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'Long live the friendship between the Soviet Union and Finland!' Irony, nostalgia, and melodrama in Finnish historical television drama and documentary series

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Television is an important source for impressions of the past. A recent survey showed that television programmes and films were the most frequently encountered sources for historical knowledge in Finland: 96 % of the survey respondents had watched historical television programmes and films during the past year, more than had viewed old photographs (90 %), visited historical sights (85 %), or museums (67 %), or read historical novels (65 %), or non-fiction (60 %) (Torsti, 2012: 40). The increased visibility of history in contemporary television culture (Holdsworth, 2011) has inspired research into televisual forms of narrating history and television's role in constructing collective memory. Research on televisual depictions of the past has focused largely on representation; how historical events have been represented on television and how these representations shape collective memory (e.g. Edgerton and Rollins, 2001; Bell and Gray, 2010). Less attention has been paid to the affective qualities of televisual depictions of the past, especially modes other than nostalgia (Holdsworth, 2011; Niemeyer and Wentz, 2014). Historical television programmes are more than a source of information, they also entertain and move viewers. Consequently, historical television may enable different ways of relating to the past than 'official' history. To understand how television participates in processes of cultural remembering, we need to understand what kinds of affective engagements with the past television offers.

In this article I analyse affective modes of engaging with the past in television drama and documentary series about the relations between Finland and the Soviet Union. The article has two aims: firstly, I want to contribute to the study of the politics of memory in television by analysing, what kinds of relations to the past are enabled by different affective modes, irony, nostalgia and melodrama. Secondly, the article contains a case study on televisual memories of Finnish–Soviet relations and thus contributes to the study of post-socialist memory from the point of view of a country that, while outside

the Soviet bloc, was still deeply affected by it. My analysis focuses on the use of television archival material in new productions. I ask how different framings of archival footage produce different affective engagements with the past. As art historian and cultural theorist Mieke Bal (2002: 140) argues, framing is a process of cutting off and relinking elements that changes the meanings of both the work and its frame. Similarly, television programmes reframe archival footage by editing it into short clips and combining it with interviews, music, text, voice-over commentary, and dramatized material. The frames don't determine the meanings of the archival footage or vice versa, but the dynamic relationship between them changes both elements (Bal, 2002: 140). The process of framing does not only change the meanings of archival material and its frames, but also colours them with different feelings. I argue that identifying different affective modes of relating to the past enables us to better understand how television participates in cultural memory work.

As a case study I analyse The Finnish Broadcasting Company YLE's historical documentary and drama series about the relationship between Finland and the Soviet Union. Finnish post-war foreign policy prioritized good relations with the neighbouring Soviet Union – a trait that set Finland apart from most of the Western world at the time. Since the fall of the Soviet Union, the nature of the relationship between Finland and the Soviet Union has been a topic of much public debate. The public broadcaster YLE has drawn on its archives to make sense of the history of Finnish–Soviet relations in documentary and drama programmes during the past decade. In the context of research on post-socialist memory, studying Finnish television memories of the Cold War era helps to question a clear binary between 'Western' and post-socialist memory cultures. While Finland did not belong to the socialist bloc, it had significant political, economic and cultural ties to it. Thus, the fall of state socialism in Europe has required memory work that deals with Finland's ambivalent position between the blocs.

The case study presented here is based on the analysis of two documentary series and one drama series. *70-luvun sekahaku* (Mixed dance of the 70s, YLE Teema 2007) is a 12-part series about social history in the 1970s. One of the episodes of the series, called 'How to recognize a friend' ('Mistä tunnet sä ystävän') in reference to a popular Russian song of the era, concentrates on Finnish–Soviet relations. YLE has broadcast comparable series about the 1960s, the 1980s and the 1990s, but Finnish–Soviet relations are only

discussed in the series on the 1970s, which has been characterized as a highly politicized decade in Finnish cultural memory (Suutela 2005, 8). The episode 'How to recognize a friend' covers classic themes associated with the Soviet Union in Finland: the authority of President Urho Kekkonen (in office 1956–1981), the Finnish-Soviet Society, tourism and the black market trade, the importance of trade with the Soviet Union for the Finnish economy, Soviet influence on Finnish domestic politics, idealistic views about the Soviet Union, and the 1975 Conference on Security and Co-Operation in Europe (CSCE). The other documentary series, *Yhteinen sävel* (*A shared melody*, YLE Teema 2009), focuses on the connections between Finnish and Soviet popular music cultures over the course of six episodes. The premise of the series is that Russian popular music has held an enduring attraction for Finnish listeners. The first episode argues that even during the 1939–1944 wars one of the most beloved songs in Finland was of Russian origin, and Russian musical motives gained immediate popularity after the war. Thus, the series argues that Finland shares a cultural connection with Russia that no political situation has severed. Unlike many historical television documentaries, neither series uses a voice-over or on-screen narrator to give coherence to its narrative. Rather, the series combine interviews with archival material and music to present a collection of different viewpoints.

The third programme I discuss is the historical drama series *Uutishuone* (*Newsroom*) which YLE broadcast in 2009 in the popular Monday prime-time slot for new drama on YLE TV1. The series follows the experiences of a young woman named Raija as she makes her career at YLE television news between 1968 and 1979. *Uutishuone* incorporates clips of television archive material into its narration to illustrate historical locations and news stories that the characters are working on. In its use of archival footage, *Uutishuone* resembles the long running Spanish serial *Cuéntame cómo pasó* (TVE 2001 to present), which recounts Spanish history during and after the Franco era through the experiences of one family. Both series are public service television projects that combine archival material with dramatized scenes to participate in cultural memory work about a controversial period in the national past, in Spain's case the Franco dictatorship and in Finland's case, the Kekkonen era. *Uutishuone* thus participates in a European trend of fictionalizing (or 'docudramatizing') history on television and of narrating historical events through the experiences of families and individuals (see Chapman, 2007; Ebbrecht, 2007; Rey, 2014). Most of the twelve

episodes of *Uutishuone* touch on the relationship between Finland and the Soviet Union or global Cold War politics.

In the next chapter I offer some historical background information on Soviet-Finnish relations and Finnish television during the Cold War era; this is the archive that later programmes draw on to remember Finnish–Soviet relations. The following chapters focus on three affective modes of engagement with the past that are used in YLE documentaries and drama programmes about Finnish–Soviet relations: irony, nostalgia, and melodrama.

Friendship politics on Finnish Cold-War era television

Between 1939 and 1944 Finland fought two wars against the Soviet Union, the second one alongside Germany. During the post-war period, international relations between Finland and the Soviet Union relied on the Agreement of Friendship, Cooperation and Mutual Assistance (1948), known as the YYA Treaty (*YYA-sopimus*) in Finland. In the agreement Finland promised to oppose attempts to attack the Soviet Union through Finnish territory and in return, the Soviet Union acknowledged Finland's wish not to be involved in conflicts between the superpowers. Maintaining good relations with the Soviet Union became a Finnish foreign policy priority. At the same time, the Soviet Union was also an important trade partner for Finnish industry (e.g. Lounasmeri, 2013: 108–109). Finland did not take sides on either side of the Cold War, but rather sought a position as a neutral Nordic state in the margins of the conflict (Browning and Lehti, 2007: 701–703).

Cultural relations between Finland and the Soviet Union began to develop during the thawing of the Cold War following Stalin's death. Due to the geographical proximity and favourable political conditions, Finnish–Soviet encounters in the field of culture were relatively frequent in comparison with other non-socialist countries. The Finnish-Soviet Society, for example, had a larger membership than comparable friendship societies in Western European countries. Twin city activities, cultural exchanges, and exchanges between schools and institutions familiarized many Finnish people with the Soviet Union on a personal level. (Mikkonen, 2015.) Tourism from Finland to the Soviet Union

developed following the commencement of affordable bus trips in 1958 and the reopening of the ferry connection between Helsinki and Tallinn in 1965. In fact, Finnish visitors became the largest group of tourists from a non-socialist country to the Soviet Union. (Kuusi, 2013: 207–208.)

Television participated in maintaining the politics of friendship between Finland and the Soviet Union. As evident from the analysis of the television schedules published in the main Finnish television guide *Katso* in 1963, 1968, 1973, 1978, 1983, and 1988, Finnish television regularly broadcast programmes about the Soviet Union and Finnish–Soviet relations. During this period, two television broadcasters operated in Finland, YLE and the commercial television company MTV, which rented broadcasting time on YLE's two channels. Both the public and commercial television companies cooperated with Soviet media institutions. Finnish–Soviet co-productions in 1978 include, for example, a four-part series on the history of Finnish–Russian cultural relations (*Timonja* TV2, *Katso* 1978[1]), a programme about the role of criticism in Soviet society (*Criticism as the Motor of Development/Kritiikki kehityksen moottorina* TV1, *Katso* 1978[22]) and a reportage about the social position of Soviet women (*Soviet Women/Neuvostonaisia* MTV, *Katso* 1978[45]). In addition, Finnish television channels broadcast several other programmes from or about the Soviet Union, particularly feature films and factual programming about industry and culture.

Finnish Cold War era television included the anniversary of the YYA Treaty in its calendar of commemorated events. YLE broadcast the official YYA anniversary celebrations in Helsinki (*Katso* 1968[14]; *Katso* 1978[14]; *Katso* 1983[14]). Moreover, both YLE and MTV marked YYA Treaty anniversaries with programmes about the history of Finnish–Soviet relations, such as *From Enmity to the Road of Peace (Vihanpidosta rauhantielle* TV2, *Katso* 1973[45]), *The Line of Friendship (Ystävyiden linja* TV1, *Katso* 1978[14]), and *25 Years of Friendship (25 vuotta ystävyyttä* MTV, *Katso* 1973[50]), all co-produced with Soviet partners. The YYA treaty anniversary was at the height of its visibility in the 1970s. In 1978, YLE broadcast four programmes dedicated to the anniversary, including a popular music concert (*Katso* 1978[13]; *Katso* 1978[14]). Thus, television participated in commemorating Finnish–Soviet relations in a way that supported Finnish foreign policy. By the late 1980s the importance of the YYA Treaty was declining. In 1988, Finnish television no longer broadcast official YYA Treaty

anniversary celebrations. Instead, YLE produced a programme called *YYA and history* (*YYA ja historia*) where Finnish and Soviet historians discussed the relations between the two countries, whilst MTV broadcast a short interview about *perestroika* on Soviet television (*Katso* 1988[14]). In sum, by means of co-productions, domestic programmes about the Soviet Union, and commemorative programming, Finnish television as the leading mass medium from the late 1960s onwards, played a key part in maintaining the public ideal of friendly neighbourly relations between Finland and the Soviet Union.

After the end of the Cold War, Finnish relations with the Soviet Union have been reinterpreted in both research and public discourse. As Christopher S. Browning argues, many Finnish commentators have questioned the formerly popular interpretation that Finland navigated Cold War politics to establish itself as a neutral country and a bridge between East and West. Instead, critics have adopted the Western Cold War era concept of Finlandization to claim that Finland, in fact, ended up supporting Soviet interests. President Kekkonen in particular has been criticized for maintaining a culture of self-censorship and official veneration towards the Soviet Union. (Browning, 2002: 53–54.) In the aftermath of the Cold War, people who were active on the left have faced demands to show public repentance for ‘Stalinist’ sympathies and Finlandization (Koivunen, 2007: 142–143; Suutela, 2005: 7). Soviet culture is, however, also an object of popular nostalgia. For example, YLE received hundreds of responses when it asked the public for photos of their most beloved Soviet objects in 2014; these ranged from tableware to musical instruments, cameras, and Misha the bear, the mascot of the Moscow Olympics. (Liekki, 2014.) YLE’s television programmes participate in the memory work concerning Finnish–Soviet relations, using different affective modes to make sense of the complexities of the past.

An ironic framing of friendship politics

70-luvun sekahaku opens with faded colour footage of Russian schoolgirls who recite in slightly fumbling Finnish: ‘We like Finland and the Finnish people’, ‘Long live the friendship between the Soviet Union and Finland’. The opening is an example of the ironic use of archival material, which is a common affective mode of engaging with Finnish–Soviet relations in YLE’s television programmes. As Linda Hutcheon (1994: 12)

points out, 'irony happens in the space *between* (and including) the said and the unsaid'. Here we have the explicit content of the archival footage, where the girls seriously express support for the friendship between the two countries. A framework for interpreting the clip as ironic is provided by the continuity announcer, who introduces the programme:

It deepens and strengthens year by year. Friendship with the Soviet Union was in the 70s what stock exchange rates were in the 80s. It was supposed to keep growing, one could not even imagine a downturn. What was life really like with the Soviet Union? (YLE Teema, 27 September 2007)

After citing 1970s rhetoric about deepening friendship ties, the introduction moves on to offer the present as a position from which one can see the mistakes of the past; the belief in the future of the Finnish friendship with the Soviet Union was equally misguided as the 1980s yuppies' trust in the stock markets. The introduction also promises that the documentary can show what the past was really like, inviting viewers to look for the truth about the past behind the rhetoric of friendship.

An ironic framing does not necessarily have to be spelled out in the programme for viewers to be able to interpret archival material ironically. Rather, it can rely on the existence of an interpretative context, where viewers know to question 1970s rhetoric about Finnish–Soviet relations. The YLE television archive of the 1970s is today seen as very politicized. Historical research on Finnish Cold War era media has characterized the journalistic approach to the Soviet Union as self-censorship, where journalists avoided writing about everything they knew to protect international relations and trade with the Soviet Union. (Lounasmeri, 2013; Uskali, 2003.) Turo Uskali's study on YLE's foreign correspondents in Moscow argues that YLE television news supported official Finnish foreign policy regarding the Soviet Union (Uskali, 2003: 241–244). The pressures on YLE to support Finnish foreign policy have been discussed not only in research, but also in the media (e.g. Leppänen, 2014; Stammeier, 2015). In this context, viewers are ready to interpret archival material in an ironic way.

Archival footage representing the official performance of friendship politics is particularly ripe for ironic framing. *70-luvun sekahaku* showcases several televised

performances of friendship politics, such as a crowd of people standing in the rain under a banner proclaiming 'May the friendship between the Soviet Union and Finland strengthen!'; military delegations meeting at the border while a narrator explains: 'A thousand kilometres of friendship and cooperation. This is how you could today characterize the border between Finland and the Soviet Union'; and a Russian folk music group performing a Finnish song at a red carpet welcoming ceremony at the Helsinki railway station. The pompous rhetoric of friendship politics seems weird from the point of view of the 2000s. Irony is central to the documentary's functioning as factual entertainment. *70-luvun sekahaku* uses archival material to invite the viewer to wonder at the strangeness of the past. The shortness of the archival clips contributes to maintaining their strangeness and keeping the viewpoint of the programme in the seemingly 'enlightened and modern present' (Brunsdon, 2004: 118). By editing archival footage into very short clips, the programme is able to turn ceremonial performances of national friendship into entertaining material for reminiscence.

Documentaries can also create an ironic effect in how they combine interviews with archival material. In *70-luvun sekahaku*, the interviews seem to give access to the reality behind the official friendship politics. For example, an archival clip of a woman welcoming visitors to the Soviet Union is cast in an ironic light when it is followed by an interview describing how hotel rooms were equipped with listening devices and how tourist guides kept an eye on travellers. Likewise in *Yhteinen sävel*, YLE's former Moscow correspondent explains that as a communist, he was frustrated by the poor Soviet propaganda and tried to support Soviet values in subtler, cleverer ways in his reporting. His interview is followed by a clip from a 1973 programme commemorating 25 years of the YYA Treaty where a man describes his experiences in the Soviet Union, saying that he could move freely, see anything he liked and talk with workers in factories. The interview casts the archival clip in an ironic light, pointing at the hidden reality behind the experiences of the traveller. In documentaries about the relationship between Finland and the Soviet Union, interviews have more authority than archival material in providing a framework for historical interpretation.

Linda Hutcheon has characterized the affective mode of irony as an evaluative and judgemental attitude. Irony can be used to reject and disapprove, at the same time as it enables the ironists an impression of emotional detachment. (Hutcheon, 1994: 37, 41.)

In historical documentaries about Finnish–Soviet relations, irony offers a mode for critiquing Cold War era culture in line with current revisionist interpretations of Cold War era Finnish history. At the same time, it offers a possibility to separate the present self from the past and, consequently, to avoid responsibility for the past. YLE television documentaries resemble compilation documentaries, which use archival material critically and dialectically, not as a straightforward document of historical reality, but as material in need of interpretation (Bruzzi, 2006: 26–28). As Stella Bruzzi (2006: 40) notes however, even as compilation documentaries recontextualize and evaluate archival material, they often treat archival footage as “evidence” in its own right. Likewise, while YLE documentaries use archival material ironically, there is a sense that archival material is still assumed to document the reality of friendship politics in a rather straightforward way. As Linda Hutcheon (1994: 43) argues, for irony to work we must be able to assume that some other people would take the ironic utterance literally. In television documentaries about Finnish–Soviet relations, an ironic framing assumes that the people appearing in the archival footage were less knowledgeable than viewers in the 2000s and participated in rituals of friendship politics in a naïve way.

Nostalgia for cultural connections

Television scholars have observed a nostalgia boom in contemporary television culture in Europe (Holdsworth, 2011; Niemeyer and Wentz, 2014). Conventionally, nostalgia is understood as an attitude that idealizes the past in response to dissatisfaction with the present (e.g. Hutcheon, 1998). Recent scholarship on nostalgia argues, however, that nostalgia does not necessarily idealize, but can encompass different attitudes towards the past, including critical ones (e.g. Boym, 2001). Introducing an edited volume on contemporary media and nostalgia, Katharina Niemeyer (2014: 6) points out that media cultures feature so many different kinds of nostalgia that instead of a single nostalgia, it would make sense to talk about nostalgias in the plural form. With the proliferation of forms and content that could be described as nostalgic, the term nostalgia may be in danger of losing its analytical usefulness. Writing about mediated memories of the Soviet Union in Russia, for example, Ekaterina Kalinina (2014: 19) notes that cultural products that deal with the Soviet past tend to be labelled nostalgic, regardless of their style. For the purposes of this article, I would like to reserve nostalgia for a specific

mode of relating to the past on television. By nostalgia, I refer to acts of remembering that portray a fondness for the past. Moreover, a nostalgic mode of relating to the past often includes a sensory enjoyment of the sights and sounds of the past.

In documentaries about Finnish–Soviet relations, a nostalgic mode of relating to the past appears especially in relation to culture. Whilst *70-luvun sekahaku* adopts an ironic attitude towards the performance of official friendship politics, there are moments when the interviewees remember Soviet culture in a fond, nostalgic way. For example, a rock musician remembers amazing performances he saw at peace festivals, and another interviewee admires how Soviet school children learnt different dance styles already in primary school, exclaiming: if this is communism, this is great! Personal experiences of cultural encounters are central to the nostalgic relation to the Soviet culture. These interviews are surrounded by television footage of folk dance performances and young Finnish people on a bus tour in the Soviet Union and photos of ice hockey players accompanied by Soviet popular music (the superiority of Soviet ice hockey in comparison to Finnish was acutely felt in Finland) – in other words, music and images that many viewers can recognize and enjoy.

Unsurprisingly, a nostalgic mode of relating to the past is particularly important in *Yhteinen sävel*, which concentrates on popular music. Episode 5, for example, focuses on 1980s Finnish cover versions of Soviet hits, many of which have become evergreens in Finland. The interviewees, most of whom are music professionals, explain the popularity of Russian music in Finland with musical similarities and the Finnish attraction to ‘Slavic’ sentimentality, but also with the audience being less prejudiced against Russian music than audiences are nowadays. Here, the Finland of the past is represented as more culturally open than the present. The soundtrack of the episode features Russian songs and their popular Finnish versions, combined with archival footage of the Soviet Union, such as touristic imagery or what seems like a car advertisement. Archival clips in *Yhteinen sävel* are longer than in *70-luvun sekahaku*, enabling viewers to linger on the television aesthetics and popular music of the past. The combination of popular music and archival material invites viewers to enjoy familiar songs and Soviet landscapes that are appealing due to both their recognizability and difference from the present. Writing about nostalgia on contemporary television, Amy Holdsworth (2011: 102) argues that nostalgia expresses ‘a desire to remember not to re-experience’. Nostalgia does not then

express a desire to return to an idealized past, but enjoyment in remembering the past. Both the emotional appeal and the critical potential of 'nostalgia television' are for Holdsworth (2011: 112) predicated on a movement between closeness and distance. *Yhteinen sävel* is appealing due to the sense of closeness with familiar popular music. At the same time, the series represents the Finland of the past as radically different from the present, for example, with regards the media propaganda discussed in the previous chapter. The movement between closeness and distance allows for the criticism of both the past and the present. On the one hand, interviewees criticize the idealized media image of the Soviet Union during the Cold War and, on the other hand, they implicitly criticize present day Finland for being less open towards Russian culture than it used to be.

In addition to culture, a certain sense of political idealism is also remembered nostalgically. For example, in *70-luvun sekahaku*, after one interviewee has described her feelings about the backwardness and drabness of the Soviet Union, another professes that she still finds it admirable how, despite material poverty, people were willing to hold on and resist the aggression of the United States, believing that at some point everyone will understand that private property is a problem. Likewise, *Uutishuone* associates the 1960s and 1970s with leftist political idealism, represented by the series' protagonist, Raija. Learning about the Soviet invasion of Czechoslovakia, Raija refuses to believe that this is the end of the development that was making Czechoslovakia a model for intellectuals everywhere, saying: 'Tanks cannot kill dreams'. (Episode 1.) Although the invasion threatens her idealistic vision of the development of socialism, Raija continues to be known as a journalist with a positive attitude towards the Soviet Union up to the late 1970s (episode 9). Raija's passionate socialism brings a sense of energy to the series. In moments like these, television programmes portray a nostalgia for political idealism that is seen to be missing from the present (cf. Koivunen, 2007).

Television documentaries such as *70-luvun sekahaku* and *Yhteinen sävel* address a viewer who has personal memories of the Cold War era and recognizes characters, visuals and music presented in the series. Especially *70-luvun sekahaku*, with its relatively fast pace and large number of interviewees, clearly assumes a viewer who is familiar with the topics and the participating characters who are not given much of an introduction. While the interviewees are public figures from different fields (politics,

popular culture, journalism) many of them would likely not be very familiar to a teen or twenty-something audience. This suggests that the documentary series primarily offer a space for reminiscence for people who lived through the Cold War era. In contrast, *Utishuone* explains historical events to the audience in the dialogue and makes the Cold War era relatable through the experiences of its fictional characters. In Ekaterina Kalinina's (2014: 229) analysis, the role of nostalgic television programmes in Russia has been to facilitate communication and the sharing of memories between generations. While YLE's programmes about Finnish–Soviet relations may also do this, only *Utishuone* makes an effort to address viewers with little experience of the historical era, while the documentaries primarily address older generations.

The melodrama of historical experience

Utishuone can in many ways be described as nostalgia television. The series celebrates the social role of television news in the 1960s and 1970s and invites viewers to remember great television moments, such as Olympic victories, shocking news events and historical milestones like the first moon landing. As such, *Utishuone* functions as institutional nostalgia (Holdsworth, 2011: 113) for YLE. The series' depiction of period fashions and interior design and the use of 1960s and 1970s pop music on the sound track can also be described as nostalgic. I would argue, however, that nostalgia is not the most suitable concept to describe the series' depiction of the relationship between Finland and the Soviet Union. Rather, the series adopts a melodramatic mode to depict Cold War era Finnish society. *Utishuone* has plenty of humorous elements, but its main story arcs (Raija's troubled relationship with her conservative parents, the alcoholism of the star news anchor, the death of the head of the newsroom in a plane crash, and Raija's colleague Vesa's seemingly hopeless love for her) make use of melodrama. I understand melodrama as a mode of narration that moves its viewers emotionally by focusing on the struggles and suffering of its protagonists. While the world of contemporary melodrama is not necessarily made up of innocent victims and evil villains in the manner of 19th century and early 20th century theatre and cinema (see Williams, 1998), melodramatic fiction still portrays protagonists at the mercy of difficult circumstances beyond their control. *Utishuone* deploys melodrama to depict its characters' struggles

in their private lives, but also to provide a sense of what it was like to live in Finland with the Soviet Union as a mighty neighbour.

While historical research has discussed how YLE news followed Finnish foreign policy in a cautious relationship with the Soviet Union, *Uutishuone* invites viewers to empathize with the position of the journalists during the Cold War era. The pressures journalists faced are dramatized, particularly in the episode that focuses on the hijacking of a Soviet airplane that landed in Finland (episode 9). At the beginning of the episode, Raija argues with her colleague who would like to let the public know that President Kekkonen's health is failing, saying: 'It's not our task to undermine the President's authority, let alone the friendship between Finland and the Soviet Union'. As the head of the newsroom, Martti, comments, Raija doesn't hide her positive attitude towards the Soviet Union in her work. Raija is, however, worried because she has received anonymous phone calls from a man calling her 'Brezhnev's red whore' and threatening to kill her. In response to complaints from viewers, Martti introduces new journalistic guidelines according to which all the political parties should get airtime exactly in proportion to their support in the parliament and both the USA and the Soviet Union should receive exactly the same amount of airtime. The absurd rule has journalists counting seconds to ensure equal coverage, but the anonymous phone calls continue. Eventually, Raija is scared to appear in a news report about the plane hijacking, because the story focuses on the Soviet Union. Moreover, newspaper journalists taunt her, saying that YLE is happy with its journalists as long as they promote the friendship between Finland and the Soviet Union. Raija is about to let her colleague take over the reporting of the case, but in the end she is annoyed by the newspaper journalists' callous attitude regarding the safety of the Russian plane passengers, and decides to report on the hijacking after all, saying 'I'm a journalist, I won't be scared into silence'. The episode shows Raija struggling with demands from many different quarters – the expectations of television viewers, the rules introduced by her boss, the journalistic ideals of reporters in other news media, and a sense of responsibility for maintaining good relations between Finland and the Soviet Union. Raija is constructed as a melodramatic heroine who experiences distress in difficult circumstances, but manages to maintain her sense of right and wrong. Through Raija's character, *Uutishuone* invites viewers to empathize with the experience of living in Cold War era Finland.

Utishuone uses archival material to give a sense of what life was like in the 1960s and 1970s. Montage sequences combining archival footage with dramatized material and popular music are typical for the series. One example appears in the episode that deals with the so-called Zavidovo leak of 1972, where Martti fears that somebody in television news has leaked confidential material that could harm Finland's relationship with the Soviet Union (episode 5). The story of the episode revolves around Raija discovering both political secrets and Martti's personal secret – his romantic relationship with the weatherman of the television news. Raija's feelings about her discoveries are presented at the end of the episode with a sequence that combines shots of a confused looking Raija with archival footage of President Kekkonen taking his presidential oath after he was re-elected without an election in order to safeguard Finland's relationship with the Soviet Union. Uriah Heep's 'Easy Livin' accompanies the images. Here the combination of archival material and music functions as a melodramatic element that expresses feelings that the character cannot express in other ways (Elsaesser, 1987: 51–57), as Raija has promised Martti to keep both the political and personal secrets she has discovered. The soundtrack of 'Easy Livin' forms an ironic contrast to the images. The affective charge of the montage sequence builds on the contradiction between the swagger of Anglo-American rock music and the formal political ceremony playing out in the black and white television images. The combination of archival material and music creates a sense of what it felt like to live through Cold War era Finnish culture, which has been retrospectively characterized as a culture of suppression and self-censorship. The combination of archival and dramatized footage presents the past as consisting of two levels of reality, the official reality on television, and Raija's experiential reality.

The final episode of *Utishuone*, set in 1979, takes stock of the Kekkonen era in television news and offers a justification for YLE's news policy in relation to the Soviet Union. Following Martti's death, Raija comes across a book manuscript about the social role of communication in his remains. She is shocked to discover that Martti seems to be advocating for television news that distracts the public from the workings of the power elite. Raija wonders if this is what she has been doing under Martti's direction all along – did Martti only paint the Soviet Union as a political threat to keep Kekkonen in power? A montage sequence combining archival footage of President Kekkonen and clips from earlier episodes of *Utishuone* to a soundtrack of aggressive rock music gives a sense of Raija's feelings: Kekkonen meets Brezhnev, talks about self-criticism and self-

mentorship, takes his presidential oath, and requests a new take of his interview answer; Martti lectures his team about the Soviet threat and demands to check every word that goes on the news; and Raija herself comments: 'It is not our task to undermine the President's authority, let alone the friendship between Finland and the Soviet Union'. The montage sequence, punctuated with close-ups of Raija's eyes, creates a sense of revelation, of seeing the past in a new light. As the episode progresses however, Raija's fears about the integrity of television news turn out to be unfounded. She finds the rest of Martti's book manuscript and discovers that the part she read was a dystopian scenario, not a representation of Martti's own ideals. Moreover, the episode's treatment of the Soviet occupation of Afghanistan seems to confirm that Kekkonen's cautiousness in relation to the Soviet Union was justified. The characters repeatedly mention that Afghanistan had recently signed an Agreement of Friendship, Cooperation and Mutual Assistance with the Soviet Union, drawing a parallel with Finland and suggesting that Finland could have shared Afghanistan's fate. In this way, *Uutishuone* ends by looking back at both the historical past (through archival material) and the series' own past to address concerns about the political role of public service television news. The series seems to suggest that television news did what was best to maintain national safety for a neighbouring country of the Soviet Union.

Conclusion

YLE's documentary and drama series use a variety of affective modes to depict the relationship between Finland and the Soviet Union. The ironic mode draws on the gap between archival material and contemporary ideas about the Kekkonen era. Irony is used especially to remember performances of official friendship politics. As irony relies on a sense of distance between the past and the present, it takes on an evaluating attitude towards the past, positing the present as a knowledgeable and enlightened vantage point with no sense of responsibility for the past. The nostalgic mode of relating to the past is found in relation to Soviet culture, personal experiences of the Soviet Union, and a sense of political idealism. The nostalgic mode uses archival footage as an object of pleasurable reminiscence. Less distanced than irony, it plays with the movement between closeness and distance, enabling both affection for and criticism of the past. A melodramatic mode is employed to depict the struggles of individuals

encountering contradictory demands during a complex historical era. Here archival material can be used expressively in combination with dramatized material to describe and justify historical experience. Melodrama invites viewers to empathize with the experience of living through the complexities of the past.

Conceptualizing the affective modes of relating to the past in more varied ways than just nostalgia, can help us to understand memory cultures on television in a more nuanced way. The affective modes analysed in this article offer different possibilities for critiquing and justifying the past. As this case study shows, a single programme can combine different modes to make sense of a contentious historical era. YLE's programmes about Finnish–Soviet relations produce an ambivalent relationship to the past, where fond nostalgia, ironic distancing, and an attempt to empathize with historical experience through melodrama can all be used in a single programme. Irony, nostalgia, and melodrama are not restricted to either documentary programmes or drama, although in this case study melodrama was only found in fiction. Melodrama could, however, also be used in documentary narration, perhaps especially in documentaries that focus on the experiences of individuals. The analysis of Finnish television memories of Finnish–Soviet relations demonstrates that the end of state socialism has required public memory work not only in former socialist countries but also in an ambiguously positioned country such as Finland. Accordingly, the study of post-socialist memory can benefit from widening the scope of study beyond the former communist bloc and tracing the similarities and differences in memories of the socialist era across the ideological divide.

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