725.

> the standing of the nation or era under investigation in the context of the general development of humanity.[61]

In reference to this approach Snellman uses the term 'general cultural history' (*allmän kulturhistorie*). He repeatedly stresses that history is a discipline that seeks to provide a total view of a phenomenon. A historian has to go deeper than just the surface of the events, he (for Snellman it was men who wrote history) has to understand an epoch as a totality. This required an understanding of the major contours in history, connections between civilizations and an awareness of certain significant turning points in historical development. For Snellman the works of Guizot, Herder or Geijer exemplified this model. He felt that the historian had an obligation to interpret his material. In preparing a general cultural history the actual labour was actually not so much about coverage of new sources; it was about collecting, evaluating and presenting the data in a certain way, with a certain kind of perspective.[62] An effective presentation of the material was essential, meaning that a historian also needed literary skills. In Snellman's words a historian was also an artist/writer.[63]

The models of early Finnish cultural history have often been identified in the German tradition, and particularly in the Lamprechtian movement.[64] If we go further into the past, to the nineteenth century, the French context is more important. Matti Klinge has noted that the nineteenth century Finnish historians, for example Zacharias Topelius, were influenced by French literature, especially fiction.[65] In this respect Snellman also looked

61 JVS: SA VI 1996, 227. Translation by the author. Original: '… rättstillståndet, litteraturens skick, skildra tillståndet i handel och näringar, kommunalväsendet, massans seder och intellektuela ståndpunkt samt den herrskande religiösa andan, för att ur alla dessa förhållanden draga någon slutsats angående den ifrågavarande nationens och periodens ställning till mensklighetens allmänna utveckling.'

62 JVS: SA VII 1996, 262.

63 This becomes clear if one reads Snellman's views on history and historical writing in detail. When writing about the French historian Adolphe Thiers (1797–1877), for example, he praised Thiers' style; according to Snellman it was clear and entertaining. On the other hand Snellman also criticized Thiers for being too superficial and paying too little attention to the social dimension of French history. See for example JVS: SA VI 1996, 226; JVS: SA VII 1996, 37–39.

64 Immonen 2001, 14–15; Haapala 2007, 51–53; also Ahtiainen 1991.

65 Klinge 1998, 186–10 and passim. Mari Hatavara has examined nineteenth century

to France rather than to Germany. Although in many ways he was a follower of German intellectual tradition, this did not prevent him from admiring French literature and historical writing. For him the French historians represented a new kind of history, or as he called it, a cultural history.[66]

Epilogue

In this article I have tried to trace some of the origins of 'culture' in Finnish tradition. This now brings me to the question: how far did or could the concept of culture develop in nineteenth century Finland? The answer is complex. One aspect of the history of 'culture' is the idea of cultivation of human potential. This tradition is especially evident in Tengström's work. To a great extent it was also comparable to the ideas (and ideals) of German neo-humanism, in which 'culture' is connected to the moral aspect of human development. 'Culture' has ranged in juxtaposition to or against 'civilization'. But in the nineteenth century understanding there is also something that approaches closely to our notion of culture. This can be seen especially in the attempts to define the larger frameworks of human activities, the society (or culture) as a whole. Behind the national discourse of the nineteenth century there lies the idea of the social, cultural human being.

Conceptual models are however historically specific. The distance between the nineteenth century writer and the present reader cannot be ignored. In some cases we have to translate the terms so that they become understandable. For example 'the spirit of the nation' sounds odd to our ears without the historical context and perhaps some kind of translation to a modern idiom. The danger is, however, that when recognizing something familiar from the past, we begin to translate it into our terms to the extent that the actors of the past would no longer recognize themselves in our

Finnish historical fiction through the works of Topelius and Fredrika Runeberg. Hatavara 2007.

66 Klinge has described nineteenth century French historians, such as François Guizot, Jules Michelet or Augustin Thierry, as representatives of total or cultural history. Klinge 1998, 197, 272, 283 and passim.

interpretations. It cannot be denied that a moral and ethical connotation that was attached to 'culture' in the nineteenth century has subsequently disappeared. *Bildning* can sometimes be translated as culture, but this is not always the case. One has to examine meaning and context on a case-by-case basis.

The roots of modern Finnish cultural history can be found in an international context, especially the Anglo-American tradition. Nevertheless the term 'cultural history' is much older in Finland. I do not claim that there is some kind of smooth and undisrupted continuum between modern cultural history and this nineteenth century tradition. They do have shared features, however. One is the idea of a culture as a totality. This has been important to the modern discipline of cultural history in Finland.[67] The idea of the historian as a writer also links the nineteenth century and modern views. Professor Veikko Litzen has drawn attention to this, referring to the ideas of Egon Friedell,[68] and this topic has been discussed frequently among cultural historians. These examples show, to my mind, that we should be aware of these historical discussions on culture and cultural history. Although there is a danger of reading too much from history, a danger of anachronism, there is also another mistake we can make: we can forget that we are not the first ones playing with the concept of culture. Whether it is relevant or not to our current understanding, it is something that should be borne in mind.

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67 The first Finnish Professors of Cultural History, Veikko Litzen and Keijo Virtanen, have emphasized this position. Litzen [1981] 1993; Virtanen 1987.

68 Litzen [1981] 1993, 26–27 and passim.

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Where the world ends? The places and challenges of northern cultural history*

Marja Tuominen

Northern cultural history can refer to at least three things: cultural history that is taught and studied in the North, that the cultural history of the North in particular is taught and studied, and finally that the northern dimension, which is often missing, is brought to interpretations of cultural history.

In Finland cultural history is an independent subject in the University of Turku and the University of Lapland in Rovaniemi. Thus cultural history is taught and studied in the North, whether the word 'north' is understood in its broader global and European context (that is, Finland) or narrower Fenno-Scandian and national context (the Province of Lapland). The University of Lapland is the northernmost university in Finland and the European Union. Therefore, it is natural that cultural history, as studied there, is interested particularly in the northern society: the interaction between the past, present and future, northern nature and people, cultural, linguistic and ethnic communities, and, finally, the North and the South.

Historically, methodologically and even ideologically, an aspiration for multidisciplinary co-operation, with the comprehensive and commonly recognized principle of a dialogue between synchronic and diachronic analysis and a shared understanding of the presence of history, has been the substratum of northern cultural history in Finland.[1] The relationship

* I wish to thank warmly Lic. Phil. Sakari Ollitervo, Professor Veli-Pekka Lehtola and Docent Ritva Hapuli for their knowledgeable and insightful comments on my article.

1 In the University of Lapland, the teaching of cultural history began in the autumn

between northern cultural history and everyday life in the North actively produces discourse.[2] This naturally leads to an interest in bringing the northern world of experience and life to those overall interpretations of the past, and thus also of the present, from which it has been left out intentionally or purely out of habit. This northern orientation is also connected in a wider sense to the premises of the so-called 'new histories' that demand space for those who have been consigned to the geographical, social and mental margins.

Alongside and in relation to the policy of memory and forgetting, I seek to analyze and conceptualize northern cultural history from the point of view of ethnocentrism, essentializing, the projective view and iconic clichés, and cultural translation. I thus look for alternative or parallel ways of conceptualizing the post-colonial discourse that has for so long been centred on the concepts of orientalism, identity and otherness. Finally, the question arises of the tensions between contextuality or situatedness and the supracultural formation of theory when the subject of the study is a culturally and regionally distinctive, multifaceted, multilayered and multiethnic world of experiences of the past.

The border between Lapland and the South, not to speak of the border between the North and the South, is anything but easy to establish. In this article, when I use the adjective 'northern', I am referring to the North Calotte: that is the northern area of the three Nordic countries – Finland, Norway and Sweden – and the Kola Peninsula in the Russian Federation. When speaking of 'Lapland', unless otherwise specified, I mean either Finnish or Swedish Lapland.

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of 1996. In the early stages the writer of this article took responsibility for a large network of researchers and the research and publication project 'Northern Identities and Mentalities', which actively brought various research themes related to northern history, culture and society into the academic and social discourse. Alongside cultural history and other fields of history there have been, for example, new Sámi studies and studies in geography, religion and theology, art and language, sociology, architecture, philosophy, education and medicine. Tuominen, Tuulentie, Lehtola & Autti 1999a and 1999b; Tuulentie & Tuominen 1999. See further, Lehtola V-P. 1997; Hautala-Hirvioja 1999; Saarinen J. 2001; Suopajärvi 2001; Tuulentie 2001; Saarinen S. 2005; Ridanpää 2005; Rantala 2009; Autti 2010; Linjakumpu & Suopajärvi 2003; Suopajärvi & Valkonen 2003; Autti & Tuominen 2005. Concerning the presence of history, see Immonen 1996.

2 See, for example, Tuominen 2005b; Tuominen 2007; Immonen 2007; Järvinen 2007.

The North in a European light

The northern way of life has taken on a unique form of its own over the course of centuries, even millennia, arising from people's responses to the challenges posed by nature and climate and the demands of their livelihoods.[3] The distance from the centre points of the mental maps and the old cultural centres of Europe, the short and sunlit summer, the long, cold and dark winter, multiethnicity and the sparseness of the population, have created, and still create, features of northern everyday life that differ from those of the mainstream national cultures. These northern conditions have always had an impact not only on housing, clothing, livelihoods and the movement of people, but also on social interactions, as well as physiological and mental functions.

Germania, a book by Publius Cornelius Tacitus in 98 AD, gives a description based on assumptions about the *Fenni* living on the edge of the world, a people who have commonly been linked to the forefathers of the Finns and/or the Sámi.[4] The view was shared by many central and southern European scholars and artists who became interested in the land of the midnight sun from the 17th through the 19th centuries. Like accounts of strange continents and the exotic East, vivid images and descriptions of the supposedly peculiar nature and people of Lapland and their habits were published in different languages across Europe.[5] Many of these have shaped the perception of the North as a monolith essentialized through

3 Regarding culture as a series of human responses to the challenges posed by the environment, see, for example, Litzen 1979, 104, and Virtanen 1987, 26.

4 Tacitus' description is a classic model – and at the same time a historical example for many subsequent descriptions of Lapland – of the ethnocentric construction produced by the author's projective view (see footnote 10). It presents an image of innocent savages who, in contrast with the phenomena of one's own civilization, have unknowingly achieved the Stoic ideal in their primitive way of life. Tacitus [1904] 2004, 41–42. Veli-Pekka Lehtola has also noted how Tacitus creates the basic elements for subsequent writings about the Sámi by using the logic of negativity: there are *no* weapons *nor* horses *nor* houses; the only hope is in arrows for which there is *no* iron, and even the children have *no* shelter apart from a canopy woven out of twigs. Lehtola V-P. 1999, 15–16.

5 On this subject see, for example, Ruiu 2007; Pihlaja 2009; Pihlaja 2005; Pitkänen 2008; Pekonen 2009a; Hagen 2009; Holmbäck 2009; also Laestadius [1840] 2000, 21–39; Lehtola V-P. 2010b, 16–17; Pihlaja 2003, 68–69.

such nugatory categories as remote, peripheral, marginal, backward and exotic.

Along with Tacitus, another seminal model for many authors was the book *Lapponia* by the Swedish scholar Johannes Schefferus, which was published in 1673. It illustrates Lapland and the life and ways of its people comprehensively.[6] To some this work has been more than an inspiration: the travelogue *Voyage de Laponie* by Jean-François Regnard was published posthumously in 1731.[7] It has, for good reason, been described as a kind of layman's edition of Schefferus' *Lapponia* – though only in relation to its more accurate sections.[8] In places Regnard lets his imagination, and in other places his arrogant ethnocentrism, take over completely. His famous descriptions of the Sámi are concrete examples of the projective view of the outsider[9]:

> These were the first Laplanders we had seen, and the sight of them gave us much satisfaction. They came to barter fish for tobacco. We regarded them attentively from head to foot; they are made quite differently from other men. The tallest of them is not more than three cubits high; and I know not any figure more truly laughable. They have large heads, broad and flat faces, level noses, small eyes, large mouths, and thick beards, descending to their

6 Schefferus [1673] 1963.

7 Regnard's journey to the Tornio region in Lapland in the late summer of 1681 lasted just over a month. Regnard 1731; Itkonen-Kaila 1982.

8 Itkonen-Kaila 1982, 7–8. The description 'layman's edition' is charitable, as the word 'plagiarism' could also be used. Regnard himself had presumably noticed this as – contrary to his original intention – he did not publish his text. See Itkonen-Kaila 1982, 8–9.

9 Here the concept of *projective view* approaches the questions of ethnocentric and 'otherness-producing' methods, but at a more general, psychohistorical level. By the concept of *projection* I refer to the externalization (that is, the placement outside of oneself/one's culture) of the conflicts and distressing or uncomfortable traits in the mind or culture, and thus the *splitting* of the experience of reality into the good self and the non-good other. Regarding projection, see, for example, Laplanche & Pontalis [1967] 1988, 350, and more extensively 349–356 (Cf. footnote 5). On the concept of *gaze*, see, for example, Pihlaja 2009, 24: 'The gaze of a traveller is based on stereotypes that have been institutionalized, in a sense, by the discourses in his or her culture. In the study of tourism there has been discussion on the outsider's touristic gaze that is directed by the baggage inherited from the traveller's own cultural background. As such it reflects the power arrangement related to interpretation and valuing.' See also Pihlaja 2009, footnote 70; Urry 1990.

> stomach. All their limbs are proportioned to their littleness of body; their legs are thin, their arms long, and the whole of this little machine seems to move on springs. Their winter dress consists of the skin of a reindeer, made like a sack, descending to the knees, and tied round the thighs with a sash of leather, adorned with small plates of silver[10]; the shoes, gloves, and boots of the same stuff; and this has led several historians to relate, that there were men in the northern regions habited like beasts, and who wore no other covering than that which nature had given them. […] Such, sir is the description of this little animal, called a Laplander; and it may be said, that, after the monkey, he approaches the nearest to man.[11]

Some rather bizarre examples of Regnard's masculinist ethnocentricity are his vivid tales of the wild erotic life and sexual hospitality of the Sámi ('Laplanders'), all based on secondary sources or, more likely, on anecdotes and imagination.[12] In them the woman is 'the other' and 'strange' in three ways: she is *northern and odd*, a northern oddity; she is an object because of her Sámi ethnicity; and she is also objectified because of her gender[13] – and thus also the object of appraising eyes:

> But perhaps, sir, whilst I am speaking of beauty, you will have the curiosity to inquire if there are any handsome Laplanders. To this question I will answer, that nature, which has been pleased to create mines of silver and other metals in the northern regions, the most distant from the sun[14], sports herself sometimes with forming beauties which are supportable in these very countries. It is however always true, that those individuals, who surpass

10 Regnard was travelling in July, so the description of winter attire is unlikely to be based on his own observations.

11 Regnard (1731) in Pinkerton 1808–1814, 163–164.

12 Regnard makes it particularly clear that he has not personally been provided with such hospitality but bases his tales on the assurances of an anonymous but 'sincere Frenchman' whom he met at the Svappavaara mines. Regnard (1731) in Pinkerton 1808–1814, 166–167.

13 See also Pitkänen 2008, 52: 'Sexualization is a way to animalize the woman and place her as a subordinate slave of her passions who, at the same time, appears as a possibility, tempting pleasure to the (white) male. The way of western men to see women of more distant cultures as lusty does, indeed, have a long tradition. Firstly, it is a woman who was seen as inferior to men both intellectually and in controlling her emotions. Also, the culture of women living far away is strange – they are thus many times "the other".' See also Hapuli 2005.

14 This is a surprising description as Regnard travelled in the summer.

> the rest by their beauty, are still but Lapponian beauties[15], and could only be considered such in this country. But, generally speaking, it is certain that all the Laplanders, male and female, are horribly ugly; and very much resemble monkeys.[16]

The tale Regnard tells is compiled from quotations of Schefferus and products of his own imagination, possibly including influences from Tacitus as well, and it produces interesting paradoxes:

> I shall now state, in general, that all the inhabitants of this country are naturally sluggish and lazy, and nothing but hunger and necessity can cha[s]e them from their huts, and oblige them to labour. I should have concluded that this general vice arose from the climate, which is so cold that no one can easily expose himself to the air, had I not found that they are equally lazy in summer as in winter.[17]

The reference to winter conduct is not supported by any direct evidence, since Regnard's own observations were made during his summer voyage. The comment above is followed by a long and circuitous account of working methods, tools, hunting and transportation equipment, food procurement, and other tasks and skills related to everyday life, which this 'sluggish and lazy' population had produced in response to the challenges of the Arctic circumstances.[18]

It is interesting how resolutely Regnard not only denigrates but also homogenizes the other in relation to the self. The absoluteness of oft-repeated words like 'always' and 'all', 'generally / in general' and 'naturally' is intended to convince the reader that no similarity whatsoever exists between the self and the other, and that there is no danger or possibility of confusing the two.[19]

Having found some suitable informants, Regnard begins to speak of 'our Laplanders' as if he and his party had somehow been attached to their subjectivity[20]– including the sacred and ritualistic artefacts that hold their worldview and community together:

15 That is, Sámi women.

16 Regnard (1731) in Pinkerton 1808–1814, 193.

17 Regnard (1731) in Pinkerton 1808–1814, 187.

18 Regnard (1731) in Pinkerton 1808–1814, 187–189.

19 On the strategies of separating purity, see Douglas [1966] 2002.

20 See Regnard (1731) in Pinkerton 1808–1814, 183–184, 189–192 et passim.

> Notwithstanding all that our Laplanders could say, to prevent us from carrying off these gods, we failed not to diminish the number of Seyta's family, and to take each of us one of his children; while they failed not to threaten us, and to call down imprecations on our head, by assuring us that our journey should be unsuccessful, if we excited the wrath of the gods. If Seyta had been thinner and less heavy, I should have carried him off with his children; but having taken him in my hand, it was with great difficulty that I could move him from the ground.[21]

Elsewhere the author boasts about getting a trusting shaman, or someone pretending to be one, hopelessly drunk with his entourage:

> When we saw that we could procure no information from our Laplander, we amused ourselves with making him drunk; and this deprivation of reason, which continued three or four days, gave us an opportunity of stealing from him all his magical instruments.[22]

Half of nothingness, monotony

At the end of the 1830s Xavier Marmier, a French literary man, explorer and academician, travelled from the arctic coast of northern Norway through Finnish and Swedish Lapland to the south. The stranger describes the meeting of his party with some Sámi people in the wilderness:

> The hut housed two families who had brought together their herds after having visited the coast of Norway for fishing; and they were now slowly returning to the vicinity of Kautokeino for the winter. Both men wore a tattered, filthy costume made of reindeer skin, and the women were no more stylish or clean in their appearance. Inside the hut, which was assembled, like all Lappish huts, by spreading tatters of woollen cloth on wooden poles, there were only two or three wooden vessels, a kettle on the fire, and a child's cradle beside it.[23]

Having reached the municipality of Karesuvanto in Swedish Lapland, the party camped at the vicarage of Lars Levi Laestadius (who became the

21 Regnard (1731) in Pinkerton 1808–1814, 184. In fact the 'hazardous journey' (Regnard [1731] in Pinkerton 1808–1814, 207) did end in embarrassment when Regnard could not publish his account of it for fear of being accused of plagiarism.

22 Regnard (1731) in Pinkerton 1808–1814, 192.

23 Marmier s.a. (1843a), 362. I wish to thank Dr. Päivi Maria Pihlaja for the translation from French into English.

most influential religious authority in Lappish religious history). In this small and dark cottage the relative modesty turned into relative luxury after everything Marmier's party had experienced in the wilderness:

> For the first time in many weeks we could make use of true household utensils. As we began our meal, we sat at a table, ate from a plate, and drank from glasses; neither a Sèvres porcelain service nor silver tableware could have brought us greater pleasure than the pastor's simple, painted pots of clay or the iron forks.[24]

For the French academician *real* household equipment is the kind that most calls to mind – albeit in a rather amusing way – his own. Even the interior equipment of the Sámi nomad's hut, which is most practical in its own context, does not feel real or adequate.

Marmier's description of the town of Tornio[25] is classic in its disdain, but as early as 1799, when Finnish Lapland was still part of Sweden and not Russia, the Englishman Edward Daniel Clarke headed north and said that he wanted to give a more accurate description of 'a town so little known' as Tornio:

> It consists of two principal streets, nearly half an *English* mile in length. The houses are all of wood. After what has been said of its civilized external aspect, it ought only to be considered as less barbarous, in its appearance, than the generality of towns in the *north* of *Sweden*. It must not be inferred, that there is the slightest similitude between this place and one of the towns in *England*. If it were possible to transport the reader, now engaged in perusing this description, into the midst of *Torneo* the first impression upon his mind would be, that he was surrounded by a number of fagot-stacks, and piles of timber, heaped by the water side for exportation, rather than inhabited houses.[26]

Here, too, instead of stopping to think about the relationship of the object he is observing to its context – that is, the natural resources available to the local builders – the outsider not only decontextualizes and recontextualizes but also projects and *translates*[27] what he sees into the language of his

24 Marmier s.a. (1843b), 7–8. Translated by Päivi Maria Pihlaja.

25 Marmier s.a. (1843b), 38–39.

26 Clarke 1819, 279.

27 The concept of *cultural translation* has come into use in anthropology to describe and explain what happens when cultures meet and the different parties try to *make sense*

own Anglo-Saxon norms. Clarke also seems to consider it important – having first, as if by accident, let slip the word 'civilized' – to assure his readers that not even the slightest similarity or possibility of confusion can be discovered between the familiar and the unfamiliar. In fact Tornio, '[the] town so little known' was, at that point, very well known in Central Europe through various travelogues. It is, then, probably not a coincidence that Clarke, too, wanted to write a description of it.

In addition to Regnard, Marmier and Clarke, Abbé Réginald Outhier, the Italian gentleman Giuseppe Acerbi and many others also presented their descriptions of Tornio.[28] The *Encyclopédie*, which was considered the voice of the French enlightenment, dedicated short articles to, among others, reindeer, Lapland, Tornio and other places familiar from the travelogues.[29] Conquering, interpreting and acquiring knowledge about the North also became a focus of rivalry for the European intelligentsia. The best-known example is probably that of Voltaire (who himself never travelled to Lapland) in his fierce attack on the interpretations, life's work and personality of Maupertuis.[30]

The priest, author, ethnographer and scientist Lars Levi Laestadius, mentioned above, spoke out bitterly against the varied nature of the interpretations of Lapland and its inhabitants. Schefferus was forgiven but Laestadius regretted '[h]ow much less one should trust such authors who as strangers with set conceptions and prejudices have visited Lapland'. The 'feebleminded' Giuseppe Acerbi and 'the likes of him' were, in Laestadius' opinion, not even worth mentioning.[31]

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of the actions and motives of the other side. Peter Burke also emphasizes that the interpretation of history is always a translation from the language of the past, that is, of the strange, into the language of our own time. Regarding the concepts of cultural translation and decontextualization and recontextualization, see, for example, Burke 2007a, 10 et passim; Burke 2007b, 133 et passim.

28 In addition to the descriptions of the three travellers discussed above, see, for example, Outhier 1746, and Acerbi 1802. The explorer Pierre-Louis Moreau de Maupertuis also described the town of Tornio in a previously unpublished private letter. See Pekonen 2009b. See also Lähteenmäki 2006, 29–42; Pihlaja 2009, 40-44, 75-82; Annanpalo 2000, 6-56.

29 See, for example, Pihlaja 2003; Pihlaja 2005.

30 See, for example, Pihlaja 2009, 114–115.

31 Laestadius 2000 (1840 and 1845), 22–33.

Another intellectual who must have read Regnard, Marmier and possibly even Clarke was the French poet Charles Baudelaire, whose collection *Petits poèmes en prose,* published posthumously in 1869, included a prose poem that, uncharacteristically, had an English title, *Any where* [sic] *out of the world*. In the poem the poet converses with his 'poor chilly' soul about how 'I should always be happy if I were somewhere else'. He first suggests settling by the water in warm and sunlit Lisbon, but the mind is silent. Then he suggests heavenly Holland, but the mind remains mute. Nor does tropical Batavia excite the poet's soul. Finally he becomes frustrated and asks:

> 'Have you sunk then into so deep a stupor that only your own pain gives you pleasure? If that be so, let us go to the lands that are made in the likeness of Death. I know exactly the place for us, poor soul! We will book our passage to Torneo. We will go still further, the limits of the Baltic; and, if it is possible, further still from life; we will make our abode at the Pole. There the sun only grazes the earth, and the slow alternations of light and night put out variety and bring in the half of nothingness, monotony. There we can take great baths of darkness, while, from time to time, for pleasure, the Aurora Borealis shall scatter its rosy sheaves before us, like reflections of fireworks in hell!'
>
> At last my soul bursts into speech, and wisely she cries to me: 'Anywhere, anywhere, out of the world!'[32]

The 17th to 19th century European travelogues from Lapland must be seen in their own historical and cultural context, as a part of the cultural history of travelling and travel literature of their time, in which sense they have played a part in creating the mental geography of travel literature – and the mental map of Europe.[33] But Finnish scribes, artists[34] and explorers have not concealed their projective view, either, in their descriptions and interpretations, whether based on academic or literary or artistic interests.

The Finnish politician and author Kaarlo Castrén's reflections on the reasons for the spread of the Laestadian revivalist movement amongst

32 In French, see, for example, Baudelaire [1869] 1973, 146–147. The translation used here was published in 'Baudelaire: His prose and poetry'. Ed. Thomas Robert Smith 1919, 51–53.

33 See, for example, Pihlaja 2009; Pihlaja 2005; Varpio 2005: Hapuli 2005; Pitkänen 2008; Ruiu 2007; see also Elsner & Rubiés 1999.

34 Hautala-Hirvioja 1999a.

the Sámi are largely based on the essentialist assumption of their moody, fearful and unpredictable basic nature. This is the case also in theologian and writer Aapeli Saarisalo's biography of Laestadius.[35] The author Ernst Lampén has described his 1920 pilgrimage to see the 'authentic Lapps' in Inari and recalled how, in the middle of the peatland, the Sámi boy Sammeli Morottaja hired as a guide began to sing utterly inauthentic 'continental jingles', tunes from *The Merry Widow* and other frivolous operettas. It turned out, Lampén explains, that the Sámi boy had learned them on his journeys with the so-called Lapp caravans in Central Europe. Professor of Sámi Culture Veli-Pekka Lehtola has shown that this story is not true; apparently Lampén misattributed the stories he had heard about the Lapp caravans. Whether true or not, the story is linked to a bewildering historical fact in an enlightening way. From the middle of the 19th century until the 1930s, at least 30 Sámi groups are known to have toured Europe and even the United States. The caravans were part of a series of exhibitions in which primitive peoples of the world and 'subordinate cultures' were shown at funfairs, circuses and zoos in big cities.[36]

In the book *Kotimaan kirja* (Book of the Homeland), intended for schoolchildren, the writer and architect Salme Setälä deplored the Norwegian Sámi who rode bicycles in public while wearing their Sámi clothing. The rural police chief of Utsjoki, a representative of the officials of the dominant Finnish culture, E. N. Manninen commented on his Sámi friend in 1934: 'Well Skaiti is not a real Lapp: he has been in Helsinki once and has eaten with a fork at the Fennia hotel with gentlemen.'[37]

Clichés and forgetting

At the beginning of the third millennium – especially in commercial and popular culture – such epithets as 'periphery' and 'marginal' or various iconic clichés like Santa Claus, the northern lights or the Sámi dressed

35 See Ihonen 2003, 85.

36 Lehtola V-P. 2009.

37 Lehtola V-P. 1999, 20; see also Lehtola V-P. 1995, 241; Manninen [1934] 1998.

in their colourful festive costumes with their reindeer are still accepted as representing Lapland and its culture.[38] As far away from Lapland as the Helsinki Market Square, the souvenir stalls are filled with Lappish dolls in Sámi dress – most probably, sadly enough, made in East Asia. What some see as harmless knickknacks may to others be proof of blatant ethnic exploitation.[39] In building an artificial reality in the name of the commodification of history,[40] the people of Lapland themselves have not by any means remained idle.[41]

The exoticizing and ethnocentric attitude easily ignores the polyphony of everyday Lapland. This attitude was seen in an interesting way in the reception of two publications produced by the *Northern Identities and Mentalities* research project of the University of Lapland in 1999. The goal of the project and the publications was to show the *everyday Arctic* in all its variety. However, the book reviews were almost solely interested in the Sámi, who represented the exception, exoticism and contradictions, and in conflicts and extreme phenomena like religious fundamentalism and environmental disputes. The articles discussing the everyday life of ordinary northern people were ignored.[42]

The same collection of stereotypes includes the image of everyone in Lapland as a Conservative Laestadian[43] – or a drunk, at least in the case of the Sámi and artists.[44] They all vote for the Centre Party and all speak

38 An iconic cliché is an image that establishes itself as the definitive interpretation of the historical truth, overwhelming other, alternative images and interpretations. See further Voss 2002; Autti 2010, 53.

39 See e.g. Aikio 1999; Saarinen J. 1999.

40 See e.g. Salmi 2001.

41 See e.g. Saarinen J. 1999; Varanka 2001.

42 Tuulentie & Tuominen 1999.

43 This view emerged particularly clearly when journalist Johanna Korhonen, who had been chosen as the managing editor of the newspaper Lapin Kansa, was dismissed from the job in 2008 before it had even begun, when it was revealed that she was a lesbian who lived with a woman involved in leftist politics. Even though the decision was made by the Helsinki management of Alma Media, the extensive public discourse and many private discussions manifested the view that people in Lapland – that is Laestadian believers who had nothing to do with the matter – had brought about the dismissal. On ethnocentric views of northern Laestadianism, see also Ihonen 2003.

44 See, for example, Orjasniemi & Tiuraniemi 2009. Here I also refer to the public discourse of the late 1990s that began as early as 1987 regarding the 'Sámi' characters

the same dialect in the same funny 'h-flavoured' way. On the other hand, the Laplanders' conceptions of the South, for their part, may be very straightforward and projecting. Sociologist Leena Suopajärvi has studied the battle lines and the strategies and arguments in the conflicts over the Kemijoki and Ounasjoki hydro-electric development plans using, as her source, newspapers in Lapland and interviews. She has also considered how the people of Lapland see those living in Southern Finland:

> The South is an odd place in the sense that only lords, men and other decision-makers live there. The lords make the decisions and quote the law to us in Lapland on how to use our land and water rights. The southern man is after the natural resources of Lapland, and the benefit always goes to the long and wide table of the southern man. The southern lords want to turn Lapland into a nature reserve zone, and they are expected to come admire for example the preserved village of Suvanto. In any case, the lords of the South have fun. […] No poor people or children live in the South; the few women are councillors or narcissistic celebs.[45]

According to this logic, the most pernicious obstacle to Laplanders' happiness is a young, male, urban intellectual, a sort of *Homo Helsinkiensis*, whose predominant aim is to empty Lapland of its indigenous inhabitants and make it into a conservation and nature reserve with no human settlement – once again.

In reality, of course, Lapland is not just a single compact and homogeneous cultural region with localized colourful eccentricities. There are many everyday Laplands, just as there are many Souths, Finlands and Europes. In Finnish Lapland, there are three Sámi languages, various Finnish dialects and regional identities, family and place names, different emphases in business, religion, material culture and architecture.[46]

Naima-Aslakka and Soihkiapää (Pirkka-Pekka Petelius and Aake Kalliala) in the TV comedy show *Hymyhuulet* (Smiling Lips). Later the same boozy characters with bad teeth and painted faces were used to promote stone fireplaces and home appliances; see, for example, Lehtola J. 2000, 235-236.

45 Suopajärvi 1999, 19. See also Suopajärvi 2001.

46 Tuominen, Tuulentie, Lehtola & Autti 1999a and 1999b.

The sky and earth of Lapland

When speaking of the Christianization of contemporary Finland and Finland's introduction to Latin culture, the fact that northernmost Finland was introduced to Christian culture slowly and gradually over centuries from both east and west is often forgotten in the general interpretation of history. There are clear signs of Orthodox Christianity in Kemi Lapland prior to the 17th century, when Lutheran missionary work gathered strength in Lapland. It is thought that the fear of the spread of Orthodoxy was one of the motives for the missionary work conducted, ultimately, at the decree of the Swedish Protestant central authority. This process was complicit with expansion along the Arctic Sea and the Lapland settlement policies of the King of Sweden, affecting both the indigenous peoples and settlers in the area, their worldviews, livelihoods, ways of life, and the social structures of the communities in manifold ways.[47] The consequences also remain embedded in the everyday life of people in the North today.

At the core of the Sámi worldview in particular has been the traditional nature religion that included the institution of the shaman (*noaidi* in Sámi, *noita* in Finnish) that was all-important to the community in many respects – even though Regnard in the previously cited story ridiculed it. The encounter with the priests was mostly peaceful but not always beneficial to the receiving party. The great shamans and their most important ritualistic artefacts, the drums, were lost. The Christian clergymen participated in the systematic eradication of shamanism.[48]

Today, too, two branches of Christianity meet in the Sámi area: Protestantism and Orthodoxy, which spread to northwest Russia, the Kola Peninsula and Petsamo in the 16th century. Through the Treaty of Tartu in 1920, Petsamo, with its Orthodox monastery, became part of Finland, and in the final stages of World War II its Orthodox Skolt Sámi population, as well as the monastery community, were evacuated to Finland. A majority of the Skolts were accommodated in the north-eastern villages of Sevettijärvi and Nellim in the municipality of Inari. Even among the Sámi

47 Enbuske 2008, 83–86, 154–170; cf. Laestadius 2000 (1840 and 1845), 21–22.

48 For a critical account of the excesses of the clergymen see, for example, Laestadius 2000 (1840 and 1845), 21-22; Pentikäinen 1995, 159–193.

minority, the Skolts have been a religious and linguistic minority that the mainstream culture nearly managed to destroy in the decades after the war through its policy of active forgetting.[49] Alongside the Petsamo Skolts, other Orthodox communities that have lived and live in the North have been clergymen, soldiers and civilians from the Russian garrison church of Tornio and refugees from Viena Karelia who crossed the Treaty of Tartu border in the early 1920's.[50]

In the 19th and early 20th centuries the Laestadian revivalist movement gained a central position in northern Finland. Lars Levi Laestadius was born in Luleå Lapland in Sweden; he was Sámi by heritage, cultural background and mother tongue. When he became the minister of Karesuvanto, he had to learn Finnish in order to give sermons – an exuberant and even coarse language of the common people that could reach his audience in a completely different way from the sermons of 'the ministers of the South'.[51]

In 1844 Laestadius published *Tåluts Suptsasah* (Old tales of God and people) in Sámi, a freely narrated interpretation of the *Old Testament* that became popular reading in the Sámi areas.[52] In his foreword Laestadius referred to how difficult it was for the Reindeer Sámi to carry a big *Bible* with them on their annual treks to the coast of the Arctic Ocean, and back to their inland winter villages, and thus defended having dared such a 'first experiment'.[53] Literary researcher Kari Sallamaa also identifies an

49 See e.g. Tuominen 2005c, 13–19.

50 Orthodox communities can be found especially in the north-eastern and northern parts of Oulu province and the south-western parts of the Province of Lapland. See, for example, Tuominen 2005c, 49–61; Tasihin 1981; Pentikäinen 1971; Rytkölä 1988.

51 Laestadius 1984 (s.a.); Laestadius 2003 (s.a.).

52 In his foreword *Muistutus Lapinmaan arvoisalle papistolle!* [Note to the honourable clergy of Lapland!] Laestadius, 'the vicar and dean of the Kaaresuvanto parish, knight of the French Légion d'honneur, member of the Royal Society of Sciences in Uppsala, member of the Stockholm Hunters Union and member of the Edinburgh Botanical Society in England' finishes with a plea: 'The king of our country Sweden has, thinking of the Lapps, paid for the work to him who has published the book in print. The name of this man is Öhrling in the town of Härnösand. But the king wishes to get his money back. Let the Lapps thus buy this book and read it actively.' Laestadius [1844] 1978, 42–43.

53 Laestadius [1844] 1978, 41.

ethnic reason for the publication of the book: the wild, bloody tales are the mythology of the Jews, another group of people on the periphery; the Sámi had their own tales and mythology. However, the nomadic Palestinian life seemed familiar to the Fell Sámi.[54] When telling about Abraham and Lot, Laestadius explained how they had a round-up when there was not enough food for both of their herds. So Lot left for new pastures and built his hut near Sodom.[55] The down-to-earth rhetoric of Laestadius can here, as well as more widely in the language of his sermons, be studied not only as a clever pedagogical technique and cultural translation, a 'making sense', but also as an emancipatory claiming of one's own physical and mental space.

When it spread to the Arctic region, Laestadianism did not accept the official status and teachings of the state church as such, but emphasized the importance of the experience of personal faith, which in the early stages aroused widespread suspicion among the clergymen and leaders of the diocese of the area.[56] The movement has since split into many branches of which, among others, Conservative Laestadianism, the so-called Laestadian New Revival, and the Little Firstborns (i.e., the Apostolic Lutheran Church) still exist in Lapland today. Of these branches the Conservative faction is the one that is most critical of the church, but it still functions within the state church of Finland. In the culture and society, and even in the politics of Lapland, Laestadianism in its different forms is still a strong – but not the only – force.[57]

After the first major schism the New Revival faction took root among the wealthier peasant population. It was not in every way a form as strict as Conservative Laestadianism, which, in its early stages, appealed more to the landless people of the countryside. Especially among the landless people and some Sámi communities, in time the movement and factions that split from it developed radical, even militant, features that were connected with the experience of social injustice and opposition to the authorities imported from the South – to which the clergymen of

54 Sallamaa 2007.

55 Laestadius [1844] 1978, 50.

56 See, for example, Mustakallio 2009, 288–296; Tuominen 1999; Ihonen 2003, 93–98. See also Ruskomaa 1930.

57 Talonen 1988; Ihonen 2003; Linjakumpu 2000a; Linjakumpu 2000b.

the church were seen as belonging.[58] One might have found portraits of Laestadius and Lenin next to each other on the wall of a home in the Torne Valley.

Referring to the Norwegian researcher of Laestadianism Roald E. Kristiansen, Professor Veli-Pekka Lehtola has suggested a new perspective on the study of northern religiosity. He calls it spiritual ecology. According to Kristiansen, researchers should be better prepared to understand the experience of northernness as a particular spiritual phenomenon that has a specific influence on northern people and their society. According to Lehtola, Kristiansen has attempted to articulate the way people and nature intertwine in a complex network of existence, and how they create a close relationship between nature and both the cultural and mental landscapes. According to Lehtola, cultural researchers should take seriously the faith and conviction that there is more than what is immediately apparent:

> Even the critical researcher should not forget that living in the North as a human being for many still means facing the transcendent. It entails the experience of life being given and taken. People cannot be rulers of their lives themselves. Therefore people try to build their identity so that amidst everyday life there is a place or space that supports the bond with the unsaid and unexplained.[59]

People have lived and read in Lapland, too

> We live in Europe, and our home country is **Finland**, with the land of Russia in the east and south, the land of Sweden in the west, and the land of Norway and the barren Lapland in the North.[60]

These coordinates were given to Finnish children for the construction of cultural identity by the *Children's Primer or the New ABC* (*Lasten lukuoppi eli Uusi aapinen*) in 1869. At that time the *Primer* was also read in 'barren Lapland'. A functioning catechist school system had been created in the sparsely populated area, and a year after the book was published, a primary

58 See e.g. Lehtola V-P. 2010b, 40–41; Tuominen 1999, 48–56; Pursiainen 1999.
59 Lehtola V-P. 2007.
60 Suomela 1869, 17.

school was opened in Rovaniemi.[61] The people of Lapland were governed by the same laws, paid taxes and obeyed the same authorities as the rest of the subjects of the Grand Duchy of Finland, as best they could or wished, and they had their own representatives in the diet.

As I browse the history atlas of my own schooldays, published nearly a hundred years after the *Children's Primer*,[62] I notice the same thing: the maps covering the history of Finnish settlement from the Stone and Bronze Ages to the 17th century show only half of Finland. Lapland is not featured on these maps even though the subject is the settlement history of the entire Finland of today. This does not mean that Lapland was uninhabited up to the 17th century, but rather that the lifestyle of the people of the North, based on hunting, fishing and nomadism, was not considered 'settlement', even at the beginning of the 1960s.

It has since been established that northern habitation, however one defines it, is significantly older and more active than was previously thought, and it extended significantly further to the north. Lapland has been inhabited since the time following the last Ice Age. The oldest known fixed settlement concentrations on the Arctic coast in what is now northern Norway probably date back some 11,000 to 7,000 years BP. There is probable evidence of the so-called Komsa culture reaching Inari almost 10,000 years ago. The settlement of Northern Finland was divided 2,000 years ago into different Sámi-based cultural regions where people spoke different dialects or languages and had lively connections to neighbouring cultures in the West, East, and South. During the Viking Age at the end of the first millennium, non-Sámi hunters created settlements in the Torne and Kemijoki river valleys reaching as far north as Rovaniemi.[63]

Another reason for Lapland's absence from the school atlases is likely to be found in the prevailing attitude that, historically, Lapland has not been seen as a sovereign region but rather as an integral part of the country, albeit an appendix. It has been considered as either wilderness or undeveloped back country. It has been known that there are Sámi who live from hunting, fishing, wild reindeer hunting and reindeer herding and later Finns who

61 Kuikka 1994–5; Lassila 2001.

62 WSOY:n Historian kartasto [WSOY Historical Atlas] 1963, 10, 18.

63 See, for example, Enbuske 2004; Enbuske 2008b; Rankama & Kankaanpää 2008; Kotivuori 1999; Julku 1985.

cultivate allocated lands there. They have been taxed and converted to the appropriate religion, but it has been impossible to count them as members of civilization.[64]

Furthermore, the state borders have not always divided northernmost Fennoscandia as they do now. Until the 19th century, there were no set borders between Norway, Sweden, Finland and Russia in the north. The nomads, hunting and fishing Sámi, Finns, Norwegians, Swedes and Russians moving to and from the coast of the Arctic Sea could move freely in the area. Tax collectors also came there from various quarters. The population moved to fish on the coast of the Arctic Sea from further south when famine or other problems arose, or when compelled by their dreams. Some came from the east or the south to trade, others to start a new life, and some just to try their luck. Goods and their use moved along with the arrivals. It was a multiethnic, multilingual and, finally, also very multinational area, and as such a very distinctive cultural region evolved over the centuries. It developed its own original survival strategies and operational networks. It also differed clearly from the dominant southern cultures of the motherlands. The change began during the 18th and 19th centuries, and as a result, according to Maria Lähteenmäki, 'Finnish Lapland' was born in a geopolitical sense.[65]

A concrete and profound shift occurred when Finland was annexed to Russia in 1809 and the border was extended to the Torne River in the middle of a linguistically and culturally homogeneous Finnish region. Despite this, the Meänkieli language (on the Finnish side the Torne Valley dialect) among others, a traditional popular style of furniture with its distinctive decorations, and the building and interior culture, survive vigorously on both sides of the river.[66] An interesting example of the policy of memory and forgetting is related to the Treaty of Hamina in

64 On 18 April 2010 on Arto Nyberg's TV1 talk show, Finnish Academy research fellow Elisabeth Widén stated that on the whole Finnish genetic markers have the greatest number of similarities with those of Sweden and Estonia, 'which concurs with what we know about the history of Finnish settlement'. According to Widén, 'it was not until the 1500s that people began to settle in Eastern and Northern Finland'.

65 Lähteenmäki 2006; Lähteenmäki 2003; Lähteenmäki 2005.

66 See, for example, Hautala-Hirvioja 1999b; Heikkilä & Pohjanen 1992; Heikkilä 1997.

1809 in particular. The Finnish War between Sweden and Russia in 1808–1809 imposed heavy civilian and military duties on the population of the Torne Valley, where the new border between Russia and Sweden was extended, and it was followed by famine, disease and a crushing population catastrophe. Thousands of soldiers and civilians, children as well as adults, died of various diseases such as dysentery, typhoid and fever. The death statistics of the civilian population during the war and immediately afterwards are much higher than the statistics from before the war and later in history. This human and demographic catastrophe has, with few exceptions, been ignored in Finnish historiography.[67]

This dark moment in the history of the Torne Valley was not mentioned during the festivities marking the common 200th anniversary or 'jubilee' of Finland and Sweden that were held in Stockholm and Porvoo.[68] However, from the point of view of the Finnish military, cultural and political elite, the subject has been studied closely. The way in which these events affected the common people of the Torne Valley, in whose everyday life they were most concretely actualized, has remained on the margins of both the historiography and the festivities of the 'jubilee'. The aggressive language policy in the part of the Finnish-speaking Torne Valley that remained on the Swedish side[69] has not received the same level of attention as

67 See, for example, Lähteenmäki 2006, 15–60.

68 One of the exceptions is the opera *Sota* [War] written by the Meänkieli-speaking researcher, writer and author of the Meänkieli grammar Bengt Pohjanen and composed by Kaj Chydenius. The opera premiered in Haparanda on 26 June 2009. It does not represent the so-called official interpretation of history, but the culture of popular history and, as such, the politics of northern history as well.

69 See e.g. Kontio 1999; Kontio 2003. The main character in a novel by Mikael Niemi, an author from Pajala, ponders a situation where a generation tries to build its identity somewhere between the proscribed and the prescribed: 'We gradually caught on to the fact that where we lived wasn't really a part of Sweden. We'd just been sort of tagged by accident. […] Ours was a childhood of deprivation. Not material deprivation – we had enough to get by on – but a lack of identity. We were nobody. Our parents were nobody. Our forefathers had made no mark whatsoever on Swedish history. Our last names were unspellable, not to mention being unpronounceable for the few substitute teachers who found their way up north from the real Sweden. None of us dared to write in to *Children's Family Favorites* because Swedish Radio would think we were Finns. Our home villages were too small to appear on maps. […] We spoke with a Finnish accent without being Finnish, and we spoke with a Swedish accent without being Swedish. We were nothing.' Niemi [2000] 2004, 48–49.

the language rights of the Finnish immigrants and their descendants in southern Sweden. The President of Finland Tarja Halonen also neglected the former when she spoke out for the latter in Stockholm during the 'jubilee' celebrations in January 2009.[70]

Subsequently the defining of the boundaries between Finland and Norway/Sweden and between Finland and the Soviet Union closed the paths of the Sámi nomads and relegated the hitherto more or less unified and independent area to the periphery of the mother states. As in the Torne Valley, in Northern, North-eastern and North-western Lapland families were split up into different nationalities. Thus, even peacetime boundary redefinition violently disrupted the everyday lives of people in Lapland.[71] The old Sámi saying 'the family ties, the state divides' still reflects this.

The integration of the border areas into the nation-state and the overarching culture also began at this time. After Finland gained independence in 1917, this development intensified as the common and centrally maintained identity of the young nation was being created and supported in every possible way.

Material and mental destruction

Over the centuries distinctive building cultures have developed in Finnish Lapland – Lapp villages, Southern Lapland farmyards, village communities, market places, centres of trade, population centres, sawmills and mills, few of which have survived to the present. Buildings in Lapland were mostly made of wood until World War II, and the older buildings have been destroyed over time.

In the final stages of the Second World War, in the autumn of 1944, when the rest of Finland had already begun reconstruction and not many even seemed to understand that Lapland was still engaged in a full-blown war,[72] Lapland collectively experienced a material, mental and cultural

70 Interview with the President of Finland Tarja Halonen on YLE TV1 news on 15 January 2009.

71 Lähteenmäki 2006.

72 The expression 'Winter War [1939–40] and Continuation War [1941–44]', which

catastrophe when the retreating German troops, pursued by Finns, destroyed virtually the entire material culture, buildings and infrastructure of the province. Private homes, public buildings, churches and vicarages alike were burnt. In many villages and some population centres more than 90 per cent of the buildings were destroyed. At the same time a large part of the roads, bridges and railways were destroyed and/or mined.[73] With the coming of modern winter and nature tourism in the 1920's and 1930's, an abundance of tourism-related buildings, cabins, hostels and modern hotels had been built in Lapland. Now all that remained of them was ashes and mined ruins.[74]

In the devastated area of Northern Finland, altogether 21,600 buildings were built or repaired by 1953, 76 per cent of which, in the countryside, were new buildings. A planning organization drafted house models for the countryside and population centres.[75] The rapid, massive reconstruction of houses at a time when there was a serious shortage of materials through a co-ordinated planning project changed the northern material and mental landscape in a drastic way.

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is established in the Finnish historical discourse, erases the Lapland War 1944–45 from the national memory of the Second World War. See, for example, Tuominen 2003, 102–103. A recent example of the treatment of the war in Lapland and the marginalization of its material, social and emotional consequences is Professor Henrik Meinander's work *Suomi 1944. Sota, yhteiskunta, tunnemaisema* ['Finland 1944: War, society and emotional landscape']. The merit of this work is that it studies closely Finland as the losing party in the war and the new Finland that emerged from the war in terms of the world of mental experience, taking into account also the international context. However, the events of the war in 1944, including destruction, reconstruction and the return to peace are seen in the collective national experience as being very homogeneous and compact. The Lappish people's experience of the war, evacuation and reconstruction are dealt with only in the chapter on October 1944, and are mentioned only briefly elsewhere in the book. As far as Lapland is concerned, the 'emotional landscape' mentioned in the title of the book is barely dealt with at all. Even the photographs of the Lapland war are presented with no explanation of where they were taken and are combined with the general collective experience of the Continuation War. Meinander 2009, 295–296, 299, 307–331 et passim. Concerning the photographs, see Meinander 2009, 353 ja 396; compare Tuominen 2001b, 329 and Tuominen 2001b, 360.

73 Ursin 1980, 14–176; Tuominen 2001b; Tuominen 2003.

74 Hautajärvi 1995.

75 Ursin 1980, 181–367.

Before this devastation, the civil population of Lapland – over 100,000 people, both Finns and Sámi – had been evacuated to Northern Sweden and southern Finland, and returning home meant starting from zero. Only a small proportion of domestic portables could be taken along when the population was evacuated, and due to lack of time or effort the remaining property was not always very carefully concealed. In any case, many left their homes convinced that the next resident would be a Soviet occupier. Thus, along with the furniture, textiles, lamps, dishes, household, agricultural and reindeer herding equipment, clothing, bed linen, books, photographs and toys were often destroyed.[76]

The cultural shock was greatest for the Sámi, who were mostly evacuated to Central Ostrobothnia. Furthermore, the number of Sámi who perished during the evacuation was proportionally greater than among the Finns who were evacuated. The consequences of this epilogue to the war were harshest for the Petsamo Skolts whose 'temporary' evacuation turned out to be permanent. Returning home, the Sámi brought with them new ways, clothing and material culture. An unprecedented, radical breach had occurred in the perpetual continuum.[77]

For many the destruction of their home meant losing the connection, all-important for identity, to their own past. This connection originates and lives in artefacts, places, spaces, and landscapes that carry memories and emotional experiences.[78] The devastation of the war and the ensuing reconstruction had its effect on childhood, people's homes, and the physical and mental landscapes of Lapland. The impact was enormous, penetrating deep into the culture, and recurring over time.

Historian Maria Lähteenmäki has called for revisiting interpretations of the Lapland War and the destruction of the province, in relation to the co-operation agreement made with Germany in the summer of 1940, and the political decisions that were made in the autumn of 1940 allowing German troops passage through Finland for their occupation of northern Norway. In Lähteenmäki's opinion it would be naive to think that northern people had not noticed the overall situation of the war: Lapland was abandoned

76 Ursin 1980, 29–32, 41–63; Tuominen, 2001b; Tuominen 2003; Lähteenmäki 1999, 176–219.

77 Lehtola V-P. 1994; Tuominen 2001; Tuominen 2003.

78 Tuominen 2003; Tuominen 2001b; Lähteenmäki 1999, 210–221.

as an area of operations to the German armed forces, so that the rest of the country and Karelia could be saved. The readiness to cede the part of Lapland that lies above the Arctic Circle to the Soviet Union as a condition for saving Karelia was already apparent in the Winter War peace negotiations of 1940. Lähteenmäki also recognizes that the motive for granting right of passage to the German troops, and the most important strategic objective during the entire Continuation War, was the restoration of Karelia to Finland. She compares this to a situation where parents give up their younger child in order to keep the older one: 'When the older and more beloved one was taken against the will of the parents anyway, the younger, mentally and physically broken one was taken back into the family.'[79]

Compared with the Karelian national landscape, 'barren' and remote Lapland had remained unfamiliar and its significance was vague to the people of 'Finland Proper'. In addition, the war experience in Lapland had taken a profoundly different shape from the Finnish war experience, which is generally thought of as homogeneous. The Lappish experience of war was mostly ignored, which led to a profound sense of inequality. This inequality resurfaced during reconstruction in assessing credit and compensation conditions: sometimes for good reason, sometimes not, the people of Lapland felt that they were worse off than the others who were being assisted: migrant Karelians and veterans of the South.[80] In this scenario, the Petsamo Skolts got the worst deal.

A cruel example of the policy of forgetting in recent Finnish history is related to the so-called partisan attacks by the Soviet Union. Finnish officials refused to evacuate the population of Eastern Lapland and Koillismaa in time despite the clear danger to their lives. The reasons for the decision not to evacuate were military and political and did not take into consideration the possibility of civilian casualties. Women, children and elderly people in outlying villages became a shield against the Soviet Red Army on one hand, and occupied the void that the Germans could have filled on the other.[81] This cost the lives, health and families of many civilians

79 Lähteenmäki 1999, 224–225.

80 Tuominen 2001b; Tuominen 2003; Lähteenmäki 1999, 225–226. Massa 1994, 200–266.

81 See e.g. Lähteenmäki 1999, 143–145.

and destroyed the northern people's faith in a *good world*.[82] The situation was not redeemed by the collective silence that persisted till the turn of the millennium, the reasons for which were political. Only sixty years after the murders of civilians that were called attacks by Soviet 'partisans', did the Finnish government officially recognize and acknowledge what had really happened when it decided, in principle, to pay a one-off compensation to those who have suffered mental trauma or wounds related to the tragedy in the northern border region.[83]

A collective trauma threatens not only the feeling of continuity of an individual but also that of a community and a culture. Psychotherapist Soili Hautamäki states: 'Also the lifeline of a culture breaks if a traumatic event too abruptly reveals too much of value and taken for granted to have been lost for good'.[84] The devastation caused by the Lapland War can, in a way, be said to have broken the lifeline of the culture of Lapland, when it very abruptly revealed to the inhabitants of the province that a great deal that had been taken for granted was lost: along with the material and social destruction, collective self-esteem and trust in national equality were also destroyed. Reconstructing these is difficult, and progress has been slow.

Northern cultural history and the narcissistic balance of culture

Northern cultural history can in a way be seen as having become a part of the mental reconstruction of Lapland, which is still incomplete. Northern cultural history seeks alternative levels and methods of articulation, transition and breaching points from old frameworks of research, and new possibilities for positioning and stances[85]. The teaching and research pro-

82 Concerning 'faith in a good world', see Tuominen 2001a; Tuominen 2005a. For the theoretical background, see also Hautamäki 1988; Siltala 1992, 11–24.

83 See e.g. Tuomaala 2008, 148–158.

84 Hautamäki 1988, 78.

85 Regarding the concept of stance instead of positioning or position, see, for example, Saarinen S. 2005, 40–41. In the everyday language of Lapland the word 'stance' [*asento*] has its own, perpetual meaning that is suitable as a metaphor in this context as well. It refers to a place where one takes a break while doing forestry, hunting, fishing

jects of northern cultural history deliberately attempt to deconstruct the given centre–periphery dichotomy and seek a new, emancipatory research method instead of repeating the *iconic clichés* – whether these clichés are related to the exoticizing perception of the Sámi, other stereotypes about Lapland, tourism in Lapland or the poverty themes of the discourse about migration and the emptying of Lapland.[86]

Referring to northern cultural history, professor Kari Immonen has argued that periphery exists only in people's minds.[87] The idea may seem unreasonable to the people in northernmost Lapland who have waited for decades to be included in the TV and radio broadcasting area one channel at a time and who still remain outside the mobile phone network even though the land line network is being demolished, and who have to give birth to their children hundreds of kilometres away from home. On the other hand, as I have also tried to establish in this article, periphery does not simply *exist*; it is *created*. A reasonable question to ask is whose mind created the idea of the North as periphery. When 'civilization found' them, the people of Lapland did not know they were living in the periphery where the world ends, as Jean-François Regnard put it,[88] until people from the South came to tell them about it.

Today the Sámi aspiration to differentiate themselves ethnically is natural and even necessary from the point of view of the survival of a minority culture. The overt ethnocentrism and traditional, benevolent lappology[89] of Central European and Finnish cultural travellers have been replaced by Sámi research that has increasingly been taken over by the Sámi themselves. This research asks how to take care of and 'negotiate' the distinctiveness that traditionally has been received as stereotypes, iconic clichés, otherness

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or gathering berries and lights a fire, has coffee and eats one's packed lunch: a place where one stops to ponder.

86 See e.g. Tuominen 2004; Tuominen 2010, 25–27.

87 'In Immonen's view, cultural history is not periphery but centres. In any case, centre, and periphery on the other hand, are not things that are but in people's minds, constructed ways of thinking.' Järvinen 2007. The article summarizes the presentation Immonen gave at the tenth anniversary of cultural history as a subject at the University of Lapland on 11 May 2007. Immonen 2007.

88 Regnard (1731) in Pinkerton 1808–1814, 175.

89 Mathisen 1994; Pentikäinen 1995, 38–59; Pulkkinen 2005, 189–190; Lehtola V-P. 2008, 139–142.

and exoticism.[90] This issue also applies to the study of northern culture and society more broadly: how to bring into the field that is being studied and intellectualized the polyphonic everyday northern reality that different population groups have shared and continue to share in Lapland and that, in both scholarship and public discourse, has been invalidated, disregarded and forgotten or ridiculed?

The study of northern everyday life faces many challenges. Future barometers, demographic reports, the shutdown or moving of production to Southern Finland and abroad, and the upgrading of industry have shown that the trend is problematic in many respects and more problems can be expected. The Finnish 'regional development policy' in the post-war sense is no longer a practical reality, but the concept of a 'development region' has become rooted so deeply in the national mentality that Finland still does not have an articulate policy for the northern areas that looks to the past, present and future. In this situation the people of Lapland perhaps need what could be called a narcissistic attitude towards their own culture: a clear recognition of the special and distinctive character of the northern past and everyday life that gives rise to cultural vitality and a sense of the continuity of life.[91] This is one reason why the studying and teaching of northern cultural history is so important.

There have long been discussions about the colonization of the Arctic region in Finland and the other Nordic countries. The greatest disagreements in both research and policy fora have been over the question of how to approach the inclusion of Lapland in the settlement – and thus the use and ownership of land – of old Lapp villages, the hunting, fishing and reindeer herding Sámi and the settlers, as well as the right to practise their livelihoods. History has a strong presence and generates high passions both in science and other public discourses and political decision-making.[92] It has also been suggested that European post-colonial theory has been

90 See e.g. Aikio 1999; Lehtola V-P. 1997b; Lehtola V-P. 2005.

91 Concerning the concept of the continuity of life more generally, see Siltala 1992, 11–24; Tuominen 2001a; Tuominen 2005a; Tuominen 2005b; Hautamäki 1988, 77–78.

92 See e.g. Tuominen 2005d. This was clearly seen also at the public defence of Matti Enbuske's doctoral thesis at the University of Oulu on 14 June 2008. From the audience Doctor of Laws Kaisa Korpijaakko and the President of the Sámi Parliament of Finland Klemetti Näkkäläjärvi strongly criticized the doctoral thesis and the motives

forcefully and rigidly imposed on the northern study of history, producing an interpretation of history that has nothing to do with the northern reality as revealed by documentary sources.[93]

These various dynamics have aroused and will continue to arouse a necessary debate about a constellation of questions: What is the nature of the relationship between the ethnic groups of northernmost Finland (as well as Sweden and Norway) and the Finnish (and Swedish and Norwegian) authorities and their use of power? What kinds of historico-political interests influence the various interpretations, and what kinds of tools are necessary to make those interests visible? What kind of (hidden) colonialism does the tourism industry of Lapland produce and how could its strategies be deconstructed through research? And on the other hand, how effectively does, for example, post-colonial and orientalist discourse[94] help us understand and conceptualize the encounters, oppression and survival strategies of the ethnic and social groups of the Arctic region? What generally is or should be the role of theory in interpreting the past and present experiences of living in the world and encountering regional and local polyphonic and multiethnic communities that scarcely conform to theoretical models that were once considered to be universal?

In northern cultural history in general – in a more or less similar way as with women and gender history and the history of indigenous people, ethnic and cultural minorities – four successive and partly overlapping phases or tendencies can be seen:

1. The phase of the history of misery;

2. The phase of heroic history, or, in this case, the history of northern enlightenment, progress and modernization, and traditional lappology;

3. The phase of post-colonial history, revealing and deconstructing stereotypes and iconic clichés related to northern people, culture and

for writing it, which were seen as being ethnocentric.

93 Enbuske 2008a.

94 For a critical analysis of the dualism of the post-colonial orientalism research that lumps together both 'the East' and 'the West' and bundles up their internal differences, see e.g. Varpio 2005.

history in policy, economics, education, culture and historiography, and challenging traditional lappology;

4. A phase that can be called *the northern turn*. That is the history of agency and emancipation that turns the colonial and touristic gaze into the gaze of the object itself toward the tourist and colonizer. This phase challenges the history of misery, the heroic history, and the post colonial approach, too, and asks, as my colleague, professor of Sámi culture Veli-Pekka Lehtola put it during a private discussion in the mid-1990's: 'Now we've revealed the stereotypes and colonization and it's about time we ask: *so what?*'

According to Lehtola, in reflecting on the history of the Sámi, seeing the Sámi as victims and the denial that colonization ever happened are two extreme positions that are sometimes taken:

> Studying the external effect and healing the wounds of colonialism is important, but we must be able to study the history of the Sámi in a context other than colonization as well. Thus the view shifts to the Sámi themselves and peeks behind the picture painted by the sources. Who were the people that the comers met in the field? What did the Sámi themselves do and how did they relate to the comers and what else did they do in their lives?[95]

What Lehtola says above goes not only for the Sámi but also for other inhabitants of the North. Here, the object becomes the subject, and the periphery turns into the *creative margin*, as Natalie Zemon Davis puts it.[96]

If the word 'periphery' is used at all in northern cultural history anymore, it is seen more as an ethnocentric tool than a given state of otherness – keeping in mind Giovanni Levi's note about how many significant things are happening even when it seems, as viewed from elsewhere, that nothing is happening.[97]

Finnish historian Pentti Renvall has stated that culture means in an essential way that the past lives in us.[98] This cannot mean simply that the

95 Lehtola 2010a.

96 Davis 1995, 155 et passim.

97 Levi [1985] 1992, 23. See also Tuominen 1999.

98 Renvall [1965] 1983, 400. Renvall is probably referring to his teacher, Eino Kaila, to whom he dedicated his book. See Kaila 1992, 427.

past influences our present, nor that we live in the past. It also means that we are aware of it and seek to discover how and why the past influences our present.[99] Otherwise we cannot deconstruct the mental and social structures that for centuries have defined centre and periphery, object and subject, what is worth remembering and what may be forgotten. To achieve that deconstruction requires a knowledge of and respect for northern cultural history.

In critically contemplating the strategies of oppression, forgetting and emancipation, northern cultural history must, in any case, attend to an area that a historian of settlements, justice, land rights, ownership and land use does not necessarily notice or even look for in the documents: the colonization of the mind and of history.

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99 Tuominen 2005b.

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The Chemical Age: Presenting history with metaphors*

Asko Nivala

'Organicism' is often regarded as a central trope in the discourse of early Romanticism. Manfred Frank notes that the Romantics were highly critical of the modern mechanistic state, and wished to promote a more organic conception of society, and indeed that the entire Romantic era could be interpreted through this theme.[1] Certainly, Frank's interpretation is convincing. The biology-derived metaphor of the 'organism' is a useful key to the Romantic imagination. However, by contrast, Friedrich Schlegel (1772–1829), one of the most influential theorists of early German Romanticism, modelled the characteristics of the modern epoch in chemical rather than mechanistic terms. He wrote in the collection called 'Fragments' ('Fragmente', 1798) that was published in *Athenäum*-magazine:

> It is natural that the French should more or less dominate the age. They are a chemical nation and in them the chemical sense is most widely developed … Likewise, the age is a chemical one. Revolutions are universal, chemical not organic movements. … That the novel, criticism, wit, sociability, the most recent rhetoric, and all previous history have a chemical makeup is self-evident. But until we have reached the stage of being able to characterize the universe and classify mankind, we have to be content with brief notes on the prevailing mood and individual mannerisms of the age, without even being able to draw a profile of the giant. For how would we go about finding

* I would like to thank the anonymous referees, Bruce Johnson, Sakari Ollitervo, Heli Rantala and Jasmine Westerlund for their most valuable suggestions in preparing this article.

1 Frank 1982, pp. 170–171, 181. See also Beiser 1992, p. 236.

> out if the age is really an individual or perhaps only the collision point of other ages without this kind of preliminary knowledge? Where exactly does it begin and where does it end? How is it possible to understand and punctuate the contemporary period of the world correctly, if one cannot even foresee the general outlines of the subsequent one? By analogy to what I said before, an organic age will follow a chemical one, and then the citizens of the next solar revolution will probably think much less of us than we do now, and consider a great deal of what we now simply marvel at as only the necessary preliminary exercises of humanity.[2]

Schlegel used the metaphor of a chemical age in order to understand his own epoch. This metaphor was useful for describing both current political events and the profiles of literary life. It was self-evident to Schlegel – and possibly for some of his contemporaries – that the culture of his whole age (literature, economics, sociability, history etc.) had a structure that was comparable to chemistry. He did not live a harmonious organic age, but an epoch where the unifying principle functioned more like a chemical compound or a mixture (about which more below). In other words, the analogy between the French Revolution and chemistry enabled him to decipher the whole development of contemporary European culture. Yet Schlegel did not present his periodization as a finished account of his era. He considered it to be a rough sketch drawn from a limited point of view, which only future generations could complete.

A contemporary reader cannot understand Schlegel's chemical metaphor without knowledge of its cultural-historical context. I will suggest a methodology harnessing cultural history to cast explanatory light on Schlegel's chemical metaphors. The issue of chemistry has to some extent already been addressed in the research, but I will give particular emphasis to a hitherto neglected area. That is, the threat of overt political censorship that may have imposed restrictions on Schlegel's expression.[3] Moreover, a

2 Schlegel [1798] 1971, p. 234. (Translation modified.) KFSA II, p. 248. No. 426. Abbreviation KFSA refers to *Kritische Friedrich-Schlegel-Ausgabe*. Translations are mine unless otherwise indicated.

3 Among scholars of Romanticism, Peter Kapitza and Michel Chaouli have been primary in emphasizing the motif of chemistry. Kapitza 1968; Chaouli 2002. Alexander Demandt's comprehensive *Metaphern für Geschichte. Sprachbilder und Gleichnisse im historisch-politischen Denken* (1978) discusses the chemical metaphors only in passing. Demandt 1978, p. 325.

discussion of metaphors can reveal something of the late eighteenth century cultural conventions that were used to make history meaningful by the deployment of mechanical, organic and chemical metaphors. Although my topic is philosophical thought, my approach will be cultural-historical in two senses.

First, in addition to traditional argument analysis, I propose to take account of how those arguments are connected with German culture of the 1790s. I understand philosophical thinking to be a cultural activity, whose presuppositions are provisional and subject to historical change like all human activity. I do not want so much to relativize those arguments, as to make them comprehensible within the historical context in which they were presented. My first methodological supposition is that in general, cultural context will always clarify a particular text.

Second, the cultural-historical study of metaphors used by Schlegel can produce new insights into how history was conceived in the eighteenth century. In this respect, my second methodological principle is that interpretation can proceed from a particular text to the level of the common cultural totality of which it is a part. A part (text) becomes understandable in its connection with its respective whole (con-text), but reciprocally context is always constructed by reference to other texts – specifically primary sources.[4] People use their pre-existing knowledge in order to conceive of new and unknown things. Metaphorical thinking is a linguistic method for relating the new to the familiar.[5] The metaphors that a past culture deployed and the changes in those metaphoric structures constitute both a field of research and a methodological resource for cultural history. The cultural system of metaphors can reveal how a particular culture interpreted and made meaningful its reality by drawing analogies between different things.[6]

4 See Gadamer [1960] 1990, p. 272; Tontti 2005, p. 60.

5 George Lakoff and Mark Johnson have claimed that every conceptual system presupposes a metaphorical system. Lakoff & Johnson 1980, p. 22. Even the etymology of word 'concept' from Latin *capere* (to take) implies a metaphor of grasping something with the hand. The German *Begriff* (concept) is similarly based on the metaphor of *greifen* (grasp).

6 According to Immanuel Kant, analogy means an identity of relation between any two ordered pairs. The analogical mode of producing knowledge follows the form: *A* is to

Schlegel's chemical metaphor came from the field of natural sciences. Comparing history with organic nature had been typical in previous German discourse. Johann Gottfried Herder (1744–1803) in particular described the history of different cultures as an organic growth process.[7] For example, he paralleled the early phase of history to seed in which the potential capacities of the future germinated.[8] In his early writings Schlegel thought that epic mythology was organic seed from which philosophy, fiction and history subsequently diverged into autonomous discourses.[9] According to this trope, the history of different cultures is understood as a cyclical growth from seed to blossom and decay. Schlegel's contemporary audience was familiar with the notion that historical change can be compared with an organic process. I suggest that Schlegel's chemical metaphors are a conscious comment on this discourse.

The confrontation between mechanism and organism was widely used in eighteenth century political theory.[10] According to H. B. Nisbet, Immanuel Kant and Herder applied this distinction in order to criticize absolutism. They thought that the modern state, as for example absolutist Prussia, was similar to a mechanical machine. In this machine, the decision-making functioned at the abstract level, which neglected the local and particular needs of a nation. Furthermore, Herder in particular extended his critique to the modern state in general in addition to the absolutist state: in his view all forms of centralized and standardized bureaucratic government and the specialized division of labor were alienated from the original organic society.[11]

B as C is to X. For instance, hand is to palm as foot is to sole. There can be exactly the same relation between two completely different objects. The analogy between palm and sole does not mean partial similarity between those obviously different things, but it means that palm is in exactly similar relation to hand as sole is to foot. See Kant, *Prolegomena*, A176, § 58. See also KFSA XIII, pp. 314–317.

7 Nisbet 1999; Frank 2006. (For an English summary of Frank's article see p. 540.) See also Irmscher 2001, pp. 116–117; White 1973, pp. 78–79.

8 Herder [1774] 1984, p. 591.

9 KFSA I, p. 6.

10 See Blumenberg [1960] 1998, pp. 91–110; Meyer 1969.

11 Nisbet 1999, p. 87.

In his *Critique of Judgment* (*Kritik der Urteilskraft*, 1790), Kant applied this distinction when he noted that there are organic and mechanical monarchies: the former are constitutional monarchies and the latter are governed by the despotic will of the ruler. In organic monarchy, every subject contributes to the decision making process rather like the members of an organic body. Kant compared mechanical monarchy with a hand mill cranked by the sovereign's will. The subjects are similar to a mechanical wheel, the function of which is the practical realization of the authority's will.[12] In current scholarship, Romanticism is seen to recognize this distinction, and inclining to the organic model. Romanticism is considered as a movement that defended natural organicism against the mechanistic contrivance of the modern state. However, Schlegel's efforts to introduce a third model (chemistry) to this dualism problematize this traditional interpretation of Romanticism.

Witty Metaphors

The endeavour to unite poetry and science was pervasive in the age of Romanticism. I argue that this effort should not be misconstrued as an irrational attempt to blur the boundaries between conceptual and metaphorical thinking. Rather, Romantics had the intellectual honesty to recognize that conceptual language is necessarily dependent on its metaphorical framework. Friedrich Schlegel identifies the chemical with the faculty that he called wit (*Witz*): 'Understanding is mechanical, wit is chemical, genius is organic spirit.'[13] In Immanuel Kant's philosophy, understanding (*Verstand*) connects things together in accordance with a static table of twelve logical categories, which Schlegel thought to be a mechanistic process. One of those categories is even mechanical causal

12 Kant, *KU*, A253 = 256; Blumenberg [1960] 1998, pp. 11–12. Kant did not object monarchy as such, but to its despotic forms. On Kant's admiration of Frederick the Great see Beiser 1992, p. 56. According to Thomas Hobbes, the state is necessarily an artificial mechanism. If subjects relinquish their power to the sovereign, it is possible to abandon the state of nature, i.e. an uncontrollable conflict between people. Hobbes [1651] 1999, p. 7.

13 Schlegel [1798] 1971, p. 221; KFSA II, p. 232. No. 366. Cf. Kapitza 1968, p. 20.

relation between cause and effect. On the other hand, Kant described genius to be natural human ability to give rules to art. He required ingenious artwork to appear as spontaneously created as if it were a biological organism, which can explain why Schlegel is referring to genius as an organic talent.[14]

According to Schlegel, there was however a third human ability. Wit sought metaphorical similarities between different objects or differences between two things that seemed similar. Romantics called this kind of metaphoric knowledge *Witz* in order to distinguish it from ordinary *Wissen*.[15] Moreover, Schlegel connected the chemical wit with the literary form of 'fragment', which was supposed to express the fragmentary character of modern culture.[16] According to Frank, wit was a fragmentary flash that exposed essential connections and differences between concepts. The romantic fragment was a literary genre that mediated those inventions to the reading public.[17]

The fragmentary method of writing deployed wit in order to find definitions for various phenomena. The fragment is not simply a form of literary fiction, but it is a liminal and in a sense transgressive genre between poetical and philosophical discourse.[18] Fragment as a genre is based on wit. Both wit and metaphor are constantly seeking similarities between things.

14 Kant, *KrV*, A67–70 = B93–95; Kant, *KU*, A177–178 = B179–180, §45–46.

15 On wit see especially Eichner 1967, pp. xxxvi–xxxvii; Lacoue-Labarthe & Nancy [1978] 1988, pp. 52–53; Best 1989, passim; Albert 1995, pp. 7–12; Saarinen 2007, p. 170.

16 KFSA II, p. 148. No. 9.

17 Frank 1989, pp. 295–296.

18 It should be remembered that Plato inaugurated philosophy using the literary genre of dialogue. On the way Schlegel questioned the demarcation line between philosophy and literature as two distinct genres see Lacoue-Labarthe & Nancy [1978] 1988, pp. 40, 53, 65, 85, 87, 90–91, 114. Cf. Chaouli 2002, p. 111. This issue is related to chemical metaphors, for a genre (from Latin *genus*) is something that belongs under the biological derived metaphor of literary genus. German *Art* or *Gattung* can refer both to zoological (or botanic) breed and a literary genre. The comparison between a poem and a living creature (ζῷον) is already made by Aristotle who inaugurated the occidental classification of literary genres. Aristotle, *Poet.* 1447a, 1450b30. Cf. Derrida [1972] 2004, pp. 84–85. Instead of this arbitrary organic classification, Schlegel favoured in his literary experiments the chemical mixture between different genres. A fragment is this kind of chemical mixture between philosophy and poetry.

Therefore the genre of fragment is comparable to metaphorical poetic logic in general. If fragments are metaphorical definitions or characterizations of things, it is necessary to consider how Schlegel conceived the act of defining.[19] Moreover, this will clarify the sense in which the conceptual and metaphorical languages are interdependent. As Werner Stegmaier has noted, Kant already observed that philosophy is unable to enforce prescriptive definitions to its concepts. Philosophy can only extrapolate from existing and spontaneous linguistic usage. Only mathematics can truly construct concepts, for it is completely independent of experience. Moreover, only mathematical concepts can be defined unambiguously. By contrast, philosophy can only clarify its concepts with other concepts borrowed from a natural language. Stegmaier explains the Hegelian concept of animate spirit from this theory of processual philosophical concepts.[20] However, it is equally possible to connect this notion with Schlegel's definition of Romantic poetry that is perpetually becoming and never perfected as a completed system.[21]

The metaphors included in Romantic fragments are temporary and sketchy definitions that are applied to reality. They can be constantly extended. Schlegel was sceptical of the possibility that philosophy could proceed according to binding and rigid definitions. He tried to introduce the concept of characterization instead of definition:

> (*Character* is something other than a *definition*. *definitio* specifies the *genus*, and the *differentiam specificam*. But in philosophy we neither want nor are we able to do this since the differentia specifica would be infinite.) If we set ourselves the task of *determining the character of philosophy*, this does not mean *determining it exactly*, for this would be defining; rather, only inasmuch as it is possible for our purpose.[22]

Schlegel distanced himself from the Aristotelian logic and its tendency to consider knowledge as a hierarchical system. According to this view, knowledge would consist of propositions that give *genus* and *differentia*

19 Cf. Chaouli 2002, p. 113.

20 See Stegmaier 1997.

21 See KFSA II, p. 183. No. 116; KFSA II, p. 265. No. 95. Cf. Blumenberg [1960] 1998, pp. 84–86.

22 Schlegel 1997 (1800-1801), p. 242; KFSA XII, p. 4.

specifica of an object. Philosophy is not analogous to mathematical logic: it cannot define (*definieren*) its objects in an exhaustive and formal way. Instead, it is permanently only drafting solutions. In other words, this kind of non-mathematical knowledge is in a constant process of self-corrective determination (*bestimmen*). For instance, it is impossible to define the historical concept of 'epoch' with the same validity and precision that geometry can define a point as a zero-dimensional object. The dynamic and variable nature of concepts is a result of their historicity. History as an empirical realism is the reverse of mathematical rational knowledge. If the mathematical method is construction, the historical method is characterization. If this characterization operates with symbolic signs, it is then hermeneutical interpretation.[23]

Many contemporary philosophers share this scepticism regarding the enterprise to achieve mathematical, precise and formal language that would be decontaminated from the carnal impurities of senses, culture and history. As Michel Chaouli emphasizes, nobody has succeeded in concretizing Leibniz's utopia of universal formal language that could replace inaccurate natural languages. Thus, Schlegel considered chemistry to be a better analogy for the function of language than mathematics is.[24] It is essential to note that the claim of mathematical precision is also a metaphor; that is, this conception presupposes that language is analogous to mathematics. The mathematical conception of language assumes that forming true propositions according to syntactic rules of grammar is making an equation.[25]

23 KFSA XII, p. 12.

24 Chaouli 2002, p. 9. Cf. Blumenberg [1960] 1998, p. 7.

25 On the other hand, both Schlegel and Novalis (Friedrich von Hardenberg, 1772–1801) described the finite human understanding according to a mathematical metaphor. They claimed that philosophical thinking resembles infinitesimal calculus. The value of a function approaches zero infinitely, but never acquires it: $\lim_{z\to\infty} \frac{x}{z} = 0$. See Schanze 1966, p. 88; Balmes 1987, pp. 454–458; Stockinger 2003, p. 92. For Romantics, this new field of mathematics, developed by Newton and Leibniz in the eighteenth century, was a metaphor for unfinished modern culture. Modern man must settle for the approximate values of reality. Yet, this analogy between infinitesimal calculus and early Romantic anti-foundationalism suggested that even mathematics was unable to define the concept of infinity other than by referring to limiting value. In other words, to achieve a complete system of knowledge is as impossible as division

Hans Blumenberg has formulated the following argument against the formalized conception of language: if philosophical language could relinquish all its sensual metaphoric, then there would be no need for conceptual history. Language would be a completely rational and transparent medium for grasping reality.[26] Yet, even the concept of 'ground' is not pure abstraction, but metaphorically concretizes the act of founding a claim to a secure 'ground'.[27] I would add that this is not only a matter of the etymological origin or connotation of words. The conception itself has a metaphorical structure. For example, there is an analogical relationship between the act of establishing a methodologically reliable way towards the research results and the act of building a road. To purify language from all analogical structures would require the abandonment of all sensuously grounded signs and replacing them with purely arbitrary mathematic signs such as x, y or z. Schlegel thought that it would be impossible to replace natural languages with this kind of formal language. Instead, he considered grammar to be comparable to chemistry: 'Philology is … enthusiasm for chemical knowledge; for grammar is surely only the philosophical part of the universal art of dividing and joining.'[28]

If mathematics was an inadequate model for describing language, in what sense did chemistry provide a better one for Schlegel's purposes? If the metaphor of chemistry is explicated, it is possible to find at least two subordinated metaphors: the metaphor of a chemical compound and a solution.[29] According to Peter Kapitza, in the eighteenth century, chemistry was defined using the concept of a compound or a mixture (*Mischung*). According to the previous scientific theory, combustion *released* phlogiston. However, the birth of chemistry as a science was based on the innovative insight that combustion actually *binds* oxygen. Consequently, the chemical method did not involve just the analysis of matter down

by zero. See KFSA XVI, p. 165. No. V:952.

26 Blumenberg [1960] 1998, pp. 7–8.

27 Frank 2006, p. 128.

28 (My ellipsis.) Schlegel [1798] 1971, p. 228; KFSA II, p. 241. No. 404.

29 The metaphors of compound and solution are examples of what Paul Ricœur refers to with his concept of root metaphor. Ricœur 1976, p. 64. If we follow Ricœur's methodology to analyse metaphors, it is possible that the metaphor of chemistry will open up a whole structure of new metaphors subordinated to it.

through smaller and smaller parts, but it was as much about synthesizing completely new compounds.[30] For Michel Chaouli, the German prefix *Ver-* is an instructive example of how Schlegel understood the function of language. Adding the prefix to different words (for instance *Stehen*, to stand) forms completely new words (like *Verstehen*, to understand), which resembled the chemical method of making new compounds. Chaouli explains with the aid of Schlegel's private notebooks that he did not conceive the language as a mathematical calculation but as a laboratory in which one can conduct experiments by adding syllables and letters to words that will produce completely new meanings to language.[31] One can find other examples of how the German philosophy of the 1790s utilized the idea of adding syllables and words together. This is something totally different as compared with, for example, Baruch Spinoza's geometrical method.[32]

In addition to uniting things that appear detached, the chemical metaphor invokes opposite process: separating two apparently united things with the help of a solution (*Auflösung* or *Lösung*).[33] To solve problems by making conceptual distinctions resembles the chemical process of clearing a murky mixture by dissolving its components. For instance, water as a polar solvent dissolves hydrophilic substances leaving hydrophobic substances insoluble. There is a risk to over-emphasize the metaphor of compound as opposed to solution. The danger is that one will reinforce the superficial interpretation of Romanticism as an irrational enthusi-

30 Kapitza 1968, pp. 12, 21–22: Chaouli 2002, pp. 90–97.

31 Chaouli 2002, pp. 5, 21–25, 103, 138, 161–164. Winfried Menninghaus, for his part, has claimed that early Romantics understood language according to mathematical analogy. Menninghaus 1989, p. 49. On Chaouli's critique of Menninghaus see Chaouli 2002, pp. 8, 80, 215–216.

32 For instance, J. G. Fichte introduced *Tathandlung* (deed-action or fact-act) that was supposed to be parallel to *Tatsache* (fact). Fichte [1794] 1988, p. 11. Similarly, Friedrich Hölderlin pondered how *Urteil* (judgment) was divided to *Ur-* (original) and *Teil* (part). Hölderlin 2000 (post.), 52. In the twentieth century, Martin Heidegger drew on this German tradition to make philosophy with prefixes.

33 See KFSA II, p. 150. No. 32. The metaphor of solution is typical of his contemporary philosophy. Kant used the metaphor of *Auflösung* when he described the dialectical 'solution' to the contradictions of reason. Interestingly enough, Kant is conscious of chemical metaphors, because he sometimes used explicitly chemical terms. See Kant, *KpV*, A291. On the English metaphorical use of solution see Lakoff & Johnson 1980, pp. 143–149.

asm for pristine unity. The early Romantics not only aimed to ascend dialectically towards a unity behind opposites, but also to unravel those things that appear united to common sense, although they actually contain a contradiction.[34] Different substances can be united as a compound, but conversely it is possible to break down a solid substance into different compounds. According to Schlegel, the scientific innovation can be compared to this process. It is heuristic experimentation where new definitions of a concept are sought by constantly separating and uniting things: 'The method of idealism is an *experimenting that combines*.'[35] This experimenting implies that the definitions of concepts are not fixed and final, but dynamic and constantly self-corrective. However, one should not confuse Schlegel's notion of the impossibility of *final* truths with later deconstruction and its claim that one cannot distinguish true from untrue.[36] Although Schlegel criticized the traditional correspondence theory of truth, he elaborated a coherence theory of truth, according to which it is impossible to achieve final truth because science must always correct itself infinitely.[37]

Chemical history

In the previous section, I discussed how Schlegel conceived the structure of metaphorical language. I will now explore his conceptualization of the era following the French Revolution as a chemical age. Of course he did not think that revolution as such could be reduced to an electrochemical phenomenon. Rather, he was searching for a metaphorical connection between two things from different fields of reality. Herder had already used this method before Schlegel. However, Herder preferred organic and natural development over modern, mechanistic and artificial history.[38]

34 According to Schlegel dialectics consist only of contradiction between thesis and antithesis without atonement in synthesis. KFSA XVIII, p. 8. No. 45.

35 Schlegel 1997 (1800-1801), p. 257; KFSA XII, p. 21.

36 Cf. Derrida [1972] 2004, p. 166.

37 On the Romantic coherence theory of truth see Frank 1998, p. 854; Millán-Zaibert 2007, p. 40.

38 Herder [1774] 1984, p. 638; Nisbet 1999, pp. 87–88.

By contrast Schlegel's aim was to elaborate a definition of the modern epoch that would be commensurate with its own immanent criteria of evaluation. Herder was self-contradictory, in that while he believed one should always evaluate different eras according to their own criteria, at the same time he criticized the modern epoch by using organic criteria foreign to it. Schlegel developed the chemical metaphor to replace the mechanistic one that was inadequate to describe the artificiality of the modern epoch properly.[39] The metaphor of a chemical age differed from the organic idea of harmonized and teleological growth by emphasizing interruption and heterogeneity instead of continuity and homogeneity. When characterizing the history writing in the nineteenth century, Hayden White builds a dichotomy between mechanistic and organic models.[40] Schlegel's chemical model provides an alternative to this dualism.

In the eighteenth century, organic models appeared suitable for depicting history. Chemical imagery never replaced this organic paradigm, but Schlegel's metaphor of a chemical age belongs to a period of transition when chemical imagery is introduced alongside the organic one. While Herder tended herbs and seedlings in his Weimar garden, F. W. J. Schelling and Percy Shelley, tried to advance their philosophical studies on the mystery of life by practical chemical experiments.[41] This change is recognizable in J. W. von Goethe's *œuvre*, which extends from the eighteenth to the nineteenth century. The protagonist of *The Sorrows of Young Werther* (*Die Leiden des jungen Werthers*, 1774) was still a vulnerable and sensitive Werther who is touched by nature or Homer's epics. At the turn of the nineteenth century, he was replaced by Dr. Faust who withdrew into a scientific sanctum with his test tubes and hermetic schemes. Goethe utilized chemical and alchemical allegories to describe modern man in the tragedies *Faust I* (1808) and *Faust II* (1832). In *Faust II*, for example

39 Philippe Lacoue-Labarthe and Jean-Luc Nancy have problematized the common interpretation of early Romantics as uncritical worshippers of the 'natural'. Lacoue-Labarthe & Nancy [1978] 1988, p. 104.

40 White 1973, p. 17.

41 As Chaouli notes, most of the other Romantics were much more familiar with practical chemistry than Schlegel. Chaouli 2002, p. 2. Schlegel's education in classical philology did not embrace chemical experiments, but he only found it appropriate as a metaphor for modern culture.

Faust's servant Wagner fabricates an alchemic Homunculus who is an artificial man living in a test tube. Another telling example is *Frankenstein* (1818) by Mary Shelley, where a secret, apparently electrochemical process, brings an artificial creature to life. In contrast to the more optimistic Schlegel, both *Faust* and *Frankenstein* connect the chemical nature of modern culture with dystopian fears aroused by the Industrial Revolution.

Concepts and metaphors are always historical. Schlegel was conscious of the problem of linguistic historical modeling. He thought that the cognitive fields of history and language overlapped.[42] When Schlegel described history according to the metaphor of chemistry, he also assigned to his concept of fragment a historico-philosophical meaning. That is, the interpretation of the modern epoch as a fragmentary era meant that his contemporary era was the age of mere tendencies. Schlegel explained the concept of tendency in a following way: 'in the dialect of the "Fragments", the word would mean that everything is still only tendency, that this age is the age of tendencies.'[43]

Through the concept of tendency Schlegel claimed that the modern age is not a straightforward repetition of former eras. How is it possible that completely new cultural compounds are mixed from the elements that are inherited from previous cultures? Although Schlegel thought that there are cultural and historical conditions framing human action, he did not think that those conditions necessarily determine it. The difference between organic and chemical metaphors is that former implied a cyclical model of natural repetition. Furthermore, the biological preformation theory implied that history consisted of the imitation of pre-conceived forms.[44] But according to Schlegel, modern history is not pre-determined. It is a movement to an open future. Therefore modern history is not an organic (that is, teleological) process although it may become so in the future.

42 See KFSA XIV, p. 6.

43 Schlegel [1800] 1997, p. 122; KFSA II, p. 367.

44 According to Hans Dietrich Irmscher, the background for Herder's organic metaphors was the debate between preformation and epigenesis theories. The epigenetic interpretation of history means that it tends to produce more and more complicated forms by dividing itself into divergent cultural forms. It is a movement from original natural unity to modern fragmentation. Irmscher 2001, pp. 109–110. Cf. Kapitza 1968, pp. 23–24. See also Turunen 2006 (for English summary see p. 541).

Especially in his early studies Schlegel emphasized that ancient history is organic and spontaneous while modern history is artificial and consciously produced.[45] Yet, modern culture is not mechanistic, so that chemistry provides a better metaphor for describing it. Modern culture is based on artificial cultural compounds, intentional actions and planning. The age of the French Revolution, in particular, highlighted to Schlegel the potential of wit. Schlegel compared wit metaphorically to friction. The flashing sparks and electric tension between people of different backgrounds can produce a dialogical encounter and thereby lead to innovation.[46] Wit was the power to produce new cultural forms by joining the artificial and unnatural compounds of formerly separated aspects or by separating formerly joined things.[47]

In *Athenäum*-fragments, Schlegel interpreted the concept of fragment at the historico-philosophical level. He connected it with the unpredictability of the future:

> A project is the subjective seed of a developing object. … The sense for projects – which one might call fragments of the future – is distinguishable from the sense for fragments of the past only by its direction: progressive in the former, regressive in the latter. What is essential is to be able to idealize and realize objects immediately and simultaneously: to complete them and in part carry them out within oneself. Since the transcendental is precisely whatever relates to the joining or separating of the ideal and the real, one might very well say that the sense for fragments and projects is the transcendental element of the historical spirit.[48]

Schlegel further elaborated Kant's conception of time as a collective human form of intuition.[49] According to Schlegel, both the past and the future exist at present as tendencies and projects. He thought that every present moment had the endless potential of future possibilities.[50] Reinhart Koselleck has argued that at the end of the eighteenth century a new sense

45 KFSA I, pp. 224, 269.

46 KFSA II, p. 150. No. 34.

47 See note 15.

48 (Translation modified; my ellipsis.) Schlegel [1798] 1971, p. 164; KFSA II, pp. 168–169. No. 22.

49 Cf. Kant, *KrV*, A36 = B53.

50 KFSA XVIII, p. 215. No. IV:250.

developed for the open, unpredictable future that could bring completely new and surprising incidents.[51]

Schlegel's metaphor of the present projects as the seeds of the future indicates that he never completely abandoned organic imagery. Yet, because of the chemical nature of wit behind fragments, he associated fragmentarity more usually with chemistry.[52] This already emerged in my first citation: Schlegel emphasized that modern history is chemical, not organic. In other words, the turbulent transitional phase after the year 1789 was not stable organic growth. It consisted of sudden man-made interruptions, which could lead to unpredictable reactions and to a completely new era of mankind. According to Schlegel's experience, the present had cut its roots to the past and organic metaphors had to give way to unforeseeable reactions in a test tube. Schlegel explicitly compared the social experiments of the French Revolutionary Government with experiments in a laboratory.[53]

To conceive of history as a striving for an open future signified a change in the notion of history. History was no more conceived simply as an organic or teleological process.[54] That is to say, it was not considered according to a purpose (*telos*) that would be outside of history. For Schlegel, the essential principle of history is its own immanent movement towards the as yet undetermined future. The tendencies that were bubbling in the test tube of his contemporary history could lead history in a completely new direction, or on the other hand remain only as unfulfilled tendencies. In fact, the metaphor of seed that was occasionally used by the Romantics, also contested the finalism[55] of organic thinking. Only a small number

51 Koselleck [1979] 2004, p. 242.

52 See for example KFSA II, p. 148. No. 9. Although Schlegel made a distinction between chemical wit and organic genius, he also characterized wit to be fragmentary ingenuity (*Genialität*). *Prima facie* this seems to be contradictory, but the idea behind this was that holistic organic thought is impossible for limited human beings, whereupon ingenuity can only appear in a fragmented chemical manner. KFSA II, p. 243. No. 412.

53 KFSA II, p. 248. No. 426.

54 On the teleological implications of the organicist models in history writing cf. White 1973, p. 16.

55 'Finalism' is the philosophical view that there are final causes in nature. In this case it means that organisms can be explained in terms of their end or purpose. The metaphor

of seeds will be fertilized, an analogy with the destiny of most historical tendencies.[56]

This rather modern conception of the subjective construction of the future as projects in the present was not simply a product of philosophical reasoning. It is interesting that for Kant and Schlegel it was in the first instance a historical event, the French Revolution, that indicated how the social order is produced by time-bound human actions and plans, and is not an immutable order made by God. The historico-philosophical research is always dependent on the level of concrete historical events. Kant defined this connection between revolution and planning the future in his essay 'A Renewed Attempt to Answer the Question: "Is the Human Race Continually Improving?"' from *The Contest of Faculties* (*Der Streit der Fakultäten*, 1798). According to Kant, the only certain way to make social prognoses *a priori*, is to first make plans and then realize them.[57] Furthermore, Kant stresses that he is referring to a certain political programme.[58] Following Reinhart Koselleck it is possible to claim that after the French Revolution historical time was no longer conceived as a homogeneous process of recurring events but as a succession of singular events. The Revolution was an irreversible event. After that change, the planning for the future assumed a more radical meaning, for it was thought possible to accelerate the coming revolution by intervening in present events.[59]

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of unfertilized seeds can be interpreted as a critique of finalism.

56 Novalis [1798] 2005, p. 285. No. 114. The name of Novalis' fragment collection is *Grains of Pollen* (*Blüthenstaub*, 1798). According to this metaphor, his fragments are analogous to incomplete thoughts, which receive their meaning after they have been 'sown' to the reading public. See Lacoue-Labarthe & Nancy [1978] 1988, p. 49. In my view, Novalis is here referring to the parable of the Sower in the synoptic Gospels. Matthew 13:1–9; Mark 4:1–9; Luke 8:4–8.

57 Kant [1798] 1977, p. 177.

58 'The revolution which we have seen taking place in our own times in a nation of gifted people may succeed, or it may fail. … But I maintain that this revolution has aroused in the hearts and desires of all spectators who are not themselves caught up in it a sympathy which borders almost on enthusiasm, although the very utterance of this sympathy was fraught with danger. It cannot therefore have been caused by anything other than a moral disposition within the human race.' (My ellipsis.) Kant [1798] 1977, p. 182. Kant's remark on the danger of expressing the hope of revolution refers to the fact that his own writings had been censored. See Beiser 1992, p. 52.

59 Koselleck [1979] 2004, pp. 50–51; Behrens 1984, pp. 11–13, 16.

Metaphors as Political Code Language

Friedrich Schlegel's metaphor of chemical age can be interpreted as an addition to the former mechanistic and organic metaphors used in his contemporary political discourse. He did not understand the making of new concepts as a mathematically precise construction but as a metaphorical characterization. However, there is also another reason behind the abundant use of metaphors. One essential difference between our own culture and late eighteenth century German culture is censorship. There has been surprisingly little research conducted on the significance of censorship in Romantic theory.[60] As Leo Strauss has noted, authors writing under censorship have always used ciphers in order to express their views indirectly through metaphors or allegories that only the initiates can decipher.[61]

Although Schlegel's notion of a chemical age demands cultural historical research in order to become explicable to a contemporary reader, it is noteworthy that this metaphor was difficult also for his own contemporaries. That early Romantic texts were hard going for contemporary readers becomes evident in their responses. Schlegel summarized the feedback that the *Athenäum*-magazine received in his essay 'On Incomprehensibility' ('Über die Unverständlichkeit', 1800). In this article, Schlegel defended the writings of the Jena circle, especially their anonymously published collaborative fragment collection 'Fragments', against their critics who claimed their writings to be simply incomprehensible.[62] This essay provides source material for studying how Schlegel wanted his readers to approach the metaphoric language of *Athenäum*-fragments.

The essay was the last text ever published in *Athenäum*-magazine. Its intention was to teach the future readers in the approaching nineteenth century to interpret the metaphorical language of early Romanticism.

60 For example Manfred Frank and Ludwig Stockinger have recognized the problem, but an overall interpretation of this theme remains to be done. See Stockinger 1988, pp. 189, 191, 205; Frank 1989, p. 292; Frank 1998, pp. 19–20, 932, 935. On censorship in the eighteenth century in general see Plachta 1994.

61 Strauss [1952] 1988, pp. 30–33.

62 KFSA II, pp. 363–372. See Schumacher 2000, pp. 157–255, especially pp. 162–163, 176–181, 185–186, 190, 199, 203–207.

Schlegel believed firmly that although the magazine was misunderstood, people would learn to read it in the future:

> Another ground for consolation as regards the generally recognized unintelligibility of the *Athenäum* … the problem will be temporary. The new age is heralding itself as fleet of foot and winged of sole; the dawn has put on seven-league boots. … Then the nineteenth century will indeed begin, and then every little mystery regarding the unintelligibility of the *Athenäum* will be solved. What a catastrophe! Then there will be readers who know how to read. In the nineteenth century everyone will be able to enjoy the fragments with ease and pleasure in the after-dinner hours, and will not need a nutcracker even for the hardest, most indigestible one.[63]

Schlegel had confidence that the new century would bring different social conditions in which the literature of Jena Romanticism could be understood. His optimism concerning the potential competence of the general public challenged his contemporaries' notion of Romantics as elitist authors, albeit Schlegel clearly regarded the Jena circle as a vanguard of the new century. He associated the nineteenth century with winged-sandalled Hermes, who was the great messenger of gods, the inventor of writing and the patron of literature. One may justifiably consider 'On Incomprehensibility' as a hermeneutic programme. Together with his friend Friedrich Schleiermacher, Schlegel contributed to the foundation of modern philosophical hermeneutics.[64]

A key section of the essay 'On Incomprehensibility' is Schlegel's interpretation of the widely known *Athenäum*-fragment no. 216. The fragment defined the most important tendencies of his era. He first cited the fragment:

> The French Revolution, Fichte's *Science of Knowledge*, and Goethe's *Meister* are the major tendencies of the age. Whoever takes offense at this combination, whoever cannot appreciate a revolution that is not loud and material, has not yet raised himself to the lofty, expansive view of the history of humanity. Even in our impoverished cultural histories – which, accompanied by a running commentary, generally resemble a collection of variants on a classical text that itself was lost – many a small book to which the noisy

63 (My ellipsis.) Schlegel [1800] 1997, p. 126; KFSA II, pp. 370–371.
64 Cf. Leventhal 1994.

> crowds paid little attention at the time has played a larger role than any activity of the crowd itself.[65]

In the fragment, Schlegel claimed that the cultural impact of Fichte's *Science of Knowledge* (*Grundlage der gesammten Wissenschaftslehre*, 1794) and Goethe's *Wilhelm Meister's Apprenticeship* (*Wilhelm Meisters Lehrjahre*, 1795–6) were parallel to the French Revolution. When he was defending himself against the political accusations, Schlegel indirectly articulated his writing strategy at the same time. I argue that this strategy provides valuable reading instructions for the current readers:

> I wrote this fragment with the most honorable intentions and almost entirely without irony. The manner in which it has been misunderstood has surprised me beyond words because I had expected misunderstanding from an entirely different quarter. That I consider art to be the core of mankind and the French Revolution an excellent allegory for the system of transcendental idealism merely happens to be one of my most subjective views. But I have indicated this so frequently and in so many different ways that I might have hoped that the reader would finally have grown accustomed to it. The rest is merely a language of ciphers. … So far there has not been any irony and there should not have been any misunderstanding; and yet this fragment has been so misunderstood that a well-known Jacobin, Magister Dyk in Leipzig, even thought he found democratic sentiments in it.[66]

There is evidence here to support my argument that there were political reasons for the Romantics' use of abstruse and esoteric metaphorical language. Schlegel referred to Johann Dyk (1750–1813), who was a bookseller from Leipzig. The mention of Dyk emphasized the role of bookstores as disseminators of revolutionary ideas that were included in fragment no. 216 as a cipher code.

In the essay 'On Incomprehensibility', Schlegel hinted that the various metaphors in his fragments are a language of ciphers. In addition to mentioning irony, he refers to the language of his fragments as 'code'. Earlier in his essay, Schlegel even compares his metaphorical expressions with the secret societies hiding inside language:

65 (Translation modified; my emphasis.) Schlegel [1800] 1997, p. 121; KFSA II, p. 366. Cf. KFSA II, pp. 198–199. No. 216.

66 (Translation modified; my ellipsis.) Schlegel [1800] 1997, pp. 121–122; KFSA II, p. 366.

> I wanted to point out that words often understand themselves better than do those who use them, wanted to draw attention to the fact that there must be secret societies among philosophical words, words that, like a host of spirits sprung forth too early, confuse everything, and exert the invisible force of the world spirit even on those who do not wish to acknowledge them.[67]

The metaphor of secret societies probably refers to the meaning of the Freemasons as distributors of the revolutionary ideology both in France and in Germany.[68] The idea of a revolutionary vanguard combines the metaphor with the notion of the nineteenth century as an era when the language of *Athenäum* could finally be understood correctly. It is characteristic of a cipher language that only a restricted circle of initiates can interpret it.

Schlegel introduced his writing strategy in a circumspect way: he ironically claimed that he wrote his fragment 'almost entirely' without irony. He remarked that Magister Dyk 'thought he found democratic sentiments in it.' According to Schlegel, the reader is responsible for finding political meanings in the text. He tried to circumvent the political risk by hiding behind Romantic irony. The function of ironic puns is to confuse what is meant to be taken seriously and what is not. Moreover, metaphors can be used in similar fashion.[69] As Paul Ricœur has emphasized, metaphor is not a paratactic but a syntactic phenomenon. In other words, metaphor exists only as a product of an interpretative act that predicates two words to one sentence. A metaphorical interpretation is triggered only when the ordinary literal meaning is absurd.[70] For Schlegel, the metaphorical writing mode was a necessary political strategy. The reader is responsible

67 Schlegel [1800] 1997, p. 119; KFSA II, p. 364.

68 According to Reinhart Koselleck, Freemasonry had a specific social function in the eighteenth century states that lacked freedom of speech and public voluntary associations that are now the norm in any democratic political system. Mysteries and the oath of secrecy protected this social practice from the intervention of the absolutist state. The Jacobin Club exploited Freemasonry to channel its political activity. Koselleck [1959] 1988, pp. 62, 64, 71–75, 80, 83, 85–89. See also Stockinger 1988, pp. 187–188.

69 In contrast to Hayden White, I do not think that metaphoric and ironic modes are mutually exclusive. Cf. White 1973, pp. 80, 233, 360; Ricœur [1985] 1988, p. 153.

70 Ricœur 1976, p. 50.

for the interpretation of metaphors instead of the author. Schlegel frankly admitted this in a private letter to his brother August Wilhelm:

> The obscurity of abstract metaphysics will protect me, and if you write only for philosophers, you can be surprisingly bold before somebody ⟨from the police⟩ will write down notes of it or even understand anything of the audacity of the matter.[71]

Schlegel can explain his hermeneutic strategy in a private letter. When interpreting works that are written under the threat of censorship, comparison between private letters and published texts can become a valuable cultural-historical method of discovering the different strategies by which an author has avoided censorship.

It is not so surprising that the public discovered democratic ideas in the *Athenäum* magazine. Earlier Schlegel had published a more straightforward politico-philosophical study, the 'Treatise on the Concept of Republicanism' ('Versuch über den Begriff des Republikanismus', 1796). In this study he criticized Kant's definition of the republic, arguing that the republic must always be democratic, not led by an enlightened sovereign. Indeed Schlegel even defends the legitimacy of a temporary revolutionary government – as the Jacobin Party had during the French Revolution – but only if this is necessary for the transition period when changing to democracy.[72] The text was published in Berlin in *Deutschland*-magazine, which

71 Friedrich Schlegel to August Wilhelm Schlegel, 19. January 1796, KFSA XXIIII, p. 275. No. 137. The expression in angle brackets is written in the marginal or between lines. See KFSA XXIV, p. lii. Cf. Brunschwieg 1976, p. 285. Although the secondary evidence from Schlegel's private correspondence is cogent, my argumentation is not dependent on it. In his published essay 'On Incomprehensibility', Schlegel already gave enough hidden hints to interpret his ambiguous irony and metaphors (the interpretation of which was at the readers' own risk) as camouflage for political radicalism. Nonetheless, the given quotation from a private letter proves that he was himself conscious of this strategy and afraid of censorship.

72 KFSA VII, pp. 15, 17, 20. See also Beiser 1992, pp. 250–251; Behler 1989, pp. 265–271. Although this exceeds the temporal scope of early Romanticism, it should be noticed that the metaphor of chemistry played a negative role in Schlegel's late philosophy. In his conservative phase, Schlegel presented a comprehensive diagnosis of his age in 'Signatur des Zeitalters' ('Signature of the Age', 1820–1823). There he criticized the revolutionary tendencies by integrating the chemical metaphor of dissolution into the metaphor of organism. For instance, the older Schlegel compared

was abolished because of problems with censorship.[73] Schlegel commented on the political sensitivity of the article to his sister-in-law: '[Study on] Republicanism slipped past the censorship luckily'.[74] *Athenäum*-magazine was published also in Berlin, where it is likely that they wanted to secure a future for the magazine. It thus made sense to print 'On Incomprehensibility' as the final article of the magazine.

Metaphors and Presenting History

In this article I have sought to untangle the age of Romanticism by exploring the use of metaphors. Yet the metaphorical mode not only belongs to the past but it is also an inescapable feature of contemporary language. According to Hans Blumenberg, the linguistic interpretation of reality cannot be based solely on conceptual language.[75] There has been wide debate in the current theory of history concerning the narrative turn. In general, the metaphorical presentation of history pertains to the linguistic presuppositions of historical knowledge. The emplotment of history has been discussed widely, but discussion of the metaphoric prefiguration of history has been remained on much more implicit level.[76] Hence, I will conclude this article by providing a provisional discussion of the epistemological role of metaphorical structures that history writing needs

the estate-based society to organism. The separation of political powers into an executive and a legislative part meant to him an artificial dissolution of natural political organic unity. KFSA VII, p. 588.

73 Behler 1993, p. 38; Plachta 1994, p. 219.

74 Friedrich Schlegel to Caroline Schlegel, 9. August 1796, KFSA XXIII, p. 328. No. 165.

75 Blumenberg [1960] 1998, pp. 10–13. Hartwig Frank has written on the change of paradigm in the study of metaphors. It is no longer assumed that it is possible to replace expressions like 'the light of reason'. Frank 2006, p. 126. The dictionary *Wörterbuch der philosophischen Metaphern* (2007) by Ralf Konersmann is an instance of the contemporary interest in the relevance of metaphors to philosophy.

76 On the relationship of metaphors to narratives see especially White 1973, p. 30; White [1978] 1987, pp. 91, 94; Ricœur 1984, p. ix; Ricœur [1985] 1988, pp. 151–156. White recognizes this metaphoric level of prefiguration, but he reduces it to the static traditional classification of four basic tropes, while I try to emphasize the dynamic transition points and the historicity of this metaphoric prefiguration of history.

to address.

The fact that historical discourse must invoke some metaphorical structures of language does not mean that it becomes unscientific. Paul Ricœur has emphasized the truth claim peculiar to metaphors. That is, metaphors can be understood as a way to make reality meaningful by seeking similarities between different objects. Metaphors build heuristic models between things, and thus they reveal new possibilities of seeing new relations of shared properties between different fields of reality. Hence, metaphors are not just emotional utterances, but they discover and disclose new cognitive and semantic potentialities implicit in language.[77] Certainly, metaphors can propose more or less adequate models, but if one can speak of 'bad' metaphors, this implies that all metaphors make claims to truth.

In this sense, the natural sciences also rely on metaphors to make their findings generally comprehensible. For example, when describing an atom, it is not possible to avoid using metaphorical models. It is necessary to use expressions like 'atomic orbit' and 'electron cloud'. The metaphorical mode of 'electron cloud' is necessary to explain the function of an atom. It does not turn physics into unscientific poetry. Similarly, when a historian speaks of 'source' s/he is not literally wandering in some desert looking for a reliable water source, but s/he is referring metaphorically to the necessity of disclosing the source of knowledge. The metaphor 'source of truth' presents linguistically the self-referential nature of primary sources. Confirming historical knowledge is always dependent on source material. A contemporary prejudice concerning the past can never overrule the testifying power of a primary source. On the contrary, a primary source can insist that we must correct our previous prejudice, because it tells us new things concerning a past epoch. If someone doubts the truth of a historical presentation, s/he must base the critique either on some other source material or on a different interpretation of the same source. This is the sense of the metaphor 'primary source'.

Leibniz's utopia of a universal language that could replace imprecise natural languages has remained unrealized.[78] If history writing were required to be metaphor-free, it would have to abandon expressions like

77 Ricœur 1976, pp. 51–53, 66–67; Lakoff & Johnson 1980, pp. 195–6.
78 Chaouli 2002, p. 9.

'source material' and replace them with formal mathematical language. When one replaces the metaphor of 'source' with the word 'evidence', one simply proceeds to another metaphor borrowed from jurisprudence.[79] As Hans Blumenberg emphasized, the modern project to purify language to the level of mathematical certainty was unsuccessful. Hence, metaphors are necessary for presenting philosophical knowledge. Blumenberg calls absolute metaphors those which cannot be translated into conceptual language. Those metaphors have histories in a more radical sense than concepts have histories.[80] This applies to language deployed in the writing of history. History cannot present human actions, conceptions, experiences and feelings using a language that is purified from sensory content and metaphors. In this respect, cultural history has two aims when studying the age of Romanticism. First, the different metaphors that Romantics used are a topic of research for cultural history. Second, the Romantic conception of metaphors as a necessary component in the study of history offers something instructive for the consideration for contemporary scholars.

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79 On the judicial metaphors see Burke 2002, pp. 23–24.

80 Blumenberg [1960] 1998, pp. 7, 10–13.

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Tracing the Hegemonic and the Marginal: A Cultural History of Cultural Studies*

Kari Kallioniemi & Kimi Kärki

> Should we go through again the nature of neo-liberalism, the emergence of market society, the destruction of the public sphere, the constitution of the private, validation of the market as the only measure of cultural and social value? This is the yellow submarine, and we're all inside it. One of the reasons why neo-liberalism can be described as hegemonic is precisely because of the number of different social sites which it has invaded and transformed.[1]

This is a dramatic statement from the eminent academic Stuart Hall and a crucial reminder of the roots of British cultural studies and new histories in a critical version of Marxism which saw industrial society as a site of oppression but also as a site of resistance. The industrial revolutions of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, and to some extent pre-industrial history,[2] created a situation of permanent struggle for cultural hegemony,

* This is based on an essay originally written in Finnish with the intention of presenting an introductory overview of the history of British cultural studies for a finnophone readership. We have included this version in the present collection, adapted to a prospective readership visualised as constituting an international polyglot community of cultural historians. The debate summarised here on the relationship between cultural studies and cultural history comes from the Finnish scholarly field, having a distinctiveness that, while not always resonating elsewhere, we hope will provide an instructive perspective.

1 Stuart Hall, speaking about the new challenges for cultural studies at the 'Cultural Studies Now' conference, July, 2007. Hall 2007, 22.

2 See Waites et al 1989, 15.

now dominated by neo-liberalism. Analysing popular culture was and is part of that struggle, as much as it is about analysing cultural practices through race, gender and nationality.

This struggle sought to critically evaluate the idealistic but narrow view of culture which originated in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries,[3] and led to the specific role of British cultural studies in post-war Britain. The welfare state, the Cold War and Americanisation created a significant role for cultural studies and its new view of English culture. In addition, the increased interest in popular and working class cultures led to a desire to re-evaluate British culturalism and its 'culture and civilization' tradition as outlined by Turner.[4] Since the war the definition of cultural history has expanded much in parallel to the trajectory of discourses of popular culture in alliance with new histories, and in the process it has also attempted to challenge the boundary between 'high' and 'low' culture.

In this essay we wish to provide an overview of the, primarily British, history of cultural studies from the perspective of our position as cultural historians. This will necessarily also involve reference to the history of popular culture, because, as suggested above, one pattern in the development of cultural studies has involved a cognate shift from a canonical conception of 'culture' as a set of elite artefacts, to an understanding of culture as a general way of life. As Raymond Williams famously wrote, 'Culture is ordinary'. One of the thrusts of the early history of cultural studies was the development of a social critique, particularly in response to the growth of fascist and communist regimes, but also the capitalist system within which anglophone culturalists were themselves positioned.[5] Taking our cue from Hall's comments, a question hanging over this article is: what can the cultural studies researcher, stuck inside the yellow submarine, do at the beginning of the new millennium to return to the roots of that research in social justice agendas, in the face of the apparent triumph of a neo-liberalism that consumes and recuperates all manifestations of critique, whether in everyday 'popular' social practices or in academic

3 Williams 1988, 87–93.

4 Turner 1996, 38–39.

5 Within the field of adult education there was a wider and more complex debate on the theoretical grounds of the field, especially "class" versus "mass culture", and Marxism versus Leavisism. See Steele 1997, 72–95.

discourse? This will raise the question of the relationship between cultural history and cultural studies, to which we shall give some attention in our conclusion.

The 'Culture and Civilization' Tradition and the History of Popular Culture

The position of popular culture in the majority of canonical works in the traditional academic disciplines was historically marginal. The belief in the possibilities of the enlightenment and the fear of industrialisation lay at the core of culturalism, constructed on the basis of these disciplines. But Marxism, and (cultural) theories developed from its core arguments, also reacted with suspicion to popular culture born out of industrial conditions. For the Frankfurt School, popular culture studies did not recognise the active role of reception and propagated the idea that industrially produced mass culture injects its ideology straightforwardly into the passive citizens. Thus, neither race or gender was taken into account in analysing this manipulation. The main objective of this theoretical apparatus, however, was to detect totalitarian practices in culture.[6] In this connection, nationalism was also an ideology which underpinned mainly fascist manipulation.

But it is also important to remember that the Frankfurt School opposed equally the Soviet Union and Nazi Germany, believing that the political systems adapted from Marxism were as inhuman as capitalism. Because of this, the critical version of Marxism was the choice for the progressive thinkers of British culturalism, principally because it also detected the authoritarianism of the British Empire and its historical traditions.[7] That is why Graeme Turner claims that British historians have been reluctant to untangle this tradition, and have been suspicious of popular culture, which is implicated in contemporary issues. They have therefore instead specialised in eighteenth and nineteenth century British popular culture and Victorian leisure. In this connection Turner remarks that 'English historians' resistance to theory, and their suspicion of those who come

6 Adorno 1991, passim. See also Negus 1996, 8–12.

7 Turner 1996, 167-174.

from outside their discipline (or even beyond their shores), may not have entirely disappeared even now.'[8]

British culturalism and its relation to the canonical foundations of English studies also produced nationally-oriented literary 'high' culture which resisted theorising, especially that which was coming from foreign sources.[9] This literature-oriented tradition dating from the nineteenth century and seeking to construct the socially and morally significant cultural canon,[10] is especially identified with the interwar literary critic F.R. Leavis (1895–1978). The moral anxiety created by the spread of mass media was reflected in the pamphlet *Mass Civilization and Minority Culture* (1930), in which Leavis defined clearly the task of high culture. According to him, in every historical period only a small minority is capable of understanding and appreciating Dante and Shakespeare, and it is because of the work of that minority that we continue to develop our (invisible) standards in culture and language.[11] This mass culture debate took up arms against the mass-produced popular culture as vigorously as the Frankfurt school. This elitist view perpetuated the Victorian idea of culture and history which, from the point of view of middle and higher classes, banished the majority of people from the realm of culture.[12]

Raymond Williams and the New Understanding of Tradition

The profound antagonism between popular culture and the upper class heritage of English history and literature was contested by the common-man patriotism of George Orwell (1903–50).[13] This political writer, and significant precursor of cultural studies and new social history, wrote about the English working class and looked beyond the official history

8 According to Turner the one particular area that has produced fruitful collaboration between history and culture studies is media history. Turner 1996, 167–70.

9 Doyle 1989, 8, 15.

10 Turner 1996, 12.

11 Turner 1996, 40–43. See also Easthope 1997, 7–9.

12 Carey 2002, 9–10.

13 That heritage was contested earlier by working class novelists, and 19th century artists such as John Ruskin and William Morris. See for example Thompson 1988.

towards the forgotten and ordinary people.[14] These were mainly people in manual work, criminals, the proletariat, and later youth and subcultures and immigrants. In this connection Raymond Williams was one of the first academics to critically observe the 'culture and civilization' model in his pivotal book *Culture and Society 1780–1950* (1958). For Raymond Williams the definition of culture approaches an organic and flexible, rather anthropological idea of history and culture, which tries to connect "high" and "low" and blur the divisions between them by questioning canonisation:

> Sense of history is the sense of human self-development in which past events are seen not as specific *histories* but as a continuous and connected process. … History, in different hands, teaches or shows us most kinds of knowable past and almost every kind of imaginable future.[15]

Williams was an 'insider/outsider' whose work was mostly born out of the recognition of the importance of ordinary life. As a working-class student in 1930s Cambridge, he encountered F.R. Leavis' ideas of a ruling-class heritage, for which culture meant, to put it schematically, Henley regatta and high art. Neither this tradition nor Marxism could answer to his sense that what he had just left behind him, in the railway and farm-labouring communities of the Welsh borderlands, was in its own way just as rich and complex as Bloomsbury or Blenheim palace. This sense of democratic culture reappropriated the concept of culture for Williams, and redefined it as a whole shared way of life. In this concept, trade unions were just as vital a cultural creation of the working class as Proust was of the bourgeoisie.[16] In this context, culture could also act as a Utopian critique of industrial capitalism, but for Williams the new broadened definition of culture was also shaped by his own experiences of coming from the cultural periphery and an idealist attachment to ordinary life.[17] Williams' subjective sense of history reflects also his enlightened belief in

14 As in *The Road to Wigan Pier* (1937), essays about popular cultural artefacts, such as the 'vulgar' postcards of Donald McGill, (*The Art of Donald McGill*, 1942), and the decline of English murder, among many other subjects. Gray & McGuigan 1993, viii. Chambers 1986, 36-40. Hebdige 1989, 198-99.

15 Williams 1990, 146, 148.

16 Eagleton 1995, 31.

17 Gorak 1988, 10. Williams 1981, 13. McGuigan 1992, 21–29.

human progress, which comes very close to the cultural historians' idea of 'the living past' or the 'past in the present'.[18]

In the second of his most important works, *The Long Revolution* (1965), Williams outlined three general categories in the definition of culture:

> We need to distinguish three levels of culture, even in its most general definition. There is the lived culture of a particular time and place, only fully accessible to those living in that time and place. There is the recorded culture, of every kind, from art to the most everyday facts: the culture of a period. There is also, as the factor connecting lived culture and period cultures, the culture of the selective tradition.[19]

This understanding of the need to bridge these different levels of culture, and especially a need to understand this concept of 'the lived culture of a particular time and place', proved crucial for the founding of cultural studies and culturalism in Britain and in the English-speaking world generally. It also opposed the vulgar Marxism that could not recognise the degree to which living people moulded their own reality, not simply passively reflecting class conditions created by a capitalist economy. In stressing lived experience Williams rescued 'the popular' from its denigration or sentimentalisation by cultural elitists and began to dislodge the monolithic *status quo* of culturalism and Marxism.[20] He initiated the first important shift towards a new way of thinking about the symbolic dimensions of our lives and thus foreshadowed the New Left cultural ideas of the 1970s and 1980s, counter-cultural thinking and the ideas of the new histories which sought to see working class cultures in a wider context than just the industrial age. Thus Williams' 'a whole way of life' sits comfortably with the ideas of microhistory and mentalities, while questioning the elite thinking of culture as something reserved only for the 'genius of the few'.

18 Immonen 1996, 15–33. All translations from Finnish to English by Kallioniemi & Kärki.

19 Williams 1965, 66.

20 See Storey 1993, 51–57. Williams 1993, 5–14. McGuigan 1992, 21–29.

Richard Hoggart and the Sentimentalisation of the Working Class

British cultural studies has been criticised for being parochial and aligning itself with the political left.[21] Richard Hoggart is clearly one of the first representatives of this tradition. His book *The Uses of Literacy* (1958) was one of the texts which drew upon a research tradition regarding the relations between culture and society, breaking the boundaries between traditional disciplines such as literature and history, but at the same time recognising and respecting parochialism and lost authenticity among working class cultures. It was, with Williams' work, one of the basic texts for new cultural studies and had a difficult and sometimes deeply troubled association with traditional Marxism and newer social scientific disciplines, most notably sociology.

Hoggart's *Uses of Literacy* 'read' everyday working-class life, customs and habits, as though they were literary texts, opening up the study of popular culture and applying the interpretive procedures of the humanities to the materials of social science. But at the same time his populist reading was his way of challenging Americanisation and its mass culture with the same vigour that had been brought to bear by the Leavisites since the 1930s. For Hoggart the authentically national popular was to be found in the old simple but honest standards on which working-class popular culture was supposedly based, but now threatened by the cynical forces of Americanisation bent on manipulation for profit. This is clearly evident in his account of 1950s youth culture in Northern England:

> Symptomatic of the general trend is the reading of juke-box boys, those who spend their evening listening in harshly lighted milk-bars to the 'nickelodeons'. The milk-bars indicate in the nastiness of their modernistic knick-knacks, their glaring showiness, an aesthetic breakdown so complete that, in comparison with them, the layout of the living-room in some of the poor homes from which the customers come seems to speak of a tradition as balanced and civilized as an eighteenth-century town house.
>
> I have in mind the kind of milk-bar – there is one in almost every northern town with more than, say, fifteen thousand inhabitants – which has become the regular evening rendezvous of some of the young men. Most

21 See Turner 1996, 169, also 157–167. Turner identifies studies of subcultures and football hooliganism as examples.

> of the customers are boys aged between fifteen and twenty, with drape-suits, picture-ties and an American slouch. Their main reason for coming is to put copper after copper into the mechanical record-player. The records seem to be changed about once a fortnight by the hiring firm; almost all are American; almost all are 'vocals' and the styles of singing much advanced beyond what is normally heard on the Light Programme of the BBC.
>
> The 'nickelodeon' is allowed to blare out so that the noise would be sufficient to fill a good-sized ballroom. The young men waggle one shoulder or stare, as desperately as Humphrey Bogart, across the tubular chairs. Compared even with the pub around the corner, this is all a peculiarly thin and pallid form of dissipation, a sort of spiritual dry-rot amid the odour of boiled milk. Many of the customers – their clothes, their hair-styles, their facial expressions all indicate – are living to a large extent in a myth-world compounded of a few simple elements which they take to be those of American life.[22]

Hoggart's main enemies, 'modernistic knick-knacks' and America, were very much the opposite of the acceptable face of an 'authentic' working-class life which was 'dense and concrete, a life where the main stress was on the intimate, the sensory, the detailed, the personal, where conversations centred on people, relationships, sex, work and sport, and not on theories or ideas.'[23]

Although Hoggart had a finely tuned understanding of pre-war working-class culture, he shared some basic attitudes about mass culture with British culturalism as articulated by, for example, F.R. Leavis, as was reflected in chapter titles of his book: 'The Full Rich Life', 'Invitations to a Candy-Floss World: The Newer Mass Art' and 'The Newer Mass Art: Sex in Shiny Packets'.[24] However, Hoggart's personal nostalgic view of a disappearing working-class culture created an influential mental map of British popular culture. The issues raised in Hoggart's seminal book also pervaded the mainly left-wing writers and directors of the British New Wave cinema, along with its hostility to the system, the new materialism, affluence and the homogenising effects of the mass media.[25] Richard Dyer has argued that Hoggart's construction of working-class life has influenced

22 Hoggart 1958, 246–250.
23 Hoggart 1958, 102–112.
24 Hoggart [1958] 1961, 7–8.
25 Richards 1997, 155.

the long-running TV serial *Coronation Street* and its imaginary working-class vernacular in Manchester.[26] The whole 'Hoggartian era', between the Second World War and the Swinging Sixties, has been the target of mythologization in British popular culture. Just one of many exemplifications is presented by the influential British pop group The Smiths from the 1980s, who based most of their repertoire on a critical discourse on British society under Thatcherism, influenced by a Hoggartian view of the English 1950s.[27]

E.P. Thompson and the New British Social History

Unlike Williams and Hoggart, Edward Palmer Thompson (1924–1993) developed his theory from within Marxist traditions but his basic humanism and romanticism resisted simple and unreflexive notions of class domination and thus recovered the importance of human agency. This view built the basis for a new type of English Social History, which focused on the emergence of the industrial age and the beginnings of the English working-class.[28] Thompson tried to avoid the Hoggartian sentimentalisation of his subjects, but a religious upbringing strongly affected his worldview as a British romantic socialist. This was particularly evident in his predilection for quoting the early nineteenth century poets, especially William Blake. His citations of Blake during his peace rally speeches during the 1970s and early 1980s made him a minor academic celebrity , as Bertrand Russell had been in the 1950s, and gave embodiment to one of the key ideas of Thompson's thinking: the historian has to bring the

26 This fictionalized northern environment has been facetiously referred to as 'Hoggartsborough'. Turner 1996, 47.

27 The Smiths' use of tradition was partly a "luddite" infatuation with a particular moment in English culture, specifically that of the late 1950s and early 1960s. Kallioniemi 2010, 230.

28 Turner 1996, 63-66. Thompson produced much of his work during the 1970s: *Whigs & Hunters. The Origin of the Black Act* (1975) and part of the collection *Customs in Common* (the whole volume published in 1991). In these he analysed the history of the notorious Black Act from 1721, which suddenly and brutally criminalised 50–200 petty crimes. In *Customs in Common* he analysed 'popular' phenomena like the selling of wives and the history of 'rough music customs'. Thompson 1991, passim.

ideological tensions of the past into the present and disclose the relations behind them.[29] Thompson was especially interested in the tensions in the relations between the British higher and lower classes in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. Addressing the experiences of these 'forgotten people' was for him the basis of expanding historical research and raising consciousness of marginal people. In his major work *The Making of the English Working Class* (1963) Thompson sought to honour the 'poor sock-maker, luddite farmer and early Utopian working-class communities'.[30] These objectives locate Thompson as an important forerunner of microhistory.[31]

Thompson's main argument was that the rise of the English working-class could not be fully explained by industrialisation. He argued that the working-class was created out of the collision between a new industrial society and the 'old society' and its traditions, ideologies and power-relationships. Thompson emphasised the role of working-class people in this process. For him the human being is first and foremost a creature who remembers and whose learning, experiences and traditions form the basis of historical processes. Thus, in Thompson's model the 'old society' could not simply be abolished, but is the crucial model for the new one.[32] Thus Thompson's approach could be compared to Fernand Braudel's idea of history as a totality and of historical polyphony. A further complementary strand was that of 'history from below', also a parallel to the thinking of Annalist school.[33] There is however a crucial difference between the Annalists and Thompson, and that is politics. His research, which emphasised everyday resistance, was the forerunner of the later British popular culture studies tradition which sought to analyse popular

29 Turner 1996, 63–64.

30 What is important in Thompson's thinking is that for him marginal people were clues to the 'hidden truths'. This differentiates him from traditional Marxist thinking which ignored the individual in favour of the collective. The positivist Marxism appreciated the laws explaining the workings of society but Thompson thought that the 'real' human experience describing concrete individuality and originality could be found among the marginal people (patients, criminals, frauds) and in their unconscious activities. Peltonen 1996, 7.

31 Peltonen 1990, 230. It can be said that he is also the founder of labour history.

32 Peltonen 1996, 2–10.

33 Steedman 1992, 613. Gray & McGuigan 1993, vii-viii. Turner 1996, 38–66.

culture texts in a way which could uncover their political and ideological substrates.

Although Thompson's work was built on a deeper exploration of life in its totality, for him the human being was always inconsistent, incomplete and misguided, and not amenable as a model for the romantic and idealised descriptions of the 'proper' subjects of historical Marxism. Thompson did not believe that the various communities of the 'old society' were fully coherent and culturally uniform, and that modernity destroyed their wholeness. Thus it could be argued that Thompson approached modernisation sceptical of the idea that it destroyed the pre-industrial order. For him, the early pioneers of the labour movements in the 19th century were thus as much enlightened political organisers as religious zealots.[34] This deep understanding of the hitherto overlooked individual subjects of history made Thompson not only one of the most important humanists of his age but also an influential example of the left-wing intellectual as the human face of socialism during the Cold War. Even when being a Marxist, he subscribed neither to the capitalist nor the socialist materialist idea of the human being as *homo economicus*, but to the flesh and blood being in all its rich fullness. Thompson was therefore ready and willing to criticise both the condition of capitalist Britain and the suppression of human rights activists in the Soviet Union and Eastern Bloc.

The Birmingham School and Stuart Hall

Interest in the marginal and concerns with the dialectical relations between the researcher's experience and the mediation of meaning were developed further by Birmingham University at the Centre for Contemporary Cultural Studies, founded in 1964 by Richard Hoggart.[35] It initiated success-

34 Peltonen 1992, 42–43.

35 This centre of international repute is now superseded by the Birmingham Department of Cultural Studies. Gray & McGuigan 1993, vii. It could be noted that this important development confirmed the break from cultural studies' origins in adult education and into the academic mainstream in which links with the Labour and other social movements were increasingly lost.

ive waves of research on popular culture (for example, youth subcultures, popular decodings of televisual texts, research into women's pleasure and studies of domestic consumption), combining the tradition of British culturalism, working class studies, criminology and continental philosophical thinking.[36] The whole rich history of popular culture as resistance up to the present was logically connected to Thompson's ideas of marginal groups and their role in society. The broader view of cultural studies as internationalist was largely based on the work of the Centre's Director during the 1970s, Stuart Hall (1932–). Hall's research on race and his neo-Gramscian[37] synthesis of hegemony theory expanded the field of popular culture studies, which became much more diversified after the 1970s.[38]

British sociological historical research saw Gramscian theory as a valuable tool in explaining the changes in post-war British society. Hegemony theory proved instructive in the analysis of the cultural crises of the 1960s and 1970s, and the erosion of traditional working class culture in the context of the demise of British Empire. Although the Second World War and its aftermath in the form of the 'austere fifties' temporarily strengthened traditional values, Tony Bennett argues that the cultural hegemony was also threatened by the ideological forces underlying neo-nationalism, women's rights and race: Celtic nationalism, feminism and rising immigration.[39] The claims of feminism, black politics and the discourses of 'the other' gradually began to decentre British cultural studies politically from its narrowly national and social class preoccupations.[40] The Birmingham Centre was a particularly apt site for this decentring, headed from 1968 to

36 Murdock 1997, 59–60; Turner 1996, 70–74.

37 Antonio Gramsci (1891–1937) argued that the mechanical Marxist opposition between establishment and counterculture could not lead to revolutionary thinking, because the real cultural hegemony lies in the structures situated in between these two, like media, school and especially popular culture. Therefore the theory of cultural hegemony explains for the Birmingham School why popular culture is the most instructive ideological apparatus in contemporary society and discloses how power relations are (re)constructed between 'high' and 'low'. Turner 1996; McGuigan 1992; Gray & McGuigan 1993; Hall 2007, 15–16.

38 Turner 1996, 66–70.

39 Bennett 1982, 7–29.

40 Gray & McGuigan 1993, x.

1979 by Hall, a Jamaican immigrant, who had come to Oxford in 1950 as a stipendiary, and who shared with Williams and Hoggart the same feeling of coming from a periphery and therefore inclined to question the traditional view of English history, identity and race.[41]

Hall has written extensively concerning Britain's postcolonial traumas and he predicted the rise of Thatcherism in his influential essays in the late 1970s,[42] in which he trenchantly repeated the neo-Gramscian message, that intellectuals have to stay in touch with the culture they would like to change. Therefore it is important to acknowledge the 'mundane' world of the common people and try to connect to it. The intelligentsia should provide a critique of the vision of cultural studies interrogating its central projects and preoccupations. It could be ironically noted that the radical project of the new right led by Margaret Thatcher found a connection to everyday life of many people partly by a populist demeaning of culturalist projects as anything from unimportant and ridiculous to disruptive.[43]

Hall's own experience of Englishness in colonial Jamaica and at the centre of empire in Britain activated his reflections on identity. He began to refer to its racial dimensions as 'the spectacle of the other'.[44] For him London had been the best place in which to survey this spectacle and think the periphery.[45] His insider/outsider-position has also influenced his thinking on historical subjects and the fragile nature of cultural identities, in much the same way as Williams and Thompson before him. One of Hall's major premises has been that the idea of a 'solid' self with specific roots is a cultural delusion. In an interview with Martin Jacques in 1997 he reaffirmed this:

> Nobody has any roots. Everybody here comes from somewhere else, be they Spaniards, English, Chinese, Africans, Indians, East Indians, Portuguese or Jews. It is a kind of pure diaspora. Afro-Caribbeans here have had

41 Rojek 2004, passim.

42 Hall 1988a, 39–56; Hall 1988b, 1–15.

43 Russell 1975, 59. The Birmingham school was closed by Tony Blair's second administration in 2002 notwithstanding strong objections from various quarters. Part of the staff were ordered to retire and the rest were integrated into the departments of University of Birmingham. *The Guardian* 18.7.2002.

44 Hall 1999, 139–222.

45 Jaggi 2000.

> to acknowledge that their roots are routes, the various places along the path of symbolic migration. … The modern condition is not about purity, homogeneity and exclusivity, but about mix, crossover, interaction. This change is most evident among the young. Until the mid-Eighties, the club scene was ethnically configured: since then, it has increasingly become a blur of colour, ethnicity and cultural influence as the music, dress and language of one group has transformed that of another in a patchwork quilt of diversity.[46]

Ideas of authentic, original or homogeneous race and the 'real' self are romantic historical constructions. 'Every identity which feels solid tells you how much you are ignoring the other part of your identity.'[47] Here again Hall approaches the ideas of historical culturalism that preceded him, especially E.P. Thompson's views of the incomplete nature of the historical subject.

Ethnicity, Youth Culture Styles and Feminism in Cultural Studies

The researchers at the Birmingham Centre, led by Stuart Hall, have been extremely influential if we consider the foundations of current Cultural Studies. Paul Gilroy (1956–), Dick Hebdige (1951–) and Angela McRobbie (1951–) have all provided varied insights into marginal forces of western society.

The analysis of ethnicity and 'race' in particular has been one of the most instructive and still ongoing projects in the field of cultural studies. One of the most significant studies in this context, especially in relation to Great Britain, is *There Ain't No Black in Union Jack* (1987). The author Paul Gilroy, who is the current Anthony Giddens Professor at the London School of Economics, accused English intellectuals and politicians, irrespective of party affiliations, of ignoring racial questions.[48] It must

46 Jacques 1997, 14–15.

47 Jaggi 2000, 19.

48 With Valerie Amos and Pratibha Parmar, Gilroy was one of the authors of the groundbreaking Birmingham Centre book *The Empire Strikes Back: Race and Racism in 1970s Britain* (1982).

be remembered that when the book was published, apartheid was still in force, Nelson Mandela was in prison, the Soviet Union appeared as strong as ever, Ronald Reagan was the U.S. president, and Margaret Thatcher the Prime Minister of Great Britain. The objective of Gilroy's analysis was to observe ethnic identities and how they were produced in public discourses including popular culture. Ethnic identities are not stable, they are rather in constant flux, reacting to their surrounding cultural discourses. This is the reason why, by challenging simplistic interpretations and stereotypes, we can reveal fundamental mechanisms shaping our society and also how discourses shape and construct reality. Gilroy has paid special attention to the deployment of the concept of 'race' in the urban context: '"Race" has become a marker for the activity of urban social movements and their conflict with urban political systems and state institutions'.[49] This kind of analysis has played an important role in changing the concept of nationality, especially in Great Britain, with its colonialist past. Gilroy has subsequently published widely on cultural studies, postcolonial studies and ethnicity. His studies include books on popular music, British racial politics, nationality and racism, and often Afro-related cultures in the western hemisphere.[50]

The study of youth cultures was another research emphasis within the Birmingham Centre. This was one of the central reasons for the popularity and rapid spread of cultural studies – this kind of research seemed relevant to student interests, as it dealt directly with their own experiences and validated them as a subject of serious study.[51] Perhaps the most influential academic book on youth subcultures is Dick Hebdige's *Subculture. The Meaning of Style* from 1979. It is also the best known book by Hebdige, currently a professor of Media and Cultural Studies in UCLA (Riverside).[52] One of the most significant changes in post-war Britain

49 Gilroy 2002, 312, see also xi–xxxviii.

50 See for example *The Black Atlantic: Modernity and Double Consciousness* (1993), *Small Acts: Thoughts On the Politics of Black Cultures* (1993), *Against Race: Imagining Political Culture Beyond the Color Line* (2000), *Between Camps: Nations, Culture and the Allure of Race* (2000), *After Empire: Multiculture or Postcolonial Melancholia* (2004) and *Black Britain – A Photographic History* (2007).

51 Rustin 2008, 3.

52 His other books include *Cut'n'Mix* (1987) and *Hiding in the Light* (1988).

was undoubtedly the emergence of oppositional youth cultures. These subcultures opposed the values of mainstream society, and struggled to distance themselves from the generation that went to war, by incorporating 'spectacular' styles and dress codes. They were founded on 'a fundamental tension between those in power and those condemned to subordinate positions and second-class lives'.[53] Thus, according to Hebdige, subcultures offer a counterforce to organized society:

> Subcultures represent 'noise' (as opposed to sound): interference in the orderly sequence which leads from real phenomena to their representation in the media. We should therefore not underestimate the signifying power of the spectacular subculture not only as a metaphor for potential anarchy 'out there' but as an actual mechanism of semantic disorder: a kind of temporary blockage in the systems of representation.[54]

Because of their respective 'noises', Mods, Glam-rockers, Teddy boys, Rastafarians, Punks and other gangs received considerable media coverage. They were both admired and ridiculed, but the influence of media on youth subcultural identities was significant. For Hebdidge it was important to attempt to observe the subcultures from within, by reading their symbolic meanings. According to him, subcultural 'style' is 'the area in which the opposing definitions clash with most dramatic force'.[55] While Hebdige has, like Hoggart, been criticised for romanticising and fetishizing youth cultures, his ideas continue in the footsteps of Thompson and Hall, especially regarding how 'uncompleted' individuals and communities appear as cultural and historical actors. Hebdige was also interested in the analysis of ethnicity. He saw the notion of 'race' as the primary definer of subcultural identity before the punk movement.[56] According to Hebdige, punk had a special role as a youth culture, because it combined scattered elements from all post-war youth styles.[57] But even punk does not offer a possibility of social utopia, since mainstream culture, having recovered from its moral panic, finds ways to appropriate and commodify

53 Hebdige 1979, 132. On the threat against the 'silent majority' see Hebdige 1979, 18.
54 Hebdige 1979, 90.
55 Hebdige 1979, 3.
56 The same can be said of masculinity.
57 Hebdige 1979, 23–26.

the oppositional countercultural forces, until we reach a less hostile situation where 'boys in lipstick are "just dressing up", where girls in rubber dresses are "daughters just like yours"'.[58]

Hebdige's analysis, however groundbreaking, still concentrated on the semiotic reading of subcultures. The gaps in his analysis were particularly criticised by Angela McRobbie, currently Professor of Communications at the University of London Goldsmith's College. She argues that Hebdige failed to address gender as a factor in shaping cultural identity.[59] McRobbie decided to analyse the cultural life of young women, and its differences from the culture of male youth:

> I am not arguing that if girls were doing the same as some boys (and subcultures are always minorities) all would be well. The "freedom" to consume alcohol and chemicals, to sniff glue and hang about the street staking out only symbolic territories is scarcely less oppressive than the pressures keeping girls in the home. Yet the classic subculture does provide its members with a sense of oppositional sociality, an unambiguous pleasure in style, a disruptive public identity and a set of collective fantasies.[60]

In her works McRobbie has observed teen magazines, for example *Jackie* and *Just Seventeen*, fashion, teen pop fandom, new romantics, cultural industries, postmodernism, and popular music in relation to gender.[61] This kind of research on girls and women was facilitated during the 1980s by the availability of new kinds of research materials. These included particularly music videos and the changing teen magazines themselves, which provided more and more material on teen girl lifestyles. This work was given force also because the punk movement had demonstrated to the popular culture industries the speciousness of earlier assumptions about the passivity of girls' roles in subcultures.

As a consequence, gender studies have become important within and beyond cultural studies. gender studies and gender history are also a major

58 Hebdige 1979, 94.

59 McRobbie 1991, 16–33.

60 McRobbie 1991, 33.

61 McRobbie's books: *Zoot Suits and Second-hand Dress* (1989), *Feminism and Youth Culture* (1991), *British Fashion Design: Rag Trade or Image Industry?* (1998), *In the Culture Society: Art, Fashion and Popular Music* (1999) and *The Aftermath of Feminism: Gender, Culture and Social Change* (2008).

element in contemporary cultural history, which, like cultural studies, has raised interest in the analysis of historical and cultural subjects. Perhaps the best known spokesperson and representative of cultural studies in Finland, Mikko Lehtonen, Professor of Media Culture at the University of Tampere, offers an interesting account of the connections between cultural and gender Studies: 'these two are first of all related by their worldliness, their connections to the world outside the academia and everyday practices. Second, they are related by their multidisciplinary nature.'[62] Lehtonen also emphasizes the role of personal interests and experiences, and how they are connected to theoretical issues in the research conducted in the two fields.[63] The issues to which he refers – multidisciplinarity, everyday experience and the role of theorising this experience from the personal perspective of the researcher – are also important aspects of contemporary cultural history.

Opposition, History and Cultural Studies at the Beginning of the 2010s

> At the beginning of the 1980s one could have reasonably have believed that 'Cultural Studies' referred to a British tradition that ran from the work of Raymond Williams and Richard Hoggart, to the research conducted mainly at the Birmingham Centre for Contemporary Cultural Studies. The turn of the decade has seen a major growth in Cultural Studies, and as a result it now embraces multiple interests moving at a wide range of directions.[64]

Even since Professor Mikko Lehtonen wrote the above assessment in the mid-1990s, cultural studies has continued to diversify. This manifest development makes it difficult to propose a straightforward account of the current state of the movement.[65] A major effort to identify common

62 Lehtonen 1994, 17.

63 The connection of these two in feminist cultural studies was also emphasized in her *Cultural Studies Now* keynote lecture by Doreen Massey, professor of Geography (Open University). Massey 2007, 4–5.

64 Lehtonen 1994, 13. Translation from Finnish by the authors.

65 Cultural researcher and activist Jeremy Gilbert commented on the enormous diversity covered by the term 'Cultural Studies': 'I think in some ways we have to accept that

ground among those working in this field was the *Cultural Studies Now* conference held in London in the Summer of 2007. This conference, the largest of its kind for years, was of special importance because it was organised and held in England, the spiritual home of the anglophone movement, and furthermore because it sought to raise the self-awareness of the movement as a radical intellectual project. Researchers from all continents gave talks in more than a hundred panels, and the keynote lectures were held by eminent and influential researchers, such as Ien Ang, Rosi Braidotti, Kuan-Hsing Chen, Judith Halberstam, Stuart Hall, Dick Hebdige, Doreen Massey and Áine O'Brien.[66]

This kind of moment of re-definition provided a stimulating opportunity for reflection: the British left-wing project has become a global and fragmented success story. In this form the movement may have difficulty reacting as radically to the challenges of contemporary societies as seemed possible in the dynamic heyday of the Birmingham Centre. The times have profoundly changed. Since Thatcherism there has been Girl Power, Cool Britannia, the rise and seeming fall of the Labour Party's neo-liberal adventure, the uncertainty caused by terrorism and, partly as a consequence, new discourses of multiculturalism. Many of the conference keynote lectures, especially that of Rosi Braidotti, emphasized the growing political potential of the movement, and the ability of the participants in the conference to influence the state of the world, both in the realms of actions and opinions. Doreen Massey identified new possible domains of influence and challenge, notably the environmental movement and related theorising, the analysis and disclosure of the all-embracing power of economics, and a much needed deeper understanding of the alternatives emerging from the complex nature of economy-based politics.[67] This might suggest that cultural studies are returning to the original idea of cultural struggle, the seemingly radical idea that intellectuals should

any discipline that decides to give itself as vague and multi-valent a name as "Cultural Studies" is asking for identity problems.' Gilbert 2007, 9.

66 See the videoed lectures at http://www.uel.ac.uk/ccsr/culturalstudiesnow.htm

67 Massey 2007, 5–7. Ironically enough (as the Scandinavian universities face similar changes caused by neo-liberal politics), Massey offers the 'Scandinavian Model' to replace the Anglo-American neo-liberalism. On the growing importance of the environmental movement, see Gilbert 2007, 12.

understand their responsibilities and actively influence the processes that might change the world to a better place.

The future of cultural studies seems to be promising. Ideas that were marginal in earlier days have become increasingly prominent in the fields of Arts and Sciences, and cultural studies, like the study of popular culture, is now established in institutionalised, even if not always recognised, positions within both the Humanities and the Social Sciences. For a cultural historian, cultural studies provides a corresponding project, which similarly challenges the prejudices against hitherto neglected research topics. Like cultural history, cultural studies is anti-reductionist in its nature – it demands attention to the complex nature of human interactions.[68] There are also differences between cultural history and cultural studies in their interpretations and definitions of related concepts. This is especially evident when we think about 'culture' itself. For a cultural historian, 'culture' is the key to the perspective of the entire discipline, a way to observe the lived world through the agency of the people. In such cases, culture is redefined again and again through the interpretative relations between the researcher and the empirical subject of the study, and these relations produce a number of definitions of the discipline itself.[69]

Cultural studies, according to the definition given by Mikko Lehtonen, takes no concepts for granted, including 'culture' itself. This means that 'culture' becomes a question, a target of observation, but also the means of questioning. Cultural studies becomes a meta-theory, which 'aims at explaining the explainer, that is, culture'.[70] The subtle difference between these two ways of using culture is that cultural history places a greater emphasis on historical contextualisation, struggling to see 'culture' in its complexity: the endless variety of historical traditions, customs, glories, practices, errors. The connections to the lived world itself become essential.

68 Grossberg 1995, 19.

69 See *e.g.* Immonen 2001, passim.

70 Lehtonen 2009, 74. This could be interpreted as suggesting that Lehtonen thinks that the 'culture' becomes almost a Platonic ideal, something that Cultural Studies will forever seek to capture. Jeremy Gilbert thinks this struggle for self-definition of Cultural Studies, and the refusal of theoretical complacency, is at times excessive: 'Our constant reflexivity may become neurotic at times but this itself is one of the perpetual risks of democracy as such.' Gilbert 2007, 14.

Cultural studies is by Lehtonen's definition primarily the study of current phenomena, of 'what happens right now'.[71] This is a radical differentiation between cultural history and cultural studies, as the former is attached to Historical Sciences, and the latter to the tradition of Social Sciences. It could be argued that cultural studies, according to Mikko Lehtonen, instead of analysing the past phenomena, seeks to actively change the conditions of the future: 'Thus its predecessor is the question first formed by the thinkers who lived in the 18th and 19th Centuries: What does it mean that we live now and not in some other time?'[72] The ethical responsibility of a cultural historian is to do justice to the subjects of the past and also to the 'past presents'. In such cases the hermeneutic idea of reaching towards the original past meanings becomes central. This is irrelevant in the context of cultural studies. Apparently, it is clear that current perspectives also shape our understanding of the research of the past subjects and their reality. What is central is the effort to relate the interpretations of the past to contemporary systems of meaning and value.[73]

Cultural studies has, even more clearly than cultural history, opposed the sometimes artificial or administrative borders between disciplines. While cultural historians have found the scientific essence of their work through reflective interdisciplinary discussions, practitioners of cultural studies try, according to Mikko Lehtonen, to work to dissolve the scholarly borders altogether:

> Cultural Studies is a theoretical melting pot, a combination of the central theories from the latest decades, from Marxism, feminism, postcolonialism, and psychoanalysis to poststructuralism and postmodernism. Because of this combination its nature is first and foremost interdisciplinary, it aims to bring down the traditional fences that separate different disciplines.[74]

Consequently, the administrative taxonomies of the universities are seen by the practitioners of cultural studies as stifling, impenetrable and slow to re-

71 Lehtonen 1994, 14.

72 Lehtonen 1994, 14.

73 This discussion is part of the debate on history culture (*Geschichtskultur*), which started in West Germany in the 1980s, most notably by the famous historian Reinhart Koselleck. See Immonen 1996, passim; Salmi 2001, 134–135.

74 Lehtonen 1994, 16

act to new challenges and breakthroughs. Even if, according to the Finnish government and European Union's education politics in general, this is exactly the reason for the recent administrative and structural changes in our university system, it is evident that these changes are just part of the process whereby universities are made first and foremost to serve economic life, various industries and the private sector. Interdisciplinary movement and innovation are now being measured through their usefulness to local and global economies.[75]

An important common objective of cultural studies and cultural history is the aspiration to reach for something new, especially in the methodological sense. Real scientific innovations emerge from the combination of critical enquiry and the willingness to take chances when needed. In the context of these two disciplines this means that we should analyse the blind spots and failures of hegemonic mainstream society, even when there is a risk of annoying the powers that be. This kind of cultural critique should also be self-reflective: academia needs more self-critical thinking instead of the current neo-liberal policies and platitudes imported into to our university system from outside. There should be alternatives to the current models, which are dominated by the desperate competition to secure private sector funding and the general slavery to economic interim reports. We should be seeking new kind of creative liminality from the borderlands of university cultures, trying to engage with social movements through a kind of popular education and political commitment, and exciting collaborations of anarchic power. We need this instead of comfortably undisturbed symbiotic relations between research and industry.[76]

Conclusion: Escaping the Yellow Submarine

The regenerative potential of our western culture has historically come from the critical outsiders who dwell in the borderlands of the mainstream

75 Lehtonen 2009, 72. Ironically enough, the efforts to renew the structural logic of our university system seem to be something that neo-liberalism and cultural studies share, despite the opposing goals.

76 See Lehtonen 2009, 75–78. The only relevant question is: how shall we finance this?

– monks, artists and eccentric visionaries.[77] Various critical projects within academia still contain pockets of similar liminal power; despite the seemingly prevailing industry-oriented agenda in contemporary universities, there is still strong support for the core academic values of humanism and enlightenment. The question is, how to find new feasible economic systems to support this kind of perspective. Cultural studies and cultural history might both have the potential to seek out new creative territories, to redefine and understand old structures of meaning, and alter the directions of cultural processes. This kind of potential often grows in previously undervalued, young and marginal academic fields – such as research into minorities and popular culture – which have been methodologically interdisciplinary by nature and necessity. The need for self-definition of emergent scholarly fields keeps them in constant movement and creates an atmosphere which is fruitful for critical inquiry. Small but widely networking units sometimes contain important and surprising power for the redefinition of cultural systems – the new critical political thinking and countercultural action already demanded by Thompson, Williams, et al., are now genuinely desired in these new situations.

What, then, is the hegemonic culture which should be opposed and questioned through the terms laid down by Williams and his contemporaries? How can we escape the Yellow Submarine, to use Stuart Hall's metaphor? Our lived world is now fully infiltrated by the logic of market economy, and we need to find new strategies to fight against it from within. As our world is rapidly changing, it could be even suggested that the identities and social spaces shaped by the market economy contain the seeds of new critical opposition.

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77 Turner 1970, 95; Carlson 2006, 36.

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II

Essays in Cultural History

Premodern Breast Cancer and the Abject*

Marjo Kaartinen

While studying early modern breast cancer I have encountered past bodies which suffered horrible fates.[1] Breast cancer was a cruel disease which mutilated the patient and often caused a lingering death. The breast-cancered body was considered with utmost horror; it could be seen as abject. In the following discussion I will explore the issue of abjection and the ways it may be deployed in the study of early modern breast cancered bodies. I will first review the concept of the abject in postmodern theory, and, using the smell of breast cancer as a test case, will then test whether abjection could be used as an analytical tool in historical research.

The Concept of the Abject

The abject can be defined as something horrible, disgusting, abhorrent and repulsive, and abjection as the process which rejects the abject. The abject is a theoretical concept which has been used particularly in the form

* I owe a great debt to several colleagues in writing on breast cancer. For help with this article I would like to thank especially Sakari Ollitervo, Heli Rantala, Bruce Johnson, Harri Kiiskinen, and my anonymous referees who all provided me with excellent comments. All remaining faults remain my own. And special thanks are due to Bruce Johnson for polishing my English. My project on early modern breast cancer has been made possible by the funding of the Academy of Finland in the form of Academy Fellowship 2005–2010.

1 More about early modern breast cancer in my forthcoming book, and for previous studies, consult de Moulin 1983/1989 and Olson 2002.

as articulated by Judith Butler,[2] but which has its roots in structuralist thinking, especially that of Mary Douglas who has written on taboo and pollution, and of Julia Kristeva whose work on the body is greatly indebted to Mary Douglas. In *Purity and Danger*[3] Douglas saw the body as the site of cultural codes, and of coherence. Order was created by pushing aside the polluting matter:

> ideas about separating, purifying, demarcating and punishing transgressions have as their main function to impose system on an inherently untidy experience. It is only by exaggerating the difference between within and without, about and below, male and female, with and against, that a semblance of order is created.[4]

Butler suggests that Douglas's model is useful in analyzing the body, particularly when the latter's analysis touches upon the surface of the body, and when, through the 'taboos and anticipated transgressions', the skin becomes significant and when the 'boundaries of the body become … the limits of the social *per se*'.[5] Thus unruliness and violation of the codes are made visible, perhaps even for the historian whose vision is obscured by the centuries intervening between the focus of our research – the women – and our enquiring gaze.

Judith Butler adapted the term 'the abject' from Julia Kristeva with slight modifications. Kristeva on her part refers to Douglas as well but remains critical of her dismissal of Freudian concepts.[6] For Kristeva, abjection is a form of exclusion, and in Butler's interpretation of Kristeva's *Powers of Horror*:

> [t]he 'abject' designates that which has been expelled from the body, discharged as excrement, literally rendered 'Other'. This appears as an expulsion of alien elements, but the alien is effectively established through this expulsion. The construction of the 'not-me' as the abject establishes the boundaries of the body which are also the first contours of the subject.[7]

2 Butler [1990] 1999; Butler 1993.
3 Douglas [1966] 2002. On Douglas, see Anttonen & Viljanen 2000, 7–25.
4 Douglas [1966] 2002, 5. Butler cites this passage in Butler [1990] 1999, 166–167.
5 Butler [1990] 1999, 167.
6 Kristeva 1982, 66.
7 Butler [1990] 1999, 169.

Butler further defines abjection to mean discarding, and that which has been cast out.[8] Returning to the history of the term, we find that Julia Kristeva's psychoanalytic abject is 'a border; abjection is above all ambiguity'.[9] Suzannah Biernoff has shown how psychoanalytical terms might be used in historical study. In her study of medieval vision and sight Biernoff discusses Kristeva's notion of abjection, and interestingly notes that

> [t]he flesh, as we have seen, is a site of permeability and pollution: a vast suppurating ulcer or a brimming sewer, to repeat Bernard of Clairvaux's metaphors. Unable to be contained within the imagined boundary of the self, but equally impossible to separate from the self, the penetrated and penetrating 'border' of flesh engenders nausea, even horror. The encounter with flesh is in this sense an encounter of with the abject.[10]

Kristeva's idea of the abject as a border is interesting. This border can be seen as including both oneself and the other, the outcaster as well as the outcast. Kristevan abject, plainly, is repugnance that protects: 'Loathing an item of food, a piece of filth, waste, or dung. The spasms and vomiting that protect me. The repugnance, the retching that thrusts me to the side and turns me away from defilement, sewage, and muck.'[11] This kind of abject is probably easier to use as a historian's tool since Butler's abject is more intertwined with the formation of the subject. It is by no means unproblematic to study early modern people in twentieth century psychoanalytical terms, since their world did not have them. Early modern subjectivity and individuality were different from ours. When Butler notes that the body is not 'being',[12] one could argue that for early modern people bodiliness was nothing but 'being'. They considered their bodies to be there, alive, solid, and made of flesh. The body was not as much as a space as our bodies, and their bodies were always essential and gendered.[13]

8 Butler 1993, 243, n. 2. See also Kekki 2004, 41–42.

9 Kristeva 1982, 9. Also cited in Biernoff 2002, 210, n. 116.

10 Biernoff 2002, 129–130.

11 Kristeva 1982, 2.

12 Butler [1990] 1999, 177.

13 This is why I am tempted to agree with Iris Marion Young who considers it problematic to consider Toril Moi's 'lived body' to lead to the rejection of the concept of gender. The historical lived body was directed by such historical structures which do not always become visible with Moi's particularism. Young 2005, 12–26. I have discussed

Fundamentally, Butler's idea of the abject is about identity formation, facing and not facing the other by creating the other. In her *Bodies that Matter*, Butler argues that there is, importantly, a simultaneous production of the social zones of subjects and abject beings. Abjects are not 'yet subjects'. These two zones presuppose each other in the sense that there is no matrix of subjects without the domain of the abject. Furthermore, the abject is a 'zone of uninhabitability' and a 'site of dreaded identification'. The matrix of subjects fears that dangerous zone – which means that the abject is inside the subject.[14]

Flesh – the Historical Body

I do not mean to essentialize the early modern diseased body.[15] It is this historical nature of flesh which allows us to analyze it in present day (anachronistic) terms.[16] It is important to note that Butler does not offer ahistoricality as a definition of the body. On the contrary, as Katriina Honkanen has shown, history, historicity and chronology are essential concepts for Butler.[17] If we read Butler further, her idea of the body becomes, in this light, perfectly acceptable for historians – early modern flesh is a historical construction:

> I suggest that gendered bodies are so many 'styles of the flesh'. These styles are never fully self-styled, for styles have a history, and those histories condition and limit the possibilities. Consider gender, for instance, *as a corporeal style*, and 'act', as it were, which is both intentional and performative, where 'performative' suggests a dramatic and contingent construction of meaning.[18]

elsewhere the possibilities for the early modern body to be 'a space'. See Kaartinen 2002.

14 Butler 1993, 3.

15 For interesting and valuable work on the body, see for example Schiebinger 1993; Porter 2004; Carel 2008.

16 Kay & Rubin 1994, 3.

17 Honkanen 2004, passim and especially 115–127, 158–174. See also Koivunen 2004, 246–251.

18 Butler [1990] 1999, 177.

What Judith Butler has to say about the flesh as being styled, or 'never fully-styled' can speak for us, too. Because the body has never been constant, but is cultural and changing in time, it is worth while to render it a historical reading which aims at seeing the processes it was subjected to by the breast cancer patient and by everyone else who was connected to the case at hand. Therefore, it can be restated that the diseased body has a style of breast cancer written on it, and that style was then performed – essential here – to build bodily meanings. The early modern body can be understood as the locus of culture, and yet again, a place where culture was negotiated. Indeed the early modern body was regulated, constrained, and formulated. Breast cancer played nasty tricks on the body and suddenly it could no longer be regular, formulaic or even kept in constraints. The nature of the disease was clearly considered rather unsociable.

Similarly, we can recognize the body's role as a focus of endless attempts of naturalization. Thus it is also as a cultural sign.[19] In this case, the body as a cultural sign speaks of the culture in reversed terms. It is my belief that the breast-cancerous body defied attempts at naturalization. And if it were abject, in the end, the naturalization process would have been rejected because of the sheer horror of the disease. Could the body become, if not inhuman, then beyond the boundaries of gender identities?

But can one assert that early modern breast-cancered body was abject? Abject in itself was as a term in use in the eighteenth century, and meant loathsome and disgusting, but we are now discussing the postmodern abject. We certainly cannot take for granted that premodern culture would have perceived the cancerous body as polluted or polluting or endangering.[20] We return to Kristeva's idea which is based on the (Douglasian) idea of boundaries and taboos that form them. The taboo would then construct a discrete subject through exclusion.[21] This would perhaps work well with breast cancer patients of the past. But were they excluded, and if so, who excluded them? Could the active agent imposing that exclusion have been the patients themselves?

19 Here my thinking is again informed by Judith Butler, see Butler [1990] 1999, 44, 90.
20 Butler [1990] 1999, 168; Douglas [1966] 2002.
21 Butler [1990] 1999, 169.

The Horrors of Cancer

If bodily beauty can be seen extremely gendered in early modern culture, the abject could be seen as the opposite. Could we indeed think that abject might produce a state in which one's sex and even gender become invisible? Let us test the idea by taking a look at the rotting diseased body. Ulcerated breast cancer was thought to smell horribly because of the rapid rotting process of cancerous flesh, and the cancerous, ichorous, fluid. If flesh is like 'a vast suppurating ulcer', its liminal position will present itself as abject when the flesh turns cancerous. Cancer produced tumours which were experienced as foreign to the body. The patients did not feel cancer as a part of their body, it was an alien which ate their body alive. When flesh in itself is viewed negatively, then what is rotten about the body certainly can be seen as the margin, horrible, a cesspit, and as something that 'engenders nausea' – perhaps the abject in Kristevan terms. An ulcerated cancer is death itself: the body, a corpse, eaten by cancer is, in Kristeva's words, 'the utmost of abjection'.[22]

In early modern terms breast cancer was fleshiness itself.[23] It was concrete, repugnant, horrible, the body turning into horror. Cancerous growth or the tumour itself could be defined as painful, very hot, cruel, and horrid.[24] Indeed, the very dictionary definition of cancer seems to be not only of a 'a hard and rough swelling', but also that cancer is 'Phagedenick', corroding, and 'eating the flesh.'[25] It is interesting that cancer was considered so horrible among horrible illnesses. Mankind itself was ridden with illness – one should not assume that consumption, tumours, or pus would shake early modern people but it did. Cancer tortured its victims for years. In the following, Godfrey Goodman eloquently lists the ailments the humans are prone to, after the fall:

> Why should man be more subiect to diseases, then all other creatures? Not any part of man without seuerall and special diseases; not any moment of his age wherein sicknesses and infirmities doe not watch and attend their

22 Kristeva 1982, 3–4. See also Zimmerman 2008, 564.

23 On early modern understanding illness and medicine, seminal works include Webster (ed.) 1979; Porter and Porter 1989; Wear 2000.

24 *Account* 1670, 20.

25 Coles 1677, sig. E4v; sig. EE4v.

> opportunitie, arising from the very constitution of his body; the small poxe & the measles creepe in his cradle; the wormes, the scabbes, and the botches attend him to schoole; in his youth, hot agues and plurisies, like burning seas with their ebbings and flowings going and returning according to their fits & their seasons, to the wonder of nature, & the astonishment of the Physitian; in his elder yeeres, the stone, the gowte, the strangullion; then ruptures, aches, and coughes; at length the dead palsie, the apoplexie, the lethargie giues him his deadly wound.[26]

As Roy Porter has attested, the early modern world was ridden with bodily decay, pain and the fear of pain. The rotting flesh was always present. And yet, cancer, and even the thought of it, shook early modern people. William Beckett gives an account of a man who tried to help his wife to rid of her breast cancer by sucking the corrosive juice out of her nipple. She died, and he got infected with cancer in his mouth, or so it was thought. His fate in the world then was sealed. Beckett describes the damage cancer inflicted on his life:

> the Cancer continu'd to spread, till it had extended it self over most of the internal Parts of the Mouth, and to the inner Part of the Nose: In this unhappy Condition, he liv'd some time, but at last became so frightful an Object, and the Stench that continually proceeded from the Parts was so offensive, that he retir'd himself from the World, and finish'd his miserable Life in a Garret.[27]

The desperate husband and his body remain distant to us. His attempt to save his wife and his decision to fly from the world to the attic are foreign to us but if we attempt to understand him in his historical context, his decisions seem more understandable. His flesh failed him: he was horrible to look at, and it seems that the horrible smell that emanated from him drove him to escape the world, and he indeed died a hermit. In a way this is what happened to lepers. Some thought the smell might be dangerous and harm those who were nearby, which may have further isolated some patients, but there is not much evidence of such isolation – usually patients were surrounded with friends and family.[28]

26 Goodman 1616, 94.

27 Beckett 1712, 41.

28 This man's body was material. Judith Butler has been often accused of renouncing the materiality of the body in *Gender Trouble* but in her *Bodies that Matter* she denies this.

Even though historical bodies are material, they cannot be for us a sensory experience since we cannot taste, smell, hear, touch, see or hear them. Even though the breast-cancered body is intensely graphic, the only way to reach it is through past representations of it. Here, in a concise form, the autobiography of William Lilly describes the time when he was in the employment of Mr and Mrs Wright. The Wrights had married late in life, when she was 70 and he 65. In 1624, Mrs Wright's left breast became painful, and there appeared a tumour in her breast. The size of it resembled 'a small pea'.[29] The case was not insignificant in his life, since Mrs Wright's death is given a special chapter in his autobiography:

> From the beginning of it until she died, she would permit no surgeon to dress it but only myself; I applied every thing unto it, and her pains were so great the winter before she died, that I have been called out of my bed two or three times in one night to dress it [and] change plaisters. In 1624 by degrees with scissars I cut all the whole breast away, I mean the sinews, nerves, &c. In one fortnight, or little more; it appeared, as it were, mere flesh, all raw, so that she could scarce endure any unguent to be applied.
>
> I remember there was a great cleft through the middle of the breast, which when that fully appeared she died, which was in September 1624.[30]

Interestingly, it is not the woman's sufferings that are foregrounded here, but in addition to the biographer's attested heroism, the bodiliness or especially the bodily effects of the illness are in an important role: it is probable that the sheer horror of it was imprinted in Lilly's mind. He describes the role he had in the illness: he was the nurse since Mrs Wright would only allow him to act as his surgeon, to dress her, and finally to cut away the breast piece by piece, with scissors.

The Stench

As said, an ulcerated cancer had an extremely repugnant smell which doctors and patients and their loved ones found difficult to get used to.[31] Breast cancer was all to do with decay, putrid flesh, open sores, foul

29 *Lives* 1774, 13.

30 *Lives* 1774, 13–14.

31 On early modern medical ethics and on meeting the patient, see Payne 2007.

smells.[32] The cancerous fluid was to some 'as sharp and as corrosive as *Aqua fortis*, polluting and dangerous, and poisonous.'[33] Cancer was yet again a sign of the fleshiness of the body, and it stank dangerously.[34] We should return to Mary Douglas who has discussed the dangers of pollution (such as human excrement), the very danger of the cancerous fluid seems to lie in the fact that it ran from the ulcer until death relieved the patient. It was not to be ordered or regulated, its course could not be extinguished. But, as Douglas has posited, we have a tendency to order things which are out of order, and especially anything we might redeem, like dirt or filth.[35] The threatening nature of the cancer fluid seems to have resided in the fact that it often ran profusely from an ulcerated tumour – until death relieved the suffering patient. This fluid seemed corrosive and endless: the flow could not be staunched in the way a vein could have been; this fluid was out of order, it was horrible, it was filth.

Furthermore, as we saw earlier, many specialists were convinced that cancer was highly contagious. Thus, literally, the patient's flesh produced dangerous, toxic pollutants which everyone felt were nothing but disgusting. Much, much worse than the plain subcutaneous tumour was an ulcerated tumour which seemed to eat away flesh or an ulcerated cancer which had begun to adhere to other body parts such as ribs. Cancer fluid was seen by many as life-threatening because it was thought to cause contagion. Thus, literally, the cancer patient's body produced this lethal poison which everyone considered abject. Moreover, this fluid ran from an ulcer which looked repulsive, which often enlarged quite rapidly and moved towards the sides and armpits, and looked like the flesh was eaten. The stench was often considered as a sign of the last stage of cancer.[36] Ac-

32 Suzannah Biernoff has demonstrated how the medieval body and flesh were not always synonyms. Perhaps it would be too simplistic to say that the body was constituted of flesh, but it was the flesh that was the sinful part of the human entity. Biernoff formulates this in the following manner: 'Defined by original sin the human condition was one in which the body was shadowed, inflamed and animated by the flesh. […] If flesh enslaves or corrupts, the implication is that there is something there to be enslaved and corrupted: some part of the self that is not flesh.' Biernoff 2002, 22–23.

33 *Account* 1670, 20–21.

34 *Account* 1670, 20–21.

35 Douglas [1966] 2002, passim, and especially 44–50.

36 Deshaies-Gendron 1701, 13, 59–60. See also Astruc 1767, 353.

cording to Banister in the sixteenth century cancer was 'in sight horrible and stinking'[37], or for Wecker 'hor[r]ible and stinking' and 'filthie'.[38] According to an anonymous author in the seventeenth century it was of 'a horrible and frightful appearance',[39] and of a 'cadaverous Smell or Stench',[40] and a woman whose breast was ulcerated had to spend the rest of her life 'in continual Pain and Filthiness, and at last dye miserably'.[41] Furthermore, it was mentioned, '[t]he ulcer is filthie, with lips, thick, swollen, hard, knottie, turned out, and standing up, casting forth filthie and carrion like filth, having a horrid aspect.'[42] Parallels can be seen between these descriptions and Douglas's polluting and Kristeva's and Butler's abject.

The smell of cancer was described in many ways, but it was always 'intolerably offensive.'[43] *Modern Family Physician* advised its readers that the smell of an ulcer was 'nauseous', and made 'the patient loathsome to all those who are obliged to attend him'[44]. This meant not just members of the patient's family but also professional carers. As mentioned earlier, early modern doctors were not inured to smells. John Pearson suggested that 'the fetid effluvia arising from a cancerous Ulcer, will sometimes produce very disagreeable effects upon the attendants'.[45] Peyrilhe described emptying the softer parts of a patient's tumour:

> I opened five of these, one after the other, and found them filled with a clear, yellowish liquor, which I collected (though not without some disgust) by means of a sponge, which had previously been wet and well pressed.[46]

John Ewart noted of the ulcer of his patient, Susan Alford, that '[t]he stench from the sore was at all times so very offensive both to herself and to by-standers, as scarcely to be endured.'[47] Richard Guy himself as a

37 Banister 1575, f. 11–11v.
38 Wecker 1585, 505.
39 *Account* 1670, 24.
40 *Account* 1670, 27.
41 *Account* 1670, 25.
42 Bayfield 1655, 293.
43 Temple 1792, 400.
44 *Modern Family Physician* 1775, 220, 221.
45 Pearson 1788, 222.
46 Peyrilhe 1778, 31.
47 Ewart 1794, 12.

surgeon suffered greatly from the stench from a patient of his who had a huge tumour, of the size of a child's head: 'the Stench was so intolerable, I could not bear the Room one Minute.'[48]

Arthur Nicolson wrote of a patient's sufferings, and stressed that the patient's own experience was the worst suffering she had endured from the horrible fœtor: 'Towards the end of October, the ulcer had spread very much, and the smell of it was so horrid, that she declared that all her other sufferings were trifling in comparison with what she felt from this cause.'[49] The smell was removed by carrot poultice 'from the first application'. The patient expressed her gratitude 'in the most pathetic terms'.[50]

A further problem with the stench of cancer was that bad odours were considered dangerous to others. Not only were illnesses thought to have been transmitted through smells, at their worst, smells were themselves dangerous diseases.[51] This is possibly the reason why Mother Dame Magdalen Digby was removed from her Abbey infirmary during her illness. Her obituary, which is the source for our knowledge of her illness, is not very clear regarding the chronology of her illness but it is said that her breast 'broke' eight months before she died.[52] This is probably when her doctor ordered her removal from the infirmary to 'new rooms'. It is said that this was done 'by the reason of the noysomness of the cancker in her breast'.[53] Whether the author refers by 'noysomness' to something that is harmful or something that is evil smelling, the consequence of the sentence is for us the same: her breast exuded danger. The smell was offensive, to say the least, and this is noted again in the obituary. Before her death her ulcer ran 'very pitifully, and was boken [sic] out into five holes, having with all a most noysom swell [sic]'. Regardless of the typographical error, numerous throughout the text, this certainly refers to smell since it is mentioned that her own sense of smell was 'quick'.[54]

48 Guy 1759, 47.
49 *Medical Observations* 1772, 362.
50 *Medical Observations* 1772, 362. Banister 1589, 207, 337.
51 Bartholomaeus 1582, 19–20; Bright 1615, 45.
52 *Obituary notices* 1917, 77.
53 *Obituary notices* 1917, 76.
54 *Obituary notices* 1917, 78.

The smell of cancer was a diagnostic tool.[55] The worse the smell, the worse the disease. If, Astruc wrote, 'the foetor not very offensive', the case might be not so dangerous. But if 'the humour discharging from it be foul, thick, or fetid; there is a certainty that the cancer is malignant'.[56] For William Nisbet ulcerated cancer had the most fetid odour, 'more so than any other',[57] and in *An Inquiry* he elaborated that

> [i]n the progress of the ulceration, the sore acquires an intolerable stench and smell, of a peculiar nature, so as to be readily distinguished by any practitioner conversant with the disease, and more offensive than that from any other species of ulcer; equally loathsome to the patient as to a by-stander.[58]

Swellings and tumours could be quite sizable. In 1755, Mrs D.'s breast was mentioned to have been of 'enormous size', and with a circumference of about a yard it indeed was. It is mentioned that she was 'a remarkably corpulent woman', but the size of the breast was explained by her large tumour which, when examined after her mastectomy, was considered to look like a cauliflower head.[59] She recovered well from her operation, and cancer did not recur at the site again. Unfortunately, however, another enormous tumour grew on her scapula. Fifteen months had passed since her first operation, and now her new tumour was measured to be 'three feet and eight inches in circumference'. The surgeon did not consider it possible to operate on this tumour, and the patient died three months later.[60] The last weeks were apparently full of horror, and even imminent danger to those who were with the patient. Gooch writes:

> Before her death the tumour was much increased; she lived but a short time after it broke, and that in the utmost misery, without any ease but what was procured by opiates: the discharge was immensely great, and the matter not only excessively offensive in smell, but the Effluvia proceeding from it were so virulent, as to affect those who constantly attended her. One of the persons who bore her to the grave told me, that the stench made him very

55 Wear 2000, 255.
56 Astruc 1767, 354.
57 Nisbet 1793, 150.
58 Nisbet 1795, 126–127.
59 Gooch 1758, 33–34. Mrs. D of P's case is reprinted in Gooch 1792, 122–125.
60 Gooch 1758, 35.

> sick, and that he was immediately seized with a flux, which soon relieved him.[61]

Here the danger of the cancer arose from the stench. In his later book Gooch gathered evidence to prove the adverse effects of cancer smells and he was adamant that he could prove that cancer would be transferred via smell to another person. He writes: 'The stench proceeding from these ulcers is often very great, consequently noxious to the patient and attendants', and then adds in a footnote: 'Doctor Harris has recorded a fatal instance, where a physician suffered in this manner from his own wife, who was afflicted with an ulcerous cancer in her breast.'[62] The cancerous smell could kill; it was abject in the utmost Kristevan sense.

In our culture cancer itself is not experienced as having any odour.[63] In early modern culture, it was the cancerous mass itself which was considered noisome, and the necrotic tissue was considered cancerous as well.[64]

Cancer and gender

It is possible to say that early modern cancer was abject but was this abjection gendered? Was it a part of a Butlerian identity process? Can it be that the patient herself becomes abject, so *other* that she would lose her sex, that she would turn into a cancerous mass? Premodern culture easily evades us and answers our questions only reluctantly. We should begin by asking if breast cancer itself was gendered.

It seems to me that cancer itself was not gendered but one's sex had much to do with the birth of cancer. That is to say: a woman did not get cancer because she was a weak woman but because human flesh was prone to blockages when for instance the natural flow of menses ceased. Similarly, men with hemorrhaging prolapsed haemorrhoids were in danger

61 Gooch 1758, 35.

62 Gooch 1792, 193. Harris's example is also used in Guy 1759, 63 to show that cancer was dangerous to people around the patient.

63 Shorter [1991] 1997, 243–244.

64 Stinking cancer was a concept which was used as a metaphor. A white breast destroyed by a stinking cancer worked as a reminder of the vain pursuits of this world. Baxter 1683, 51.

of getting cancer if this bleeding was suddenly stopped. Did breast cancer have anything to do with experiencing femininity or being feminine? Probably so. It must be noted, however, that very little on that issue was written in the early modern period. It may have been that it was not an issue one would want to write about or that then it was not a particular issue since early modern women with breast cancer had little luxury of hoping that they would be cured. Perhaps their silence on this matter in their letters and journals reflects this: it was better to be alive even if mutilated. The fact that the few men found with breast cancer were treated as any patient without much ado about their sex would suggest that breast cancer was not a gendered disease.

The silence around the experience of breast cancer is rare, which naturally has its effects on the nature of the sources we have available. Therefore the silence around breast cancer and femininity is deep. An exception to this silence comes from Madame de Motteville's biography of Anne of Austria who died of breast cancer in 1666 at the age of 65, having been ill for some three years. Motteville wrote in her *Mémoires*[65] about the Queen Mother as a great heroine, and I see her text reflecting some general ideas of early modern femininity – but which of course must be taken with a pinch of salt since we cannot be sure that the views reported by Motteville were in fact Queen Anne's. Madame was her courtier, however, and knew the Queen Mother well. Of course it is valuable to know what Motteville herself thought of cancer and femininity if we decide her thoughts cannot be taken as Anne's.

Madame de Motteville wrote that Anne had been infatuated in her youth by her own beauty, and this was accompanied by a great love of self indulgent fastidiousness. This was, of course, in early modern culture sinful, and Anne seems to have seen her illness as a God's punishment for her vanity. Motteville writes:

> Her natural Inclination, and the fineness of her Skin was such, that whatever was innocently delightful she lik'd: She lov'd Perfumes passionately; it was a hard matter to get Linen fine enough to make her Sheet and Shifts; and before she cou'd use them, they must be several times wash'd to make

65 Madame de Motteville's grand *œuvre* was translated into English in 1725 which is the edition I refer in the following.

> them softer. Cardinal Mazarine, bantring her often upon it when she was in perfect health, said, *That if she went to Hell, she wou'd need no other Punishement than to lie in Holland Sheets*.[66]

The love of soft sheets seems to have been characteristic of and important to Anne's understanding of herself during her last days, when the sheets apparently symbolized her piety and especially her penitence. When she lay dying, she met the countess of Ille, and made her understand that she 'upbraided herself for being so over-nice formerly in her Person; who, when in Health, could not bear any Sheets but what were extraordinary fine. … Ha! Condessa, savanas de Batista; ha! Condessa, savanas de Batista!'[67] Thus she declaimed, trying to communicate her remorse.

Anne's great love for luxury brings us back to the world of smells. Anne's love of perfumes was a bittersweet thing to Madame de Motteville. She takes great care to include in the *Memoirs* an account of an occasion when Anne's old servant, the head servant came to say goodbye to the (it was then thought) dying Queen-Mother. What the servant says should probably be understood as comforting, as suggesting that he understood that death would be a welcome relief for her:

> He answer'd her very coldly, according to his usual manner of speaking and acting, as if he were made of Ice; *You may imagine, Madame, with what Sorrow it is that your Servants receive this Sentence; but it is some Comfort to us to see your Majesty releas'd from such great Torments, and from a great Inconveniency besides, particularly to her that loves Perfumes; for these Distempers at last have a noisome Smell*.[68]

The courtier spoke frankly! Again Anne is almost cruelly reminded of her love of beauty and elegance and especially of her awful smell. The smell of cancer would be unbearable for her, and this is probably what the servant Beringhen understood.[69] Anne of Austria mentioned to the Countess of Ille that she was uneasy because of the offensive smell that her breast gave off.[70] By the nineteenth of January 1666, the stench was unbearable. Motteville explained:

66 Italics original. Motteville 1725, 275.
67 Motteville 1725, 313. The modern spelling of sheet in Spanish is *sábana.*
68 Motteville 1725, 281.
69 Motteville 1725, 284.
70 Motteville 1725, 313.

> they were forc'd to hold sweet Baggs under her Nose, to overpower the noisom Stench that came from her Sore. It was not offensive to her before, because the other Remedies she made use of, hinder'd its putrefying; and even them, such was the quantity of Perfumes upon her Bed, that those who came near her were not annoy'd: but now, in this last Dressing, as I observ'd, ever time she was forc'd to hold her Nose.[71]

Finally, when death was closing on her beloved Queen Mother, Madame de Motteville ponders on her looks. For the first time, she says, Anne looked older than sixty. She was a sad sight, her hands, arms and face had swollen horribly, and her body in general was so 'unwieldy' that she could hardly carry out the slightest movements.[72] But surprisingly, a little later on, there is found some perfect beauty in Anne on her death bed:

> looking on her Hand, which was a little swell'd, she shook her Head, and said to herself very low, *My Hand is swell'd; well, 'tis time to be going*. All her Ailments and Sufferings had not diminish'd the beauty of her Arms and Hands, which never lookd' better than in these last Days of her Sickness: her Distemper had made them a little leaner indeed, but the Swelling which the St. Antony's Fire left behind it, had plump'd them to perfection; and they look'd more like Hands and Arms of Alabaster than Flesh: but that which Time could not impair, was now going to be destroy'd by that which puts an end to Time itself.[73]

Even on her death bed, knowing that her time had now come, her cancer having sent its humours to her lungs, as indicated by her severe cough, Anne of Austria was able to comment about her beauty. Perhaps it indeed comforted her a little. Anne was considered 'handsom' on her death bed, as her fever made her eyes sparkle and gave her face an appealing colour, and her son Louis XIV himself noted: 'I never saw her look so well'.[74] The physical beauty of the Mother of the Sun King was culturally acceptable and appropriate, and that it becomes so important in the account of her last hours is extremely interesting. Feminine beauty was utterly important, and a cultural norm in viewing women was to look at their beauty for signs of its fading. This death bed scene speaks to us as well, and reminds

71 Motteville 1725, 316–317.
72 Motteville 1725, 310.
73 Motteville 1725, 317.
74 Motteville 1725, 320.

us that illness was the object of a gaze. The gaze seems to have averted itself from the abject. It was not the bandages one wanted to see but the sparkling feverish eyes, blushing face and plump white hands. These were the literal embodiment of femininity.[75] We cannot generalize from Anne's case but it is possible that the viewer may have seen more what he or she wanted to see – radiant beauty moving towards God's heaven rather than a decaying body. It may well be, however, that beauty was a feminine virtue which never really left its bearer however cruelly fate treated the worldly body.

Conclusions

The history of illness can open a way to understanding past culture and its history.

One must conclude, however, that there cannot be one unequivocal and final statement about early modern femininity. The concept of woman seems to have embraced many kinds of femininites, and the categories of men and women were fixed so well that one remained one or the other in extreme circumstances. This does not mean that the categories were narrow: they were flexible, tolerated the utmost abject, and the destruction caused by a horrible disease. I was tempted to see the concept of the abject as a key to finding a tear in the fabric of the early modern categorization of gender, but ended up finding no such tear. Early modern people were more flexible that I thought, once again. In these cases they clearly perceived the ill person's personality as more important than the body as a determinant of her identity. The ill woman and her illness were not the same. Even though admittedly a horrible sight, that patient could still be portrayed as the epitome of femininity – if not in her body, then in her perfect mind.

75 Korhonen 2005.

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‘Dotage without a fever’. Towards a cultural history of melancholia*

Kirsi Tuohela

In this article I discuss what a cultural history of melancholia might be about. The concept of *melancholia*[1] is varying and in ‘eternal flux’, covering a broad time scale and the whole spectrum of meanings from disease to emotion. Sometimes an image, a text or a landscape has been interpreted as ‘melancholy’ and the term has thus often been used in a metaphorical way. My aim in this article is to ask and clarify what melancholia could mean to the cultural historian.

I identify myself as a cultural historian aware of the critique that asks if there really is a separate field of study called *cultural history*. I believe there is, and my aim also is to specify what cultural history could be about. To locate disciplines in context I acknowledge that cultural history has borrowed a lot from other disciplines, including anthropology, ethnography, art history and cultural studies, that address culture and/or history, but it has also built an identity as a field of research that can be seen as its own, an approach that is – if not unique – characteristic of it. In this article I intend to sketch the outlines of a cultural history approach, and in particular how it would address the subject of melancholy.

My article is largely a reflection on methodology and historiography

* I would like to acknowledge the invaluable contribution to the preparation of this essay of the Publishing in English workshops, presented in the Department of Cultural History, University of Turku, Finland by Bruce Johnson. I also would like to thank the anonymous referees who provided very useful suggestions.

1 I use both ‘melancholia’ and ‘melancholy’ more or less interchangeably. However when I refer to the pathological form of melancholy/melancholia, I use ‘melancholia’.

and only partly based on original primary material. It aims to suggest a definition and understanding of the phenomenon called melancholy that is useful in cultural history.

To introduce the phenomenon called melancholia I present two influential and eminent scholars who have shed light on what Robert Burton described as this 'dotage without a fever' (see below). I continue by briefly reviewing the origins of the term *melancholia*, the development and transformation of the concept during what Foucault called the 'classical epoch of melancholy' the period from the seventeenth to the nineteenth century.[2] I then analyse in more detail some of the ways in which melancholia has been studied in historical research. I focus on how melancholia has been defined and approached, and discuss the extent of its usefulness in the study of cultural history. I also reflect upon the methodological inspiration that has been offered by some scholars and individual works in the field of medical history and history of madness. I also introduce a gender perspective and consider its possible benefits for the cultural history of melancholy. From all this I shall develop an argument for a model of a cultural historical approach to melancholia.

The famous commentators Burton and Freud

To introduce the theme I refer to two epochs and two writers that do not share much more than a keen interest in melancholy. The seventeenth century English clergyman, librarian and man of letters Robert Burton (1577–1640) is one of the key writers in the literature of melancholy, and who made a paramount effort to unravel the mystery so familiar to many of his contemporaries: melancholy. His enquiry into the nature of melancholy produced his odd and witty book *The Anatomy of Melancholy* (1621).

Burton's study opens with a preface, 'The Author's Abstract of Melancholy', which is written as a poem and includes the lines:

> When I lie waking all alone,
> Recounting what I have ill done,

2 Foucault 1988, 121.

My thoughts on me then tyrannize,
Fear and sorrow me surprise,
Whether I tarry still or go,
Methinks the time moves very slow,
All my griefs to this are jolly,
Naught so sad as melancholy.[3]

Here, in Burton's verse, melancholy reveals its nature as something in eternal flux: it is bitter and sweet, soft and tearing, blessed and damned. It also signifies introspection, inventing one's thoughts and deeds, and measuring one's feelings of guilt. It often also includes emotions of fear and sorrow. Many typical features of melancholy already appear in this 'abstract', not the least of which is the subjective nature of the suffering it inflicts.

At the time Burton's book was published, melancholy was the subject of much discussion. When conducting his own research on the topic Burton had access to a large library, and he refers both to classical authors of antiquity and the medical texts of his own day. He could not, however, find a consensus about its usual manifestations, the reasons behind it, nor the proper treatment to cure it. Nonetheless his scrupulous, extensive and dedicated reflections on the subject have made Burton's book a classic piece of melancholy literature.[4] Burton serves as an introductory reminder of the ambiguities of melancholia. Melancholia as a malady of the mind can be identified relatively clearly through its most common symptoms of fear, sorrow, gloominess and anxiety, but as a general concept melancholia/melancholy is also wide-ranging and ambiguous. It appears both as an illness and as an emotion. Burton's example shows us clearly that melancholy is both familiar to all of us and still difficult to define and understand fully.

Through the centuries the cardinal symptoms of melancholia have been said to be those to which Burton refers: fear and sorrow. Burton writes that '[t]he common sort define it to be a kind of dotage without a fever, having for his ordinary companions fear and sadness, without any apparent occasion'. These symptoms of fear and sorrow distinguish it from

3 Burton [1621] 1977, 11. See also Foucault [1961] 1988, 121; Porter 2002, 52.
4 See further on Burton, Babb 1959 and Gowland 2006.

'folly and madness', and melancholia being something 'without a cause' distinguishes it from other ordinary passions (that do have a cause).[5] The distinction between pathological and normal is anything but clear in the colourful history of melancholia but the effort to define this borderline between them has been perennially important to thinkers throughout the centuries.[6]

From the modern twentieth century perspective one of the most influential explorers of the human mind, Sigmund Freud, has also written about melancholia. Like so many previous thinkers Freud, too, connected it to sadness. According to Freud melancholia can mean a category of psychic disorder, a diagnosis, as well as a name for a sorrowful emotion, a feeling of loss.[7] Freud related sadness and melancholia, or mourning and melancholia to each other, and thought that they both are reactions to loss. Like Burton he tried to distinguish the pathological from the normal and he noted that the melancholic, as a distinct from the sad or those in mourning, does not really know what he/she has lost. In this respect he/she differs from the ordinary mourner who can identify the loss that is mourned. This definition comes from a long tradition which can also be found in Burton's thinking. Freud, however, adds something very new to melancholia's definition and alters the way this condition is understood in western culture of the twentieth century.

Freud states that in melancholia a person suffers from extremely low self-esteem, a moral sense of worthlessness. According to Freud this is exactly the feature that warrants the term melancholia. Low self esteem is something Freud brought to melancholia and which he even identified

5 Burton [1621] 1977, 169–170; also Horwitz & Wakefield 2007, 64, Johannisson 2009, 32–33, Radden 2009, 5. Regarding the expression 'without a cause' see Radden 2009, 14.

6 Radden 2009, 97–109.

7 In his original text *Trauer und Melancholie* (1914) Freud uses the term *Trauer*, which can be translated to both sadness and mourning. His term *Melancholie* is close to *melancholia*, but in the German language there is no distinction equivalent to the distinction in English between melancholia and melancholy. This distinction has not always been clear even in English (Radden 2009, 98) and is lacking in my own native language, Finnish. So, when referring to its pathological form I use melancholia but when using the term more generally I use both melancholia and melancholy. Freud [1917] 2005, 160–161; Johannisson 2009, 30.

as its central symptom. It is this that Jennifer Radden argues is the great innovation in Freud's thinking.[8] Thus, to an extent Freud perpetuated the traditional connection between melancholia and the usual symptoms of sadness and fear but by introducing exceptionally low self-esteem as a key feature he altered the concept and understanding of melancholia.

From the point of view of the objective of this article – to identify a fruitful way of writing a cultural history of melancholia – the attempt to distinguish between the pathological and the normal, to separate melancholia as a disease from 'ordinary' low feelings is a key distinction. The distinction has offered and still offers us a means to define melancholia as pathology and mental illness, and write its history in those terms. The distinction also makes it possible to identify melancholy as a mood, as a feeling or emotion, and to recognise the 'written melancholia' as the testimony of 'well' people who never were hospitalised, medicated or diagnosed as mentally ill but who themselves interpreted their fatigue as melancholy. In her psychoanalytically oriented approach to melancholia French philosopher Julia Kristeva refers to this distinction between pathology the written melancholia, the latter of which has hardly anything to do with the hospitalised stupor that carries the same name.[9] The difference between the healthy and the pathological can be seen as a graduated spectrum, but nonetheless it is an essential distinction.

The questions for cultural historians are how can we recognise and accommodate both the pathological and non-pathological aspects of melancholy; how could we write a history of the culture at large; how could we include in a history of melancholia a great variety of opinions of medical men and experiences of their patients, representations of writers and painters, reactions of friends and family members who live in close proximity to melancholics? For a scholar the question is how can we find a balance between conceptual flexibility and mere unproductive vagueness?

8 Radden 2009, 157.

9 Kristeva 1998, 20.

Melaina chole, black bile – Origins of the term and the transformation of it during the 'classical era of melancholia'

The term *melancholia* has its roots in Greek and Latin. The term comes from Greek μέλαινα χολή (*melaina chole*), from which it was translated to Latin as *atra bilis*. Later it was translated into English as *black bile*. During the fourteenth century many variations of the original Greek word began to circulate in English texts and discussions – *malencoley, melancholie, melancholy* – and in a medical context the form *melancholia* became established.

Melaina chole has given its name to a great variety of sad and sorrowful states of mind and feelings, to literary pieces, images and landscapes. But the black bile as a physical 'liquid', as an agent causing melancholia, is also interesting from the material perspective. This is partly due to the explanatory force this fluid has exercised for two millennia, shedding light not only on the cause of melancholia, but also explaining other maladies. Black bile has been seen as one of the humours of the body, and according to the doctrine of the humours (humoralism) it was one of the four basic types. A proper balance between these four humours meant health, while illness was understood to be caused by an imbalance in these bodily fluids. This explanatory tradition of humoralism survived in variations from the sixth century B.C. to the eighteenth century as a sustained basis for understanding melancholia, although with some variations.

Peculiar to black bile is, however, that unlike other humours (blood, phlegm and yellow bile), it was not thought to be formed in any particular organ or tissue of the body. In the early phase, in pre-Hippocratic texts it was either not originally referred to, or it was conceived to be the corrupted form of the yellow bile. Later, in the sixth century B.C. black bile, however, was established as one of the four basic humours, and this model survived in medical texts for two thousand years. In the texts of antiquity black bile could be formed by corruption but also as the outcome of a process in which the blood cooled. In post-Hippocratic antiquity it was also believed that each of the four natural humours had as its counterpart an unnatural and corrupted form, a kind of bad and black bile that then

caused diseases.[10] Thus, since antiquity the doctrine of the humours meant that melancholia was understood as a physical disease caused by black bile although this humour could not be empirically observed.

This inability to clearly observe *black bile* led Michel Foucault to argue that, at least from the seventeenth century *black bile* was primarily a symbolic concept. He acknowledges that during the period of 'classical melancholia' from the seventeenth to the nineteenth century, melancholia was connected to a natural born temperament, and bodily humours and vapours arising from them were identified as the causes of melancholia. According to Foucault, however, all this discussion was more on a notional level than proceeding from the exact observation of the body and its functions.[11]

In line with Foucault we may argue that during the classical period of melancholia (from the seventeenth to the nineteenth century) the whole definition of the malady focused on symptoms, paying less attention to causes and the mechanisms underpinning them. Explanations were dominated by symptoms and manifestations of melancholia, and the earlier idea of partial madness faded away as melancholia was increasing regarded as a state of mind, sorrow and bitterness, seeking solitude and becoming torpid. This is reflected in the citation of 1740s by Englishman Robert James who wrote of melancholics in this manner, stating that 'they avoid company, prefer solitary places, and wander without knowing where they are going'. James goes on, describing the sufferers:

> they have a yellowish colour, a dry tongue as in a person suffering from great thirst, and their eyes are dry, hollow, never moistened with tears; their entire body is dry and burning hot, their face dark, and expressing only horror and sadness.[12]

In this kind of symptomatology melancholia was no longer defined as a bodily process, 'the chemistry of acids', but rather as 'a qualitative option: a phenomenology of melancholic experience'.[13]

Melancholia altered because the whole understanding of the relationship between the body and soul, or body and mind, altered. The vocabulary

10 Jackson 1986, 7–10.

11 Foucault [1961] 1988, 124.

12 Robert James: *A medicinal dictionary: including physic, surgery, anatomy, chymistry, and botany* (1743), in French 1746. Cit. Foucault [1961] 1988, 122, 125.

13 Foucault [1961] 1988, 117–135.

used in depicting the suffering of melancholy was also transformed. During the eighteenth century for example many sensible intellectual men labelled their melancholy suffering as *hypochondria*, a term that then in the late nineteenth century lost its positive association with 'genius' and became a faked illness.[14] A much more recent newcomer is the term that today goes hand in hand with melancholia, *depression*. It can be found in the seventeenth century, having the sense of something to be 'pushed down' (Lat. *de* (down) *premere* (push)). Soon it became a part of the vocabulary used in describing the state of mind, and in the eighteenth century it was a part of the language of melancholia. In the nineteenth century the use of the adjective 'depressive' gained currency in discussions of emotions and states of mind, and psychiatrists also began to use it more often. Among others, the father figures of German psychiatry Wilhelm Griesinger and Emil Kraepelin used it: the former for example in the form of *die psychischen Depressionzustände* and the latter in the form of *depressive Wahnsinn.* As a formal psychiatric diagnosis *depression* was established, however, in the psychiatry of the twentieth century.[15] While the connections between these terms are important, it is equally important to bear in mind their separate meanings.[16]

The long history of melancholia: a shared journey of the pathological and the cultural

According to many historians of psychiatry, melancholia has a long and notable history. Its sufferers can be found from texts of antiquity onwards, and its nature has exercised the minds of philosophers, doctors, priest and poets for an equally long period. The history of melancholia can be written as a narrative of medical and psychiatric evolution or it can be treated as a broader cultural phenomenon including also a range of representations of emotional states of and by non-medical persons.

The long history of melancholia can be divided into periods, using the

14 Johannisson 1998, 108–110.

15 Jackson 1986, 5–6; see also Horwitz & Wakefield 2007, 66.

16 Radden 2003.

term *modern* as a key concept in the manner of the Swedish historian Karin Johannisson. She divides the history of melancholia into three phases, distinguishing the first period as 'premodern black melancholia', the second as 'modern grey melancholia', and the third as 'late modern white melancholia'. The first phase covers the period from antiquity to the eighteenth century, when melancholia was seen as manifesting itself in bitterness, gloominess, apathy and darkness of the sufferer. This state of health was thought to stem from an imbalance between the bodily humours in the patient. Melancholia was understood as arising from an excess of black bile (*melaina chole*) in the body, and according to Johannisson was thus perceived as clearly a bodily disease.

Johannisson also identifies a parallel tradition. Since antiquity there emerges another way of understanding melancholia: the emotional, romantic and more exalted idea that links melancholia with intellectual and spiritual gravitas and greatness. Plato and Aristotle posited this connection, and Renaissance scholars revived it, bringing melancholia into fashion in the seventeenth century.[17] Literature and stage drama became populated by misanthropists, hypochondriacs, pessimists and suicidal lovers. The melancholics of these eighteenth century texts still manifested the pre-modern black melancholia, according to Karin Johannisson. They are characterized by self-absorption, agony and fear, but also a kind of wildness and mania. Pre-modern melancholics could turn into wolves, solitary and tragic wild animals with an insatiable hunger. The 'Wolf-man' was a literary figure, but also a medical diagnosis, a special case in melancholia in the eighteenth century. Essential to the pre-modern black melancholia was, then, that it incorporated its own opposite, mania. According to Johannisson the melancholia of the pre-moderns was dialectical, including both of its extremes: it combined a hard exterior with hyper-sensitivity, silence, broken by torrents of words, apathy and rage.[18]

The second phase in Johannissons history, the 'grey' modern melancholia, emerged in association with Romanticism during the transition from the eighteenth to the nineteenth centuries. The extravagant melodrama of

17 Johannisson 2009, 31–34; see also Gowland 2006, 1–2. Melancholy in Antiquity see Demont 2006.

18 Johannisson 2009, 31–38.

the melancholic evolved into the less flamboyant and theatrical profile of the modern sensibility and was assimilated into the idea of an 'authentic self'. Melancholy began to flourish as a component of the artistic identity as well as in the self-documentation of the elite and bourgeois alike, as in letters and diaries. According to Johannisson's account, an outsider position increasingly came to characterise melancholy. It was modulating from a tragic sense of exclusion from human society, to a self-authenticating freedom from normal social conventions.[19]

The third, the late modern melancholia is described as white and empty in Karin Johanisson's analysis. In this epoch men and women have lost their illusions and try to fill their emptiness by consuming. Subjects for consumption can be found in fantasies of violence, death and escape, in images of sorrow and illness, in acts of self-violation, in nostalgia and virtual worlds. The other side of the coin is that these kinds of performances of melancholy offer opportunities to imagine, to fantasize your own world to be whatever you want. It allows you to imagine yourself an identity that can be changed endlessly. Of particular importance here is that this late modern melancholia is a democratized phenomenon; it is available to everyone.[20]

Johannisson's history of melancholy is engaging reading and primarily traces the history of melancholy as an emotion. It narrates the intellectual and emotional history of western and European civilization seen through the prism of melancholy. As historical writing it is more interested in constructing a coherent narrative than raising questions of presentism, essentialism and historism or devoting close attention to issues of contextualisation.

Melancholia as a term can be identified and analysed in late modernity, but as a category of illness it has almost vanished. *Depression* has entered the discourse instead. As a concept depression is clearly more meagre because it lacks the existential resonance of melancholia, as pointed out

19 Johannisson 2009, 46–48.

20 Depression is actively discussed for example in the sociology of health and illness. Its ubiquity nowadays is evident in health statistics regarding prescribed medication. In the USA the use of antidepressants exceeds almost all other categories of drugs in all fields of medicine; with the exception of some anti-inflammatory agents, they are prescribed more often than any other drug. Shorter 2009, 169.

by, for example, Karin Johannisson. Depression is just one disease among others. The dialectical character of melancholia with one facet of agony and other of creative energy has vanished in modernity, and to its loss. The productive potential of pain and mourning has been lost in a culture that has moved from the discourse of melancholia to that of depression. To put it another way, modern psychiatry has medicalized the dark side of the soul into everyday illness. These modern mental depressive disorders are clinically identifiable and chemically treatable (which can be seen as a good thing), but at the same time they are as meaningless as a rash or the flu, writes Johannisson.[21] She seems to admit that the medical help available to many in form of pills is fine and good for individuals, but at the same time the price of this relief is culturally significant.

The history of melancholia has been written from perspectives other than the history of the emotions in civilization. It has been constructed as a thread in the evolution of medicine and psychiatry and thus as part of the narrative of scientific progress. Even then, however, the roots of melancholia have been located in antiquity. Working from this approach, psychiatrist and historian Stanley Jackson has focused on melancholia as a clinical syndrome, and traced the representation of the disease, its manifestations and changes over the course of two and a half millennia. His main argument seems to be that in addition to the changes and variations in aetiology one can also locate similarities and continuities. Theories of the origin of melancholia have come and gone, while in the accounts of the symptoms one can recognize significant similarities and continuities.[22]

Stanley Jackson thus understands the history of melancholia as a succession of changes in a phenomenon that is nonetheless surprisingly coherent. His starting point is the division of pathological and 'normal', and he writes that a melancholy and gloomy person does not necessarily need to be mentally ill and her/his condition does not have to be pathological. Only when the condition is severe and lasts for a long period can melancholy be treated as a disease, a pathology. Jackson chooses to focus on

21 Johannisson 2009, 61–67. Jennifer Radden sees this slightly differently, arguing that the same sort of ennobling value and glamorous associations previously connected to melancholia are still today sometimes linked to depression. Radden 2008, 23.

22 Jackson 1986, 1–2.

melancholia in these terms, that is, as a pathological, clinical condition. He notices the non-pathological emotions of mourning, sorrow, suffering and despair, and points out that for example *acedia* of the middle ages needs to be placed in its religious context. He does not pay close attention to cultural context, however, but concentrates on the medical perspective of the history of melancholia.[23] To a cultural historian this choice is understandable but also restrictive. To make sense of the medical world of any epoch the cultural historian would want to learn about the patients and their families, non-medical writings of letter and fiction writers, and also the emotional lives of people.

The perspective of cultural history

The question central to this article is: how does melancholia as a research topic fit into contemporary cultural history? Is it a part of the cultural history of science? Is the starting point in the analysis of representations of melancholia to be found in literature, visual art and film? Does the cultural historian here continue the work of the social historian, focusing on the perspective of the patient? Is the key question to do with the shifting boundary between madness and rationality in different historical contexts? Is the aim to critically analyse the mechanisms of psychiatric institutions and caring systems? Or is it indeed permutations of all these questions? To approach an answer in another way one could begin by defining the approach of cultural history, or more specifically the cultural history of illness. As a relatively recent development, this orientation cannot be rigidly defined, but it has generated some key concepts.

A closely related field to the cultural history of melancholia is the history of madness, which has its pioneers, among whom Michel Foucault in France and Andrew Scull in England are eminent pathfinders. Both have mapped major historical trajectories and have emphasised the importance of context.[24] Although melancholia is not their specific focus, Foucault analyses it in a visionary way. Interestingly, the historical process of medic-

23 Jackson 1986, 3–4, 65, passim.
24 Foucault [1961] 1988 and Scull 1979.

alization is situated in the social context, and scientific practices are treated as fields of human negotiation that also include doubts and hesitations. Potential paths for development include further contextualisation and bold synthesizations, constructing grand narratives that are anchored in a wide array of detailed primary sources.

Beside these 'grand narratives' the history of madness and psychiatry has produced close readings of individual case studies of forms of suffering and of specific disorders. Ian Hacking's *Mad Travelers* (1998) is exemplary; an analysis of the first *fugueur*, mad traveler. Strange journeys and insanely compulsive travelling have long been known, but in 1887 a doctoral thesis in medicine identified this phenomenon as a specific and diagnosable type of insanity. In German it was called *Wandertrieb* and in some other contexts *dromomania*. Hacking's main purpose is not to contextualise and historicize obsessive travel, but as an analytic philosopher he uses the phenomenon to model a conceptual problem. According to him insanely compulsive travel is an example of an illness whose definition and even existence *qua* illness is unclear. If it is not a clinical condition, can we treat it as a cultural construction, he asks. Although this conceptual borderline between 'real' and 'cultural' is what Hacking seeks to clarify, he also situates this illness within a cultural context. He documents its 'invention', its erratic appearance in different periods and places, and its relatively short term onset with sudden 'epidemic' phases. He demonstrates how its manifestations and diagnosis can be understood only within a certain cultural context, and this statement makes him important for cultural historian.[25]

What Hacking argues about the boundary between 'cultural' and 'real' is significant. He observes that in western discourses of illness there is a special pressure for an illness to be treated as 'real', in the sense of having a basis in the body, material links to symptoms, biochemical, neurological or organic evidence that can be observed and found in a laboratory or by means of some form of technology. If there is no such evidence, but only a syndrome that underpins a diagnosis, the illness is more likely to be interpreted as 'cultural' and not 'real'. According to Hacking this has both practical and moral consequences: illness that is 'real' by these definitions,

25 Hacking 1998, 1–14, passim.

with the status of a 'disease', gives a patient entitlement to, for example, sick-leave and insurance benefits.[26] Here, as a philosopher, Hacking's approach is not especially context sensitive while he is referring to 'western discourses', and passing specificity of time and place. Still, his ideas merit attention as long as in contemporary societies even historians of 'madness' have to deal with the belief that madness is nothing but brain disorder. As historian Greg Eghigian reminds us, in these discussions the historian can for at least take note that arguments like this date back centuries.[27]

In the field of the history of madness and psychiatry, one scholar who clearly focuses on melancholia is Janet Oppenheim, who published her important study *Shattered Nerves* in 1991. She has identified cases of vulnerable nervous conditions in Victorian England and has focused on depression from both the doctor's and patient's perspectives. Her point of departure is that the concept of the *nervous breakdown* is diagnostically heterogeneous and unclear in definition. Doctors and patients are treated by Oppenheim as participants of a world of meanings, where no definition or statement is 'purely objective' or free from moral valuation. Especially in nineteenth century psychiatric cases, where precise and professionally shared information was lacking, cultural values and stereotypes migrated into medical discourse. Oppenheim stresses the fundamental idea that illness is born somewhere between biology and culture, and the interaction between them. She argues that it would be as specious to think that illness is confined to the realm of the body as it is to imagine that any illness is exclusively a cultural construction autonomous of bodily functions and pain.[28] I share this idea, which I regard as important for any cultural historian of medicine and illness.

A further mental disorder (or neurosis) that has gained the attention of medical historians is hysteria. A highly regarded and important work on the subject from 1995 is Mark Micale's *Approaching Hysteria. Disease and Its Interpretations*. Micale observes the prolixity of writing about hysteria, this 'hopelessly fashionable' topic. He reflects upon the motives behind the interest and suggests that in hysteria even academics can find an

26 Hacking 1998, especially 11.
27 Eghigian 2010, 3.
28 Oppenheim 1991, 4–5.

'irresistible blend of science, sexuality, and sensationalism'.[29] But he also notes that the subject is extremely important, and his rich and intensive contribution is lucid and thought-provoking. It offers insights into the history of hysteria as well as models for the study of the cultural history of medicine in general.

Micale traces the many avenues through which illness enters the cultural terrain and public discussion, and according to him there is no need to attempt to privilege any single model. Instead of charting line of cultural origin, influence and evolution, it would be more appropriative to work toward model of influence or interaction that is 'neither one- nor two-directional but circular'. The 'criss-cross of ideas' and information means that visual, dramatic, and medical theories and images meet each other in a shared cultural milieu that proceeds in cycles rather than linearly or in a simple causal order. The shared cultural milieu is something from which every author, from medical professionals to literary writers and lay people, may draw. Micale's own example, hysteria, flourished in nineteenth century France mainly in medical, literary and religious discourses and its representation in each enriched representations in the others. It would be artificial to isolate them from each other. Instead, Micale argues, one should explore the interactions and the 'intermixture of imaginations' in the past.[30] In my opinion Micale's model of circular interaction opens very fruitful possibilities for the cultural history of melancholia. Like hysteria, melancholia is discussed and represented in a great many categories of cultural productions, and they interact with each other.

Some typical features, then, can be distinguished in the cultural history of melancholia. I find them akin to those that Mary Fissell has distinguished when describing the 'new cultural history of medicine'. She writes about three aspects of 'new' cultural history[31] that would be most pertinent for historians of medicine in general. Firstly she notes the importance of the making of meaning, secondly the shift from pattern to process and thirdly the decision to pay attention to forms of storytelling as being com-

29 Micale 1995, 3.

30 Micale 1995, 238–239.

31 The publication *New Cultural History* from 1984 can be seen as marking the arrival of this sub-discipline. Fissell 2004, 369. Also Immonen 2001, Salmi 2007.

mon features to historians identifying themselves as cultural historians.[32] All these can be said to be cornerstones of my own scientific orientation as well. When developing the approach of cultural history to melancholia I find it important to see the culture as a web of meaning, where meanings are constructed in interaction. The very idea of history involves changes over time, and instead of charting structures and solid definitions I find it important to analyse processes, changing patterns that can be slowed down for analysis and contextualization. After the linguistic turn and the growth of social and cultural constructionism I find it impossible to see language simply as a mirror of 'the real'. The role of language is more complex, both in the texts we read and the ones we produce. In creating the worlds that have gone, in composing historical narratives, we need to acknowledge this. I also want to stress the importance of gender in the analysis, and by gender I mean a social and cultural construction, a process of making differences and hierarchies between individuals and groups in society, differences that are based on bodies and sexualities of people.[33]

Melancholia and gender

Regarding melancholia and gender, Karin Johannisson writes succinctly and elegantly that 'the historical stereotype of melancholia is "the chosen man" ("den utvalda mannen").'[34] In her narrative 'the chosen man' represents the stereotypical melancholic, and as a counterpart it has a modern stereotype of the depressive patient, an anonymous woman. According to Johannisson the formation of late modern melancholia is not only a matter of how melancholia transformed itself to depression, but also a matter of how a male melancholia was transformed to a female depression.[35] This notion of feminization of the melancholia is shared by several scholars, beginning with the classical study of Elaine Showalter, *The Female Malady* (1987). The change is usually dated to the nineteenth century, although

32 Fissell 2004.
33 Scott 1999; Boydston 2008.
34 Johannisson 2009, 67.
35 Johannisson 2009, 67.

the idea that melancholia has been feminised has also been seen as a too schematic and in need of critical discussion.

Feminist psychology has also noted the pattern of gender shift and some feminist psychologists have asked how women's over-representation in depression statistics could be explained.[36] Is the twice-as-high rate for women than for men in the depression statistics due to the fact that women become depressive more easily? Is it easier for doctors to diagnose women's depression, or do women search for medical help more eagerly than men? Since when has it been like this and why?

Feminist psychologists Janet Stoppard and Linda McMullen have focused women's depression and applied a contextual approach in their research. For cultural historians the approach to psychic disorders that takes the social context seriously seems relevant and interesting. In addition to the question of why women become more depressed than men, Stoppard and McMullen ask in what kind of circumstances women fall ill.[37] Similar questions and approaches have been applied by psychologist Dana Jack, whose material has been equally interesting from a cultural historian's perspective: that is, autobiographies of women who have suffered from depression. By analysing this material Dana Jack has come to the conclusion that in the process of becoming depressed women silence themselves. They stifle their intentions and dreams, their own voices in order to maintain the close human relations that are important to them.[38]

A similar interpretation can be drawn from material revealing women's introspection during the modern epoch. The existing documentation of women's inner lives during the nineteenth century, which I have analysed in my own research, discloses experiences of loss and, suffering and feeling empty, existential claustrophobia, inability to speak and to be heard.[39] In the Scandinavian context the period that offers especially rich material about women's inner melancholy is the phase known as the modern break through, the last decades of the nineteenth century. My own research on the cultural history of melancholia maps this time period and analyses women's experiences of melancholia through auto/biographical texts and

36 McMullen 2008, 127.
37 Stoppard & McMullen 2003, 4–12.
38 Jack 1991.
39 See also Johannisson 2009, 67–71.

writing.[40] Alongside the question of how women's experiences of melancholy find their way into writing and texts, I have also explored the role of gender in these processes. The striking similarities between experiences of women of the late nineteenth and late twentieth centuries at first caused me to wonder if I was reading my material anachronistically.

I focus here on three woman writers of late nineteenth century Scandinavia, and bring the female experiences of melancholia and gender under the lenses. In many cases difficulties and discomforts associated to gender can be recognised. In the texts of these women living in a gendered social and literary world caused conflicts, and feelings of being rejected and unwanted. These negative experiences can be traced in various kinds of texts, ranging from letters and diaries to novels and essays. These texts chronicle life events and marriage plans, but also disclose frequent feelings of depression and discouragement. One example is in a diary of Swedish author Victoria Benedictsson (1850–1888) who wrote in it in February 1887:

> I mourn for being a woman. A woman can never be a first class artist. That's what they say. I suppose that's how it is.
>
> I want peace. Loneliness. I would want to be dead. Nirvana – there the great happiness.
>
> If we women get ahead, still are we just toys for great men; this is all the pre-eminent among us gain. …
>
> I am good for nothing. My work is worth nothing. If it really is like this, then I would rather die.[41]

Benedictsson wrote at length about her deep loneliness, mental desolation and inner darkness. She described melancholia in various ways and is an example of a woman who, in the virtual world of diary and in the act of writing it, found a space and a voice that were not otherwise available to her in her circumstances. What is important from the point of view of gender is that when reasoning out causes for her depression she repeatedly gave her female sex as the basis of her misery and sorrow. Again she wrote in her diary that 'I am a woman. I consider it to be the worst

40 Tuohela 2008.

41 Benedictsson [1887] 1985, 233, transl. KT.

misfortune, because it has existed in me always and it will never end.'[42] This understanding of her sex (gender) is central and beyond remedy.

Benedictsson experienced many conflicts, many of which were related to her sex/gender. A major imbalance she felt was between her ideal to become a writer, a true artist, and her gendered social role, her sex. She thought that her female sex hindered her from experiencing a life and activity that she dreamed of: a life as a writer. She had learned to value and even worship authorship and at the same time observed that in her culture the status of an author was exclusively for males. She wrote about this dilemma or paradox. Her late short stories tell of a weary female who has no image, just a voice that remains isolated. She narrates a story of female artist who sacrifices herself in order to be a muse for male creativity. In her diary she tries and rehearses several plots, but sees her own life story finally descending to destruction. Her written self in her diary sees her female sex as a trap, with no escape and no exit but death.

Among the active literary women of the modern breakthrough there were actors who, rather than reflecting their private selves in diaries, wrote about their inner miseries in public. Some chose to use their pens to discuss social problems – women and marriage among them – in order to promote social change. Norwegian woman writer Amalie Skram (1846–1905) was one of these writers with a public orientation, and she depicted women of her time using a very naturalistic aesthetic. Her stories of women and marriage usually have unhappy endings, obviously to wake up readers to feel and think seriously about their society.

Skram's debut novel, *Constance Ring* (1885), narrates a marriage plot and can be read as a 'bildungsroman' of a woman, but in a negative manner because the story is a journey of a female protagonist from youth to destruction. The novel can be read as an analysis of how the joy of the life of a woman in Skram's time and society disintegrates into agony. It can be located on the continuum of storylines in which a female life ends in suicide, in companion with Gustave Flaubert's *Madame Bovary*, August Strindberg's *Miss Julie* or Leo Tolstoy's *Anna Karenina*, to mention just some of the famous examples in this tradition.

Interestingly *Constance Ring*, like some other texts in this genre, is both

42 Benedictsson [1887] 1985, 234, transl. KT. Also Tuohela 2008, 122–123.

notably melodramatic and critical. It targets the double standard of the sexual *mores* of the day that allow men a sexual space and freedom that are denied to women. Skram's novel portrays the disastrous consequences of this inequitable moral code for women. In *Constance Ring* both the seduced girl from the lower classes and the bourgeois daughter who is captured in romantic lies about marriage, repressed in her everyday life and bypassed as an individual, decline. Skram's message is that the education of girls ill-prepares young brides for the realities of marriage and sexuality. Married life does not bring happiness but disillusionment and disappointment to the woman, who can achieve fulfilment as an individual neither within nor outside marriage. At the end of the story the protagonist, the bourgeois girl and wife, Constance Ring, finally understands everything in retrospect. She has been married twice and in a free relationship once, but ultimately finds only disappointment and self-loathing. She comes to believe that her greatest sin, that caused one misery after another, is her selfishness in seeking to find her own path. It has been a mistake to try to break cultural conventions in trying to be an individual rather than just a woman. Individual fulfilment simply has not been possible for her in her time and place, and Skram writes in the last pages of *Constance Ring*:

> A wasting tiredness of life took over her. Gone were the anger, the desire for revenge, pain. Inside she had become so resigned, so empty and so dead. She realised that she did not have the strength to go on living. She said it to herself with a slow, quiet voice. Now only one thing was left: to die. Would she dare? Yes, that was the only conclusion, the only one, that brought rest. (…)
>
> Yes, it was true. She had been overflowingly selfish. She saw it clearly at that moment. It had been the biggest sin of her life.[43]

This despairing image is ameliorated only by Amalie Skam's barely recognizable irony.

Like Victoria Benedictsson, Amalie Skram also saw female sex as a crucial explanation behind the experiences of depression, of growing exhaustion and apathy. The female sex was not purely biological to them, but also a social and cultural category. For them the classification 'woman' also invoked a social context including the education of young girls, the

43 Skram [1885] 1979, 267–268, transl. KT; also Tuohela 2008, 171–181.

narrow range of acceptable conduct for women and the constraints of female sexuality.

Apart from chronic low spirits, hatred and pity were also among the reactions that women's social situation generated among contemporaries. Some however went beyond this, and Baltic German writer Laura Marholm-Hansson (1854–1928) for example turned her attention to attempts to develop women's psyches instead of reforming social conditions. For her, the problem confronting the contemporary woman lay not in men nor marriage nor society as such, but in an inability to properly love. For Laura Marholm a woman's insufficiencies in sexual and erotic love made her a spiritual cripple. She believed that women's inner selves were lost, which was the cause of hysteria among many females. It also reduced them to performing empty and superficial traditional female roles that were presented to them from outside. Other women chose to cross social borders and entered the public sphere as writers, activists, teachers and reformers. But they too, according to Marholm, felt miserable and usually depressed because they had lost their true inner female self. The ideal for her was a physically fully loving woman who found her inner true authentic female self in a love relationship with the right man. Her ideal celebrated the heterosexual couple and many interpreted this also as a celebration of the male. Feminist movements that proclaimed women's independence and social rights therefore saw her ideas as dangerous and strongly opposed her.[44]

The important point here is that, like Benedictsson and Skram, Marholm argued a connection between women's depression and their female sex. Unlike the other two, however, Marholm, stressed psycho-sexual well-being, whereas Skram and Benedictsson demanded existential recognition and social agency for women. Of the three woman writers Laura Marholm was perhaps the most eager to work towards positive goals for a better future as she understood it. She wanted to leave behind the pessimistic, depressive and degenerated *fin de siècle* altogether and enter the new twentieth century that, in her utopia, was replete with a new feminine love and happiness. Her utopia was, however, unrealistic in many respects. Her personal exhaustion silenced her prophesies after 1905 when she

44 Marholm 1895, Marhom 1897. Tuohela 2008, 253–331.

broke down mentally and was hospitalised. After this episode she stopped writing and her visions were no longer available to the reading public.[45]

Prior to that Laura Marholm had been a sharp observer of women's depression, like Victoria Benedictsson and Amalie Skram. All three writers wrote of women in depression and explored the problems of female sex. Although their explanations of how gender/sex and depression were related varied, it is noteworthy that they all saw it as a crucial in the causes of female depression.

Drawing on the empirical evidence of my own research and studies conducted by others I want to argue in conclusion that gender is decisive in research into the cultural history of melancholia. In addition I argue that gender is not to be understood as an ahistorical theoretical tool but as a concept that needs to be historicized. Gendered practices and understandings about gender must be analysed in relation to time and place, in their social and cultural context. The concept of 'woman' was manifold, complex and as much in process of change in the late nineteenth century as was the concept of 'man'. It is the mutual interaction of these concepts and their usage in different practices that matter, but in addition, the culturally conditioned inner dialogue of the meaning of womanhood and maleness are significant. And sometimes the reason underlying the melancholy is not so much in the conflict *between* the sexes as in the conflict *within* the sex, the normative role, the gender.

Conclusion

Melancholia as a research theme offers many possibilities for the cultural historian. I have here elaborated the approaches and interpretations that seem to me to be interesting and promising. Some of them are broad brush strokes, others involve detailed close readings. Some narrate a coherent story of western civilization seen through the theme of melancholia – a theme that is mostly understood as an emotion – some stress the progressive narrative of western science and medicine. These are important broad landscapes that have their own value. My own approach, however, prefers

45 ibid.

a smaller scale, more detailed close reading and more specific contextualization. Several ideas from current scholarship are helpful in building up this approach: the importance of context, the notions of variety and difference, the idea of culture as a web of interacting meanings, and the conception of the world as a process inextricably linked to language. Within the framework of these notions and the concept of gender, I argue that melancholia provides a fruitful vehicle for the study of cultural history.

To conclude by drawing together the role of the historian in general and the subject of melancholy in particular, I return to Burton. Like him, I also see the work of historian as finding, collecting, commenting, and narrating, and in *The Anatomy of Melancholy* Burton writes insightfully both about his own personal authorship and about the scholarly project in general. As a cultural historian I identify with his words:

> I have only this *Macrobius* to say for my selfe, *Omne meum, nihil meum*, 'tis all mine and none mine. As a good hous-wife out of divers fleeces weaves one peece of Cloath, a Bee gathers Wax and Hony out of many Flowers, and makes a new bundle of all … I have laboriously collected this *Cento* out of divers Writers … The matter is their most part, and yet mine, (…)[46]

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46 Quoted in Gowland 2006, 22.

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The public and private worlds of writing

Ritva Hapuli & Maarit Leskelä-Kärki

> The creative Daemon – I feel it deeply – will enslave me until the very end. It is my part in life – already written in the stars at birth. – I can only humbly, and without protest, obey and fulfil the given order.[1]

The citation reveals how Finnish-Estonian writer Aino Kallas (1878–1956) conceptualised her own urge to write in her diary 8 January 1954 only two years prior to her death. On the other hand, writing did not simply represent a creative inspiration for her, rather professionalism and goal-orientation were also characteristic of her writing. Kallas nurtured her talents by reading, writing in various genres and acquainting herself with the original materials and research concerning historical matters.[2] She also published her diaries which have inspired, comforted and even irritated thousands of Finnish readers. Kallas offers a fruitful example of a writer, who throughout her life constructed her literary identity in various forms and arenas both in public and in private.

One method for pondering the art of writing might be to align writing with craftsmanship, much in the way done by philosophers Hannah Arendt and Paul Ricœur. A craftsmanship that transforms thinking into a reality is similar to that needed to create lasting objects. Writing is work

1 Kallas 1957, 363 (8.1.1954).

2 Kallas' literary life and works, see Leskelä-Kärki & Melkas 2009, 11–46. See also Rojola & Kurvet-Käosaar (eds.) 2010. In her research Leena Kurvet-Käosaari links Kallas' diary with the well-known literary diaries of Anaïs Nin and Virginia Woolf. Kurvet-Käosaar 2006.

that involves its own specific processes, skills, rhythms and techniques. The text helps to make language a special subject of craftsmanship. Writing enables the writer to transmit thoughts, feelings, and experiences beyond her own world. Ricœur states, the life-span of a text escapes the finite horizon of the writer's life. Writing enables one to understand the world, and an experience of the world that is engaged and preserved through writing also represents an historical path to understanding yesterday's culture.[3]

In this essay we are particularly interested in women writers' autobiographical documents such as Aino Kallas' diary and in the ways public and private intersect in these kinds of documents. We begin by introducing our ideas on the cultural history of writing, and then move on to analysing the textuality and historicity of documents such as diaries and letters.

Considering the cultural history of writing

Under the heading of the cultural history of writing, we have in our research examined writing as a process, a profession and an activity during a particular era of society. We have not simply been focusing on the world of texts, but, rather, we have been interested in the writers and the different factors and networks that have influenced their writing. In the course of our research, we have aimed at highlighting literary genres and areas that have traditionally remained marginalized, such as newspaper articles, travel writing, causeries, biographical and religious writings, automatic writing and translation.[4]

As for example Richard R. Brodhead stresses, no one becomes a writer within a vacuum; instead, the process requires an awareness of what

3 Arendt [1958] 2002, 169–176; Ricœur [1976] 2000, 55–81.

4 See e.g. Hapuli 2003, Leskelä-Kärki 2006, Hapuli 2008. Our article is largely based on discussions held and texts published within the context of a project *A Pen of One's Own – Cultural History of Women's Writing*, funded by the Academy of Finland in 2001–2005. In addition to our participation, Kirsi Tuohela and Kaisa Vehkalahti also contributed to the project. See also Hapuli 2005, 317–324. We want to thank Bruce Johnson and the anonymous referees for their valuable comments and corrections during the process of writing this article.

writing and being a writer signify during a particular era. They are bound to cultural and social concepts, with which the individual has a constant dialogue and through which the individual arrives at her own solutions. Writing is, therefore, a conscious activity that requires practice and takes place in a cultural and historical milieu, within literary scenes. There are simultaneously several literary scenes, so that writing cannot be considered as an isolated practice, since each genre has its own determining elements and a distinctive audience, or imaginary readership. Brodhead reminds us that texts and contexts are also in continuous interaction and dialogue with one another.[5]

The cultural history of writing can be approached by assigning equal status to texts written in the private sphere alongside published texts. These texts are not treated merely as documents with content, rather the target of the thematization is the process of writing itself within its various genres. The approach does not concentrate only on what has been said, but also on where, how and to whom it has been said. Different texts have their own traditions, histories and conventions, in relation to which and through the shaping of which, writers write.

We have been particularly interested in autobiographical documents produced by women, who also acted as authors and writers. After having analysed their ways to act in publicity and to cross boundaries in their work as public authors, we got interested in the ways public and private texts intersect and overlap in their writings. How does a cultural historian approach these kinds of documents? How could their textual value be appreciated and taken into consideration?

We have searched for the questions through which we could approach these different texts. The central issue is to examine the ways in which the texts reflect and intersect with the culturally learned conventions of writing. In other words, the various forms of writing are not taken at face value, rather our attention is also directed at the writing genre, its conditions and history, as well as at the writer's activities in relation to these factors, and how the writer assumes her place as part of the literary continuum.

In focusing on both private and published texts, we have also addressed

5 Brodhead 1994, 5–8, 86. See also Leskelä-Kärki 2006, 43–44.

the question concerning the relationship between different fictional and non-fictional texts, and the nature of the line drawn between the two. In order to draw that line, one defining factor is the referential relationship of the texts to reality. We refer to Liz Stanley's theorizing of the term 'auto/biography' which is meant to disturb the supposed binaries of self and other, fact and fiction, past and present, reality and representation, autobiography and biography, and to point out how they overlap and intersect in different narratives.[6] The lines between fiction and autobiographical, lived and recounted, 'reality' and representation, prove to be indefinite and relative. The essential element may not necessarily be the relationship of the fictional or non-fictional text to reality, but rather the realisation that no text is entirely fictional or entirely non-fictional. No text is without some reference to reality or devoid of plot-setting or narrative methods.[7]

We now continue to examine autobiographical writing, particularly by concentrating on two of its most private forms: diaries and letters. We define these genres loosely as autobiographical ones. The boundaries between these different types of writing are vague and shifting, and even 'diary' as such can vary from a very public document meant for a large audience to an intimate daily account of everyday happenings meant for nobody else than the writer herself.

The line between private and public is, however, uncertain. Historian Alain Corbin reminds us that the writer's environment and society are always present, even if they are only present as mute spirits.[8] Corbin's 'mute spirit' can be viewed as being comparable to Virginia Woolf's 'Angel in the House', albeit a more moderate representation. The angel is the control system internalised by a woman as a reminder of her proper place. As Woolf's statement goes, the task of killing the 'Angel in the House'

6 Stanley 1992; Jolly & Stanley 2005: 99–100

7 Tuohela 2008, passim, especially 42–45. See also Stanley 1992, 59–88; Leskelä-Kärki 2008. In the modern world of virtual writing, the boundaries between private and public are disrupted, and many of the issues that we present here need to be approached from a completely different angle. In this article, we deal with the timeframe that is most familiar to us, from the beginning of, to the mid-20th century, and primarily concern ourselves with texts written by women.

8 Corbin 1990, 497–506.

is part of the occupation of a woman writer. It may even be a bloody battle, which she must endure in order to be able to write.[9] The history of writing is gendered, since the historical, social and cultural contexts have been different for women writers than for men. When we refer to 'a room of one's own'[10] – the mental and material conditions for writing – the history of writing is very different for each gender. But what degree of gender difference do we see – or might it even disappear – if we examine writing from the standpoint of the conventions or rules connected with the different genres? For the time being, this question will remain open, but it is well worth examining. Gender may even prove to be secondary in significance, if writing is examined from the perspective of class and social status. For us, the private texts of professional women writers have nevertheless become particularly interesting because of the shifting and contradictious borders between public and private writing. These kinds of texts can illuminate how women have negotiated their relationship with the public sphere at different historical times.

Autobiographical writing: truthfulness and shared experiences

The issues linked with autobiographical writing involve the will and the need to present oneself in a written form. It is a means of exploring who one is and has been. Diaries and letters as a form of intimate writing, as we currently view it, have their roots in the 1600s, but it was not until the 1800s that writers began, in growing numbers, to focus on introspection.

As for example Alain Corbin and Patrick Hutton have noted, the increase in autobiographical writing is linked to the process of privatising memories, and represents a new way of looking at the world.[11] It signifies an increased interest in individuals, their fates, feelings, expectations and introspections. It also expresses an understanding of the idea that memories, the important moments of life, have significance in terms of the development of the individual, which makes them valuable and thus

9 Woolf [1931] 1993, 4–7. See also Koli 1993, 8-15. Woolf introduced the 'Angel in the House' concept in 1931, in her essay entitled 'Professions for Women'.

10 Woolf (1928) 1980.

11 Corbin 1990, 457–547; Hutton 1999, 69–90. See also Sjöblad 2009, 339–341.

also worthy of examination. The fact that, within academic research, the autobiographical writings of so-called common people have risen alongside that of famous persons also indicates a growing interest in individuals.

On the other hand, as literary scholar Päivi Kosonen's research on autobiographical writing in the classical period indicates, there is an extensive history connected with forms of autobiographical writing. Earlier, the eighteenth century was regarded as the heyday of autobiographical writing, while it is actually only one turning point for such writing within a longer history, whose roots are set in antiquity. Even though the first autobiographies – or those texts which were written as independent works recounting the life of the author – were written during the fourth and fifth centuries, there already existed a broad tradition of writing in the period prior to that, and Kosonen has interpreted that tradition as one of autobiographical literature.[12]

The question of truthfulness is one of the key issues in autobiographical research. The research literature views Philippe Lejeune's idea of an 'autobiographical pact' as significant. The pact refers to the writer's commitment to tell the truth within their text about their own life or a phase thereof. It should be clear to the reader that the author, narrator and protagonist are one and the same.[13] Swedish Literary Historian Lisbeth Larsson argues that all biographical material incorporates both 'truth and consequence'. They are always constructions comprising choices, phrases and interpretations, which utilise the norms, assumptions and current discourses of their own era. Otherwise, they would not rightly be narratives. One particular characteristic of this genre of material is that the authors have made a truth pact with their readers, thus rendering them 'true accounts' regardless of whether their content can be proven to be true or not.[14]

In the first part of her autobiography, entitled *Under my Skin* (1994), Nobel Prize-winning Author Doris Lessing takes a position on the problem of truthfulness in her role as 'she who remembers'. Lessing was seventy-five years old when the work was published, and this is reflected in her interpretation. She felt that the change in perspectives was a more crucial

12 Kosonen 2007, passim.

13 Lejeune 2009, 201–210. See also for example Stanley 1992, 60–62; Kosonen 2007, 20–21.

14 Larsson 2001, 16; see also Leskelä-Kärki 2006, especially 73–74.

issue than that of truthfulness. She states that one views life differently at different phases of life, so that the issue of truthfulness also appears to be different. Life is like a long climb up a mountain. Not only is the perspective changing as one climbs, but also what one sees. The issues related to writing also concern memory, why the writer remembers certain things, and whether that which has been remembered is unconditionally more important than that which has been forgotten.[15]

The concept of the autobiographical pact encompasses the idea that the text is always directed at someone, a recipient, even if it means the writer herself. The issue concerning the recipients gives rise to an important difference between a published autobiography, a letter and a diary. Autobiographies that are written to be published are directed at an unknown readership, on which the writer hopes to have an impact. The writer and the unknown readers can, nevertheless, share common experiences.

Simone de Beauvoir has also pondered the relationship between author and readers, originally in the speech she gave in Japan in 1966 entitled 'My experience as a writer'. In this she analyses the writing of her own autobiography and emphasises the communal aspects of literature and writing. She claims that her narratives about the most private issues have been by far the farthest reaching, and have touched her readers the most deeply. Writing about very personal experiences, such as seclusion and anxiety, is a way of approaching others and helping one another:

> [W]hen a person goes through a painful experience, she suffers in two ways. She suffers the severity of her fate, but also because the pain isolates her. She is separated from others, because she is unhappy. If she is able to write, the writing breaks through this isolation. Writers often describe painful experiences, but their intention is not to subject all things possible to literary use or blaspheme as is sometimes claimed. The issue is more a matter of the fact that talking about the pain, anguish and grief helps the writer to get over these feelings. Correspondingly, the readers are also able to more successfully bear their own grief and anxiety, because they no longer feel isolated.[16]

15 Lessing (in Finnish 'Ihon alla') 2008, 23–25.

16 de Beauvoir [1966] 2007, 129. In Finnish, this speech is part of the collection *Must We Burn Sade?* (2007).

In publishing her own diaries from the 1950 to the 1970s, the Finnish Author Aila Meriluoto referred to her own 'literary programme': the universal applicability of private texts. For her, the most important task of the writer is to give testimonial through one's own self. The diary in particular provides the opportunity to make such a testimonial: 'A diary, if it is spontaneous and authentic, is, also by virtue of its extreme subjectivity and precisely because of this, a universal attestation of its time – and of human experience itself.' Such a diary contains 'information that extends to a level of generality, particularly as it concerns women's experiential mechanisms in the area of emotions', which Meriluoto feels facilitates the opportunity for female readers, in particular, to identify with the writer.[17]

Beauvoir and Meriluoto both point out the overlapping boundaries of private and public in their writing. As Beauvoir reflects writing as an almost therapeutic force, in which intimate and more general experiences can come together and writing can become a means to find a way out of isolation, Meriluoto argues for the meaning of personal experience. Both in her poetry, diaries and other statements she has been openly acclaimed for the connections between the most intimate and the most public. For her, this has also been a motivator to publish her private diaries and use her personal experiences in her fiction. Albeit not meaning to generalise women's writing, we have found these kinds of similar viewpoints on women author's texts interesting, since they open up the paradoxical nature of most private texts.

Internal discourse

We now turn to exploring the textual worlds of diaries and letters, and the methodological problems they pose to a historian. The method of writing both diaries and letters is learned. It is a process guided by traditions, approaches, models and agreements. Writing provides a forum for the linguistic expression of feelings, expressions that are historically changing and have a context-bound code.

Diaries as well as letters are written in the moment from a perspective in

17 Meriluoto 1996, 9–10.

which the future remains open. The structure of the diary is episodic and fragmented. It typically contains repetition, gaps and even contradictions. It endeavours to describe events as they occurred rather than striving to select and group them into a single narrative. Autobiographies, however, reflect on events from a greater distance and strive to create a coherent narrative from the fragments of the past. A diary is considered to be more truthful than an autobiography, with the criteria for authenticity residing in its directness, disorganisation and its repetition.

The diary can sometimes be the most intimate form of writing, when the writer, narrator, protagonist and reader are the same person, and the diary is of a particularly private kind. It strives to minimise the distance between the writing self and the written self, thus it could be characterised as internal discourse. However, literary historian Arne Melberg points out that the writing self in diaries divides in a strange manner. The self divides into two: the self who writes, or the reflective self, and the self who lives and has lived, in other words, the self about whom one writes. The written, depicted self is often incomplete, while the writing self is more ready and can have a clear understanding of how one has reached this point. Interpretations and explanations of the writing self are never, however, final and distinct, since the next day, and its experiences, may change things drastically. Furthermore, writing in itself leads to discoveries, insights and even interpretation problems.[18]

Diaries come in various forms and their purposes can vary depending on the writer's life situation.[19] Diaries can take on the form of sketchbooks, almanacs, calendars and dream journals. It is precisely the freedom of these forms that may encourage the writer to write. Writing enables the writer to analyse her own actions, feelings, aspirations, dreams, fears and practical dilemmas. A diary can be an expression of the joy of writing, or a need to be creative, and it may replace other forms of writing. It may simply satisfy a need to record a specific event. It may be a sign

18 Melberg 2008, 17–22.

19 The next two paragraphs conflate ideas from several different researchers. See e.g. Larsson 2001, 217–237; Makkonen 1993, 360–376; Jokinen 2006, 118–140; Tuohela 2008, 40–42, 57–150; Sjöblad 2009, especially 7–37. On the therapeutic significance of writing and writing therapy, see *Sanat että hoitaisimme* (Words that take care), 2009.

of ritualistic escape. As we have already seen, writing is viewed as being beneficial and liberating, as a method for breaking out of isolation and compensating for life's shortcomings. Thus, it offers a path out of an unsatisfactory situation. It may fulfil a need for communication, in which the diary serves as interlocutor, and provides the writer with the means to see herself and acquire information about herself through narration. In particular, it is currently viewed as a tool for gaining self-understanding and a means to test the various forms of the presented self.

A diary is also a form of internal discipline, a means of recognising one's own culpability and failures, and a means of acknowledgement. As sociologist Eeva Jokinen has stated, the diary is a record of the livable life as well as a guideline for how life should and can be lived. It is thus a tale about the search for the ethical self and the process of learning life skills.[20] A diary is also an expression of the writer's self-esteem, because she views something in her life as being worth remembering. Writing acts as proof of the writer's existence and lends authority and significance to her experiences. Thus the writer is not, for example, simply a victim of circumstances, but rather one who has the ability to share. The objective may be the desire to achieve immortality, since the writing extends beyond the life of the body.

The diary entry written on 8 July 1900 by the young, nearly twenty-two year-old Aino Kallas expresses the profound significance of writing in her life at that time, as a central part of her own identity:

> Nothing else brings me as much satisfaction – provides a restful feeling of joy that affirms that one was not born into this world in vain – as writing does. All other work is only either driven by obligation or done for trivial fun; once done, they leave me feeling empty, they are not sufficient to fill my life. Writing lends me courage and the will to live; it is an internal source of strength, just as love is.[21]

The diaries of Kyllikki Villa, Finnish translator and author of more than seventy travel journals, are a brilliant example of the aforementioned

20 Jokinen 2006, 120.

21 Kallas 1953, 229 (8.7.1900). See also Leskelä-Kärki 2006. Leskelä-Kärki notes that, along with marriage and motherhood, Kallas' diary became a place to define her own personal space and desires, but also a notebook of literary work, 2006, 374.

functions of writing. Villa herself can be described as 'speaking through writing', and the travel journals are only one portion of her diaries.[22] Travel journals could, indeed, be viewed as a sub-category of diaries. Diaries can be characterised as the writer's letters to herself as another, so the travel journals are thus understood to be messages written to the writer herself under specific circumstances or messages for those staying home. In these are recorded a clearly defined phase of the writer's life, and only select moments from that phase. They end when the writer returns home, or sometimes the journey does not end until the writer writes that it has ended upon arriving home.

For the process of writing her travel journals, Villa has compiled for herself – and for any possible other readers – a book of memories, thus ensuring for herself the opportunity to return to her own history. During the journeys, the diaries have functioned in different roles. They have documented what has happened, been experienced, and been seen on the journeys. Villa does, however, grieve for the fact that not everything that has been seen and experienced can be put into writing. The entries may be long internal discussions about life and travelling or, alternatively, only brief descriptions of the weather.

The act of writing the diaries offered security in strange situations, and Villa has specifically mentioned the locations in which she has been writing. The act of writing has kept the traveller aware of the passing of time, particularly important in the somewhat timeless environment of cargo vessels. Diaries have served as interlocutors with whom Villa could discuss for example additional and return routes. They also served as bookkeeping logs and workbooks, since Villa used them to carefully record her expenses and the number of pages she translated into Finnish. Writing has also been a tool for self-examination, and Villa often recorded her dreams. It should be noted that the process of a writer who is focusing on self-reflection grows stronger as she increasingly begins to travel on her own – the 'we' in earlier diaries and the act of following what others are doing shifts to a focus on self and self-examination. Diaries tell of

22 Villa's first travel journal was written in 1952 and they continued until the 2000s. Her more personal diaries are in the Literary Archives of the Finnish Literature Society and they are sealed until the year 2030. The observations presented here come from Ritva Hapuli's work *Matkalla kotona* (Kyllikki Villa's travel diaries, 2008), especially 22–34.

the anxiety, loneliness and desire for one's loved ones and intimacy in connection with one's travels, as well as reflecting the physical and mental challenges presented with age.

Kyllikki Villa's travel journals manifest a deep melancholy from time to time, anxieties that no-one needs her or her writing. Despite these feelings, she has taken pains to continue writing. In this case, Claudio Magris' comments regarding the significance of writing in his book entitled *Danubio* (1986) seem also applicable to Villa. Magris describes a journey which takes the reader along the River Donau while also showcasing a sample of European cultural history. Magris stops for a moment to question whether the written word is able to express the unquestionable desperation of life and the moments in which it feels simply empty, insufficient and frightening. He doubts that it is possible, since writing in itself already helps to fill that void. It gives shape to the emptiness, transmits the fear it produces and, at the same time, defeats it, albeit only narrowly. Magris adds that when an uncertain and insecure traveller reads his travel notes after the journey is done, he will find himself surprised. Much to his astonishment, he will notice that he has been more cheerful and calmer, but above all, more strong-minded and determined than he thought during his travels. He will notice that, despite everything, he was able to provide clear answers to the questions that gnawed at him.[23]

Three of Villa's diaries have recently been published. Thus, they have participated in a process in which the original, very limited or even singular, readership is multiplied, as pointed out by Canadian author Margaret Atwood.[24] Only very slightly edited, they reveal the inner contradictions of the experienced traveller, her uncertainty, doubts and pleasures. As such they can offer readers an encouraging example. Travelling means testing one's limits but one need not be extremely brave to make even long journeys.

23 The Finnish translation *Tonava* 2000, 129.

24 Atwood 2002, 123–151.

Epistolary dialogue

Like diaries letters also have many different forms and functions. According to general supposition the recipient of the diary is still considered to be singular, the writer herself, while in correspondence, there are at least two persons involved. In the popular guide book *Joku odottaa kirjettäsi* (Someone is waiting for your letter), written in 1984, correspondence is described as a means of maintaining intimacy in a long-distance relationship.[25] Dialogue is the most important modality of letters. They are written messages from one person to another. Letter writing is one of the more historically-rich and geographically dispersed forms of human activity. Their history is closely connected to the development of other communication systems. Nearly everything can be put in epistolary form, including business transactions, demands and personal experiences.[26]

Joku odottaa kirjettäsi views letter-writing as a form of intimacy between two people, a gift from one person to another. The idea of letters as a gift refers to their reciprocity, the expectation of a return gift, and, perhaps, an obligation.[27] The introduction by Irja Lappalainen, the book's editor, addresses what it is that we are actually exchanging in the course of epistolary correspondence. It is also important to note that she refers to writing by using the Finnish verb *sorvata* ('turn'), thus comparing it to craftsmanship:

> [T]he most important thing is, in any case, that we are remembered. We use a typewriter if we are used to using one, otherwise we turn out our message by hand. And only then when we really have the time. Then we have a moment to sit down to write with pen in hand and, in the silence, to present a part of ourselves to those closest to us: this is what letter writing is at its very best. We use our time for ourselves – since the letter enables us to tell about ourselves and our own experiences – but also for the recipient, and thus, between us is formed a wondrous bridge of thought, a connection that may even be more intimate than physical closeness.[28]

25 Lappalainen 1984, 12.
26 See *Letter writing as a social practice* 2000, passim; *Brevkonst* 2003, passim.
27 See Mauss [1950] 1999, passim, especially 112–137; Stanley 2004, 212.
28 Lappalainen 1984, 25.

As a guide to the etiquette of letter-writing, *Joku odottaa kirjettäsi* can be seen as a part of a continuum of guidebooks that were prevalent during the eighteenth century, a continuum that reveals the culture-bound aspect of letters. Roger Chartier has noted that, within upper-class culture in the eighteenth century, letter writing was an essential part of finding and expressing oneself, but it also involved a strong educational element. It dealt with the contemporary public aspect of the letter culture; letters were read aloud and served as a type of handwritten literature, whose writers had to understand the rules of the game, so that they would not need to be ashamed of their chosen expressions.[29] During the subsequent century, letter writing began to spread among the other strata of society, and letters were used to teach writing and reading skills. The guidebooks and teaching related to the letters reveal a contradiction; letter-writing was held to be a spontaneous and 'natural' activity, or as a way into the writer's 'true' innermost self, and, yet, it was guided by the rules of courtesy and decency. The writing of diaries and letters has been a strong element in the education of children.[30]

On the other hand, recognition of the rules governing writing facilitates their violation and generates the self-assurance that is also required in order to draft a letter. Thus, the rules should not be seen simply as something that suppresses individual freedom. Generally speaking, it is then possible to say that letters carry traces of historical practices, and each letter is marked by the world and sent out into it. They provide a view of the things that have been possible to think and say within a specific historical situation.

A descriptive example of a change in the code of 'naturalness' can be found in Salme Setälä's work *Levoton veri* (Restless blood), published in 1966. The biographical book tells about her parents, E. N. Setälä and Helmi Krohn. Setälä found it important to explain the way in which her mother and her mother's childhood friend, Maila Winter (later Talvio), expressed their emotions seventy years ago to one another in their correspondence. Setälä writes:

29 Chartier 1997, 1–3; Ulvros 1996, 23–28.

30 Vehkalahti 2009. Vehkalahti studied the practices related to letter writing and monitoring at Vuorela reformatory. The development of the girls at the reformatory was also assessed by reference to their letters. Concerning diaries, see Makkonen 1993, 374.

> The correspondence is full of warm embraces and kisses and mutual declarations of love. They seem, nowadays, to be slightly silly, but they belong to the style of their time. The same passionate assurances of friendship abound in the letters of both. I have left all of these excessive declarations for what they are worth, so that the current, sane reader might not be lulled into a false understanding about the friendship between these girls. … A reader may, perhaps, imagine some type of twisted erotic orientation hidden in these silly effusions, perhaps even blatant lesbianism – but it definitely does not involve anything of the sort; it is simply a kind of playfulness projected as one is instinctively longing and waiting for the right man.[31]

Salme Setälä seeks to convince the reader that the girls' letters disclose their anticipation of the only life path available for women at that time: they were waiting for the right men to come along. She expresses her concerns in a very straightforward manner. She already has at her disposal a concept created by sexology by which the close relationships between women are named and labelled. She feared that the letters would mark her mother as a lesbian, which, at the time when *Levoton veri* was published, was considered to be a sinful way of life and an illness. In Finland, it was also considered a crime until 1971. Thus, expressions and sentiments that would have been unexceptionable for Helmi Krohn's contemporaries, in due course became unacceptable, and her daughter Salme found it necessary to censor and edit the correspondence.

In studying letters as a genre, literary historian Margaretta Jolly and sociologist Liz Stanley emphasise the difficulty of defining the genre. The boundaries between the forms of letter-writing and other genres are in flux. They also stress the pact concerning truthfulness and state that the pact carries more of a contradiction in relation to letters than it does in biographies or diaries. When reading a diary, the reader expects truthfulness, at least in comparison to the reader's expectations with regard to a fictional diary. The author of letters, on the other hand, promises only to communicate with the reader, so the truthfulness of the writing is defined by the relationship and in a relative fashion. The importance of the personal aspect, authenticity and intimacy only concerns the recipient. The 'truth' in letter-writing is, therefore, determined by the relationship rather

31 Setälä 1966, 316.

than by the topic; a fact that does not mean a denial of the referentiality of the letters, but rather their connection with the experience.[32]

In accordance with the ideas of literary historian Mikhail Bakhtin, we might argue that the dialogue in letters is the result of the fact that half of the dialogue is always someone else's. Through our writing to others, we recreate our own identity, and show others who we are or who we would like to be. Correspondence involves at least two parties, who relay and read, quite possibly, different stories; two voices, through which we continuously define both ourselves and others. The writer and reader do, of course, switch roles.[33] A letter can be viewed as a type of 'stage for oneself'. The writer presents herself in relation to the recipient, strives to please the recipient and predict the recipient's reactions. When utilising letters to examine the life of an individual, one must take into account the different ways in which letters can be written to different people. Letters that are addressed to close family members may give quite a different picture than letters written, for example, to a good friend; this directly refers to the performativity of letters.

The dialogic aspect of letters also includes a strong fictive characteristic or narrative methodology. Correspondence over a long period of time requires the formation of certain roles within the relationship and involves a running plot. The letter writer constructs for herself, also out of necessity, a 'corresponding self'. The same is also true for the recipient, who constructs her own persona, and the plot is formed between these two personae. Therefore, private, authentic correspondence could be read like fiction, since it uses many fictional and story-telling methods. At the same time, it is more unstable than fiction, since, in letters, the world is created and recreated constantly within a process that is both dynamic and infinite.[34]

An essential part of the dialogue is the world constructed within the letters and the manner in which the letters create, not simply reiterate, a relationship between the individuals involved. During, for example, the nineteenth century, the written word facilitated the development of a mu-

32 Jolly & Stanley 2005, 91–118.

33 Bakhtin 1981; Ulvros 2011; Leskelä-Kärki 2006, 70.

34 MacArthur 1990, 119.

tual relationship in a notably deeper and more direct manner than would perhaps have been possible in face-to-face encounters. Correspondence offered a means to maintain and secure intimacy, for example, during the period of engagement, when actual meetings between the betrothed were tightly controlled within the educated classes.[35]

In considering the question of the relationship between speech and writing, Jacques Derrida states that writing is an amendment, a supplement intended to make speech present, while, in reality, it is absent. Writing expresses the desire to control absence and restore the subject's presence. We rely on writing as a way to fill in the absence.[36] The idea of securing our presence through writing is highly applicable to letters, since absence is a prerequisite for letter writing.

Absence may also make it easier to say what one wants to say. Letters may feel like an easier and more natural means of expression. This idea was presented by Aune Krohn in a letter written to her sister Aino Kallas in August 1946: 'I can say, for myself, that I am actually more myself and more cordial, and am able to better express myself in my letters than I can when we are face-to-face.'[37] The same idea about letters as providing a closer connection than actual physical intimacy can also be seen in the quote from the above-mentioned *Joku odottaa kirjettäsi*. The work refers to this type of epistolary connection as 'a wondrous bridge of thought'.

In the best of cases, a researcher gains access to a person's entire letter collection. Liz Stanley uses the term *epistolarium* in referring to a complete letter collection but she also remarks that gaps are inevitable. She assigns the term four different meanings. First, it can be all of the letter material from a single individual. Second, it may mean everything written by a single person, from postcards and notes to letters, both those that still exist and those that have been forgotten. The third meaning also includes letters received by the individual. The fourth meaning also includes materials that are produced as a result of the correspondence, such as published collections. The concept of the *epistolarium* may be useful, when the subject of one's research is precisely the broad letter collection or preserved

35 Häggman 1994, 29.

36 Derrida 2003, 27–57. Derrida interprets Rousseau's texts in the article 'Ce dangereux supplément' (1967), in Finnish 'Vaarallinen täydennys'.

37 Aune Krohn's letter to Aino Kallas 25.8.1946, FLS LitA.

correspondence of an individual. It also helps us to see the characteristics and limited scope of the letter material.[38]

We must, however, always also be mindful of the inadequacy of the collections; no collection will ever be stored in its entirety in archives, and so these gaps in the correspondence must be considered. Sociologist and biographer Katarina Eskola has also noted that the most crucial elements may be hidden in precisely these missing letters.[39] Also, letters may completely elide issues that we feel are fundamental, and which therefore impose restrictions on research. In his study of the lives of the educated classes in the nineteenth century, for example, Historian Kai Häggman found this to be the case concerning sexuality, which the parties involved in the Wasenius family's correspondence seem to have 'forgotten'. These issues were not considered suitable topics for letters.[40]

Researchers must recognise that the inner world of letters is often an unknown. The dialogue in letters requires consideration for a number of factors by outside readers who are reading at a later period in time. The limitations of our studies are defined on the one hand by the letters' intertextuality or reference to the world referred to in the letters, and, on the other hand, to the world outside of the letters. Many factors, such as the individuals' names and their fates, may remain forever an enigma, which only the letters' authors could clarify.[41]

Methodological and ethical aspects of archived material

What shall we historians do with this information when we find ourselves faced with archived material, and we encounter diaries and letters as

38 Stanley has conducted pioneering work on the letters of feminist author Olive Schreiner, who lived around the turn of the twentieth century and was influential in her homeland of South Africa. Stanley has formulated many important methodologies and theoretical concepts regarding the study of letters. More can be read about her extensive Schreiner project online at http://www.oliveschreinerletters.ed.ac.uk/.

39 Eskola 2003, 490.

40 Häggman 1994.

41 Stanley 2004, 213; Leskelä-Kärki 2006, 72.

material objects?[42] At first glance, we may be tempted to forget that the written experience is not completely consistent with the experience itself, since writing is, by nature, selective, interpretive and conceptual. The ability to touch the materials entices us to view them as direct expressions of their authors, or as indisputable documents. This idea is supported by what the writer leaves behind: variations in handwriting; corrections and marginal notes; the quality of the paper; the preserved scents; tickets, notes and photos found with letters and between the pages of diaries create a special sense of presence.

The material aspect also raises questions regarding how letters were sent, how our means of transportation and our postal services have developed, and how much time it has taken the letters to travel from one place or country to another. The shift from handwritten letters to typed letters has been significant; for example, in the 1920s, Aune Krohn began gradually to type her own letters, an act which she began to suspect would lead to the disappearance of the individual tone in letters.[43] On the other hand, writers Selma Lagerlöf and Sophie Elkan approached the idea of shifting to machine-writing with the attitude that it would be easier for future researchers to read their mutual correspondence. This intention to be helpful proved, however, to be misguided. Swedish Historian Eva Helen Ulvros, who has studied their correspondence, has noted that many of the letters that they typed to one another were no longer legible as the texts had faded out unlike those written in pencil.[44]

The fact that Lagerlöf and Elkan trusted that their letters would someday be worthy of research introduces an important perspective, particularly in examining texts written by well-known individuals; how conscious, for example, have the writers been of their possible future readers? Were their letters sometimes written as much for the generations to come as they were for a particular correspondent? How has this possible future reader impacted on the letter-writing process itself? These same questions are also as applicable to the study of diaries.

42 The publication and archival processes of private material vary, and, of course, diaries and letters can also be published by their author during his or her lifetime. Here we mainly concentrate on the problems posed by archival material.

43 Aune Krohn's letter to Aino Kallas 4.1.1925, FLS LitA.

44 Ulvros 2001, 158–164.

We have referred above to the pacts between autobiographies and letters and their readers. Paul Ricœur has also discussed the pact between the historian and the readers, and the aspired consensus therein. The consensus concerns the idea that the historian handles the sources as traces of the past and the lived life. The historian deals with events and situations and the people they concern, people who have genuinely existed. They have existed prior to the time when the narrative about them or concerning them was created. Ricœur feels that a reader's interest and enjoyment in reading are simply an additional bonus.[45] How can the historian respond to the reader's expectations and fulfil the given promise?

We previously raised the question concerning the relationship between text and experience in relation to both fiction and autobiography. The question can also be reversed: since letters and diaries are discursive in nature, no one has the option of retreating outside of the literary institution or conventions. This is especially true of professional writers. As Lynn Z. Bloom has pointedly stated: no professional writer has private texts. A writer always turns her thoughts to the reader; she wants to tell a story, pays attention to the rhythm and tone of the text, and offers enough details to be understood.[46] Thus, the borders between private and public, life and fiction are always fluctuating. Although these questions are specifically directed at the writer, they are also important to consider in terms of texts written by so-called common writers; what information did the writer of the texts have about the reader? How did the writer understand her own place and that of her text within the culture?

Diaries and letters can shed a whole new light on the past by highlighting the experience of an individual, an experience that is simultaneously, in a fundamental way, bound to the prevailing culture of its era. Diaries and letters are places where feelings reside and are revealed. It is important, however, to remember that although they can offer a very authentic-feeling access into the experiential world of individuals, they do not necessarily directly disclose the feelings and experiences.[47] Private texts should not, however, serve only as an illustrator and animator for historical research;

45 Ricœur 2005, 26, 350.
46 Bloom 1996, 24–25; see also Makkonen 1999, 421 and 423.
47 Stanley 2004, 210, 223.

their special textual nature should be utilised as the subject of study. As we have shown, letters and diaries are, in many ways, conditional sources. They may fool their readers, at a considerably later date, with their intimacy and the way they offer places to relate to and the way in which they appear to be interpreting one's own experience. When we enter our experiences in a diary or letter, we step, however, into an area of specific cultural practices that defines our writing. We analyse, edit, remove and add, and endeavour to create an intelligible story from what we have experienced for ourselves and others.

The relationship between the experience and the writing becomes the focus, particularly when examining different autobiographical texts. Tuija Saresma, who has studied the autobiographical writings of common people, believes in the connection between the experience and the narrative, and describes it poetically regarding the autobiographical researcher:

> The connection forms the image of a writer, who holds a pen in her hand and uses it to write text on paper. The idea of a hand holding a pen emphasises the discursiveness of an experience, and illustrates that the textual and corporeal cannot be differentiated. The person behind the autobiography is present through the marks on the paper and the hand that has created them. The reader can reach toward the hand that is moving the pen – it cannot be touched, but we can pursue it on the basis of the writing style.[48]

In other words, autobiographical material brings the researcher into contact with the one who has lived. The objective is to understand the life lived, and to create a relationship between the living and the deceased. One might claim that the overall goal is to gain a holistic understanding of the individual and her life. As, for example, Lisbeth Larsson has shown, the act of telling one's life story enables us to define and recreate the person, and, finally, to help the person, and ourselves, to be understood. We also seek to achieve some sort of unanimity about what an individual should be. Autobiographical writing is a genre in which we encounter people's ideas about humanity, and about ourselves.[49]

48 Saresma 2007, 93. Saresma comprehensively considers the relationship between autobiography and experience from a feminist point of view. See Saresma 2007, 88–103.

49 Larsson 2007, 51. See also Hinkkanen 1997, 123–132 and Leskelä-Kärki 2006, 631–639.

The cultural history of writing is about recognising the tension between writing as a commonplace activity and as a 'divine urge' – or 'Daemon', as Aino Kallas named it. At their best private materials illuminate the writing process behind the texts. They tell about the writer's spiritual and material conditions, her joys and doubts. For a researcher, it is challenging to analyse the boundaries between the personal and culturally learned. Particular expressions reveal what is held to be 'natural and normal' during a certain period of time. On the other hand, the researcher cannot be absolutely certain whether this is the case so she must consider the boundary between the public and private realms.

The research leads one, inevitably, to ethical issues concerning the right of the researcher to examine and present interpretations of someone who no longer has the opportunity to speak.[50] It is crucial to consider whether the writer has consciously intended to leave behind a trace of themselves, or whether we have, as researchers, made the decision to bring the writer into public view. How do we treat the individual, on what grounds and with what consequences?

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50 See for example *History and Theory*, v. 43, theme issue 'Historians & Ethics', Dec. 2004.

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The photograph as source of microhistory – reaching out for the invisible

Mervi Autti

The photograph is a technical and chemical representation of the object, an image on light sensitive material. The picture is full of signs of the object, traces of the past, which depend on a camera as a technical apparatus.[1] Black and white two-dimensional images do not simply register history, but they are also reliant upon the photographer's choices, and often the wishes of people in the photograph.

Photographs as representations are like mirrors, which can be also distorting. What we see can be a lie, what the image, 'the invisible', does not specifically show us, can open up new clues and questions in interpretation. Photographs can be investigated as productions of the culture, and different tones of the past, mentalities, ideologies and identities of the past people and societies can be reached through them.

There has been a steady growth in the employment of photography across a range of diverse historical studies since the 1960s and 1970s, and photographs are part of the new material of microhistorical research.[2] This has been a backlash against historians' tendency to consider photographs as mere illustrations, and they have not been employed as primary sources of research. Too often photographs are used only to put supplementary flesh on the printed text, too frequently the relationship between photograph

1 In this article I will discuss photographs *prior to* the invention of colour photography and digital technology.

2 Burke 2001, 10; Tucker & Campt 2009, 3.

and text is superficial.[3]

Photographs are moments frozen by shutter speed, and they represent very concretely microhistory's focus on the 'short duration'. The pioneer of microhistory, Carlo Ginzburg, considers micro- and macrohistory as the continuing interaction between close-ups and panning. We can change our angle of view from short duration and apparent exceptions, to a holistic understanding of historical processes.[4] The small can open the way into vast scenes. Especially in the interpretation of photographs, dialogue between micro- and macrohistory demands contextualization in terms of the epoch, and clarifying the point of view which is deployed. In microhistory, emphasizing the context is the opposite of gazing at the disconnected fragments.[5]

When we look at foreign images of cultures and social conditions other than our own, we bring to bear the outsider's interpretation. In addition, the time constitutes its own context; when we look at photographs of the past, we interpret them differently from the way contemporaries did. Elizabeth Edwards discusses the changes which, in the general perception of photographs themselves, have influenced the perception of historical photographs. At the end of the 1800s and the beginning of the 1900s photography was viewed largely as a simple recording and truth-revealing mechanism. Today it is perceived as a form of mass communication, and indeed of mass participation and manipulation.[6] When speaking about the context, we can take into account whether it is an album, press, commercial or ethnological photograph in question.

Thus, photographs are representations reflecting different discourses of reality, and are strongly bound to their context and place. The emergence over recent decades of research into visual cultures is a reaction against the under-appreciation of their importance.[7] In the 1990s the term 'pictorial turn' was used; in contemporary culture and theory images and the realm of the visual more generally have been recognized as being as important and

3 Burke 2001, 10; Keskinen 2003.

4 Ginzburg 1996, 186. Ginzburg refers to an idea of Marc Bloch in *Société féodale* (1939–1940).

5 Ginzburg 1996, 193.

6 Edwards 1992, 4.

7 Rossi & Seppä 2007, 9.

worthy of intense scrutiny as the realm of language.[8] In the theme issue on historical photographs, *History and Theory* (2009), Jennifer Tucker and Tina Campt write about the 'visual turn'. Photography has become the site of analysis and debate for fields as diverse as memory and 'post-memory' studies, and Holocaust studies, for example. Here the photograph serves not only as a historical document or source, but also as a reflexive medium that exposes the stakes of historical study by revealing the constructed nature of what constitutes historical evidence.[9]

In this article, I will discuss photographs as sources for microhistorical research. How are the photographs interpreted? What new information can their examination provide to historians? My interpretations will draw on microhistory, feminist research, and partly semiotics, and the idea of the photograph as the evidence through its use as material source in the writing of history and in the interpretation of society and culture.[10] I will examine album photographs from the beginning of the twentieth century. My particular interest has been the lives of two photographer sisters, Lyyli (1898–1950) and Hanna Autti (1901–1996), who lived in Finland, on the Arctic Circle. My sources are the sisters' album photographs – either pictures of them or pictures taken by them – which I have examined using a microhistorical approach.

The enchantment of distance

Lyyli Autti was 18 years old when she began her career as a photographer in Rovaniemi. Hanna Autti, her little sister, was her assistant.[11] The village itself was tiny, situated on the Arctic Circle in Lapland. The Misses Autti, as they were called, took portraits in their studio, but they also photographed weddings, birthdays, funerals, and meetings – all those kinds of ceremonies that clients wanted to have permanently memorialised. In addition, as their own hobby they took snap shots of themselves, friends, relatives

8 Tucker & Campt 2009, 2.

9 Tucker & Campt 2009, 3.

10 Tucker & Campt 2009, 1; see also Burke 2001, 169.

11 KA. PRH. Rovaniemi Photographic Studio. Lyyli and Hanna Autti are my grandfather's sisters, though I never met them.

Figure 1: Lyyli and Hanna Autti at the window of their home, 2.9.1929, Rovaniemi. Photograph by Rovaniemi Photographic Studio. Provincial Museum of Lapland, Rovaniemi.

and family. The button was sometimes pressed by someone else, as in the photograph in Figure 1.[12]

A ripe moment in late summer, on Monday the 2nd of September 1929, is recorded in this photograph. Lyyli is sitting on the left, and Hanna on the right at the window of their room.[13] They smile to the camera. Beside the house there is a garden of varied and beautiful flowers: abundant and tall *Humulus lupulus*, creeper, asters, violets, phlox, columbines. Of course the flowers were worth photographing.[14] But perhaps the reason for the photograph was the special numbering of that date, September 2, 1929 (2.9.29 in the Finnish form of the time). It is announced in the full dresses

12 I have given the title 'The Misses Autti at the window' to the photograph.

13 I am aware of the gender signals that accompany first names (see for example Leskelä-Kärki 2006, 20), but I use first names for the sake of the fluency of the text.

14 Gardener Airi Tuomivaara helped me to identify the flowers, interview 24.6.2003.

and an air of festivity, although it was a weekday, not a Sunday.

In the photograph – with its many levels – the Misses Autti have stationed themselves at the window, from which they look out. They are surrounded by nature, the flower garden and the creepers which they have cultivated. They are inside and out, at the border of private and public, at the same time. The photograph is constructed of the gazes of the Misses, gazes from the women's space, the past. We meet by looking. According to hermeneutic conceptions, in interpretation the text – in this case the image – and the world view of the researcher are in contact, and in the meeting the two horizons may merge. While the horizons of the present and the past are not identical, we see them converging, incorporating both sameness and difference.[15]

My own experiences as a photographer are fundamental to my contribution to the attempt to reach the lives of those photographer sisters in the past.[16] When I began studying photography in 1974 the prints were made of fibre paper.[17] I have written in my notebook:

> I am aware of the feeling when the cold water feels so cold in developing photographs, and when the hands are freezing; I know the unreality of the dark room because of the dim light. I know the feeling when the toxic chemicals suck up in pores of the skin, and when developer tastes bad in the mouth. I know how the negative turns to positive in the development sink; the feeling of excitement, did I succeed in taking a picture? I know the ecstasy of the success, when the photograph, which is developing in front of my eyes, is good.

My interpretation of the pictures is based on a dialogue between me and the Misses, between present and past. The interval of time does not have to be crossed, but to be recognised as a 'possibility of positive and productive understanding'. Temporal distance is productive and creates a new understanding.[18] The enchantment of distance, like the technology of enlarging, opens new possibilities for interpretation.

15 Gadamer [1959] 2002, 66; Nikander 2002, 64.

16 Before my academic studies I worked for many years as a photographer.

17 Fibre based photographic paper was superseded by plastic based paper.

18 Gadamer 2004, 37; see Ollitervo 2003.

Oskari Klemetti who took part in the inquiry by the National Board of Antiquities of Finland, wrote of her mother having a photo album from 1908 in Rovaniemi. It was in a chest of drawers in a guest room. The album contained mainly photographs of relatives who lived elsewhere. There were framed photographs on the cabinet, and also hanging on the walls of the guest room.[19] Another respondent, S. Tolonen recalled: 'I remember the old albums covered with beautiful hide and locks. Thick photographs mounted on cardboard were set in the double-sided pages. The album looked very dignified.'[20]

The first photographic albums were respected books set up in the most public room in the bourgeois homes, the hall. The album could be browsed by quests, and it was like a catalogue of the relatives and the friends of a family. With the help of this 'catalogue', the status of the family on the social scale could be assessed. The monarchs could also be in the family album. In England for example the *carte-de-visite* portraits of the monarchs were placed on the first pages. In Finland, portraits of the emperor were also sold, but they were not so popular. Before becoming independent in 1917, Finland was an autonomous Grand Duchy of the Russian Empire.[21]

The early photographs were faithful to conventions of portrait-painting. In state portraits, sovereigns were represented according to their status and estate, not as individuals. In general, in the earliest photographs people, including the lower classes, almost always looked like bourgeoisie – if they could afford photographs. Status could also be shown by, for example, placing the highest ranking person in the middle of a group. From whole-figure to bust represented an increasingly intimate connection. The basic conventions and categories of portraiture remained fixed for some time.[22] The technology of photography and other conditions have affected portraiture however. Since the early 1890s, coming-of-age rites

19 MV: K 18: 1–35, *About photograph and photographers.* Oskari Klemetti. The Rovaniemi. Inquiry was conducted in 1971.

20 MV: K 18: 1–35, S. Tolonen, Rovaniemi.

21 Palin 1992, 359; Saraste 1980, 63.

22 Palin 1992, 356–361; Sinisalo 1995, 73.

and other life transitions were documented: in photographs of children being confirmed, graduates, marriages and anniversaries – in much the same way as now.[23] The conventions of composition and visual structure of early portrait-photographs are clearly evident.

The family album shuttles between the private and the public. Its meanings are social as well as personal, as Patricia Holland argues.[24] Firstly, it is *private* because of the very personal content. In photographs there are important people and places associated with moving memories. An album is like a diary with images which, in this sense, do not open up to others. It includes its own, and even secret meanings. Secondly, the family album is *public*; it is meant to be shown to quests too. When we set photographs into the album, there is an observer's gaze in the back of our mind. People in the photographs are posing, which, according to the Finnish dictionary, revealingly means 'to attitudinize, to make oneself important'.

According to John Tagg, the production of portraits is the production of significations in which contending social classes claim presence in representation, and the production of things which may be possessed and for which there is a socially defined demand.[25] Social ascent can be shown through photographs, which is one reason for their popularity. The history of portraiture is essentially defined by the question of who is worth a picture.[26] In spite of the fact that an album is often defined as the *family* album, I do not want to overemphasise the nuclear family, although taking photos of the family is one of the traditions in the history and the presence of photography.

Album photographs can continue to be meaningful even after they have ceased to exist. As an example, there is a story which has its background in the Second World War, in which Finland participated. Art historian Tuija Hautala-Hirvioja has written of the special memory of the destroyed family album which in a sense continued to be part of her grandparent's and parent's stories of the war and the evacuation, to which she herself, who had not experienced the war, had listened. As a teen-ager, she had a

23 See for example Ijäs 2009, 93; Palin 1997, 256.
24 Holland 1991, 3.
25 Tagg 1995, 37.
26 Palin 1992, 358.

dream of escaping the war:

> For a moment I wondered what would be the most important thing to take with. I took family albums which I carried with a blanket on my shoulders, and joined an endless and silent queue of evacuees. When I woke up, the solution of taking albums with me felt absurd. Then I remembered that there were no photographs of my father as a child or a young man. The pictures had been destroyed during the war.[27]

Her dream can be interpreted in terms of the meaning of photographs as ways of honouring the family. Another impressive story of lost photographs was told to me by my first teacher Kaija Kähkönen, whose family album vanished in the evacuation. After the war, she began to collect photographs from her relatives and friends, and made copies of them for her new 'reconstruction album'.[28]

Photographs – 'truth' and representations

According to Susan Sontag the ultimate wisdom of photographic image is to say: 'There is the surface. Now think – or rather feel, intuit – what is beyond it, what the reality must be like if it looks this way.' Photographs are inexhaustible invitations to deduction, speculation, and fantasy.[29]

In everyday thinking a photograph is like a window onto reality. A photograph both reminds us of reality (iconic form) and proves an object to have been existing. The clear causal relationship intertwines the image and the object (indexical form).[30] The resumption of its indexical nature is a central attribute of photo-portraits. The authenticity of the photograph – 'genuine' and 'real' objects – is guaranteed by mechanics.[31] Conceptions of the index and the icon evoke the reality effect of photograph.[32]

Walter Benjamin has raised the idea of the involuntary memory, in which a lot of meaningless and unimportant things are recorded. The

27 Hautala-Hirvioja 2001, 265.
28 The interview of Kaija Kähkönen 24.4.2003.
29 Sontag [1973] 2001, 23.
30 Elovirta 1998, 91; ks. Fiske [1990] 1992, 70.
31 Palin 1993, 11–12.
32 'Reality effect' does not mean the same as real.

involuntary memory is cited by cultural historian Matti Peltonen, who argues that the same happens in a photograph. When an anniversary is photographed, for example, the surrounding incidental details of atmosphere and milieu are recorded too. 'The past looks at us in a photograph. It is conserved there waiting for us to see it, like a capsuled piece of history.'[33] When photographs are used as the evidence of the past, they can be seen as the traces of the material culture. According to Peter Burke, 'the history of material culture would be impossible without the testimony of images.'[34]

At the beginning of the twentieth century, the camera could be described as 'duplicator' or 'immortalizer'.[35] Thus, the basic functions of album photographs are to witness, immortalize, preserve and represent. The meanings of the family have changed over time, but echoes of them can be seen in photographs. Witnessing can be related to rituals of taking pictures; there exist rituals which would seem incomplete without photography.[36] For instance, a graduation or marriage demands to be photographed.

Elizabeth Edwards sees photographs as material performances that enact a complex range of historiographical desires. These desires cluster around, on the one hand, ideas of truth, accuracy, inscription, and statement, and, on the other, an intense awareness of the past and its potential loss. Edwards' heuristic strategy places photographs, understood as material things made in certain ways to fulfill the social and cultural expectations regarding them, at the center of historical analysis. Understanding the significance of these entwined practices for those involved is a way of exploring the potential of photographs as historical evidence, and is also a means to investigate the forms through which historical imagination might be made possible and be experienced. Paying careful attention to the material practices of photography constitutes not only an interpretive strategy, but it also goes to the heart of how the makers of the photographs themselves saw the potential of their images, the 'active materiality' of the photographs. It is the material that shapes existences and experiences.

33 Peltonen 1999, 91; see Benjamin [1929] 1989, 68.
34 Burke 2001, 9. See also Kalela 2000, 96.
35 MV: K 18: 1–35, Juho Lantto, Rovaniemi.
36 Tagg 1995, 34.

The camera, chemicals, negatives, printing papers, and labels – mediate experiences and articulate desires.[37] The 'things' of the photographs, which can be touched by hands and seen by eyes, can direct us to new paths of writing history. 'The photographs are visible manifestations of time, being as insistently in the present as they are of the past'.[38]

In addition to semiotically charged representations, Elizabeth Edwards seeks to highlight material performances that enact a complex range of historiographical desires.[39] According to an anti-essentialist view, the meanings of photographs are constructed through cultural conventions, in which they are looked at, used and represented.[40] Photographs are attached to the place and the historical and cultural context. It is self-evidently important to take pictures on many occasions; both taking and being in photographs are ways of 'being in the world'. Interpretation is also cultural. By representations, which are ossified as part of the contents of visual culture, research can be connected to broader theoretical discussions of subjectivity, gender and ideology.[41] What we *see* in the pictures, is their topmost message – although they can be 'false'. For Liz Stanley 'false representations' can be at least as complexly interesting and useful as 'truth' to feminist analysis. Her concern here is particularly with the link between truth and lies.[42]

Photographs of the Misses Autti are the expression of an intention. They, or someone else, took many portraits of themselves. In interpreting photographs, a constructivist approach is extremely instructive.[43] In the intentional and the constructivist approach both photographer and/or

37 Edwards 2009, 130–136.

38 Edwards 1999, 60.

39 Edwards 2009, 150.

40 Seppänen 2001, 8.

41 Seppänen 2005, 77, 82; see Hall 1997, 16–21.

42 Stanley 1992, 31.

43 According to Stuart Hall there are the reflective, the intentional and the constructionist approaches to explain how representation of meaning through *language* works. Signs may also have material dimensions, like photographs. In the reflective approach the photograph functions like a mirror, in the intentional approach the photographer imposes his or her unique meaning through the image. In the constructivist or constructionist approach it is social actors who use the conceptual systems of their culture to construct meanings, to communicate about the world meaningfully to others. Hall 1997, 24–25.

the one who is in the picture are active. When I showed the special and precious group picture of the Misses Autti with their friends half-naked, having fun in the context of sauna bath, to my 18-year-old daughter, it had a powerful effect on the way she envisaged the history of Rovaniemi. Hitherto she had visualised it in terms of the war; bombed out, gloomy, and grey. The photographs of the destroyed town represented the past for her. My daughter's experience reinforced a comment by Chris Vos that some photographs are iconic clichés which can 'change history'. They often shock or outrage public opinion and appear to determine subsequent perceptions of events.[44] The photographs of the past perceive and visualize history. Impressive photographs can overwhelm others with their message.

What defines an iconic cliché, then? According to Vos they are very famous, they seem to evoke deep sentiment and above all they are seen as a metonym, as a symbol of something greater than the scene that is depicted: a struggle for freedom, the misery of a whole people or the cruelty of authorities.[45] The ruins of Rovaniemi construct a powerful sign of its history. The photographs taken just after German solders had left the burned and bombed town, are in people's minds representing the past, as iconic clichés.

My daughter's 'memories' of her razed hometown also tell us about post-memory, as discussed by Marianne Hirsch. Reading post-memory is distinguished from memory by generational distance and from history by deep personal connection. Post-memory is a very particular form of memory, because its connection to its object or source is mediated through an imaginative investment and creation. Post-memory characterizes the experience of those who grow up dominated by narratives of traumatic events, as for example war time.[46] My daughter's grandmother continually tells the emotional story of the evacuation. Her last glimpse of home in the light of the evening sun is as exact as a photograph, as well as the story

44 Vos [2005] 2002. The term 'iconic cliché' can lead to misunderstanding, because cliché has connotations of the worn-out or trivial. Vos 2002.

45 Iconic photographs belong to the canon of photojournalism, mediating the collective memory of communities and societies. Thus, Vos is referring to studies of photojournalism, *Photojournalism and Foreign Policy* (1998) by David Pelmutter and *Body Horror* (1998) by John Taylor. However, Vos repudiates their unhistorical views. Vos 2002.

46 Hirsch 1997, 22.

of coming home to ruins.

The Misses Autti took many photographs of themselves, or asked someone else to take a picture of them. My interpretation of their photographs is based on their intentionality. However, we can ask how gender is produced in the photograph from a constructivist perspective.[47] We study the ways of representing womanhood by examining the relationship between the private and the public at the beginning of twentieth century. The structures of past societies can be discerned in the way gender is constructed.

Details as clues

The sun is shining in this photograph (Figure 1), which was taken before the war. The Misses are posing smilingly, and the photograph is technically of a high standard, sharp and nuanced. Prints were given to friends and relatives, and it was enlarged, and framed and hung on the wall to be admired. It is a 'good' picture. It arouses a form of general enthusiasm and interest, which Roland Barthes calls the *studium* of a photograph.[48]

The analysis of photographs as cultural productions is assisted by the fact that the photographer is generally unknown subsequently; family album photographs in particular are rarely signed, in contrast to paintings. Studio photographs often carry the studio's name. Thus, the institution represents the actor.[49] I see this as a sign of the photograph's ideological existence, 'its coalescence and codification of value-filled meanings with its existence as a material object, whose "currency" and "value" arise in certain distinct and historically specific social practices', as Tagg puts it.[50] In my opinion, this applies primarily to album photographs.

The photograph of the Misses Autti can be enlarged in the computer monitor by 200 per cent. (See Figure 2) At first, I look at the gazes of Lyyli and Hanna. Lyyli looks straight at the camera, and Hanna a little to

47 E.g. Scott 1999, xi.

48 Barthes [1980] 2000, 26

49 Idea of the 'vanishing' of the photographer's person relates to album photographers, not press or art photographers.

50 Tagg 1995, 188.

Figure 2: Enlargements of The Misses Autti at the Window (Figure 1). Photograph by Rovaniemi Photographic Studio. Provincial museum of Lapland, Rovaniemi.

the side, perhaps at the person beside the photographer. There is a curl on Hanna's forehead, and her hair is short as Lyyli's. The pattern of lace of curtains can be clearly seen. The Misses have their dresses with bare shoulders, and they have similar strings of pearls. Perhaps they bought them in Paris, where they had visited the previous year.[51] Hanna is wearing a flower on her breast, and she has folded the hem of her dress on the window sill.

Before digital technology, historical photographs were reproduced by first photographing again the original picture, and then the film and the print were developed. Today, as a result of the technological developments in photography, we can use the digital magnifier in the image program. Digitisation makes the whole thing easier and simpler than the old technology. However, digital technology requires professional image editing with the facility to adjust tone and definition. Moreover, the file and tone

51 The interview of Marjatta Autio 9.3.2001.

scale must be large enough.[52]

The function of a photograph can expand or change when a small print of 6×9 centimetres or of postcard size is enlarged to A4, or even bigger. It is no longer an album photograph in its original – active and concrete, even communicative – meaning. However, its qualities of liminality, and demarcation of private and public remain. The functions of *immortalising and conserving*, the photograph as icon and index, emerges. The photograph is now a source of history, it is the image of the past with all its details which the photographer who took the picture probably did not notice.

The conventional photographs of the family album strive for the *studium* formulated by Roland Barthes – 'the studium is the order of liking, not of loving' and they provoke only a general polite interest.[53] In reading details we can refer to the concept *punctum* by him. Some photographs have special elements which interest us; they contain something which stands out and punctuates our consciousness, and this is related to our biography, our history and what kind of things personally interest us. Barthes calls this striking detail or quality the *punctum*.[54] Overall, the studium and the punctum are like *impulses* that activate the process of my interpretation.[55]

The album photograph can be an attempt to fulfill the norm of society and culture, *to be decent*. The decency can be seen in postures, gestures and clothing, in catching the ideal-me. According to art historian and researcher of photography, Johanna Frigård, photographic representations can produce life-like idealistic images, and the reality effect of photography offers an illusion of truth. The ideal images – which are ideologically meaningful – reveal what is appreciated, good and desirable.[56]

In the interpretation of photographs my interest is in the very ordinary details, those that are taken for granted. These 'punctums' inspire me to

52 Interview with museum photographer Jukka Suvilehto 5.3.2008.

53 Barthes [1980] 2000, 27.

54 Barthes [1980] 2000, 27; Farran 1990, 267.

55 According to Barthes, the studium is ultimately always coded, the punctum is not. Barthes [1980] 2000, 51. See Farran 1990, 267. I am aware of discussions around these concepts, especially Barthes' idea of punctum as non-discursive. I see studium *and* punctum arising from culture and social understanding, and they are socially comprehended.

56 Frigård 2008, 27.

look at them through feminist theories; in reading details it is essential to recognise their *power*. Details can be seen and 'heard' in a new way. They act as tools of seeing in another way, as a counter strategy.[57] For instance Carlo Ginzburg has argued that the work of the historian can belong to a paradigm of sign-reading, the interpreting of clues.[58] Details can open up new perspectives and insights into particular cases and periods of time.

In the preceding photographs the foremost clues in examining details are the gazes of the Misses and their short hair. Similarly, the strings of pearls or the weave of the lace curtains could also be remarkable details. By 'opening' the curtains, we could pay attention to women's handicraft; how it was appreciated and changed. Contextualized details can expand to the new ideas. What kind of reality do photographs construct, and what did the Misses Autti want to show by their photographs at that time? The answers can be found by examining the new ideas in relation to other images of the period, the contemporary literature and research. Anachronism can be avoided by seeking a deep understanding of the epoch and its culture.

Looks inside and out

In the microhistorical approach I must also take into account other similar photographs. At the same time as *The Misses Autti at the window* was taken, there exists another photograph of the summer's moment. It is the biggest of the attached series of pictures. (See Figure 3) Hanna is sitting on a fence, and Lyyli is standing behind it. There is a sign for the photographic studio, and many flowers in this picture also. I am assuming that the Misses planned the whole position, and composition – this is their self-portrait.

In *carte-de-visite* portraits and cabinet cards of the late 1800s, unmarried

57 Kortelainen 2002, 55.

58 Ginzburg 1990, 96–125. More of the details: Ginzburg 1990; Burke 2001, 32–33; Benjamin [1929] 1989, 123. In art history e.g. Palin 2004a and Kortelainen 2002a. Ginzburg has written of the clue method, with its connections to art history and the Morelli's method. According to Giovanni Morelli, we should examine the most trivial details to identify the artist. Ginzburg 1990, 96–97.

Figure 3: Photographs of Lyyli and Hanna taken in the same place in front of the studio 1926–1929. Private archives and Provincial Museum of Lapland, Rovaniemi.

young women do not often look straight at the camera.[59] Photographs stand in relation to earlier images as intertextuality, which is the shaping of texts' meanings by other texts.[60] This comes to my mind, when looking at the series in which Lyyli and Hanna are posing in the flower garden from 1926 to 1929.

In the small pictures, taken by the roll-film camera, the young women look timidly down (Figure 3, top and top left). In the figure on the top the Misses are sitting on a fence and rolling a ball of string. They look as though they were reflecting deeply into themselves and thoughts, as though nothing outside could disturb them.[61] Yet at the same time there

59 The size of *carte-de-visite*'s is about 100×62 mm. The cabinet cards are generally bigger, about 165×105 mm. Hirn 1977, 11.

60 Palin 1992, 360; Palin 2009.

61 Palin refers to Rudolf Zeitler, who used the term internal *(Innerlichkeit)* when he was

is action, since they are making handicrafts. In another photograph of Hanna (Figure 3, bottom right) taken at the same time, she is sitting at the window looking straight at the camera. The small photos are like sketches of the forthcoming picture in which the Misses sit at the window. I use the term sketching, although the previous photographs did not consciously foreshadow the later photograph. Nevertheless, they could have an effect on 'now', in 2.9.1929, when the bigger photographs (Figures 1 and 3, bottom left) were taken.

Roland Barthes describes pertinently how he acts when he feels himself observed by the lens: 'I constitute myself in the process of "posing", I instantaneously make another body of myself, I transform myself in advance into an image.' In other words, he is a subject with feelings of becoming an object.[62] *The gaze* creates and recreates the identity of the gazer by making us aware of visual perception and also that others can see us. 'No term has been more important to the various visual disciplines over the last twenty years than the gaze', argues Nicholas Mirzoef. The gaze allows us to think about the ways in which looking is a form of power and how power is gendered.[63]

In the set of photographs, the Misses Autti are looked at, they are being gazed at. However, the images lack the 'innocence' of snapshots. As a photographer Lisette Model argues that a professional could never make an informal or casual snapshot, because training, experience, and visual sophistication are not attributes one readily unlearns.[64] I have experienced myself the same sense of lost innocence in taking pictures. Although Lyyli and Hanna took snapshots, they were designed.

Producing and repeating gender

The Misses Autti have positioned themselves in the decorous postures appropriate to young maidens. They represent cultural meanings outlined,

analysing paintings from the beginning of 1800s. Palin 1992, 360.

62 Barthes [1980] 2000, 10, 14.

63 Mirzoeff 1998, 391.

64 Nickel 1998, 14.

or written in their bodies.[65] In a way, in the photographs the young women are performing gender by repeating shy, introverted gestures. Judith Butler argues, that 'rules that are partially structured among matrices of gender hierarchy and compulsory heterosexuality, operate through repetition.' Gender is a repeated stylization of the body to produce the appearance of substance, of a natural sort of being, and gender identity is performatively constituted by the very 'expressions' that are said to be its results.[66]

As a technical invention, photography effectively perpetuates the ideal image of female and male. The maintenance of heterosexuality can be perceived in commercial pictorial production since the 1920s. On the other hand, in the media and in everyday life, beauty has been seen as gendered since the 1800s, when the 'natural' connection of beauty and women was highlighted.[67] Taking pictures is often a ritual, and being in a photograph is straightforwardly performative. In photographs people are in specific, identifiable positions which can be imagined beforehand. Moreover, we print countless prints of negatives, and – in a sense – this proliferates idea of gender. Visual representations do not only reflect, but they produce reality, too.

The light and compact hand-held camera used by the Misses, was used side by side with the studio camera. They represented themselves in self-portraits, as in the picture I have called *The Misses Autti at the window*. The questions of feminist photography research – 'who takes a picture?', 'who owns it?', 'who is the object of the gaze?' – open up in an interesting way in the images the Misses. They constructed themselves according their own gazes, visualizations and cultural surrounding. The means of representation were theirs, as well as the tool – the camera – and their skills.[68] The Misses looked at themselves through the cultural gaze. When studying the set of pictures of them in the garden, we notice that being looked at has been discomfiting but also an interesting experiment. Was it really their intention to be like a 'beautiful flower' among genuine flowers?

In the profession, Lyyli and Hanna Autti had learned to photograph people who wanted to have a good picture of themselves. In 1929, when

65 See Palin 1996, 237.
66 Butler 1990, 25, 33, 105
67 Hovi 1990, 259; Rossi 2003, 24, 36.
68 See Koivunen 1995, 25.

they sat in a window, and had the photographs taken, they knew how to do it correctly and appropriately. In their self-portrait, it appears that they are aware of themselves and their surroundings, over which they apparently have control. Lyyli and Hanna were economically independent women; in *The Misses Autti at the Window* their self-sufficiency is emphasized, and the photographs's magic reaches to the present. Lyyli and Hanna do not position themselves as objects. On the contrary, they seem to produce significances of so-called New Women in a deliberate way. Modes of representation were not stable.

Frames of interpretation

Photographs, especially album photographs – material fragments of the past – fit like a glove to sources of microhistorical research. Pictures can reflect or construct reality, and they can function as intentional representations. The album photographs are produced, distributed, consumed, interpreted, and with the help of the images communication is also possible.[69] The photographs are given, and they are received, they are watched and investigated, people in them are discussed and they are remembered – or spectators become distressed, because of the memories which stem from pictures. We can experience shared meanings.

When drawing on photographs as sources in microhistorical research, we try to reach *behind* them, into their contexts and social relations.[70] To perform or being performed speaks of ideals, values, goals and aims of the eras. Furthermore, I am interested in the photographs which are produced intentionally, and as representations which construct reality.

In enlargements we can see details which contemporaries did not necessarily see or which were not meaningful for them: the involuntary memory of the photograph. In the process of being examined their original function may change. Details seen by a magnifying class can be clues which raise new questions. Details can also give hints as to what might have been self-evident and taken for granted at the time of the photograph

69 Tagg 1995, 188; Seppänen 2005, 84; ks. Ulkuniemi 2005, 50–51.
70 Tuomisto & Uusikylä 1995, 12.

being taken. From details we can also receive facts which strengthen or weaken our assumptions.

In feminist research we are interested in how gender is produced and represented. Often expressing one's gender is effected stereotypically and conventionally – even by clichés. Basically the iconography of historical photographs – in which shutter-speed was so slow that people had to sit still without smiling – can suggest a representation of a humourless past. However, photographs of the Misses Autti and their friends taken in 1910–1920s, dismantle that grey cheerlessness by showing another side of the coin before the war. Nonetheless we can see performative repetition in them, which opens up our understanding of young women's lives.

The looks of the Misses Autti led me to investigate objects of the gaze. The basis of feminist analysis of women is to be aware of the politics of representations, including photographs. The way women are represented is remarkable both for their cultural image (how women are seen) and for their self-image (how they see themselves).[71] The 'innocence' of album pictures can reveal what constitute propriety and decency. The power of photographs is that they can also *produce* the past. If photographs are emotionally intense, and they are repeatedly displayed, they can even change history. Perhaps I am also doing this by showing and writing about the unique photograph of *The Misses Autti at the Window*. At least in the local history, it has become the icon for women's liberation. On the other hand, it can also obscure miserable living conditions of the poor, and social inequality in the 1920s.

The enchantment of photography may lead us to a dialogue with people of the past more easily than texts do. However, without context they lead nowhere: according to Susan Sontag a photograph is only a fragment, and with the passage of time its moorings come unstuck. It drifts away into a soft abstract pastness, open to any kind of reading.[72] In cultural history, 'moorings' are retrieved, and the photograph is related to its own time; the era is complemented by interpreting the picture. Thus, movement is bi-directional, because the photograph itself is replenished when it is attached to historical process.

71 See Koivunen 1995, 25.

72 Sontag 1984, 71.

By careful research, photographs reveal gaps and cracks which can open new windows to the past. As sources of microhistorical research, album photographs – with their implicit meanings of privacy and publicity – expose past societies, cultures and epochs. All these potential revelations, however, depend on the questions which are asked.

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Photographs

Figure 1. Lyyli and Hanna Autti at the window of their home, 2.9.1929, Rovaniemi. Photograph by Rovaniemi Photographic Studio. Provincial museum of Lapland, Rovaniemi.
Figure 2. Lyyli Autti and Hanna Autti. Enlargements of the figure 1.
Figure 3. Lyyli and Hanna Autti in front of their studio 2.9.1929, Rovaniemi. Photograph by Rovaniemi Photographic Studio. Provincial museum of Lapland, Rovaniemi; Hanna Autti on the yard in front of the studio 1928, Rovaniemi. Photographer Lyyli Autti. Original photograph owned by Maija-Liisa Kuusiniemi; Lyyli and Hanna Autti are rolling ball of strings 1926, Rovaniemi. Photographer unknown. Original photograph owned by Esko Autti; Lyyli Autti on the yard in front of the studio 1928, Rovaniemi.

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