Negative Environmental Emotions in 21st Century Finnish Fiction

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Introduction

Dystopian fiction has boomed in Finland since the 1990s, offering visions of undesirable societies that arise as a response to the worsened environmental conditions (see Isomaa and Lahtinen 2017). Many works use the conventions of dystopia, apocalypse and post-apocalypse to imagine a darkening future but sometimes subgenres of fantasy are also included. In the 2000s, climate fiction has joined to portray a contemporary or future Finland where climate is changing or has changed radically, the cold Northern climate with its specific fauna and flora has become a part of the past and the environment is rapidly transformed in the process. The effects of environmental change on the human psyche are also mapped in some works. Some recent novels even focus on the psychological consequences of climate change, making visible the vulnerability of not only the environment but also of the human psyche. Such works typically portray inconvenient character emotions that arise as a response to the changing environment; some works even depict psychological character development that leads to a mental breakdown and subsequent self-destructive behaviour. The depicted mental states and phenomena bear some resemblance to those that are discussed elsewhere in this book in the frame of Arctic hysteria. However, the discourse around Arctic hysteria does not offer sharp conceptual tools for giving sensitive descriptions of the various environmental emotions portrayed in these novels. Furthermore, neither the novels nor their authors evoke the discourse of Arctic hysteria in the novels or elsewhere; therefore, we employ concepts of emotion studies in our analysis.

In this chapter, we continue mapping the problematic relationship between literary characters and their Northern habitat. In our approach, the characters are viewed as possible persons whose emotions can be taken seriously and analysed as psychological reactions to their environment. Instead of using the concept of Arctic hysteria in our analysis of literary characters, we approach them from the perspective of contemporary, multidisciplinary research into emotions. Modern research offers sensitive, neutral concepts for analysing their environmental emotional responses. In practice, we emphasise the mimetic dimension of literary characters as theorised by

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James Phelan (1989; Phelan and Frow 2022) by analysing their emotions with reference to recent multidisciplinary discussions of environmental and other emotions.

Despite this friction with the concept of Arctic hysteria as such, we think that the analysis of these most recent forms of environmental emotions in Finnish fiction adds to the present discussion by connecting environmental emotions to societal criticism. Our goal in this chapter is to describe the prevailing negative environmental emotions portrayed in each novel and learn how such affective features engage critically with the negative possibilities latent in contemporary risk societies. More generally, we map some of the new emotions that recent Finnish novels have imagined with reference to the climate crisis. Being a medium of cultural meaning-making, literature has cultural power in making sense of the world around and its imaginations of the future worlds and their emotional structures are noteworthy as socially shared representations.

In the history of dystopian fiction, negative character emotions have already been portrayed in classical dystopias that often motivate the genre-typical action, an uprising against an authoritarian or a totalitarian society, with the negative emotions the society evokes in the characters (see Isomaa 2020). However, in this chapter we argue that recent dystopian fiction expands the range of negative emotions by portraying negative environmental emotions that arise as a response to environmental decline. Recent studies in eco-psychology have mapped and named previously unnamed environmental emotions such as environmental grief and solastalgia that are responses to undesirable changes in the natural world (see e.g., Albrecht 2007; Pihkala 2020). We argue that similar emotions are also portrayed in such recent Finnish fiction as *Memory of Water* (2014) by Emmi Itäranta, *Lupaus* [Promise] (2018) by Emma Puikkonen and *Maa joka ei koskaan sula* [The Land that Never Melts] (2021) by Inkeri Markkula that focus on mapping the emotions and affects of their protagonists that must face undesirable and irreparable changes occurring not only in their beloved home environment but also globally. Whereas the first Finnish novel of climate fiction, *Sarasvatin hiekkaa* (2005, transl. *The Sands of Sarasvati* 2008) by Risto Isomäki, has been perceived as action-oriented and populated with stereotypical characters (see Lahtinen 2017), the aforementioned novels focus more on psychological or eco-psychological depiction, combining the genre of the psychological novel with conventions from dystopian fiction.

However, negative character emotions are not always a direct response to the environmental change as such but may be focused on those institutions that bring about the changes or mediate access to the environment. In the post-apocalyptic novel *Korpisoturi* [Wilderness Warrior] (2016) by Laura Gustafsson, the negative emotions of the protagonist, a Finnish man in his thirties named Ahma, arise as a response to late-modern capitalist institutions that he perceives as untrustworthy; these emotions are part of the motivation that prompt him to adopt a survivalist ideology and move to the wilderness to live a self-sufficient life. Despite the critical – comical and parodic – treatment of survivalism in the novel, it still offers a serious analysis of experiences that may alienate an ordinary person from society (see Isomaa 2022). In *Korpisoturi*, the reasons can be found in capitalist institutions that trade ethics for profit and produce food and construct buildings in an unsustainable, short-sighted manner. The untrustworthiness of the institutions motivates the protagonist to abandon organised society and try to live in a premodern manner in a rural setting. Similarly, in the post-apocalyptic novel *Memory of Water* by Emmi Itäranta, the protagonist's feelings

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of oppression and anxiety arise from living under the rule of a military junta that restricts the availability of essential resources necessary for survival such as water and intellectual resources such as information.

It is worth asking whether there is something specifically Northern or Finnish in the emotions that the novels portray. After all, the genres of dystopian fiction are basically transnational in that they occur in many literatures and their generic repertoires in these literatures are so similar that the genres can be identified as forming transnational genres. Furthermore, dystopian works often adopt a transnational or global perspective on the state of the world: the dystopian societies are often world states and the apocalyptic cataclysm that occurs in apocalyptic and post-apocalyptic fiction usually affects the world transnationally or globally. In this sense, a national perspective is alien to dystopian fiction. However, literature cannot escape being part of and portraying a culture or cultures. The portrayed emotions are localised in the narratives but also imagined by Finnish writers, which connects them to Finnish culture. Nevertheless, there are indications that inconvenient environmental emotions are perhaps a central part of the contemporary mentality or structure of emotions in Finland and elsewhere and the novels analysed in this chapter contribute to making them visible and understandable for the community of their readers.

Historically, the field of dystopian fiction itself seems to have arisen as a reaction to modernity that not only produced the technological tools for creating high-tech dystopian societies but also worsened environmental conditions; these dynamics are portrayed in Aldous Huxley's *Brave New World* (1932) and George Orwell's *Nineteen Eighty-Four* (1949). To understand the literary genres in their broad historical context, an analysis should connect dystopian fiction to two concepts, the Anthropocene and risk society, that have been used to describe contemporary modern society. The Anthropocene refers to a proposed geological epoch, beginning at the end of the eighteenth century or after, that is characterised by large-scale human effects on the planet, such as anthropogenic climate change. Climate fiction participates in imagining what the epoch is or will be like (see Isomaa, Korpua and Teittinen 2020, xiv–xvi). Risk society is a sociological concept, coined by the German sociologist Ulrich Beck and further developed by sociologist Anthony Giddens and others and refers to a "society that is increasingly preoccupied with the future (and also with safety)", as Giddens and Pearson (1998, 209) describe. The concept has been referred to in recent discussions of dystopian fiction (see e.g., Lahtinen 2013, 95–96; Isomaa and Lahtinen 2017, 9–10). Risk society is not necessarily more dangerous than some previous forms of social order; its inhabitants are just more aware and focused on possible negative future events and consequences of human action than perhaps earlier peoples were. Historically, Giddens and Pearson (1998, 208) consider transition to risk society having occurred around the 1940s and 1950s, when people began to worry more about what they were doing to nature more than what nature could do to them. The concept of *manufactured risk* refers to risks that are created by human development, especially by science and technology (Giddens and Pearson 1998, 210). Since dystopian fiction is focused on imagining negative futures for humankind, it can be considered to participate in the mapping of risks that characterise a risk society. In this vein of thought, dystopian fiction can also be perceived as critical of the modernity that the development of science and technology has produced. Only now do humans have the technological tools that not only enable large-scale environmental

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destruction but also present effective ways to govern and control the everyday life of millions of people (see Isomaa and Lahtinen 2017, 9.) Dystopian fiction focuses on showcasing the negative possibilities latent in the current social, economic and environmental realities.

Dystopian fiction, especially in its more speculative forms, critically defamiliarizes the everydayness of technological civilization. Speculative works situated in the ruins of technological civilization, such as Itäranta's *Memory of Water*, focus on the material waste and environmental destruction effected by modern societies: dried-out river valleys and toxic wastelands and the persistent plastic dumped in landfills and repurposed by future tinkerers. The criticism in dystopian fiction might also contain seeds for meaningful ways of living with environmental destruction. In *Lupaus*, the main character gradually learns to accept and tolerate the fact that the world is changing irreparably; her new attitude is evident when she learns to appreciate the sound of dripping water, a manifestation of global warming. In *Memory of Water*, the main character seeks an affective and spiritual alliance with water. The spiritual practice in *Memory of Water* also arises from the particular material conditions of the Arctic and thus highlights what can be considered 'Northern' or 'Finnish' even without reference to nationalism. In addition to learning to live with environmental destruction, characters in these dystopian novels must also come to terms with life in a risk society, as will be seen in the next section.

Escaping the Untrustworthy Risk Society in Laura Gustafsson's Korpisoturi

Korpisoturi by Laura Gustafsson is a curious hybrid of speculative and realist fiction. It joins the tradition of realism by recounting the life of an ordinary Finnish man who loses his faith in organised society and relocates from the capital city of Helsinki to the north-eastern countryside to live a self-sufficient life as a hermit. Depiction of ordinary Finnish people (*kansankuvaus*) is one of the great traditions of Finnish literature that began with the works of the Finnish national poet Johan Ludvig Runeberg in the 1830s and continued in different forms and styles to the present. The *kansankuvaus* tradition is evoked in the novel by intertextual references to previous literature and the portrayal of a reclusive character that abandons the community to escape amidst nature. In earlier Finnish literature, the protagonists of the most lauded novel in Finnish, *Seitsemän veljestä* (1870, transl. *Seven Brothers* 1929) by Aleksis Kivi, abandoned their village community and chose to live self-sufficiently in the wilderness far from the benefits and demands of an organised community; in this novel Ahma follows their lead (see also Isomaa 2022).

However, in *Korpisoturi* the realist motifs are mixed with conventions of the post-apocalyptic novel. Ahma has adopted a survivalist ideology that offers him a way of perceiving and coping with a complicated reality; the latter half of the novel follows the pattern of the post-apocalyptic novel as it portrays the consequences of an international trade embargo that causes the rural community to run out of food supplies, resulting in a post-apocalyptic struggle to survive. Elsewhere (Isomaa 2022) a more detailed analysis of the post-apocalyptic features of the novel, including its rich intertextuality have been presented. Here it suffices to say that the compromise between the two traditions is innovative but also requires formal compromises; the

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cataclysm typical of post-apocalypses is diminished in scale to satisfy the criterion of realism and to keep the focus on societal analysis and commentary instead of the future speculation that is typical of science fiction. However, the combination of the traditions enables *Korpisoturi* to offer an interesting analysis of contemporary society and the emotions it may evoke in some of its members. Fleeing from society is an old way to cope with difficult emotions for characters in Finnish literature but in this novel Laura Gustafsson updates a view of the psychological motivations behind such a choice. As Juha Raipola (2019) has shown, *Korpisoturi* offers a critical, mainly parodic and comical portrayal of Ahma's survivalist ideology. However, the novel still puts forth a serious societal analysis of why he chooses the survivalist ideology in the first place.

Ahma's reasons for abandoning organised society relate to his problematic relationship with the capitalist institutions around him. As a young man, Ahma worked as a construction worker but he quit after his superior demanded that he coat a wet concrete structure of a school even if that action was likely to produce a serious mould problem in the future. In Ahma's eyes, the company could not be trusted, as it focused on producing short-term profit without taking serious responsibility for the quality of the product in the future. To emphasise the theme, the reader learns that Ahma's studio flat in Helsinki is also structurally damaged, suggesting the idea that Ahma's experience of the building company was not an exceptional case but rather indicative of a more general ethos in the sector. Ahma also voices his lack of trust for other institutions that mediate access to the environment, mentioning global problems such as fields being coated with glyphosate, rainforests being levelled and deserts being irrigated. In short, Ahma is critical of the operating principles of businesses around him and globally to the degree that he wishes to give up his reliance on them and become self-sufficient.

This analysis of the untrustworthiness of contemporary business and societal institutions has also been mentioned by Allison Ford (2020) who has analysed the American self-sufficiency movement from a sociological and socio-psychological point of view; she argues that the experience of the untrustworthiness of institutions is an emotional motivation for many in the movement to adopt a self-sufficient lifestyle. In fact, the choice is a way to regulate the negative emotions that arise from living in a risk society. In *Korpisoturi*, Ahma's psychological depiction as a survivalist is realistic in that his motives and emotions resemble those of real-life preppers who try to disengage their dependency on social institutions and look forward to a future world in which organised societies no longer exist. Living in an untrustworthy capitalist society is emotionally frustrating and taxing. In Ahma's case, however, his insecure childhood also motivates his desire to find emotional security in the survivalist ideology and its preferred lifestyle (see Isomaa 2022).

Korpisoturi differs from some older Finnish classics – such as *Seitsemän veljestä*, *Noitaympyrä* [Vicious Circle] (1956) by Pentti Haanpää and *Jäniksen vuosi* (1975, transl. *The Year of the Hare* 1995) by Arto Paasilinna – in that its protagonist does not return to the organised society after a period in the wilderness but seems to be permanently settled in the chosen location and self-sufficient lifestyle. It is noteworthy that Ahma's settlement was not very remote in the beginning despite its forest setting, since he is able to ride a bike to a hardware store and other people live on nearby farms. In comparison, the brothers in Kivi's novels relocate to a primaeval forest that

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they own and Pate Teikka in Haanpää's *Noitaympyrä* (1956, written in 1931) lives in a remote location in Lapland for a year with magister Raunio; both novels imagine a genuine separation from other people. Ahma is not a similar settler in that he buys an old cottage near a village instead of building a house in a previously uninhabited place. This is an understandable choice of a setting for a novel that obviously intends to comment on human relations and social dynamics: other characters, especially those who have lived in the area for their whole life, are needed to communicate and clash with the protagonist who 'immigrates' to the area for the novel to function as a 'social laboratory'. Furthermore, having Ahma choose an old cottage that represents a much older, even 'premodern' lifestyle enables the author to contrast the past and present and serves the novel's critique of modernity (see also, Isomaa 2022).

More generally, Ahma inhabits a much later fictional Finland than the characters in earlier fiction since his Finland is part of the European Union and faces the challenges typical of the 2000s. The context in which he makes his life choices is very different from the context of the characters in Kivi's and Haanpää's novels. Kai Laitinen has noted that urban and industrial milieus have gained more ground in Finnish literature only after the Second World War; earlier, the general direction in Finnish fiction was movement from the forest to the city (see Laitinen 1984, 11–15, 17–19, 22). Ahma goes against the grain when he returns from the capital city to the countryside to live a retro lifestyle characterised by self-sufficiency. Modernity and its city life do not represent progress and shelter from the harsh natural conditions for him, as it did for some previous generations; rather, Ahma seeks shelter from modernity in nature and chooses a more primitive lifestyle without modern amenities and services than dependency on immoral, capitalist institutions. Ahma's survivalist, hyper-masculinist ideology is criticised and even ridiculed in the novel but the emotionally taxing side of technological modernity is still made visible.

This escape from modernity has been called 'inverted quarantine' by Andrew Szasz (2007, 4–5) in his view of social action in which individuals decide to isolate themselves from the environment or surroundings that they consider illness-inducing or toxic. This is the opposite of a more traditional quarantine in which the community isolates an ill individual. Szasz (2007, 5–6) claims that well-off citizens purchased their way out of (socially) threatening surroundings already in the nineteenth century by moving to the countryside or living behind gates and walls, using private carriages and visiting only wealthy neighbourhoods. Even nowadays the inverted quarantine typical of risk societies is consumerist by nature: it manifests in the ability to buy more expensive goods that are assumed to shield the individual from the environment that has proved to be polluted and dangerous, even as the sun causes skin cancer and air and water contain impurities. Such expensive products include organic food, ecological hygiene products and makeup, organic textiles and building materials and home appliances, such as air and water filters (see Szasz 2007, 1–2, 7). Similarly, Allison Ford (2019, 127) has used the concept of inverted quarantine in her analysis of the American self-sufficiency movement. She considers 'prepping' and 'homesteading' as forms of inverted quarantine that not only help people to cope with the polluted environment and the emotions it induces but also offer a source of pleasure doing such chores as gardening.

Ahma also quarantines himself invertedly to protect himself from the problematic society and to prepare for the consequences of its assumed future collapse. Szasz's

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emphasis on consumerism directs attention to the monetary resources that Ahma needs to possess to be able to protect himself from the 'toxic', untrustworthy urban society. After all, he has to buy the cottage legally and without inherited funds he would not be able to afford it. Furthermore, living in a traditional way requires resources such as farming equipment, a work horse and seed grains, and renovating the cottage also requires funds or a free workforce network. In a sense, Ahma also buys or negotiates for himself the shield behind which he can hide from the risks he fears. He recognizes the contradiction that becoming self-sufficient requires resources and consumption. Nevertheless, owning the cottage gives him power over others, because he can command the others to leave after becoming upset with them and the others respect his ownership of the cottage. In this general sense, Ahma is clearly a part of the organized, capitalist and consumerist society that he despises while he also benefits from it. His relationship with others is ambivalent: he both needs them and wants to isolate himself from them.

A somewhat similar but narrower concept has been discussed in literary studies, namely 'inverted Crusoeism', that refers to characters who – in contrast to Robinson Crusoe – deliberately isolate themselves on a remote island. The term was coined in the literary works of J G Ballard and scholars such as Simon Sellars (2012) and Vicente Bicudo de Castro and Matthias Muskat (2020) have used it in literary research. Bicudo de Castro and Muskat (2020, 255) distinguish three stages to characterise the experience of being isolated on a remote island in previous research: the character 1) has an entrapping experience, has to adapt to the new environment, then 2) has a healing experience, discovers themself and creates new social relations and finally 3) has an empowering experience, having survived (see Bicudo de Castro and Muskat 2020, 255–256). While there are also Finnish robinsonades and depictions of island recluses, many of the recluses in Finnish literature maroon themselves in the wilderness. For instance, the seven brothers in Kivi's novel isolate themselves in the Impivaara forest that they own and Junnu in Juhani Aho's short story 'Maailman murjoma' (1890) is a tenant farmer living on a forest plot. Only some of the Finnish recluses have the experiences of healing and becoming empowered; a subarctic forest with dark, cold winters and wild beasts may not be as benevolent a milieu as an island in a tropical climate.

In *Korpisoturi*, Ahma chooses inverted quarantine when he purchases the cottage as his site for survival and begins to prepare for a cataclysm. Despite his efforts to block other people from entering the property, several people trespass for different reasons and he reluctantly communicates with them. Adapting to the new environment takes some time and Ahma is not at all as self-sufficient as he wishes to be as he needs to buy food, wood and appliances and must ask for help with some minor renovations. The portrayal of his self-proclaimed reclusiveness is not serious but presented as rather comical. The three phases constituting the typical experience of inverted Crusoeism do not characterise his story in any clear way, unless the two last are seen to take place at the very end of the novel, when a fellow survivalist, a young woman named Lynx comes to save his life. The arrival of Lynx marks the end of Ahma's secluded life and he seems to join the ranks of reclusive male characters of the Finnish *kansankuvaus* tradition that live with a family but treat others with suspicion.

At the end of the novel, Ahma is portrayed as beginning a family with Lynx, who saved him from starving to death and agreed to live with him on his property. The

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description has idyllic features but the novel does not fully believe in the anarchist, anticultural 'new Eden' that the two survivalists create. The ending can be interpreted in the context of post-apocalyptic fiction in that it portrays survivors of a cataclysm founding humankind anew (see Isomaa 2022).

However, the *kansankuvaus* tradition is also present in the appreciative depiction of the characters. Kai Laitinen (1984, 15–16) has claimed that the *kansankuvaus* tradition of Finnish fiction portrays common characters appreciatively from their level and with empathy. The narrator does not evaluate the characters but perceives the world through their eyes and allows readers to draw their own conclusions. However, this does not prevent the characters from also being portrayed in a critical light, sometimes even comically. However, the tradition still abstains from portraying common people as comical clowns or primitives that are paraded in a novel for local colour or for comical effect. Laitinen sees this emphasis on human dignity as resembling that of the classical Russian novels and suggests that the Finnish novel has from the very beginning been strongly and devotedly democratic with a narrator that almost whispers to the reader: "it could be you" (Laitinen 1984). *Korpisoturi* also continues the Finnish tradition of *kansankuvaus* in this respect. Despite the comical aspects and the critical framing of Ahma's story, the narrator is still somehow empathetic towards him and sees his dignity as a person.

Eco-anxiety as a Psychological Response to Climate Change in Lupaus

The protagonist of Emma Puikkonen's *Lupaus* (=*L*), a single mother named Rinna, also engages in survivalist action in an effort to regulate her negative emotions: she builds an underground bunker in her yard to prepare for possible future catastrophes. Living in a country house in Eastern Finland in the first decades of the 2000s, Rinna suffers from negative emotions that the declining environmental conditions, most importantly climate change, evoke in her. An underlying factor for her distress is the lack of an adequate social safety net. However, Rinna's survivalist preparation is a response not only to imagined or mediated future risks but also her daughter Seela's health issues as she falls ill with tick-borne encephalitis, or TBE, that has spread to their home area because of global warming. Nevertheless, *Lupaus* gives a literary expression to a much-discussed new form of ecoanxiety, namely climate anxiety. As a literary work, the novel brings together realism and speculative fiction by letting the characters reminisce about a recognizable Finland of recent decades while also imagining a dystopian world of the late 2020s that is characterised by political unrest and environmental change.

Certain aspects of Rinna's state of mind become understandable when read against Ford's (2020) analysis of the emotions typical of a risk society. For instance, her survivalist preparation for a future cataclysm can be read as an attempt to manage the difficult emotions triggered in a risk society that is overly conscious of what could go wrong in the world in the future. Rinna's underground shelter is her version of risk management. However, some of her psychological dilemmas have been discussed in climate psychology that focuses on examining the effects of climate change on the human psyche. Climate anxiety (or climate change anxiety) is often considered as synonymous with eco-anxiety, that has been described as "heightened

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emotional, mental or somatic distress in response to dangerous changes in the climate system" (Climate Psychology Alliance 2022, 22). Also Ahma's emotional landscape in *Korpisoturi* encompasses the fundamental aspect of eco-anxiety, namely "a chronic fear of environmental doom" (Climate Psychology Alliance 2022, 22). Whereas Ahma does not worry much about climate change but ponders other environmental issues such as the problematic policies of mass-market food production, Rinna suffers a psychological reaction to global climate change that also concretely affects her everyday life. It can be called solastalgia in the broad meaning of the term. The concept of solastalgia was coined by Glenn A Albrecht in 2003 to refer to the complex human emotion that people experienced in circumstances where a beloved home environment was changed and distressed. In later studies, the concept has been broadened to refer more to the lived experience of negative environmental change (Albrecht 2020, 10–14).

In addition to solastalgia (as environmental grief), Rinna also suffers from a gendered version of 'global dread'. Global dread is defined by Albrecht (2019, 199) as "the anticipation of an apocalyptic future state of the world that produces a mixture of terror and sadness in the sufferer for those who will exist in such a state". Rinna's dread is related to her motherhood as it is triggered by the thought that her daughter Seela will have to face the future world without her, since Rinna is likely to die before her daughter. We suggest that Rinna's version of the emotion could be referred to as 'mother's dread' or 'parental dread'. Rinna also has other personal worries that intensify and contribute to her mental breakdown but her fear of the consequences of global warming is foregrounded in the story.

Whereas *Korpisoturi* portrays the emotions of a young man who looks forward to a future cataclysm, *Lupaus* imagines the mindset of a single mother whose sense of security is severely shaken by the environmental and social consequences of global warming. The impact of motherhood on Rinna's emotions and mental health issues is emphasised in *Lupaus* and in this sense the novel offers a gendered portrayal of climate anxiety. Motherhood is one of the traditional frames for portraying female characters in Finnish fiction and *Lupaus* adds a new layer to the treatment of motherhood by imagining how a mother reacts to climate change and what her survivalist preparation is like.

A central turning point in Rinna's mental health is Seela's TBE infection. Rinna and six-year-old Seela live together in Rinna's childhood home, an idyllic countryside house situated by a lake and surrounded by a garden. The environment has changed so much in the past few decades that Seela contracts tick-borne encephalitis, or TBE, when playing outside. There were no ticks in the area in Rinna's childhood and she and her brother Robert were safe even when playing naked in the woods (*L*, 50–51). Seela belongs to a later generation whose living conditions have worsened considerably. Ticks are spreading to new environments due to climate change and there are more of them every year: Rinna finds them crawling in her hands in the evening and wakes up at night to find one in her navel (*L*, 57). The ticks have invaded not only Rinna's garden but also her body and house and made the environment unsafe, as they are carriers of severe diseases such as TBE and borreliosis. It is difficult to protect oneself against ticks, because they are almost everywhere and difficult to spot due to their small size. Like melting glaciers, the ticks function as a motif and a metaphor for environmental change and the more dangerous environment it creates. The ticks suck

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blood and contaminate it, which makes the insect a suitable metaphor for the vitality-reducing effects of climate change. The spreading of ticks is an unwelcome change in the home environment, making the insect one of the sources of solastalgia. The tick bite is for Rinna a similar turning point as the negative experiences in the building company are for Ahma: their trust is severely shaken.

Having lived in the same house since childhood, Rinna is also able to note other changes that are taking place in the surrounding environment: the lake becomes more eutrophic and malodorous every year, the number of mosquitos increases, catkins appear at the wrong time of the year and white hares are easily spotted in the winter since there is no snow to camouflage their white fur (*L*, 59). Each of the changes is a potential trigger of solastalgia. The surroundings of the idyllic childhood home are changing and a child is no longer safe from serious infections in the garden. The changes in weather conditions are also worrisome for Rinna, hinting at the category of meteoranxiety or anxiety triggered by the threat of "increasing frequency and severity of extreme weather" (Albrecht 2017, 293). Similar negative changes are occurring world-wide in the form of a mass distinction of species and Rinna is painfully aware of them. She feels anxious when Seela asks her about the mass extinction of species and hopes that she forgets about it soon. Letting her child find out the truth about the world is difficult for Rinna and she tries to protect her from it to an unhealthy degree and eventually falls ill herself.

Seela's TBE leads to Rinna's anxiety and unhealthy emotion management and coping habits. Seela falls severely ill after the tick bite, spends three weeks in the hospital and only gains full mobility several weeks later. Despite promises, Seela's father Leo does not come to support them in the hospital, Rinna's brother Robert is abroad and Rinna's father is in a care home. During the winter following Seela's TBE infection, Rinna feels that her life splits in two, as if it consisted of two transparent layers of fabric. She acts like she is leading a rather happy, normal everyday life but at the same time she is terrified inside, the terrible side of the world appearing to her in nightmares and insomnia. She lives in a dual reality against her will. (*L*, 115–116.) After reading a newspaper article in which researchers warn about a dystopian future, she loses her ability to keep the two sides of her perception of the world separate. She feels that she can finally think clearly, without deceiving herself and intense grief and a feeling of powerlessness overcome her. She cannot bear the thought that one day she must tell the truth about the environmental condition to Seela. In this anxious state of mind, she decides to build an underground bunker. (*L*, 188–121.)

Rinna finally acknowledges that nature is being destroyed and it leads her to experience grief that is caused by losses in the natural world. Douglas Burton-Christie (2011, 29) has noted that environmental grief is nowadays a common part of personal and collective emotional landscapes. Rinna's grief is anticipatory mourning in that it occurs before the loss (see Braun 2017, 83). According to Sebastian F Braun (2017, 84), the grief over the loss of our environment (Albrecht's solastalgia) is also mourning the loss of the human species. The emotions overcome Rinna and her decision to build an underground bunker can be seen as an attempt to regulate the difficult emotions. In Ford's (2020, 126) analysis, self-sufficiency practices serve as emotion management strategies and the underground shelter with its emergency food storage and gas filters is Rinna's attempt to be self-sufficient in case of a cataclysm. Having been unable

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to get social support from others previously, an effort to survive on her own is an understandable choice.

Rinna's underground shelter can be perceived as a form of inverted quarantine. Building the bunker is not simple for Rinna, because as Ahma before his inheritance, she does not have the required funds to purchase the expensive bunker. She asks for money from her father but also empties Seela's bank account, which is a morally questionable act that Rinna justifies by thinking that she is building the shelter for Seela's benefit (*L*, 156). The shelter complicates the close relationship between Rinna and her brother Robert, because Rinna fells Robert's dear climbing tree and erases the tomb of their childhood cat, as well as their mother's old vegetable patch without telling him beforehand. Robert considers Rinna's building project as lunacy and feels that Rinna has ruined his childhood and made him both homeless and sisterless (*L*, 156–161). Rinna's survivalist preparations have altered their childhood home irreparably and it triggers deep solastalgia in Robert in the narrow sense: losing one's beloved home environment rather than the larger collective environment. Robert sees Rinna's actions from a different perspective: he cannot see a need for an underground bunker and considers her choice to destroy the most beautiful features of the property as crazy. He cannot fully understand why he takes the destruction so hard but his reaction shows what strong emotional ties people have to their surroundings and that losing them can cause intense grief. Robert finds it hard to forgive Rinna but they manage to start rebuilding their relationship in one phone call before Robert vanishes on a trip to Greenland. Robert's disappearance is another blow for Rinna's well-being. She loses an important person that helped her maintain Seela's sense of security.

Even though Rinna spends time in the shelter and also makes Seela live there when her level of anxiety increases, the shelter is never used for its original purpose. It is useless, serving only as an emotional comfort for the emotionally unstable and insecure Rinna. The novel is critical towards the security business that profits from people's anxieties and insecurities. Rinna's decision to buy the underground shelter saves the young female entrepreneur Tuuli who started the shelter business after being made redundant as a letter carrier. Tuuli has recently bought a beautiful flat with her husband Petri and is desperate to make her business idea work. Rinna is her first client and Tuuli manages to create enough publicity for her business by bringing social media influencers to the building site, that people start buying underground bunkers for themselves. Rinna's distress and Seela's innocence are brutally used for business purposes and one of the social media influencers even shows Rinna's touching speech about her love for her child in his YouTube video, editing it and adding pictures of zombies and severed heads to it (*L*, 190–192). After seeing the video and the blogs, many families decide to also have a 'plan B'. Soon Tuuli sells tens of bomb shelters each month, becoming a wealthy, privileged person and finally even a media celebrity that makes light entertainment out of real fears and mental health issues, warning people also of zombies and farting husbands (*L*, 191–193, 265).

Fear proves to be a good business but later Rinna feels that by carving the shelter in the ground she also carved fear inside her: it weakened her mental health. The disappearance of Robert in Greenland pushes Rinna deeper into mental health problems: she begins to have delusional or paranoid ideas of how her smallest actions, like taking too long strides when walking, might cause Robert's or her own demise (*L*,

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230). She sits in the shelter in the darkness and loses her sense of time. It comforts her, because she feels that in the shelter, she is an outsider to everything that takes place in the world, such as search parties looking for Robert. However, it is obvious that the coping mechanism is not healthy but prevents her from dealing with the emotion of loss. The underground space of the shelter is like a grave that enables Rinna to be emotionally dead to the unbearable truths and facts concerning her reality and the world at large. Rinna needs to be numb and descends to the grave-like shelter where she can pretend that the world has stopped and nothing is happening:

> In the shelter I am separated from everything that is happening.
>
> There is no glacier, no search party, no camp where Seela is running in circles while playing dodgeball, no climate change and statistics about how the new climate affects the crop. There is only darkness. The ground around gives the auditory impression that something is moving and rustling silently.
>
> I sit all day in the dark, there are no moments of time, nothing is happening outside, nothing is happening.
>
> Suojassa olen syrjässä kaikesta mitä tapahtuu.
>
> Ei ole olemassa jäätikköä, ei etsintäpartiota, ei leiriä, jolla Seela juoksee ympyrää pelatessaan polttopalloa, ei muuttuvaa ilmastoa ja tilastoja siitä, miten uusi sää vaikuttaa satoon. On vain pimeys. Maa ympärillä kuulosta siltä kuin liikkuisi ja rapisisi hiljaa.
>
> Istun koko päivän pimeässä, kellonaikoja ei ole, ulkopuolella ei tapahdu mitään, mitään ei tapahdu. (L, 230–231, transl. S. I.)

The shelter offers a way to escape actual reality instead of facing the overwhelming emotions related to Robert's disappearance (*L*, 230–231). Rinna's unhealthy emotional responses and coping mechanisms include avoidance, escape and emotional paralysis in the silence of the shelter.

Rinna's final mental breakdown takes place during her shopping trip to a new mall some time after Robert's body is found. For Rinna, all the stimuli at the mall, fortified by her new mal-functioning hi-tech eye lenses, are too much to process and manage. Her distress grows when the sellers cannot answer her detailed, ecologically super-aware questions about the origins and manufacturing processes of the products. Suddenly, people around Rinna do not have facial features but only skin that is tightened around their skulls, making them resemble worms. Rinna tries to run away but cannot. She hallucinates, bangs her head on advertising kiosks and eats products in three shops before she is captured. Her last thoughts concern her preoccupation with saving her daughter and being saved herself, as well as the idea of promises that should be kept.

Rinna's behaviour can be perceived as a psychotic episode in which she loses touch with reality and acts irrationally. The setting of the episode, the new mall, is fitting, because the consumerist paradise lacking ecological awareness reveals that little has changed in the way people live, driving the fragile Rinna to lose touch with reality. Her hallucination of people having worm-like faces can be read as communicating her negative view of the weak powers of individuals and her inability to connect to other people as unique individuals. Additionally, the worm might also be a reference to what people are like or become when they live in an underground shelter: they lose

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their humanity and resemble worms. Rinna's perception of worms around her instead of human faces communicates her twisted mindset.

Rinna is taken to a hospital, where she is still delusional as different ideas cross her mind. She is revealed to have read about survivalism and thinking that one should not reveal to anyone about preparing to avoid people coming to ask for help when the cataclysm takes place. She imagines hearing her father's voice, asking whether such a life is worth living (*L*, 272). Worst of all, Rinna cannot see anyone's faces, only worm-like heads. She is first hospitalised for two weeks and then accepted to nature therapy that consists of taking care of a vegetable patch. Rinna begins to feel better and she also takes part in an experiential form of therapy in which the participants plant trees in a forest. Despite environmental destruction, nature still exists and can be taken care of. Most of the participants are mothers. The anxious mothers nurture nature as an essential part of their therapy, serving as a metaphor of how nature should be treated.

Rinna's future is left open. At the end of the novel, Seela, who has been doing fine in foster care comes to visit and for the first time since her psychotic episode Rinna sees a person with a face. During the visit, Rinna also seems to find a new way to react to the dystopian reality around her, because she thinks that despite the amount of carbon dioxide increasing and its inevitable consequences, she can still be just where she is, breathing, watching, and seeing what is happening. She even thinks about a fairy-tale in which Seela's future grandchildren play outside and she has turned into a tree; Seela also turns into a tree after her death and comes to tell her what happened to humankind. The novel ends with the remark that Seela has tears in her eyes and her hand is warm. The ending suggests that Rinna finds a way to accept the inconvenient truth of the negative changes taking place in nature without becoming anxious, which could be read as a signal of the successfulness of the therapy. References to Seela's happy grandchildren also communicate a belief in a relatively happy future. Seela's tears are more ambiguous, as tears are not tied with a particular feeling but can occur with both positive and negative emotions.

Emotional Detachment as Coping in Memory of Water

In *Lupaus,* Emma Puikkonen uses the culturally powerful image of melting glaciers to convey contemporary fears about futures transformed by climate change. Emmi Itäranta's climate fiction novel *Memory of Water* (=*MW*) imagines one transformed future. The glaciers are present as phantoms, in redrawn coastlines and bare, arid mountain tops. Itäranta imagines the inevitable result of runaway climate change: an Arctic without ice and snow. The novel also presents a main character who, as a means of coping, responds to environmental and social hardships with emotional detachment. Such detachment is developed through contemplative practices that also serve to highlight the uncontrollable aspects of environmental processes and water circulation in particular.

The events of the novel are situated in a rural village somewhere in the Scandinavian Union, north of the city of Kuusamo. The frame of the narrative does not give specific dates but projects its speculative fantasy some hundreds of years in the future, after an unspecified environmental cataclysm and the 'Twilight Century' that followed. Both the environment and society have been transformed: the most significant features of

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the storyworld are a temperate climate, a scarcity of water and a totalitarian control of all resources, ruled by the remote but powerful New Qian empire.

Throughout *Memory of Water*, bodily experiences and affect are articulated through the metaphoric field of water. A combination of environmental catastrophes and military control over essential resources has led to a severe scarcity of fresh water: as aquifers, springs and rivers have dried up, the population subsists on purified sea water and occasional rain, though all water use is heavily regulated by the corrupt rulers. Itäranta's worldbuilding details drought-related features in the story world, such as the meshed hoods that people use to protect their faces from swarms of biting insects and drought-resistant staple crops: amaranth, sunflower and millet. In the tea master's privileged garden, one also finds tea bushes, gooseberry and a variety of root crops. These elements circumscribe the material and political reality of water in the storyworld, which is in stark contrast with the present reality of Finnish politics and ecosystems. Currently, Finland is known for its rich freshwater reservoirs and is routinely dubbed 'the Land of a Thousand Lakes'. In the Finnish context, regions north of Kuusamo are especially known for heavy snowfall and cold winters. The flora of the region is subarctic, with a growing season of less than four months. Politically, Finland is a democratic state with a low tolerance for open institutional violence.

In *Memory of Water*, water gains a spiritual aspect that also serves to estrange the expectations of contemporary Finnish readers. Water is used in tea ceremonies that resemble the traditional Japanese ceremonies. Such traditions are not common to contemporary Finnish culture and tea is culturally far less prominent than coffee. The traditional philosophy and practice of Itäranta's tea masters reveres water as the essential element of life and the tea masters use it in quantities that would be luxurious for the common citizens of the storyworld. The novel's focalizing narrator is Noria Kaitio, the daughter and successor of the village tea master. The formal tea ceremony is repeated several times in the course of the novel as the passages serve as structural elements that mark turning points in the narrative. The passages also form the philosophical core of the novel, as they provide a detached and contemplative frame to the social and personal dramas in the plot.

In the ethical code of the tea masters, water is respected on its own terms. It is believed to have agency and to be able to remember all the events of the world. On the day of Noria's graduation as a tea master, her father shows her the *fjell* spring that their family has kept hidden from the world for generations and which also provides water for the family household. After passing on the guardianship of the spring, Noria's father gives her this lesson:

> Water understands the movements of the world, it knows when it is sought and where it is needed. Sometimes a spring or a well escapes of its own will, withdrawing into the cover of the earth to look for another channel. Tea masters believe there are times when water doesn't wish to be found because it knows it will be chained in ways that are against its nature. Therefore the drying of a spring may have its own purpose that must not be fought. Not everything in the world belongs to people. Tea and water do not belong to tea masters, but tea masters belong to tea and water. We are the watchers of water, but first and foremost we are its servants. (*MW*, 91)

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The idea that springs dry out for a reason challenges the image of humans as masters and rulers of nature: "Not everything in the world belongs to people". When it comes to water, the right thing to do is to accept its passage. The central ethical dilemma of the narrative is whether to adhere to this traditional code of conduct, when secretly using the spring gives Noria a remarkable privilege over the other villagers who struggle to find sufficient water for bare survival and when sharing the spring would diminish their suffering. After a string of civil protests against the rule of the empire, military officials punish the villagers by dealing out water only in minimal rations. Seeing the villagers suffering for lack of water, Noria eventually shares her wealth with them at the fatal price of being discovered, confined and starved to death by the military officials. The secret spring eventually becomes the property of the military.

The ethical dilemma draws the young tea master to an affective and introspective process. When considering her role as a keeper of tea master traditions, for example, she articulates her participation in the tradition in terms of material processes and bodily habits: the "echoes of tea masters that had come before" in her body, the iteration of their words and movements and the handling of the same water. She perceives this "curious feeling" of iteration as both supportive and confining (*MW,* 94–95).

In such articulations of bodily feeling, Noria's agency appears as permeated by two other agencies: tradition and water. At times, these agencies are in conflict: tradition dictates that the spring should be kept hidden, under the guardianship and control of the tea master, while the nature of water itself would be to run free. This conflict also underlines the corruption of the tea master traditions; while the ethics of Noria's father considers tea masters primarily as servants of the water, most contemporary tea masters in the novel's world draw on their privileged access to water as a means of accumulating personal wealth. Corruption also tempts Noria as in her thoughts and words, she often slips into thinking of the spring water as her personal possession.

Throughout the novel, affects are articulated as forces that flow inside and pass through the body, often literally as water, or sometimes air: "I thought of the silence of the earth, but air and water flowed under my skin still, and I had to make use of the brief daylight hours while they lasted" (*MW,* 114); "I can feel water wanting to leave me" (*MW,* 222); "Breath passed in me hastily, raggedly" (*MW,* 225); "My breathing sang, stuck in my tense throat" (*MW,* 226). Sometimes the flow is expressed only through verbs or references to the movements of blood or other bodily flows: "An unexpected shudder ran through me" (*MW,* 120); "Blood rushed to my face" (*MW,* 132): "Blood weighed in my feet" (*MW,* 226). Keeping a secret is likened to water that churns in underground passages, eroding the rock until it finds a way to the light (*MW,* 161, 167, 184). In moments of crisis, Noria stops to listen to her own breath and the flow of blood in her veins (*MW,* 223, 226).

Such articulations can be interpreted as a marker of the tea master's Zen-inspired worldview: what matters most is not the individual mind but the ceaseless circulation of non-personal elements and energies. They also challenge the model of ego-centred control of resources exemplified by the corrupt tea masters and military officials: the individual appears as a site of affect, life and water, not as the master or owner of them. Eventually, following the way of the water leads Noria to her death, which is conceptualized in terms of water exiting the body, leaving behind only dust.

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In contrast to Gustafsson's *Korpisoturi* or Puikkonen's *Lupaus* analysed above, *Memory of Water* offers a contemplative view of societal and environmental collapse. In doing so, it challenges the individualist tendencies of self-sufficiency practitioners, as discussed by Ford (2021). Rather, it resonates with the writings of certain influential collapse thinkers, such as Carolyn Baker, who have stressed the importance of introspective work when preparing for and encountering collapse.

Baker, in her book *Sacred Demise: Walking the Spiritual Path of Industrial Civilization's Collapse* (2009), argues that collapse will lead most citizens of industrialized countries to experience the collapse of their egos, in one way or another. This is simply due to the transformation of their habitual ways of life; thus, their identities as "professional person[s] with money in the bank" or "solid citizens" (2009, 62–63) will be transformed. Drawing on Jungian psychoanalysis, she explains the persistent denial of collapse through the cultural base myth of heroism combined with American exceptionalism, that is, the self-understanding of Americans as a 'chosen people' that will always triumph in the end. For Baker (2009, 44), heroism is a fundamental aspect of the American ethos; to be defeated in any way "implies a deficiency of character". However, admitting defeat is an essential step on Baker's spiritual path of collapse:

> [I]t is precisely our willingness to encounter defeat, despair, hopelessness, powerlessness, loss, and other so-called 'negative' emotions which could paradoxically offer 'salvation' – not salvation *from* collapse, but salvation *from continuing to deny that collapse is happening all around us* – and salvation from the toxic legacy of empire. (Baker 2009, 46, emphases original)

It could be argued that such heroism is characteristic not only of the American mind but also of the ethos of imperialism more generally. Empires are built on the expansion of frontiers or a continued succession of successful conquests. By imperial standards, Itäranta's Noria is no hero: not only does she tread on murky ethical ground in keeping her secrets but remains rather passive throughout the story. Despite relieving the suffering of the villagers for a short moment before her solitary confinement and death, her actions do not challenge any enemy. Indeed, judged by the end result of her death and the loss of the spring, those actions might be considered foolish and definitely a defeat.

However, Noria is a martyr for a cause greater than herself: the preservation of truthful history. In exploring the archives of her tea master elders, she finds a hidden log that details the findings of a long-vanished expedition troupe. The recordings point to the possible existence of a source of fresh water in Northern Scandinavia. Noria and her friend Sanja listen to the recordings and transcribe them for posterity; they even prepare for a Scandinavia-bound expedition of their own. While their travel preparations come to a tragic halt that separates the friends, they succeed in preserving the historical and scientific data. In the resolution of the plot, this fact is presented as a source of hope for the future. Simultaneously, the resolution does not encourage readers to imagine freedom from the oppressive imperium of Qian – not in the near future, at least.

Thus, the dominant structure of feeling in the novel remains within the realm of detachment and defeat. It presents life in a climate-changed world in terms of

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the strict confines of drought and oppression, in which the emotions and actions of individuals need to be kept in check and, in Noria's case, compartmentalized through contemplative practices. For a novel mostly interpreted as young adult literature, such complexity of affect is both subtle and remarkable.

Solastalgia and Eco-nostalgia in the Arctic

Maa joka ei koskaan sula (=*MJEKS*) by Inkeri Markkula portrays environmental emotions by depicting the life story of Unni, a Finnish female glaciologist who studies the Penny Icecap in Nunavut, Canada. However, the novel differs from the other novels analysed in this chapter in that it also discusses the historical treatment of the indigenous peoples of the North and portrays the psychological consequences of the assimilation politics of the latter half of the twentieth century, that traumatised several generations of Sámi and Inuit people in Eurasia and North America. As such, the novel touches upon phenomena that were in the early 1900s discussed in the frame of Arctic hysteria but offers a very different analysis of them. The title of the novel is a translation of the name Auyuittuq, referring to the area where the Penny Icecap is situated. The name of the area is no longer accurate in a globally warming and melting world and it makes visible the negative environmental change that is taking place in the fictive world. However, the melting of ice seems to serve also as a metaphor for traumatised characters that begin to recover from their trauma, which is a positive change. Creation of parallels and metaphors is a part of the novel's poetics.

The novel is psychological in its focus on the emotions, thoughts and motivations of the characters; it is also evident in the careful depiction of Unni's childhood experiences, which have been split between two places and realities, Lapland and Southern Finland. Unni was born to a Sámi father and a Finnish mother who lived somewhere in the Kaldoaivi area in northmost Finland but her parents divorced in her childhood and her mother moved with Unni to a little town by the sea in Southern Finland, which made her life miserable. Unni was bullied cruelly at school but luckily, she was able to spend very happy summers with her father in Lapland before her run-away trip to the north in the winter resulted in her losing two fingers and being denied meeting her father. Before the unlucky incident, her father gifted her a fawn that she named Martti after the Finnish name of the wild goose in Selma Lagerlöf's children's novel *Nils Holgerssons underbara resa genom Sverige* (1906–1907, transl. *The Wonderful Adventures of Nils*). Nils Holgersson travels to Lapland with Martti and wild geese and Unni also feels that she is part of two worlds: she constantly misses Lapland, which is her beloved home of freedom and nature and tries to wash the traces of her life in the south from her skin.

The novel gives Unni's traumatic childhood and feelings of not belonging more generality by creating a thematic parallel between the historical assimilation of the Sámi people and what Unni's mother did to Unni by separating her from her home in Lapland against her and her father's will. Even as an adult living in Helsinki, Unni feels that her real home is in the north; that is her place of origin. However, as a glaciologist Unni knows and perceives that the Arctic area is rapidly changing due to global climate change, which produces solastalgia and eco-nostalgia in her. Unni's deep connection to her childhood home in the Arctic and her experiences of losing

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it first due to social factors and then due to environmental change become central topics of the novel; her individual fate echoes the historical experiences of the Sámi and other indigenous people more generally.

Internationally, the novel can be compared to a renowned Danish novel, *Frøken Smillas fornemmelse for sne* (1992, transl. *Smilla's Sense of Snow* 1993) by Peter Høeg: it touches upon several similar themes and the narrators are alike. Høeg's novel is centred on the assumed murder of a small boy, Esajas, whose parents are members of the Greenland Inuit tribe. The narrator is his neighbour, a 37-year-old glacier specialist Smilla, whose mother was a Greenland's Inuit and father a Danish millionaire. Like Unni, Smilla has also been forced to move away from her northern homeland as a child and made to live in a southern city, learning the Danish culture and forgetting parts of the Inuit culture. Both Smilla and Unni feel distanced from the southern culture, missing the Northern habitat and constantly compare the two cultures. They perceive the dominant culture (Smilla's Danish and Unni's Finnish) from mostly an 'outsider's' perspective – that of Inuit and Sámi – and their narration also includes words from their native languages. Snow and ice are constantly mentioned and sometimes anthropomorphised in their discourses. Both characters are critical of colonialist history and exploitation and live close to nature: Smilla has a special sense of snow and Unni feels a close connection with glaciers. Despite the differences of genre, both novels focus on the tensional history and present between the minority and majority cultures of the depicted countries and imagine the North from the perspective of characters who live between two cultures.

Unni's feeling of eco-nostalgia is expressed in her depiction of her visit to a *palsa*, a bog characterised by permafrost mounds, near her childhood home. Unni tells her assistant Isaac that as a child, she used to pick cloudberries in the *palsa* area and knew it very well; the mounds serve as landmarks for her. When she visits the area as an adult fifteen years later, she first thinks that she has become lost because the scenery is very different. Then she realises that the permafrost has melted and the mounds have collapsed like animals that have been cut open. She is not sure what to think about it. She had thought that her childhood home would never change but she now realises that only the house will remain as it is while the world around it is melting and twisting into an awkward position (*MJEKS,* 54). Solastalgia differs from eco-nostalgia in that in solastalgia a person has lived experience of the process of change in the home environment, whereas in eco-nostalgia a person returns to a place that has been transformed or changed during an absence by development or climate change; thus, the changes trigger melancholia (see Albrecht 2011, 54). Previously, when living in Helsinki, Unni always missed the coldness of the north and the sensory perceptions, sounds and colours typical of sub-zero temperatures along with everything else that can be perceived and experienced in the north (*MJEKS*, 55). These qualities or characteristics were the object of her homesickness. However, as the characteristics of the environment are changing as a consequence of climate change, what will happen to Unni's emotion? Will it persist? The changes occurring in her home environment are emotionally difficult for her. The memory of her childhood home in the North was a source of happiness for her in her miserable childhood years in southern Finland but the consequences of climate change are now emotionally confusing for her. The world seems to be changing irreparably and it creates an identity problem for a person who is emotionally attached to an environment that was experienced earlier in life.

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Unni also expresses her environmental worry and grief in discussions with other people. For instance, when justifying her need to travel back to Canada for her thesis supervisor, she compares the changes occurring in her childhood environment to an uninvited guest spoiling a painting of it with the wrong colours. Environmental change is not just an object of research for her but also something personal; she wants to personally document the change (*MJEKS*, 248). The adjective 'wrong' is repeated in her depiction of the change. The reason for her not moving back to live near her childhood home is that she does not want to study the environmental changes of her home area as they feel too personal to her and there is little else to do for work in the area (*MJEKS*, 56–57). For Unni, studying glaciers abroad is emotionally easier. When talking to her future boyfriend Jon for the first time, she motivates her choice of researching the disappearing glaciers by wanting to gather the knowledge of history they carry in their layers (*MJEKS*, 19). There is obviously also an aesthetic aspect motivating her research on the glaciers: as an adult, she perceives the glaciers almost as living beings that sing about the northern countries with cold winds and long winters, as well about the rhythm of the sun and melting waters inside the glaciers (*MJEKS*, 43, 56–57). Furthermore, Unni feels empathy for the Penny glacier and thinks that neither of them have ever been on the winning team (*MJEKS*, 258).

In addition to contemplative environmental emotions such as the different forms of longing or nostalgia, fear is also discussed in the novel. Unni's assistant Isaac confesses that in recent years, he has begun to feel fear when walking on the glaciers. The rapidly changing ice has become alien to him and he gives a metaphorical description of his experience by comparing it to alexia, an experience of losing one's ability to read. Isaac feels that he is suffering from an 'environmental alexia', an inability to 'read' the environment:

> 'I have walked on the glaciers since I was a child', Isaac continues. 'Here in Penny and over there on the sea ice. But I have begun to feel fear only in the past few years'.
>
> 'Fear of what?'
>
> 'Crevasses, melts, currents. Anything suddenly appearing, that I cannot foresee. One should relearn to know the ice. But it takes time. Maybe the feeling is a little like having to relearn to read. The letters are the same, but you don't know them anymore'.

> "Olen kulkenut jäällä lapsesta asti", Isaac jatkaa. "Täällä Pennyllä ja tuolla merijäällä. Mutta vasta viime vuosina olen alkanut pelätä".
>
> "Pelätä mitä?"
>
> "Railoja, sulapaikkoja, virtauksia. Kaikkea mikä tulee eteen yhtäkkiä ilman että osaan ennakoida. Pitäisi oppia tuntemaan jää uudelleen. Mutta ei sellainen tapahdu hetkessä. Ehkä se tunne on vähän sama kuin jos sinun pitäisi nyt yhtäkkiä opetella lukemaan uudestaan. Kirjaimet olisivat samat, mutta et osaisi niitä enää." (*MJEKS*, 53–54, transl. S. I.)

Despite her traumatic childhood experiences, Unni knows her parents and has retained a connection to her childhood home and Sámi roots; she even actively studies the history of the Sámi. The man with whom Unni falls in love, Jon, is not as lucky. Unni meets Jon at the Penny glacier and they become lovers only to depart over a week later when Unni has to travel back home from Canada. Jon does not reveal his life story to Unni but his backstory is revealed to the reader by an external narrator

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that gives glimpses of his life before he travels from Denmark to Canada to meet his biological father. Jon was adopted as a baby and he feels rootless because he does not know his biological parents and background. When working as a paramedic, he constantly meets people who are sorry when they are not able to say farewell to their close relatives killed in accidents. In contrast, Jon was not given an opportunity to even know who his biological parents were, leading him to wonder whether some of the strangers he meets as a paramedic could be his biological relatives.

To emphasise a person's right to a biological family and connection to the place of origin, the novel seems to suggest that a baby learns to know the environment and the people around him even before birth. This idea is developed in the portrayal of the pregnancy of Jon's mother Alasie and in Jon's curious reactions to the environment in Auyuittuq where his mother lived while pregnant. As an adult visiting the place for the first time, Jon feels that he has visited certain places there before. Furthermore, as a newborn baby, he rejects the adoptive mother as if he recognised that she is not the person who carried him under her heart before. The early experiences seem to have affected Jon: he remembers having carried a deep sorrow in him since childhood and he uses that feeling to explain his overuse of alcohol. Ethnic stereotypes also bother him. He suffers from people treating him as an ethnic Other due to his dark appearance and they ask about his ethnicity, projecting stereotypical beliefs about his nature; sometimes they want him to give an opinion on some political question as a representative of his ethnicity. His ethnic looks have also aroused the interest of women and some people have envied him because he is indigenous but Jon feels it disconcerting that people emphasise his looks so much in their appraisal of who he is, especially when he himself considers his appearance as irrelevant in that context (*MJEKS*, 83–95). In the thematic composition of the novel, the issues of Jon deepen the theme of belonging to a place and to a family, as well as the question of the treatment of indigenous people in Western societies.

The shocking fact about Jon's background is revealed little by little in the novel: he was stolen from his married Inuit parents by Canadian authorities when he was born in a hospital in 1970 via C-section. The hospital staff lied to his mother and told her that the baby had died at birth. In reality, he was given for adoption to a childless white couple, Helen and Liam, as the authorities thought that indigenous people were incapable of bringing up good citizens. In Jon's story, the novel lays bare the history of racist assimilation politics of Canada, especially the so-called Sixties scoop spanning from the 1960s to the 1980s during which child welfare authorities took children from their indigenous parents without consent and placed them for adoption to white families. To emphasise the historical context, a short description of the Sixties scoop is included in the printed edition of the novel as part of the end matter, along with a list of historical resources that the author used to create the fictional story.

Research is a theme in the novel as well, as Jon's adoptive mother Helen began to research Jon's background already in the 1980s and she uses the concept of genocide to make sense of the real nature of the Sixties scoop. According to the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court (an international treaty that establishes core international crimes) that is referred to in the novel, genocide can take the form of forcibly transferring children out of one group to another group (*MJEKS*, 159, 292). In Helen's eyes, Jon's fate is to be understood in that conceptual context: he and his parents are victims of genocide. Having studied history, Helen also knows of

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racist science that has historically appraised the indigenous peoples of the North as "immoral, retarded, stunted and large-skulled, the kind that could, in the context of menagerie, be mistaken as representing a missing link between the humans and the apes" (*MJEKS*, 154, transl. S. I.).[251]

In a sense, Jon and Unni share similar disturbances from their childhood that are also manifest in their adult lives. Unni also studies the history of indigenous people and she finds similar sources as Helen had found that affect her interpretation of her father's life. Despite its fictionality, the novel relies on historical sources and gives a fictional interpretation of the past. The indigenous peoples of the Arctic have suffered from the assimilation politics of the nation states but they also suffer from climate change that transforms their home environment irreparably. The novel makes both visible.

Despite complications, *Maa joka ei koskaan sula* still has a hopeful ending. Unni cannot forget Jon and she tries to find him. Due to lucky coincidences, she ends up in the Danish hospital where Jon is treated for falling from a roof and nearly dying and finds him there after going to offer comfort to a woman, Helen, who is wailing loudly in the hospital corridor. Unni and Jon understand each other in a special way and the novel hints that Jon recovers at least to some degree from his injuries and Unni and Jon end up being together. Helen decides to find and contact Jon's biological mother. The novel ends with a scene in which Helen walks to meet Jon's biological mother Alasie, who is outside her home repairing a window and gives her an envelope that contains two photos of Jon. The wrongs that the institutions of the state have done in history cannot be repaired by individuals. For instance, the marriage between Jon's biological parents ended after they lost their baby 33 years ago and that past cannot be changed yet the characters can still learn the truth of what happened and reveal it to those involved. Thus, some closure can be attained.

In a sense, the novel portrays a quest for truth on two fronts, the history of glaciers and of assimilation politics. The fictional characters are able to gain information of what has happened in both areas via systematic study. For the readers, the novel offers a literary view to the traumatic history of assimilation politics, as well as to the consequences of climate change. The emotions of characters make sense of how the historical events affect human communities and individual lives. By focusing on portraying indigenous minorities, the novel also offers an experiential way of imagining their lives, even if some of the aspects, such as the social meaning of the traditional Sámi coat that Unni's father takes to the attic, are not explicated. The novel imagines the North and the emotions of the fictive characters that range from deep love for the North to solastalgia and to the varied emotions related to assimilation politics.

The novel's discussion of adoption tends to lean on emphasizing the biological rather than the social aspects, which is also understandable considering that the novel portrays cultural genocide in which children are taken from their loving parents without consent and with the help of death and birth certificates fabricated by the

251. "Toista ovat seinän takaa kuullut keskustelut, toista ovat itseään tutkijoiksi kutsuvien miesten kirjoittamat teokset, joissa pohjoisen alkuperäiskansoja kuvattiin moraalittomiksi, jälkeenjääneiksi, kitukasvuisiksi ja suurikalloisiksi, sellaisiksi, joita voisi villieläinnäyttelyyn vietynä kuulla kauan sitten kadonneeksi renkaaksi ihmisen ja apinan välillä."

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state authorities. However, the novel does not portray all racialised people as saintly and others as evil in a tendentious manner but offers a more balanced representation of individuals making moral choices in their lives. Especially Jon's adoptive mother Helen is a central character in uncovering the traumatic history and finding the concealed truth about Jon's birth and adoption.

Maa joka ei koskaan sula is dedicated to the North, *pohjoiselle*. In many ways it focuses on portraying and empathising with the life and history of circumpolar peoples. In contrast to *Korpisoturi* and *Lupaus*, Markkula's novel is not oriented towards imagining possible near futures but rather reappraising the past. As such, it can be considered as part of the twenty-first century Finnish trend of historical novels by mostly female writers that reappraise twentieth-century history from new perspectives and treat collective traumas by offering an experiential view to the events (see and cf., Korhonen 2013, 271). Such works include *Käsky* [Command] (2003) by Leena Lander; *Puhdistus* (2008, transl. *Purge* 2010) and *Kun kyyhkyset katosivat* (2012, transl. *When the Doves Disappeared* 2015) by Sofi Oksanen; *Kätilö* (2011, transl. *The Midwife* 2016) and *Rose on poissa* [Rose is Gone] (2018) by Katja Kettu, and *Margarita* (2020) by Anni Kytömäki. Especially Kettu's *Rose on poissa* can be mentioned here, since the novel focuses on retelling the recent history of native Americans from a critical perspective, also offering literary portrayals of the many kinds of violence native American children experienced in boarding schools. Markkula also depicts the violence that Jon's biological parents experienced as indigenous children in a boarding school. Both Kettu and Markkula make visible the violent treatment, even cultural genocide, of indigenous people in certain Western nation states.

Maa joka ei koskaan sula portrays fictional events that take place between 1962 and 2003. However, climate change began to occur as a theme in Finnish literature mainly after the publication of Risto Isomäki's novel *Sarasvatin hiekkaa* in 2005 and environmental emotions triggered by it have become an object of interest in Finnish novels only in the 2010s; *Lupaus* is possibly the first novel that focused on the psychological consequences of climate change. Markkula's novel may portray past decades but its poetics and themes are typical of its time of publication, 2021.

Conclusion

Hopefully, this analysis has shown that environmental emotions are an important aspect of the 21st-century Finnish novels analysed here. Ecological themes have been a trend in literature of the new millennium and Finnish literature has also begun to imagine future worlds and the experiences of individuals that live in ecologically declining environments. This creates new literary emotions in Finnish literature, most of them negative and in desperate need of emotion management. Nature still offers emotional refuge for some of the characters but some resort to new, posthuman forms of spirituality. Some experience psychotic episodes that could have been perceived as Arctic hysteria by previous generations; in this case, the trigger is not the Northern climate as such but the unpredictably changing local and global climate and environment. What is noteworthy in the analysed novels is that they also pay special attention to how environmental change may affect individuals in different social positions, such as a mother, or a member of an indigenous group.

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Thus, the novels imagine a diversity of possible new environmental emotions and participate in mapping the psychological consequences of negative environmental change. The outdated concept of hysteria is being given an updated eco-psychological interpretation in the novels.

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