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APPROACHING TRAUMA

GUEST EDITORS

TUULIKKI KURKI, TIIU JAAGO, SAIJA KASKINEN, KIRSI LAURÉN & TARJA TANTTU

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CULTURAL ANALYSIS

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Approaching Trauma

Through Laughter, Betrayal, and Othering

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Guest Editors

Tuulikki Kurki, Tiiu Jaago, Saija Kaskinen,
Kirsi Laurén & Tarja Tanttu

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Table of Contents

Tuulikki Kurki, Tiiu Jaago, Saija Kaskinen, Kirsi Laurén & Tarja Tanttu
Introduction: Approaching Trauma Through Laughter, Betrayal, and Othering.. 1

Liisi Laineste
Laughing Through Tears: Online Reactions to Trauma-related Humor in Estonia..7

Saija Kaskinen
The Story of Migration and Betrayal: Finnish-Americans Coming Down with Karelian Fever..25

Tarja Tanttu & Tuulikki Kurki
Odd One Out: Writers Addressing Othering and Exclusion in Finland..46

Response

Jopi Nyman
Trauma at the Border..81

Reviews

Judith Lepore, *Rites of Spontaneity: Communality and Subjectivity in Traditional Irish Music Sessions* (Ferraiuolo)..R1

Introduction: Approaching Trauma through Laughter, Betrayal, and Othering

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Trauma has become a popular media topic in the last few decades and is featured widely in global societal discussions. At the same time, trauma has become an increasingly visible object of research in disciplines ranging from humanities to social sciences. Due to its increased visibility, the concepts, research questions, and viewpoints applied in studying trauma have multiplied and quickly expanded the research from the psychological aspects of trauma to its social, political, and cultural aspects (Kaplan 2005, 25), including the mechanisms of survival (Bond & Craps 2020, 139–41).

The theme issue, *Approaching Trauma Through Laughter, Betrayal, and Othering*, focuses on three potentially traumatizing cases in Finnish, Estonian, and North American contexts in 20th and 21st centuries. On the one hand, the issue examines large-scale, collective events, such as the forced migration of the Estonian population to Siberia in the 1940s and mobility from North America to the Soviet Union in the 1920s and 1930s. On the other hand, the theme issue studies the challenging or violent experiences of migrant individuals in Finland in the late 20th century, such as exclusion, othering, and aggression.

The theme issue examines these traumatic experiences through individual and collective viewpoints in the methodological frame of cultural studies. The theme issue approaches trauma through different modalities of narration: TV comedy shows, newspapers, and literatures. In these modalities, trauma is understood as a historical process where the levels of individuality and collectivity vary in relation to time, modalities of narration as well as in cultural, societal, and political contexts. In addition, trauma is examined through concepts closely linked with trauma, such as gallows humor, laughter, betrayal, and exclusion through othering and bordering. These concepts reveal the alternative ways to address trauma and the responses to trauma. They also reveal various cultural and social dimensions of trauma and their changing, or even competing meanings of trauma. The complex ways of addressing trauma are related to cultural, and social practices, and even everyday language. Therefore, as Antonio Traverso and Mick Broderick (2010, 4–5) suggest trauma has become one of the central terms through which the links between social history, subjective experience, and cultural representations can be examined. Trauma can also function as an instrument of research. As Jeffrey Alexander (2004, 2) notes cultural trauma can illuminate

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the relationships between structures, perceptions, and actions, constituting an emerging domain of social responsibility and political action. Illuminating these complex relationships, the genealogy of trauma can be reconstructed. Following Alexander's thought further, trauma can be an instigator of social, cultural, and political change.

The theme issue aims to contribute to the multidisciplinary approaches of trauma research in humanities and border and mobility studies. The theories and concepts of humanist trauma research of the late 20th century and early 21st century, together with viewpoints and approaches in folklore research, media, literature research, and border and mobility studies form the primary theoretical context for this theme issue. One of the central theoretical discussions is the pluralistic trauma model introduced by Michelle Balaev (2014). According to this model, Balaev (2014, 5) argues that contemporary trauma research includes several approaches to trauma, that are often used in place of the classical psychological model. Balaev further argues that the pluralistic model can combine various theories, including psychoanalytic theory, postcolonial theory, and, for example, various theories stemming from cultural studies to provide different analytical lenses on trauma. Therefore, the model allows more thorough examination of trauma's social and political dimensions.

Furthermore, according to Balaev (2014, 6–7), the pluralistic trauma model shifts the focus of research from the unrepresentability and unspeakability of trauma to the uniqueness of trauma. The shift to uniqueness of trauma allows the examination of the traumatic experience in its social and cultural contexts and allows the questions of representation and signification of trauma. The pluralistic trauma model also critically examines the idea of the universality of trauma and focuses on the language and experience of trauma, thus allowing for a more diverse conceptualization and understanding of trauma.

One of the thought-provoking trends in trauma research is the expansion of the trauma concept from single, large-scale and catastrophic events (such as war or terrorism) to include cumulatively developing traumas that develop over a longer period in everyday contexts (Brown 1991). This type of trauma, the so-called insidious trauma, was introduced in trauma research already in the 1990s (Brown 1991, 128; Kaplan 2007, 144). The causes of insidious trauma are, for example, discrimination, exclusion, and the abusive use of power. These long-term cumulative experiences may have similar effects on the human psyche than single, traditionally defined trauma events.

The concept of insidious trauma helps make visible such traumatic experiences among various minority groups that had long remained almost invisible to the dominant groups in their societies. The concept of insidious trauma resembles the concepts of minority stress and cumulatively developing complex post-traumatic stress disorder (ICD-11). The concept of minority stress is frequently used to study the experiences of different minorities (Meyer 1995). CPTSD has been defined as a trauma that is not connected to any specific, single event but rather a complex array of external, highly distressing events that have taken place over several months, even years in a person's life.

In the context of border and mobility studies, the theme issue focuses on difficult experiences of mobility and encounters from the point of view of individuals, families,

and marginal and repressed groups (Kurki & Laurén 2012; Tanttu 2014; 2017; Kurki 2021a; Laurén & Malinen 2021; Laurén & Jaago 2022). The theme issue attempts to create a 'from below' understanding of mobility, borders, and cultural encounters but does not forget that trauma is also relevant to interpersonal and cultural processes.

In addition, the articles in this theme issue are contributed to the discussion of multidisciplinary approaches in trauma research. Multidisciplinary approaches are essential in recognizing the cultural and social processes that may lead to traumas, and recognizing traumas that may be invisible to the majority. Furthermore, multidisciplinary approaches may increase our understanding of culturally specific ways of addressing trauma, the construction of the cultural and collective significance of trauma, and the use of trauma in constructing collective pasts, presents, and futures. The theme issue participates in discussing how trauma that emerges in everyday contexts, and how to process trauma individually or collectively, could be approached through various clustering concepts and cultural processes linked to trauma.

The first article in this theme issue is Liisi Laineste's article *Laughing through Tears: Online Reactions to Trauma-Related Humor in Estonia*. Laineste's article analyzes examples of trauma-inspired gallows humor in Estonian public discourse. Her article discusses reactions to humorous takes on collective trauma concerning WWII and its aftermath and the Soviet occupation of Estonia, including forced migration, and analyses them against recent humor theory.

Saija Kaskinen's article, *The Story of Migration and Betrayal: Finnish-Americans Coming Down with Karelian Fever*, examines a so-called 'betrayal trauma,' and the "institutionalized" betrayal trauma of the rising Karelian Fever of the 1920s and early 1930s in North America. The purpose is to investigate the role of radical Finnish language newspapers and their influence on the decisions of the thousands of North American Finns to move to the Soviet Union to build the so-called the "Workers' Paradise" (Golubev & Takala 2014, 68). The article analyses the betrayal trauma in interpersonal and institutional relationships where history and decision making are based on deception and self-deception. In the creation of betrayal trauma, powerful images and mass media are used to create a defactualized world that influences the decision-making of individuals.

Tarja Tanttu and Tuulikki Kurki's article *Odd One Out: Writers Addressing Othering and Exclusion in Finland* examines how immigrant authors address othering and exclusion and the consequences of these processes from the perspective of constructing cultural citizenship and belonging. These themes have become visible globally in recent migrant literature (Glesener 2016). The article attempts to elicit perspectives on the so-called 'insidious trauma' and categorize the rejections and harmful encounters that are enacted in everyday interactions that can lead to its development. The article connects with the discussion about insidious traumas and difficult experiences experienced by various minorities, such as by migrants. The article aims to increase the understanding of social and cultural processes and structures that may lead to trauma, as many of these processes and structures may be invisible to members of the dominant culture.

The theme issue claims that trauma and its related cultural expressions create rup-

tures in the fabric of social and political conformity and collective consciousness. Border and mobility-related traumas reveal the power mechanisms embedded in cultural processes of ordering, bordering, and othering. The cultural and national order, and political and ideological order are subverted through trauma narration that exposes the difficult experiences of dislocated people living in forced exile, at geographical and territorial borders and borderlands, and at the symbolic borders and borderlands within society. The symbolic borders and borderlands exist and operate deep within society and are, therefore, often invisible to the representatives of the majority. Revealing these traumatizing borders and encounters challenge the dominating order and processes of ordering, bordering, and othering (Kurki & Kaskinen 2019; Kurki 2021a; Tanttu & Kurki in this issue). Furthermore, the shared border and mobility-related traumatic experiences and their narrative knowledge can function as a basis for decentered and de-territorial identities. These emerging identities challenge territorially and nationally oriented, homogenizing definitions of identity. Therefore, shared border and mobility-related trauma narratives reveal often the overlooked diversity of people and their experiences living in various borderlands.

This theme issue is based on the work of the research project 'Traumatized Borders: Reviving subversive narratives of b/order, and other' that was funded by the Academy of Finland and implemented at the Karelian Institute in the University of Eastern Finland in 2016–2020 (Kurki et al. 2016). The project investigated oral, written, and material narratives about difficult, even traumatic experiences related to various topographic and symbolic borders in Russian, Finnish, Estonian, Ukrainian, and North American contexts. Geopolitically the project focused on the contemporary EU-Russian border, former Soviet internal borders, and the historical Soviet Union border with the West, whose influence reaches even the North American context. The study covered the period between the 1920s to the present day. The main results are available in the publications by the project researchers in 2016–2022 (Jaago 2021; Kurki 2016: 2018; 2020; 2021a; 2021b; Kurki & Kaskinen 2019; Laurén 2017; 2018; 2019; Laurén & Malinen 2021; Laurén & Jaago 2022; Nugin et al. 2020; Tanttu 2017).

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Laughing Through Tears: Online Reactions to Trauma-related Humor in Estonia

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Abstract

Humor is a way to cope with trauma. Reclaiming one's experiences and getting back in control through humor has been reported in disaster jokes (Kuipers 2002), celebrity scandals (Blank 2013), wartime humor (Stokker 1995), and death-related humor in general (Narvaez 2003). However, there is another aspect to this issue, whereby humor may trivialize the traumatic experience. Anyone can make a joke, and gallows humor is not only the prerogative of the victims. Humor usually implies punching upwards at oppressors, terrorists, rapists, ultra-right wingers, and thus fulfills the therapeutic aim, might turn against the victims themselves and become a tool in the hands of those who already have the upper hand. Accordingly, reactions to trauma-inspired humor may range from high praise to unlaughter (Billig 2005)—a deliberate withholding of humor appreciation—, although it is unclear how the society negotiates these opposing positions.

This article will take a close look at examples of trauma-inspired humor in the Estonian public discourse to clarify that point. It will discuss reactions to humorous takes on trauma (specifically concerning WWII and its aftermath, the Soviet occupation of Estonia) and analyze them against the backdrop of recent humor theory. The material will lend grounds to discuss humorous reactions to trauma diachronically, touching upon the topics of power and entitlement, and above all, negotiations over the right to joke about sensitive topics.

Keywords: trauma, humor, forced migration, Estonia, *Tujurikkuja* ('Mood spoiler')

Introduction

Trauma and humor are two notions that have nothing in common at first sight, and it might seem insensitive and thoughtless to connect the two phenomena. In reality, though, there is a correlation that surprises and shocks some people yet offers hope and consolation to others. The different reactions to witnessing an instance of trauma-related gallows humor appear, among other things, to reflect different degrees of emotional engagement with the distressing event, but also a specific taste for 'tasteless' humor (Kuipers 2008). Regardless of the perceiver's judgment, humor regarding traumatic events such as the Holocaust, 9/11, or hurricane Katrina tended to follow quite naturally. It is uncertain how long a trauma can last and how

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long it can continue to inspire humor, but there seems to be a "best before" date for which a traumatic experience can legitimately generate new jokes (see Ellis 2002).

The present article discusses questions of entitlement, power, and control in the context of sharing gallows humor about war and forced migration. Studying reactions to instances of gallows humor seeks to answer the central question of how the public negotiates varied standpoints ranging from indignation to praise. Additionally, there is a lack of studies that focus on humor directed towards traumatic events that have occurred only in the past (as opposed to immediate reactions to ongoing trauma, which have been analyzed by, e.g., Ellis 2001; Davies 2003; Blank 2016). This article thus fills this academic lacuna by investigating the diachronic dimensions and mechanisms of humor and 'unlaughter' (Billig 2005). Unlaughter is a deliberate withholding of humor appreciation to point at discrepancies in the joke teller's and recipients' sense of humor (see also Smith 2009 and Marsh 2016 for examples and discussion of the phenomenon). I suggest that understanding the balance between "laughter" and "unlaughter" can illuminate the complex relationship between trauma and humor, and has a growing relevance in the context of negotiating humor in a globalizing world where standards and tastes in humor vary and can have real and even tragic consequences (like in the case of Mohammad cartoon controversy that started in Denmark; see, e.g., Lewis et al. 2007). In order to better present the concepts involved in the study, I will give a short overview of humor theories and related definitions, as well as the context of such jokes in Estonia and elsewhere. The following section will connect the Estonian context of trauma and humor. I will then discuss examples of online discourse that comment on the trauma-related humor of Mood Spoiler, an Estonian TV humor program. The discussion will tackle the polemics of entitlement to perform controversial humor to broad audiences and potential reasons for unlaughter reactions, which seek to clarify further the relationship between (gallows) humor and trauma on a grander scale, not only in the Estonian context.

Humor

Humor is a way to cope with trauma. Obrdlik (1942, 715) describes an urban legend-like case from a Czech village during WWII where the German Gestapo found a hanged hen with the inscription "*I'd rather commit suicide than lay eggs for Hitler*" fastened to her neck. This kind of gallows humor, he concedes, allows those sharing such humor to see the larger picture while remaining aware of the temporality of suffering. He calls such humor an "index of good morale and the spirit of resistance," concluding that the purest kind of humor is born out of painful experiences accompanied by grief and sorrow (ibid., 716). Reclaiming one's experiences and getting back in control through humor has been reported in the contexts of disaster jokes (Kuipers 2002), celebrity scandals (Blank 2013), wartime humor (Stokker 1995), and death-related humor in general (Narvaez 2003). Analyzing Jewish humor has offered an essential contribution to the scholarly discussions over the functionality and nature of such humor (e.g., Oring 2016, 178 explains the mythical connection between the tragic Jewish history and the legendary "Jewish joke"). A "sword and shield" metaphor can describe

the essence of humor, implying a joke can be used as a weapon against the aggressor and a defense against attack (Helmy & Frerichs 2013). These varied viewpoints show humor as a functional phenomenon that people 'use' to achieve a specific aim – either as a weapon or as a form of relief or therapy.

Researchers in diachronic and comparative studies have questioned the functionality of humor. Notably, the studies of Davies (1998; 2011) and Oring (2003) reveal that the relationship between social circumstances (e.g., real-life aggression or conflict) and humor are far from straightforward. Jokes are undeniably social facts in that they are a facet of a particular social world, and thus need to be analyzed at a collective level, i.e., not reflecting the tastes and perceptions of individuals but rather that of specific groups or society as a whole (Davies 2011, 4–5). However, discussions and polemics on what humor is (Laineste 2011), what forms good and acceptable humor (Kuipers 2008), and who is entitled to make jokes (Kramer 2011) have always kept researchers aware of the complexity of the phenomenon. Similarly, a question of power (of defining humor and telling good humor from bad) guides the dynamics of laughter and unlaughter. One can conclude that, at best, humor holds a distorting mirror towards society (Davies 1998, 13; cf. Dundes 2007 [1969]).

The question of how humor precisely relates to those who share it always has interested researchers. Plato and Aristotle (and later Hobbes, see Carrell 2008, 306) laid the foundations of the *superiority theory* of humor that claims that we laugh at those we want to belittle. Several scholars have since agreed that there is inherent aggression to be found in humor. The 'sword and shield' metaphor stressing the functionality of humor evolved from this approach. Sociologists have posed three main hypotheses concerning the functionality of humor, whereby humor is used to (1) maintain social order (laughing at wrongdoers and causing humiliation; excluding outsiders through strengthening group norms and borders), (2) create group cohesion (laughing with the community), and (3) provide a path of relief from conflict and stress (for an overview, see Kuipers 2008). At the same time, humor assumes a certain detachment from reality, supported by the notions of incongruity (first suggested by Kant; see Carrell 2008, 308). Talking about functions is speculative to a large extent, but at the same time, very tempting. Knowing why something is as it is requires getting to the very heart of the phenomenon. However, the height of popularity of this approach was in the mid-20th century, and the then-popular "Why?" question has now been replaced with a safer "How?" question. However, this does not mean that researchers have abandoned the idea of nailing down the functions of humor altogether. McGraw et al. (2014) have suggested an explanation of humor as a function of spatial, temporal, and emotional proximity of the distressing event, based on their study of Hurricane Sandy jokes circulating in 2012. They claim that distance—not too close nor too far—creates a "comedic sweet spot," and this occurs when the psychological distance from a tragedy is big enough to buffer people from threat (creating what they call a "benign violation") but not so significant that the event becomes a purely benign, nonthreatening situation.

There are numerous lay and professional terms that denote the kinds of humor that accompany or follow a traumatic event, and in this article, I will use the terms

"black" or "gallows" humor.

Gallows humor is, by definition, a way of making fun of death, life-threatening situations, and danger (Nilsen & Nilsen 2014, 254–56). Black humor or black comedy[1] is a comic style that makes light of themes that are generally considered severe or taboo, but not primarily death, and is recently perhaps a more contemporarily used term than gallows humor[2]. Essentially, however, black humor and gallows humor can be seen as synonyms (Encyclopedia Britannica, March 18, 2019). Sick humor is humor that breaks social conventions: e.g., making fun of issues such as death, illness, or other serious misfortunes (Beermann 2014, 691–93). The genre gathered popularity in the late 1950s in the US and was practiced by those referred to as "sicknicks" (The Sicknicks 1959). Other less frequent alternatives include 'tasteless humor,' which is an emic term for taboo topics in humor (as in "alt.tasteless" [see Encyclopedia Dramatica, March 18, 2019] and 'twisted humor,' neither of which are used in scholarship). "Blue humor" is focused heavily on topics such as nudity, sex, homophobia, and racism (Rock 2013), while 'brown humor' focuses on bodily functions, above all scatological and often in a political context, to name just a few related lay terms (as seen in, e.g., Brexit humor, Trump jokes; see Chiaro 2018).

Although many of these terms are interrelated and partly overlap with each other (Beermann 2014, 692), as well as with the general notion of obscenity and insult, humor is different from insult in that it is subtler and does not necessarily have the explicit intention of offending people. Instead, it strives to provide entertainment and social criticism (Davies 2011). Another observation based on the prolific terminology is that people consider the phenomenon necessary. Disaster humor seems to mushroom naturally during tough times, visible, e.g., in the popular *Sickipedia*,[3] an online initiative to gather examples of anything that might be distasteful yet still humorous. The fast dissemination of gallows humor is the rule rather than an exception, and this is a growing trend in the globalizing, internet-connected world of today (as an example, the global internet joke cycle concerning the 9/11 attacks are the first example of the fast online spread of black humor). Milner (2013) has looked at the example of 4chan[4] and has described online humor as weird, bitter, biting, and ironic, referring to it as the "logic of lulz," which is something that hits the audience "right in the feels."

There is no place for sentimentality, sincerity, or naivety within the genre of (online) gallows humor, and even before the internet, catastrophes triggered jokes (for example, sinking of the Titanic in 1912 [see Chovanec 2019], the sinking of the ferry Estonia in 1994, the Challenger space shuttle disaster in 1986 [see Smyth 1986], or the untimely death of Princess Diana in 1997 [see Davies 2003]). Research has documented the contemporary humorous reactions to disasters (and the reactions to these reactions) have well, but there is a lack of studies that focus on humor related to traumatic events that have occurred further back in time.

Trauma and Humor in Estonia

Many would refuse to see the painful experiences of war and any consequential forced migration as being a "laughing matter." Such a migration, e.g., mobilization or depor-

tation, is a source of trauma. It involves up-rooting from a familiar environment and trying to fit in under new circumstances that are usually not friendly towards the involuntary migrant. Especially, people in migrant destinations often perceive migrants as 'others' and treat them with anger, fear, or even disgust. However, I argue that collective discursive processes (including humor) can help transform traumatic events into cultural trauma (Eyerman 2019, 3; see also Alexander 2004, 1) and open the past events up for re-interpretation and contestation. Trauma is always a process because nothing is "culturally traumatic" in itself; it is "made, not born" (Smelser 2004, 37). The powerful emotions triggered by collectively experienced traumatic events, e.g., forced migration, are processed by succeeding generations (on collective trauma, see Aarelaid-Tart 2006; 2010; Laanes 2017). The migrants' children and grandchildren do this in order to understand and channel the often-hidden emotions, even though the interpretative lens and narrative elements may vary from generation to generation and individual to individual. The contesting and provocative form of humor challenges traditional narratives and reopens discussions of cultural trauma even more effective than many other ways of talking about trauma. The connection between these two notions—humor and trauma—is thus especially significant to understand.

In Estonia, trauma, injustice, and humor are closely connected. Already in the 19th century, when folklorists collected the first humorous folkloric texts in Estonia, the upward-punching nature of the tales was notable, e.g., humor about landlords and the clergy were among the most frequent categories (Laineste, Jonuks & Fiadotava 2019). If we narrow the context down to migration and its aftermath, we can find plenty of examples of humorous treatment.

Estonian history is complex and troublesome, filled with opportunities for black humor to arise. Estonia's political situation at the end of WWII was decided mainly by the Soviet and Nazi struggles over the territory, and historians have estimated that a total of about 100,000 Estonians served in the Red Army and German armed forces, which has remained a traumatic and frequently raised issue in Estonian life histories (e.g., Kõresaar 2011). As the Soviets recruited one-third of these soldiers into the Red Army and the remaining two-thirds served in the German armed forces, this often divided family and friends to different sides of the battlefront, turning brothers against brothers regardless of their ideological convictions. This problem (embedded in deep cultural memory [Wertsch 2009]) still feeds into present-day public discourse when talking about the history of the 20th century. For instance, more personal accounts of history in the form of folk stories add an emotional tinge to these traumatic events, like rumors about a human meat sausage factory that were common at the end of WWII (Kalmre 2007, 144).

As actual contacts with a different, threatening 'other' increased during the war and its aftermath, peculiar habits, hygiene, and looks created both tensions and humor. Cartoons published during and after WWII on both sides of the front show soldiers going to war and returning severely disabled (see, e.g., Laineste & Lääne 2015, 86). A caricature from 1943 depicts a Russian migrant arriving in Estonia and an Estonian railway station janitor reminding him to wipe his feet before stepping on the street, lest the newcomer would make the streets dirty (Laineste and Lääne 2015, 91).

Encounters with the belligerent 'other' were traumatic for the local populace, and this is evident in the folkloric expression of the time and times that followed (see Jaago 2018, Kirss 2013).

The aftermath of WWII was also a source for humor. Among other humorous genres, two comic books emerged concerning DP (displaced persons) camps in Germany, one by Raul Edari and Arnold Sepp and Endel Kõks. Depicting life in migrant camps in the 1940s, they reflect on the dilemmas and humiliations of displaced persons. These included (inter-alia) frequent and often unnecessary medical examinations (Kõks & Sepp 2014 [1943], 76); absurd ways to pass the time by forming committees and assessing the quality of life in the camp (Kõks & Sepp 2014 [1943], 68–69); and these stories often ask the equally tragic, even though visually comically framed question: What will happen to them next?[5]

We can find examples from later periods as well, and it is a widely known and published fact that jokes flourished in the Soviet period. Significantly, the 1980s were the most fertile times for this genre of joke, when censorship had loosened up, and political absurdity abounded (Krikmann 2009). Of course, as a libertarian form of folklore, jokes were not in hibernation during more difficult times either, and in the 1950s, according to one widely known joke, there was enough humor for Stalin to collect entire concentration camps of jokes:

Q: What did Stalin collect?
A: Jokes about himself. He had two camps full of them.

(Krikmann 2004, 71.)

Generally, these examples seem to point out an Estonian interest in subdued, at times gallows humor, and a dislike of physical "pie-in-the-face" humor that is often categorized as "American" by Estonian audiences (for a diachronic overview of trends in caricature art, see Hiibus & Veetamm 2011, 57–58). Estonian humor has more of a down-to-earth, often sarcastic or dark (Lukas 2019) character. Nevertheless, in reality, delineating a "national sense of humor" is often seen as an act of futile speculation (see Ziv 1988 for attempts to describe Italian, Jewish, Belgian, Australian senses of humor). Instead, as a rule, joke-tellers tend to accredit themselves with the best *taste* of humor and the best *sense* of humor (Kuipers 2006), while accusing out-groups of a lack of any humor taste or sense. Trauma-related humor (which is often self-deprecating) places that verdict in doubt, and in this context, discussions about what humor is are bound to arise.

Mood Spoiler

A comedy group called the 'Mood Spoiler' ('Tujurikkuja'), active in 2008–2015, had acquired an important role in Estonian contemporary humor discourse. They had a reputation of providing uncomfortable reinterpretations of the past in their (in)famous television program that aired annually on New Year's Eve on Estonian national TV. Always a source of controversy due to its provocative and satirical content, it fre-

quently received polarized comments from viewers, especially in online forums and various social media outlets (Külmoja 2016), which proved that the comedians had targeted something that was seen as relevant to the people watching. Mood Spoiler has a history of excelling at gallows humor. Some of the more controversial issues they covered concerning Nazis,[6] patient care,[7] the 'Estonia' ferry tragedy,[8] tragic events from Estonian history,[9] or parodies of patriotic songs.[10] It is precisely the online reactions to these sketches of Estonian traumatic historical events (especially the last two that feature in the list of controversial examples) that inform this study. The comedians of Mood Spoiler have received various awards, proving that their art is generally appreciated. Nevertheless, the show has a controversial reputation, and despite positive public recognition, parts of the audience have taken offense to the sketches performed and have condemned the group's insensitive approach to painful issues.

Data and Analysis

In what follows, I will discuss two cases: online reactions to a 2010 sketch depicting mass deportations of Estonians to Siberia and a 2015 sketch reflecting the traumatic final decade of the Soviet occupation of Estonia and reinterpreting it in the light of present-day xenophobic anti-refugee sentiments. The analysis will focus on the public reactions of Internet users[11] that followed the airing of the sketches. These reactions were scraped using a designated python script that harvested all comments[12] to news connected to the topic (21 articles in total). I chose four major news sites in Estonia (*delfi.ee*, *ekspress.ee*, *epl.ee*, and *ohtuleht.ee*) to obtain more representative and balanced data.[13] Altogether, the database consisted of 3965 comments. Next, I tagged the data with mixed quantitative and qualitative analysis software, QDA Miner, to identify the main trends and opinions within the data. The comments were initially in Estonian and were translated into English by the author. As indicated in a previous study on online comments (Laineste 2020), the tone of the majority of comments (around 60 percent) was negative, while only less than 20 percent were supportive of the humor texts that made fun of past trauma (the rest being irrelevant to the topic or neutral in tone). The comments frequently argued over the entitlement to joke at such traumatic events (deportations and a struggle against the Soviet occupation) and, ultimately, the entitlement to judge if this is funny or not. The commenters also justified their reasons for reacting with unlaughter, which led to discussions about good or bad humor.

The questions that arise are many-layered and complex; they are connected to a particular triggering event that inspired the authors of the sketches (e.g., the wave of migration in present-day Europe) and the past traumatic events or circumstances (e.g., living under foreign rule and oppression), but they include much more. The reception may depend on intergenerational differences, knowledge about other relevant cultural texts (the TV series Windward Land, in the case of the deportation example),[14] or taste in humor, among other things. In the context of trauma theory, the first sketch about mass deportations is connected to the notion of historical trauma (LaCapra 2014 [2001], 82), whereas the second example, a parody of the patriotic song "No country stands alone," links to the ideas of structural trauma (LaCapra 2014 [2001], 82; Ataria

2017). I argue that the process where the traumas are recontextualized, joked about, and then hotly debated by various audiences is, in the vein of Eyerman (2014, 6), a way to debate and reformulate collective identity and memory.

The 2010 deportation sketch starts with the camera approaching a small house at night, with the subtitle "*Somewhere in Estonia, in 1941*". Next, we can see a family eating supper, with the father cutting bread and the mother pouring coffee into cups, when suddenly there is a brutal knock on the door and three men with guns enter. In the following interaction, it turns out that the men have come to deport them to Siberia. However, as the family does not know the meaning of "deporting" or "Siberia," the procedure is explained to them as "you will be going on a trip." The atmosphere changes as the family is positively overwhelmed by the opportunity to travel, and what is more, for free. They hurry to get their things packed, offer drinks to the men and toast them, while the puzzled 'deporters' offer hesitant congratulations. The sketch closes with a picture of the family in snowy Siberia and the sentence: "*This clip was financed by the Historical Truth Committee of the Russian State Duma*."

The reactions touch upon three main issues: (1) agreeing that the sketch was humorous and underlining that the target of humor was, as the last frame indicated, Russia's propagandistic reinterpretation of history; (2) claiming that the sketch was blasphemous and wrong; and (3) refraining from a straightforward judgment about the sketch but joining the argument about what humor is in the first place.

There are commenters who say that they considered the sketch funny: *It was funny indeed. It must be a strong nation who can laugh like this* (Source 22, January 4, 2010, 8:52 pm). Or they praise the use of humor for its potentially beneficial nature: *Humor is always welcome!! And those who don't get the joke have to blame themselves!! I support [the sketch] because laughter and humor keep people alive* (Source 34, January 4, 2010, 8:56 pm). The discussion also provides grounds for comparisons with other cultures and contexts: *Well the joke was quite a good one. I laughed indeed. Let's not be like the Jews with their Holocaust* (Source 54, January 4, 2010, 9:38 pm). The commenters bring up the topic of freedom of speech: *We are not America where some topics are taboo, we have a democratic country where human rights, including freedom of speech, are held in high esteem* (Source 89, January 4, 2010, 10:25 pm). An interesting aspect is a frequent reference to who may laugh at the deportations and who may not: *Yes, it's ok [to laugh at deportations]. But of all the parties involved, only we can laugh at it* (Source 46, January 4, 2010, 9:12 pm), and *depends who makes the joke, whether the deportee or the deporter* (Source 58, January 4, 2010, 9:41 pm).

An opposite but loudly expressed point of view is present in the straightforward indignation directed towards the comedians' reinterpretation of traumatic history. Some just shortly state "No," while others take time to explain their thoughts in more detail. The latter often refer to actual experiences or memories from history: *I truly hope that my grandaunt didn't see this sketch, her 7-month-old baby and 3-year-old child died of hunger in Siberia. Also old people died, but I think it's more painful to lose a child. Grandaunt alone returned* (Source 32, January 4, 2010, 8:54 pm). Or *Go to Siberia and see if you will still be laughing*. (Source 61, January 4, 2010, 9:47 pm). Some point out that *Everything that doesn't happen to us or our close ones is funny; disgusting how low Estonian humor can*

sink (Source 43, January 4, 2010, 9:02 pm) so, theorizing in their way about what humor is. However, in the opposite vein, commenters claim:

> If the ones who deported others are joking, then why not. But if those people are joking whose grandfathers-grandmothers were taken to Siberia, from where only a few came back alive, then they don't know the limits of humor, nor do they respect their parents, grandparents, or their suffering. Will they laugh at the Estonia ferry catastrophe next? (Source 101, January 4, 2010, 11:44 pm)

The prediction of laughing at the Estonian ferry catastrophe came true a few years later (see endnote 8). In more emotional moments when arguments got heated, irony may emerge together with a textual emphasis (created by typing capital letters): *Endless horror, pain, misfortune, calamities..!! AWFULLY FUNNY, ISN'T IT? WHY NOT LAUGH OUT LOUD, RIGHT? Haaaaaaaaaa-haaaaaaaaa-haaaaaaaa!!!!!!!!!!* (Source 97, January 4, 2010, 11:32 pm).

Ultimately, shame and shaming is also brought into the equation (see also the examples from the following case below):

> The young don't care about what happened in the distant past… i.e. they spit on everything or show indifference, they don't respect history nor do they honor the memory of their forefathers. Sad! Even depressing! And I am afraid of the future. We don't have such men who would protect and love their fatherland with their body and soul. (Source 82, January 4, 2010, 11:06 pm)

Another set of comments ponders about question of what humor is. They claim that *humor may be a psychological defense mechanism: we interpret a traumatic event through the prism of humor and tension is released* (Source 51, January 4, 2010, 9:21 pm). The widely known stereotype of Estonians worrying about what others think of them is evident in the following comment:

> The Estonian is a true "break" ["stick-in-the-mud" (тормоз), a nickname given to the slow Estonians by Russians]. The Estonian makes a joke and then starts discussing in hundreds of comments whether it was a joke or not. This news and the comments is a joke in itself. (Source 63, January 4, 2010, 9:59 pm; for additional thoughts on the Estonian stereotype see Laineste and Krikmann 2015)

A few years later, in 2015, the sketch '*Ei ole üksi ükski maa*' ('No country stands alone') parodied a song considered one of the flagships of the Estonian singing revolution.[15] In the 1980s, it was among a song repertoire that united the country against the Soviet occupation. The original song names different regions in Estonia (Läänemaa, Saaremaa, etc.), praised one after another for fighting for the country's independence. The parody does the same thing, showing beloved famous singers praising the regions of Estonia – but this time not for fighting against oppressors, but instead against refugees and other Estonians. Contrary to the original song, the parody criticizes the xenopho-

bic Estonians and their tendency to fight with each other (for more detailed discussion, see Laineste 2020).

The online commenters who reacted positively to the sketch and agreed that it was indeed funny (and can thus be defined as humor) claim: *I am not saying I am sinless /…/ but at least I am able to laugh at myself* (Source 212, January 1, 2016, 12:23 am). The positive comments see those who oppose the sketch as lacking in knowledge or being narrow-minded: *It hit the nail on the head. But well, those who don't understand it or who don't like it, maybe they are unfamiliar with present-day politics and life, or they don't see past the nose on their face* (Source 224, January 1, 2016, 1:56 am). Referring to 'them' as people with no sense of humor comes combined with unintelligence: *Most of the Delfi [media thread] commenters are clowns with only primary education who should educate themselves instead of posting here* (Source 321, January 1, 2016, 5:35 am).

Various ways of expressing hate, indignation, or umbrage towards the sketch dominate the comments culled from the Delfi news online forum. A way to symbolically express indignation towards the reinterpretation of the patriotic song is to describe the sketch as an act of spitting on the nation or its 'face': *Especially unpleasant was the final song that spat on the opinions and fears of the majority* (Source 210, January 1, 2016, 12:15 am). Commenters use conjunctions and disclaimers: *Generally I like [Märt] Avandi, I understand humor… but this time, yes, they probably made a slightly wrong joke and [chose] a wrong topic to laugh at* (Source 539, January 6, 2016, 9:38 pm).

Some comments show both support and dismissal simultaneously, and such polyvocal statements reveal the inherent complexity of the topic of the discussion: *The song was very good and will be in my playlist. Self-irony is a good expression of a sound mind, as is being against refugees*. (Source 201, January 1, 2016, 12:04am). Thus, opinions are not always clear-cut and simple, and commenters combine various opinions into condensed statements.

Discussion

The examples mentioned above (wartime cartoons, comic books, Soviet jokes, and contemporary humorous sketches) all belong to different genres, but they express one idea: using humor about traumatic times can hold a healing power, but it can also tear open a painful wound. The reactions and discussions about the right to create and enjoy humor targeted towards the hardships of forced migration further illuminate the complicated relationship between trauma and humor. Specifically, they illustrate a situation where the customary humor theories based on superiority and the functionality of the humor cannot explain why these particular jokes come about. Studying humor reception gives a better insight into how questions of power and entitlement affect the production and enjoyment of trauma-related humor. Tsakona (2017, 179) stresses the importance of taking humor's performance/reception aspect into account when discussing whether humor influences and reflects reality and public opinion, how, to what extent, and under what circumstances, especially when humorous texts involving discriminatory content (e.g., racist, sexist) are discussed.

The key term to understand issues related to the right to joke about hardships of

life is "unlaughter." Based on the work of the social psychologist Michael Billig (2005), I define unlaughter as non-amusement that explicitly follows a recognized, but not appreciated attempt at creating humor. The term fits not just because the success or failure of humor has significant social consequences but also because it reveals power relations that "humor scandals" highlight (see Smith 2009). Unlaughter is the pivotal component in the power struggle between different voices, opinions, and definitions of humor. It also shifts the attention from isolated examples of humorous texts to their reception, i.e., the performative context. As the online environment brings together bigger audiences and a greater selection of humorous texts, the potential for an unlaughter reaction is almost inevitable. Unlaughter introduces a facet of humor that the public has until recently deliberately downplayed: the high value placed on having a sense of humor means that not understanding a joke is regarded as socially awkward and thus generally undesirable. However, it is an unexpected yet increasingly indispensable outcome of humorous communication. The fact that some people do not agree to recognize, understand or appreciate the humor they encounter (see Hay's [2001] model of failed humor) does not make it "better" humor, but stirs more intensive reverberations, more opposite reactions, and may ultimately help the humor to reach wider audiences eventually (Laineste 2020).

In the studied online comments, the commenters often referred to Estonia's traumatic history and claimed that the comedians did not have a right to joke about it. Thus, they blamed 'the laughers' for having a bad sense of humor, and so underlined an 'us' ('unlaughers') and 'them' (those who laughed) division. Creating such a division is a recognized strategy in the struggle for power and entitlement. Unlaughter has consequences: when unlaughter occurs, it is not merely noteworthy (and thus possibly regrettable) but is socially significant. It will unquestionably draw a sharp line between those who find something laughable and those who do not (Dodds 2010). The two polarized sides will consequently see each other as not possessing a proper and acceptable sense of humor. The positive comments on the sketches praised the brave and unexpected account of the past trauma and accused the opposite party of lacking a sense of humor and being narrow-minded, aggressive, racist. Those against the sketches claimed that it did not qualify as humor at all.

Such a heated debate shows that humor has a strong potential for drawing people together and pulling them apart. Those who evaluate humor differently are ostracized, which in more extreme cases can lead to violent, reactionary actions against the satirists (Smith 2009). The power of humor to divide societies takes the polemics to the next level, including not just academic considerations but also a broad set of moral, political, practical, and legal issues (Kuipers 2015, 31). People use laughter and unlaughter to communicate meanings and position themselves in discussions (Billig 2005, 189–92), thus regulating personal and group boundaries. However, this brings about the polarization of opposing statements and makes dialogue more complicated.

Why were these sketches met with unlaughter? The joke was on a very sensitive topic, i.e., a traumatic experience taken from history. It touched upon "them" as endangering "us," involving important concepts like national identity, sacred symbols of the nation, and revived painful memories like those of Soviet repressions. However,

the painful reactions of unlaughter made the sketch highly visible online, as everyone needed to either see what the discussion was about, refresh their memory or feelings of indignation and exhilaration, or perhaps a bit of both. As Marsh posits, "risk is part of the challenge and appeal of jokes; the louder the unlaughter, the more credit goes to the jokers for having risked it" (2016, 39). The final verdict on the laughability of a joke depends on the power lines and status of the parties involved (see also Kuipers 2015).

The comments containing unlaughter express strong xenophobic and racist opinions and used strong metaphorical imagery, referring to the comedians as those who "spit in the face of the nation." Therefore, they interpret the initially humorously intended sketches as a blasphemous attack on the nation, its complex history, and the traumatic experiences involved. On the other hand, the favorable comments that praise the humor and laughability of the sketches claim that those who do not understand or appreciate the sketches lack a sense of humor. For them, any reference to humor as attack represents censorship and should be disapproved. The thin line between humor and insult is stepped on, redrawn, and maneuvered in these online discussions, often with the excuse "I was only joking," making it even more challenging to spot and define definitive boundaries. Both sides ostracize each other and try to assert themselves and their definition of "good humor" (Kuipers 2006).

Studying the complicated online reaction patterns help us understand the power relations embedded in humorous communication. In an online context, the emerging discussions are even more emotional than those of face-to-face communication, and in this context, laughter and unlaughter become two sides of the same coin that contribute to constructing an online affective-discursive order around humor (Malmqvist 2015, 747).

There is an inherent difficulty in seeing humor as a functional tool to ensure one's (mental) superiority over an aggressor. To follow up on the metaphor discussed earlier, the sword (and the shield) of humor turn against the victim and becomes a double weapon. So, laughing at a traumatic experience can quickly become an argument about "who gets the last laugh." Theories of superiority and functionality do not apply well here because the humor is directed equally at the aggressor, as well as the unfortunate events and the unfortunate people who experienced them (for discussions on self-directed humor, see Martin 2007, 47–49). Hence, aggression is somewhat difficult to spot at this juncture.

Furthermore, to say that the functions of humor can explain the basic mechanisms of humor is a circular argumentation, claiming that people use humor in the context of trauma because it helps, and it helps because it is used. Like other social phenomena, humor does not necessarily carry the same function for everybody and can even be dysfunctional. Also, the reactions to humorous utterances are difficult to predict. Due to the ambiguity and complexity of any humorous text and its numerous intertextual references, it is impossible to infer any unidirectional aims or draw any conclusions about the intentions of the joke-tellers or predict the outcomes of the intended humor.

The ability to deny any serious intentions by pointing at the ambiguity of humor with the phrase "I was only joking!" is part of what makes humor simultaneously so effective and ineffective in the face of trauma. However, researchers have argued–

taking us a step closer to answering the question of "Why does humor rise alongside trauma?" – that humor creates a discursive space that allows for open discussions to take place about matters that would otherwise be silenced or tabooed (Goldstein 2003; Malmqvist 2015). So, a justified question arises: how do people joke about past traumatic experiences and who has the right to joke about traumatic experiences?

De Fina and Georgakopoulou (2015, 5) refer to the concept of *story ownership* to respond to who can tell stories and how underlining that it is a question of power and exemplifying the embedding of story-telling in different contexts and practices. They claim that negotiations and contestations about the rights to own and tell stories to link them to broader societal stances about "who can talk, what is tellable, and by whom" (ibid.). Joking about a traumatic experience can turn the trauma into a productive, creative act – at least in an ideal world. More important than the definite purpose of such an act, we must ask whether the victims of trauma need an audience to reclaim their experiences and power and who ultimately has the right to joke about difficult times. The next logical question is who has the right to laugh at these jokes. Those who argue publicly about the acceptability of joking about deportation or the Soviet occupation (as described in the case above) argue about who can say certain words and how trauma can and should be discussed. The sides that people take in such arguments sort people into social groups and reinforce or reassess their identities (Kramer 2011; Shuman 2015). However, ultimately, this concerns a question of who is entitled to judge whether other people are entitled to talk—or, more specifically, to joke—about trauma. The question of entitlement is inextricable from questions of power. So, in those heated arguments over who has the right to decide what is funny and what is not, when to react with laughter or unlaughter, the commenters are implicitly making claims about who is powerful enough to be a censor in the first place. Consequently, the issue of the functionality of humor takes a back seat, despite appearing to be the principal question. Humor effectively triggers societal discussions and debates, negotiating past traumas from novel and productive angles.

Notes

1 While black comedy stresses the performance aspect, black humor is a more general term.

2 Black humor is attributed to the French surrealist Andre Breton (in his Anthologie de l'humor noir, 'Anthology of Black Humor', 1997 [1940])

3 http://www.sickipedia.net/

4 www.4chan.org

5 A parallel case can be found in Latvian culture where Irina Pilke's drawings from the post-war period have been assembled into an animated documentary film "Little bird's diary" (released in 2007).

6 "Estonia is looking for the neo-Nazi," a parody of the program "Estonia is looking for a superstar," similar to e.g. "American Idol"; ERR archive, http://arhiiv.err.ee/guid/201005120050552010010002081001517C41A040000005020B00000D0F066767, 4:00

7 A mockumentary of coma patients struggling for survival, one being voted out every week; ERR archive, http://arhiiv.err.ee/guid/20100512005055201001000208100 1517C41A040000005020B00000D0F066767; 21:00
8 A fake ad of an exhibition depicting the sinking of the ferry Estonia https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=PaABXCWQ2Mg
9 A sketch about deportations of Estonians to Siberia after the end of WWII: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IWLKiLXBGhg (with English subtitles).
10 https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-FNKJGBtmM8
11 For additional statistics on Internet usage coverage among various demographic groups, see https://news.err.ee/981944/90-percent-of-households-in-estonia-have-internet-at-home
12 Although the authors of comments were not approached for getting their consent during the study, nor were they warned that their comments would be used for research purposes, the translation process and additional anonymization of names is considered a sufficient measure to meet online research ethics requirements.
13 *Delfi.ee* and *ohtuleht.ee* represent a more provocative and tabloid journalism (see Laineste 2020, 114) with an anonymous commenting option, and *ekspress.ee* and *epl.ee* publish less sensationalist articles and allow only sign-in commenting.
14 A connection can be made between this sketch and the 2008 TV series *Tuulepealne maa* ('Windward Land'). Its reception by critics and audiences pointed out the propagandist way Estonian 20th century history was depicted in the series, filmed with state funding and consulted by historians and research institutions (Tohvri 2008).
15 The Singing Revolution is a commonly used name for events that fell between 1987 and 1991 that led to the restoration of the independence of Estonia and other Baltic countries. For further information, see the trailer of a 2006 documentary https://singingrevolution.com/.

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The Story of Migration and Betrayal: Finnish-Americans Coming Down with Karelian Fever

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Abstract
This article examines a historical migration phenomenon called Karelian Fever that refers to migration experiences of thousands of Finnish-Americans who emigrated from North-America to the Republic of Karelia of the Soviet Union in 1920–1933 to build the "Proletarian Paradise." Studying the Karelian Fever experience from the perspective of betrayal trauma theory, Text World Theory, and frame analysis, linked with political, ideological, and national themes, the research interest focuses on Finnish-American radical newspapers and their role in creating Karelian Fever in the Finnish-American communities. How did the newspapers set the agenda and parameters of information that started to produce dislocations in their readers' daily routine, rupture, and reshape their patterns of thinking and acting that finally caused the mass migration?

Keywords: betrayal, utopia, trauma, the radical press

> "Give me your tired, your poor,
> Your huddled masses yearning to breathe free,
> The Wretched refuse of your teeming shore.
> Send these, the homeless, tempest-tost to me,
> I lift my lamp beside the golden door!"
> Statue of Liberty
>
> Victory Day Already Approaching
> With their power, with their might
> The Proletarian are able to show their domination.
> So, the former tyrants, the advocates of slavery,
> You will bend your knee and worship the Giants of Labor!
> Helmi Mattson (*Mutinous Spirits*)

Trapped between two dreams—the American dream of the Land of Opportunity and the dream of the Proletarian Paradise in Soviet Karelia—Karelian Fever conveys a traumatic account of thousands of American and Canadian Finns, who in the late1920s and early 1930s emigrated from North-America to the Karelian region of the Soviet Union to build the ideal communist society. Karelia, a region divided by the nation-state border between the Soviet Union/Russia and Finland, has always been a border region and its habitants the border people, who throughout their long history

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have shared a fate of dislocation, dispossession, and savagery. Vacillating first in the possession between Russia and Sweden's domination and later between the Soviet Union/Russia and Finland's possession, Karelia has been a subject of many wars, multiple shifts of the state borders, and often a target of forced political, cultural, and linguistic adaptation. However, as Karelian Fever phenomenon shows, Karelia has also been the place of dreams for a "good life," the frontline of experimentation where, for example, North-American Finns yearned for an opportunity to create a new political system, the Proletarian Paradise. They envisioned their Paradise as a place in which social and cultural arrangements and its institutions aimed at collective security and prosperity in the Soviet communist system rather than in competitive, self-interest based on the North-American capitalist system. (Golubev & Takala 2014, viii; Bealieu and Ratz 2017, 40). However, the fruition of their dream of the Proletarian Paradise in the Soviet Karelia ended with Stalin's Great Terror that left North-American Finns disillusioned, almost annihilated in the ruins of betrayed promises of the Soviet Communism.

Karelian Fever in itself is difficult to define. It is a complex historical, ideological, transnational, and psychological story of migration. Described as Finnish Exodus to the Soviet Union, it represents in the history of the United State the first large-scale migration flow from west to east rather than other way around (Golubev & Takala 2014, xi). Although Karelian Fever has generally been understood as the North American Finns escaping from poor working conditions, severe unemployment, labor surplus, and finally, Great Depression and subsequent fears of economic ruin (Hannula 1979, 155; Golubev & Takala 2014, 33; Efremkin 2016, 546; Lindström 2004,17), it can also be understood as a phenomenon emerging from the Roaring Twenties—a decade of massive social, political, and cultural transformations in the United States. Radical political movements, such as labor union movements, Socialism, Communism (the First Red Scare), women's rights movement, racial conflicts, together with Prohibition and the rise of religious fundamentalism challenged the normative social order and status quo relationships. It was the time of agitation, fierce accusations, hard attitudes, mobilization of masses, and great passions that created a fertile ground for radicalism that advocated or demanded a thorough or complete political and social reform. Admits this tumultuous time, the North American Finns started to become more and more disillusioned about North America as "a land of equal opportunity," and from their discontent, Karelian Fever started to become more and more infectious.

This article grows out of the general interest in North-American Finns and their evolving utopian vision of the radical political force of Soviet Communism and its hope raising, alternative world view. The aim of this paper is to study the phenomenon of Karelian Fever from the perspective of Betrayal Trauma and Institutional Betrayal Trauma Theory in relation to North-American Finnish-language leftist newspapers. The purpose is to understand to what extent the Finnish-language press did serve as a risk factor of the Finns contracting Karelian Fever. Were the newspapers inadvertently or even purposefully guilty of betrayal that consequently led to the Finns' decision to emigrate to Soviet Karelia (see Beken 1988,104). To what extent, if any, were their sense of reality influenced, their political behavior impacted, and their common sense

challenged by the radical Finnish-language newspapers? The basic premise of this paper claims that Finnish-language newspapers had a central role in causing Karelian Fever.

In the beginning of the twentieth century, newspapers had become the major media form. Serving as the major information source, they brought into the Finns' awareness not only their own Finnish national, political, and cultural new but also diverse local, regional, national, and international issues of the day and world politics. Consequently, the North-American Finnish-language newspapers started permeating the Finnish households and become a part of their everyday experiences. The Finnish- language newspapers became a "life-line" or "daily bread," especially, to the first-generation North-American immigrant Finns, who without adequate English language skills, would have been entirely isolated from the mainstream American society as well cut off from the news regarding Finland (Hummasti 1977, 180). As a proof of this need, North-American Finns—both conservative Finns (the Church Finns) as well as socialist and communist Finns (the Red Finns) established the long-lasting and diverse Finnish-language press (Hummasti 1979, 36; Kostiainen 1987, 206).

Theoretical Framework

The first theoretical approach in this study draws on Betrayal Trauma Theory that is coined to Jennifer Freyd (Freyd 1996). The core issue in the Betrayal Trauma is trust. Freyd defines Betrayal Trauma as a social dimension of psychological trauma that occurs in safe, trustworthy relationships or in relationship where the default is trust. Trauma occurs when a trusted, care giving person (such as parents, spouses, siblings, and relatives) becomes a perpetrator by violating this fundamental trust (e.g. child molestation, domestic violence, rape, alcoholism, or drug abusing). The closer the relationship is between the perpetrator and a survivor, the more traumatic and damaging is betrayal (Freyd 1996, 76; Parikh 2009, 2). In 2014, Freyd and Carly Smith extended this social dimension of betrayal trauma perpetrated by generally trusted, valued, and often powerful institutions such as churches, schools, political entities, businesses, military, police, law, health care, media, and government. Institutional betrayal trauma, as it is called, occurs when institutions through their actions or inaction become perpetrators and, consequently, cause harm to those who are dependent on them for safety, wellbeing, employment, information, or even for their survival (Smith and Freyd 2014, 575). Within institutional betrayal trauma theory, the relational focus shifts from personal, private, and intimate to a more shared, relational, and societal level. This does not mean that personal trauma is forgotten, but rather that trauma is examined from a multilayered perspective, where social and political, personal, and interpersonal come together.

In both betrayal traumas, the question of the set of relationships and the social context where betrayal occurs is paramount (Freyd 1999, 5). In this paper, the radical Finnish-language newspapers are considered as an institution. Founded for social, ideological, and educational purposes, the radical newspapers formed a major source of information for the Finnish audience, thus, creating a mediated relationship with their readership that portrayed both dependency and trust.

Another theory employed in this study is the Text World Theory (TWT) that is fundamentally a reader response theory. TWT does not just concentrate on a particular text, the type of language used in the text or its composition but also acknowledges the context where the text is embedded. Text worlds that people build through reading are not constructed only through language but through contextual factors that surround and influence the language. These contextual factors are, for example, political, social, historical, and psychological issues that are connected to the readers' previous knowledge and experiences that in turn, influence the text's production and reception (Werth 1999, 103; Gavins 2007, 3; Canning 2017, 173). Text worlds are mental representations, human reasoning blocks, through which people understand the world around them and their experiences in that world. Sometimes, text-worlds are able to create such strong emotional experiences and even physical responses that they "can even start revolutions" (Gavins 2007, 10).

In this study, the premise is that the Finnish language newspapers were able to forge such a relevant relationship between the text and the reader that in the reader's mind, the text worlds started to parallel with the actual world. The reader's personal knowledge of culture and society, ideological beliefs, and everyday experiences found a springboard in the Finnish language newspapers that corroborated the reader's understanding of the world in which they lived.

If the Text-World Theory focuses on contextual questions around the text, the Frame Analysis more specifically focuses on the content of the information that the text conveys. Frame analysis examines agenda forming-setting decisions that determine the tone, scope, and parameters of information that is communicated to wider public (Barkho 2013, 3; D'Angelo & Kuypers 2010, 2–4). Frames function as an organizing tool to help readers understand the issue in hand by organizing information into issue frames. Furthermore, the Frame Analysis is about deciding on what issues make news. What pieces of empirical information are either included or excluded, what beliefs or viewpoints are emphasized or diminished, and whether any emotive or loaded words and expressions are used to guarantee a reaction in a reader are. These decisions influence knowledge formation, because news framing creates a space of the pre-organized thought that both directs or even shapes the readers' interpretation of the issues (Iyengar 1991, 3; Price & Tewksbury 1997, 173). In association with Karelian Fever, Frame Analysis raises questions about the ways the leftist Finnish-language newspapers used selective news framing that could have affected the rising of Karelian Fever. To what degree were the Karelian Fever Finns the objects of manipulative discourse, and to what extent was this discourse intentionally or unintentionally manipulative? What were the specific mechanisms through which betrayal was conducted, and what were the specific characteristics of constructing the idea and an image of America and Soviet Karelia that led to Karelian Fever? Were the North-American Finns' attitudes toward America and expectations of Soviet Karelia manufactured by the Finnish-language radical newspapers?

These questions might be a futile undertaking if the main concern is to evaluate the impartiality or objectivity of the news in the radical North-American Finnish-language newspapers. These newspapers were openly propagandist, living up to their

ideological ideals rather than journalistic ideals. They announced themselves to be the ardent, official, and main organs of socialist or communist ideology. They saw themselves as champions not only wanting to record and reflect their times (Downie 2001, 1) but to set out to make a case for a more just and safer world (Kaunonen 2010, 18). Being radical, they became a tool for resistance, rebellion, and social criticism and, thus, instrumental in creating radical movements (Lumsden 2014, 5): "The best weapons in the Workers' class struggle are their own organizations and the word press" (Toveri: August 11, 1920; Vapaus July 29, 1922). However, their open propagandist nature raises the question of the reader expectations regarding the criteria of rationality, truthfulness, and the ethics of journalism. Were the readers willingly unaware of how propaganda distorted not only the informational value of these newspapers but also the perception of social and discursive reality

Materials

The radical leftist newspapers and their special supplements served as a primary source material for this study. The Finnish language leftist press concentrated in New York, Fitchburg (MA), Astoria (OR), Hancock (MI), and Superior (WI) where the largest numbers of Finnish-Americans were settled (Kaunonen and Goings 2013, 20; Kivisto 1984, 72–73). Divided roughly, Toveri (The Comrade 1907–1931) and Toveritar (The Female Comrade 1911–1930) located on the West Coast, while Työläisnainen (The Workingwoman 1930–1936) in the Midwest, and Raivaaja (The Pioneer 1905–2009) in the East Coast. In Canada (Sudbury, Ontario) the most influential leftist newspaper was Vapaus (Freedom 1917–1974). These newspapers were selected based on their leftist political orientation. Their political stance became more distinctive in 1914–1915 when the Finnish Socialist Federation split between Socialist and the more radical IWW. After 1919 the battle line between Social Democrats and Communist was drawn.

The material was gathered from microfilmed runs of these newspapers from the Finnish-American Historical Archive (Finlandia College) and Immigration History Research Center (University of Minnesota). A total of three thousand pages between 1913–1936 was read for extracting news frames that were further categorized into issues frames. The issue frames in turn were selected by the salience of the themes that repeatedly appeared in news frames. The repeated themes captured the information and the core concepts that were analyzed in order to identify the elements of institutional betrayal. The institutions that are part of betrayal in this study are the political states—America, Finland, and the Soviet Union; ideological apparatuses—The Finnish-language newspapers and North-American Finns.

This kind of inquiry is not without difficulties. Difficulties lie in the nature of seeking to reach a better understanding of the inner workings of historical texts in their contemporary, "real-time" context and propagandist production. The newspaper articles themselves serve as circumstantial evidence and interpreting them leaves naturally much room for conjecture and supposition. Another challenge is the Finnish language itself. Leftist newspapers developed their own distinctive vocabulary for Socialism and Communism as well as for Capitalism that were greatly entwined with

the contemporary cultural political conventions and political history. Much is lost in a translation process, but the gist of the meaning of the specific words, metaphors, and expressions are given in separate explanations.

Analysis

Issue Frame: Staging Betrayal

The meaning of Karelian Fever in North America cannot be spoken in the absence of the context, both historical and political. Although North-American Finns shared the same ethnic background, it did not mean that they were a united group that lived and cooperated harmoniously. As any minority ethnic group, the Finns were divided along political, religious, and economic lines. However, it is reasonable to assume that they had a common national and cultural consciousness. Staging betrayal in Karelian Fever starts exactly in Finnish national consciousness that was deeply rooted in Karelia. Karelia is the birthplace of Kalevala, a Finnish national epic. Since its completion by Elias Lönnrot in 1835, Kalevala has had a distinctive mythic dimension in Finnish imagination and has strongly influenced the Finnish national consciousness. Empowering Finland to discover its unique nation-identifying elements, such as their own distinct cultural identity based on their own vernacular language and prevalent traditions, Kalevala became to represent primeval Finn and Finnishness—a national myth of origin—that strengthened the Finns' claim for their national independency from Russia. Consequently, it is plausible to argue that Karelia denoted a common, national consciousness and a construct of common cultural heritage (Pimiä 2012, 395) to which the majority of North-American Finns had already been predisposed.

By the time when the borders of independent Finland were ratified by the Peace Treaty of Tartu in 1920, Karelia had been divided into Finnish and the Soviet Eastern Karelia (Fingerroos 2012, 482). Soviet Russia was fighting on a three-front war: the Civil War between the Bolsheviks and internal, anti-Bolsheviks forces; the Liberation War involving multiple, separatist national uprisings of the minority nationalities (Karelia region included) fighting for their autonomy; the Defence War in the middle of the First World War repelling the intervention of the foreign armed forces (Kirkinen 1986, 341; Vituhnovskaya-Kauppala 2012, 86–108). Finland had just experienced its own class-based civil war between the Whites and the Reds in 1918 that ended with the victory of the Whites. An immediate escape of six-thousand Red Finns to the Soviet Eastern Karelia (Golubev & Takala 2014, 8), and the foundation of the Communist Party of Finland in Moscow in 1918 (Rentola 1998) reenforced Soviet Russia and Karelian's role as the leaders of the Proletarian.

In these years of turmoil (1918–1922), Soviet Karelia suffered tremendously because the wars and famine. However, the cruellest betrayer emerged from the colonial fantasy of Greater Finland—the grand narrative of the White Finns—that felt entitled to incorporate Eastern Soviet Karelia and its "Kindred people" into Finland. This ideology intensified into irredentist wars that engaged over 10,000 voluntary semi-military Finns (Kangaspuro 2000, 69; Engman 2005, 391; Roselius 2014, 119). In America,

the leftist press was outraged. The reason of Finland's participation in tearing Karelia apart like a "rabid dog" was understood as the Finnish capitalist greediness, anti-Soviet bacchanal, and White Fascism; an excuse that allows to continue the White's political terror against Karelians who "struggle to fight for their political and social emancipation" as the Reds did during the Finnish Civil War. It was a violation of a presumptive contract between the Finnish government and the defeated Reds, and as a result, it produced a psychological conflict that can be seen in a letter published in Toveritar. A young sister writes from the USA to his brother in Finland beseeching him not to participate in 'the White Butchers' war: "If you get conscripted, please, rather shoot a bullet through your head, but don't help overthrow the worker's kingdom. That would be the worst betrayal ever" ("Letter", June 24, 1922). It seemed as if the North American Leftist newspapers were reconstructing the war trauma of the Finnish Civil War through their numerous reports of inhumane treatment of Karelians. They created present-conflict/post-conflict settings on which the North-American Finns projected their anger, disappointment, and a sense of betrayal they had experience during the Finnish Civil War.

However, Finland's expansionist aspirations failed, and Karelia proudly declared the following proclamation published in Toveri:

> Let the motto of all Karelian workers and peasants be: We will not join Finland to become an area to be exploited by the Finns once we have been freed from slavery. We will never want to become the slaves for the Finnish capitalists, but what we want to do is to take care of our territories, live together with other workers and peasants in Soviet Russia, and build a new communist world. (Toveri August 25, 1920)

The stage for betrayal of Karelian Fever was set.

The dream of Greater Finland was replaced with Edward Gylling's vision of establishing Great Red Finland in Karelia. Gylling envisioned Karelia as the Soviet autonomous region that eventually would develop into an exemplary autonomous Soviet federation. The negotiations with the government of Soviet Russia had already started in 1918, and Lenin authorized Gylling's plan to transform Karelia into an autonomous Karelian Labour Commune in 1920 and in 1923 the name was changed to Karelian Autonomous Soviet Republic. The news of the Soviet's recognition of Karelia was received with enthusiasm in North America.

> Soviet Russia has become a promised country to the world's poor. The migrant who, decades before the war [WWI], had turned their gaze to America, which shimmered in their thoughts as a country of freedom and prosperity, are now turning their gaze and travel to Soviet Russia. In Soviet Russia will they find that paradise that they once thought to find in America. ("Going to Go and Build the Soviet -Karelia" Toveritar, May 30, 1920)

Gylling was nominated as a new head of Karelian government (Elmgren 2015, 287; Golubev & Takala 2014, 18; Gelb 1993, 1). Relying on Karelian vast timber supply,

Gylling's plan was to build an independent economic power region with full self-governing rights, unite Finnish nationalities,[1] ensure the predominance of the Finnish language and ethnic prestige (Kangaspuro 2000, 130; Golubev & Takala 2014, 33; Kurki 2018, 70). Gylling's ambitions also included to increase Soviet Karelia's political intervention in Finland by supporting socialist radicals and their revolutionary activities that would eventually lead to a revolution first in Finland and then expand to other Scandinavian countries until a new Scandinavian Soviet Republic, was born (Elmgren 2015, 305; Golubev & Takala 2014, 13; Kangaspuro 2000, 126). To fulfill his vision, Gylling needed more Finns to increase Finnish population; he needed skillful workers to fulfill acute labor shortage and to meet the quotas in production plans determined by Moscow; he also needed Finnish "ethnic proletariat" (Golubev & Takala 2014, 22) who knew the tenets of Socialism and were committed to the cause. As a result, in December 1930, Moscow gave Gylling permission to proceed with his plan, and a few months later the following advertisements were launched in the leftist, Finnish-language newspapers in North-America.

> A Battle Greetings to the Comrades Who are Emigrating to Soviet Karelia: "Emigrating to the country where a heroic giant of labor is standing with a dreadful sword in his hand, and with which he has beaten numerous enemies and will continue to beat them in the future; and in the other hand, he has a trowel with which he is creating a society, unprecedented in the history of mankind, radiating heroism and energy, a new and happier society in which each and every one feels that he is a human being among people. Side by side with them we all promise that we will give our best to the glorious cause" (Työmies: January 23, 1931).

Establishing the autonomous Karelia was an act of restorative justice, or even an indirect, post-victory for the Red Finns. Perhaps, it can be argued even further that establishing Karelia started a recovery process in the midst of the difficult migrant life in North America and after the betrayal of the American dream.

Issue Frame: State, Newspapers and Betrayal

In considering the role betrayal plays in the experiences of Karelian Fever, it is important to try to determine what was the state's ultimate betrayal, and, especially, an ultimate institutional betrayal that penetrated many levels of political and social life in the USA and Canada. As it is often confirmed in political research literature, the relationship between the state and its subjects is symbiotic (Busch, 2022. The relationship is based on mutual trust that is relational and conditional (Levi & Stoker 2000, 476). The oldest and simplest legal obligation of the state is to guarantee social protection and ensure human rights. The people in return are expected to show loyalty to the state, protect the nation's sovereignty, abide the laws, and pay fair taxes. Although it is not possible to reach consensus on every political, social, or moral issues, the government's failure to take appropriate action to protect its subjects from violence, discrimination, and illegalities of its institutions that have a capacity to harm amounts to institutional betrayal.

The first type of institutional betrayal entails the question of institutional power and authority at the state level, and the ways in which the state's ability and efficiency to ensure the correctness of their policy decisions. Epitomized in Raivaaja's supplement issue, Raivaaja Callender, the recurrent theme bluntly states that "The US Congress represents only the Capitalists" (Raivaaja Calendar 1914, 114). This statement reveals the core betrayal in American society that is the government itself. The government's betrayal stems from its ignorance and *willingness to ignore* the suffering that Social Darwinism with its doctrine of "survival of fittest" causes in people's everyday life. Raivaaja, Työläisnainen, and Toveri repeatedly accused the US government of Social Darwinism that not only formed the core of American Capitalism but was embedded in American Constitution: "The fathers of this country so skillfully adjusted the Constitution that it became to safeguard the continual concentration of wealth, land, and natural resources on fewer hands" (Toveri August 22, 1922). Capitalism and its central administration and social institutions carry mechanisms of betrayal and deceit. The core of the state institutional betrayal is its inability to govern and being indifferent to the consequences:

> In today's capitalist society, there are the most efficient means to improve and assist people's life. And, yet the deprivation is greater than ever before. On the other hand, there is every day the fiercest battle for bread, while at the same time there is the most deplorable struggle for making yet millions of dollars. This increases injustice and crude materialism in society that leads to the escalation of devastating fights between people for basic daily necessities (Toveritar, October 5, 1920).

The ultimate betrayal of Capitalism, endorsed by the government, is a gradual erosion of humanity itself.

Education is another state regulated institution that frequently becomes under the attack of the leftist press.

> In the United States, children are taught that they live in a republic where everybody is guaranteed the same opportunities, and that is up to them to become whatever they want to become. Our children are constantly told that they are equal. The aim of all this claptrap is to deceive and cover up the class differences and inequalities that form the backbone of the current system. The cunning skills of every teacher, journalist, and priest are put into practice in guiding, teaching, and influencing our youth to adapt to the capitalist system. (Toveritar July 18, 1920)

Toveritar clearly blames the school's institutional authority to create "false hope" or empty dreams which cannot come true for working class children. In addition, Työläisnainen and Toveritar often criticize education being too expensive and too time consuming for the working class children who start working at early age. The severest betrayal the education system commits against the working class is, however, that it imposes capitalist values on children. This does not only confuse the children but also lead to divided loyalties in a family.

The theme of capitalist betrayal in education haunted the leftist newspapers throughout the Roaring Twenties. For example, in 1930 Työläisnainen continues denouncing education to be nothing but "bourgeois pastime" aiming at teaching the students to hate the Proletariat. Warnings are distributed repeatedly about "bourgeois poisoning" in education, and parents are seriously recommended to become active in their children's education. The parents' obligation is to subscribe "New Pioneer", the socialist children's newspaper: "New Pioneer addresses class struggle issues in "a child-friendly" way. In addition, New Pioneer is not only easily understandable but makes reading enjoyable" (Työläisnainen May 17, 1930). Numerous articles in the leftist press repeatedly delivered the message that education cannot be trusted because it is but one form of power structure in the capitalist system.

The state betrayal in the Finnish radical newspapers was consistently connected with the state policies or state related institutions, organizations, and private businesses which often were in interdependent relationship with the state. One of the most complex interdependent relationships existed between the state, its preferential migration policies, businesses, and labor force. The leftist Finnish language newspapers brought into a sharp focus the relations between the state's disputes over immigration and the working class, between the working class and employers, and their impact on Finns. In 1920s, when America had a labor surplus, the federal government issued the Immigration Act of 1924 that placed a strict quota system for different nationalities. Finland was one of these nationalities. Only a few hundred Finns were allowed to enter the USA each year, and their acquisition of citizenship was often denied. These "new" Finnish immigrants were considered as "distinct other" or "distinct race" (Kaunonen & Goings 2013, 46) whose taciturn, clannish nature and lack of language skills prevented them from adapting to the new culture. Conspicuous in protests, strikes, organized unions, and socialist clubs, the Finns started to find their names on the "blacklist" and were singled out as anarchist, nihilist, and the Jackpine Savages (Ross 1977, 117; Alanen 1981, 45; Ronning 2003, 359; Huhta 2014, 170). In its news article "Persecution of Foreigners", Toveri describes how the status of immigrants started to change: "Foreigners are in a sad position in this country. They rights are minor, next to none, and downright arbitrary despotism is in rife against foreigners." (Toveri, 1920). Advocating a strict immigration policy, the American mainstream press was also identified as a betrayer of the immigrants: "This country's press has systematically increased hatred against foreigners […] by using lies and all kinds of dirty tricks (Toveri August 10, 1920). Ten years later, Toveri sarcastically lamented the predicament of America: "If there were not so many foreigners, and especially, those radical foreigners, things would be very good in this country (Toveri, October 21, 1931). Becoming publicly discredited, feared, or stigmatized is a form of emotional abuse that leads to more discrimination, belittlement, isolation, and questioning one's whole social existence in North America. It seemed as if the time had come to radical Finns to answer the questions posed by Työläisnainen: "Needless to ask: Who represents brutality and who civilization? Who is promoting justice and who is not? Who protects the workers and who threatens to destroy it (Työläisnainen April 12, 1933).

Against this backdrop, it seems that trust between the Finns, America, its institu-

tions, and even American themselves had started to erode (Handlin 1961, 9). People's political cynicism, disaffection, and alienation frequently result in people resigning from being part of the social contract (Berdufi & Dushi 2015, 396). Under these circumstances people do not have to obey and can even chose another form of social system. An American system where "money prevails, few rules, and people are oppressed and persecuted" (Toveritar: August 21, 1917) was rotten. However, a suitable replacement is available in the Soviet Union:

> While here, in America, where the Capitalist braggarts are boasting about their riches, the working class are forced to succumb to misery; many are forced to live next to rubbish heaps while in the Soviet Union, the Proletariat have created the foundations of the socialist system and have taken a giant step toward developing their own cultivation. (Työnainen: April 19, 1933)

Issue Frame: Newspapers and Society and Institutional Betrayal

Distrust motivates monitoring the relationships for any misdeeds or for any signs that convey the idea that might severe the relationship even further (Levi & Stoker 2000, 476). Distrust also awakens a latent awareness of political consciousness that raises the questions of the issues of equality, justice, and alternative ways to organize society. While the Finns' trust continued to diminish toward American state and its government, their trust started to diminish also toward incumbent authorities. The Finnish-language leftist newspapers repeatedly reported various occasions in 1920–1930 that showed the government's inability to govern without having to resort to coercion or deceit that often was sanctioned by the judiciary, the key institution to build trust between people and the state (Knack & Zak 2003). Police brutality, unlawful arrests, and deportations were but a few examples of legalized abuse whose purpose was to secure the freedom of the "captains of industry" and "mining and timber barons" to pursue their laissez-faire capitalism and satisfy their personal greed. This was best accomplished by supporting and implementing anti-workers policies and oppressive actions against them (Työläisnainen April 5, 1933). The leftist newspapers repeatedly accused the government of allowing "shady deals" in legal matters and deploying the Law against the working class and the opponents of the government.

> How lawlessness flourishes by law because corruption is so strong. The law worships and allows the lawlessness. But you've another thing coming when this police and judges, bought by Al Capon, get their fangs on the unemployed! Then the gavels rap, gas bombs fly, and random judgments are delivered. Then and there these officials of law are bursting with their legitimacy and, consequently, unwelcomed citizens are found and arrested, and foreign immigrants deported. (March 3, 1931 TN)

The law had become "criminal" and thus a force of betrayal. "Corrupted" Law became a popular theme in leftist newspapers, and they eagerly covered legal abuses occurring all over North America and the rest of the world. In America as well as in Canada, the case that caught much of attention from the Finnish radical papers was

the "Scottsboro Juttu" (Scottsboro Story). In this story, eight negro youngsters were accused for "raping" two white female prostitutes. The case became an epitome of social as well as institutional betrayal against the principles of working class fighting for the rights of the poor. The newspapers fiercely argued that the poor, just as these boys, do not receive justice because they simply did not matter, and because the poor, as these boys, no money for the defense (Finnish leftist newspapers furiously campaigned to raise money for the legal fees). In addition, the court needed a scapegoat. The Scottsboro case challenged the workers to show their solidarity which thy did by protesting in front of the courthouse and fighting physically against the Ku Klux Klan lynching mob that had threatened to hang the accused boys. "Scottsboro Juttu" emphasized the socialist tenet to abolish racism ("a greatest betrayal in American Demoracy"), "because class struggle does not know race or nationality boundaries". Although "the Capitalist class has always tried to keep the black and white worker as far apart as possible" the white and negroes alike should present a united front to "Alabama's bloodthirsty police and judges" and show that people refuse to be betrayed by their "rotten murder conspiracy" (Työläisnainen April 12, 1933). The reaction of the Finnish radical newspapers revealed deep political mistrust and racial tensions that furthermore divided the nation. The Scottsboro's case also revealed the institutional betrayal trauma when the allegedly trusted institution, the judiciary, fails to uphold the promise to treat everybody the same.

Other salient issues that carried the accusations of betrayal between 1920-1933 were the First World War (IWW), Prohibition, religion, and gender politics. The IWW became to be the most deceptive governmental force that could severely betray the Socialist cause. Participating in the war would be betrayal to American Socialists because entering the war is against Marxist ideology (Hummasti 1981,181; Shannon 1955, 7). However, the major bulk of the army consisted of the working-class men, and therefore, they would be fighting against their comrades at war, and this would seriously damage the international working-class solidarity. Moreover, the war was utterly dishonorable, caused by the imperialist aspirations of capitalist nations by the "capitalist-mongers, and any Socialist or Communist who supported the war (as they ended up doing in Europe as well as in North America) was considered supporting the Capitalists and "their butchering armies" (Toveri 1916), thus betraying their Comrades.

Regardless the Socialists' fierce, anti-war rhetoric, the betrayal emerged from the reverent spirit of their patriotism. A significant majority of the world Socialists become to support their country's war efforts, and as a result the Socialist Party split into two in 1914: Social Democrats and Communists. (Kostiainen 2014, 140). The radical newspapers tried to patch the division by assuring their readers that "We Are All Socialists", and that the split was nothing but a "family quarrel" (Vapaus Jan.1. 1920). The split was not supposed to affect any important principal issues of Socialism, but the rift between the Socialists and Communists grew. The core issue of the dispute was a disagreement of deciding the most efficient procedure to make a transition to Socialism in America. Whether Socialism was to be attained through a direct action of revolution or through parliamentary reforms caused great friction. What started as "family quarrel" escalated into a full-blown conflict when the action procedures of

"newly baptized Communists" and "weakling noskets" were tested in severe labor disputes such as organizing strikes. Action procedures became to represent "correct social consciousness" (Hummasti 1981, 186) that was to become represented either in Socialist inactivity or Communist activity. The Communist saw the Socialist's inactivity as a betrayal both in America as well as in Europe. A serious display of the Socialist's ineptitude occurred when the German Social Democrats did not accept the Communist Party's proposal to hold a joint Big Strike against rising fascism. Työläisnainen bitterly comments on the Socialists' betrayal that resulted in Hitler's takeover: "As if all those "gutless wonders in the Social Democrat Party who refused to fight together with the Communist were not treacherous enough, no, they had to go and betray the workers" (Työläisnainen April 5, 1933). To a large sense, the Socialists broke the worker's collectivism and failed to commit to their common cause, and thus, betrayed their political fidelity to the Proletariat.

Perhaps the only area of life where the Red Fins and the Church Finns were able to identify "the common enemy" was the issue of excessive alcohol use amongst the Finns (Karni 1981, 170). However, in newspapers their official stance divided their ranks. The Church Finns (the Conservatives) were judgmental and considered alcohol abuse as a moral weakness and a character flaw, while the Red Finns recognized alcohol as yet another way to exploit workers. Although alcohol was a salient theme both in Toveritar and Työläisnainen (not as frequently addressed in Raivaaja and Toveri) the rhetoric, used in the articles regarding alcohol was considerably milder compared to the newspapers' usual style: "We have to fight hard against the evil of drink that is only one of the curses that the capitalists have created. We have to fight hard […] against any kinds of secretive parties, debauchers, who lower the morale of our class and paralyze organized political activity in the ranks of the united Proletariat (Työläisnainen June 2, 1931). The reason for the mild language and tone might be that the alcohol abuse was not only a "capitalist curse" but a personal problem that many wanted to hide. The side effects of alcohol abuse such as, public brawling, gambling, prostitution, and loss of reputation as a reliable worker, carried over into people's homes in the forms of domestic violence, loss of income, and shame (Hummasti 2014: 96). Another reason for "tempered" rhetoric might be that "the capitalist curse" served as an entrepreneurial opportunity also for Socialist Finns (ibid., 93). In a sense, the Proletariat was in pact with the "Capitalist curse" both as consumers as well as its producers. Therefore alcohol as a betrayal mechanism was ambiguous because it involved the idea of self-betrayal that makes one a victim but also a perpetrator.

Prostitution as a vice was treated entirely as an outcome of exploitation. Prostitution was generally seen as a vice within a common social framework rooted in institutional and political power structures and in the traditions of "polite society." Women's radical newspapers, especially, frequently distanced themselves from the topic by situating prostitution in other countries. The articles concerning prostitution were written as a kind of counterattack against the Capitalists' propaganda about women's position in communist system. Työläisnainen reveals the Capitalists' fear toward Communism that destroys the "sacredness of home and feminine purity" by making women "a common property" [equivalent to prostitution] and by "socializing women

they [the Communists] destroy the moral sense women have inherited from their fathers." As Työläisnainen mockingly concludes, from the capitalist point of view the betrayal mechanism is not as much within prostitution itself or its power to damage both gender and sexual relations, as it is within a woman who allows herself to be turned into a communist female subject, and who with this action alone destroys the family nucleus - "the cornerstone of social structure" (Työläisnainen May 17, 1931). In radical newspapers, Japan was frequently used as an example of the double-standard capitalist morality that the Capitalists America considered as a highly developed civilization, a forefront of highest ethical principles and moral discipline that "proudly stands as a bulwark against Communism." Women's radical newspapers run several feature stories about Japan's horrible tradition of "legalized" prostitution. "If this kind of social action is approved in a highly regarded capitalist country, we would recommend the Capitalists think carefully how sacred women's position as legalized prostitutes under the Capitalist system really is (Työläisnainen May 17, 1931).

Työläisnainen as well as Toveritar acknowledge women's own responsibility to awaken to and recognize the state of their own specific exploitation: "During the good times, we dreamed, and we read the novels. No more serious questions aroused interest in us. We thought that politics belonged to men. But if years ago [women] had gone deeper into acquiring information, at such critical times as we have now, women would have things different (April 15, 1931).

The last betrayal mechanism that emerged from the capitalist system was the church: "There is hardly any other movement in world history that would have been so shamelessly false, pursued so immense injustice, or committed so horrible crimes, shown so much brutality, and a vile betrayal (Toveritar December 20, 1921). The radical newspapers all determined religion as "opium" according to Marxist decree. Religion is "capitalist propaganda" that the priests, "capitalist agents", preach. They "force you [the working class] to worship a non-existing god so that you would remain obedient to capitalist classes; that you wouldn't start rebelling against the misery that the Capitalists are guilty of "(Raivaaja May 11, 1928). The Church is guilty of many betrayals, but the greatest betrayal is when the priests stands beside "the worker's open grave promising salvation and eternal peace while he in his life has never done an honest day's work" (Työläisnainen March 23, 1932). The church has oppressed people for centuries and has slaved women by creating an image of women that emphasizes women's inferiority and evilness. The newspapers unanimously agree that the church is an enemy of the working class, and women. The anti-dote is scientific atheism that was made a compulsory subject in curriculum in Soviet Union.

The First World war, Prohibition and alcohol, prostitution and religion were often identified as betrayal mechanisms whose aim is to destroy working class consciousness and replace it with false consciousness (Pines 1993, 4). False consciousness forces the workers believe that they have common interests they could share or a common goal they could reach together with the ruling capitalist class. False consciousness simply aims at deceiving, dulling, conditioning, and controlling the Proletariat's class consciousness resulting in the confusion of the mind that prevents them from seeing the reality of their strenuous circumstances and from remembering who their real

enemy is: Capitalism. In real life, as Työläisnainen warns its readers, the capitalists do not want to have anything to do with the working class:

> The writer who worked as a maid had heard how her employer, the lady of the house, had described to her little child who and what kind of a person is an unemployed proletarian: "This type [unemployed] of a proletarian is a 'bomb.' They are dirty and they smell, and furthermore, they are brutal people. (April 5, 1933)

This quote alleges that the Proletariat, as a class, is alienated from presumed capitalist norms of civility, self-control, and the ability for personal self-sustaining. Stereotyping the unemployed workers as sub-humans, who, on top of everything are dangerous, create an unbridgeable gap between the classes. The Capitalist refuse to recognize an unemployed worker as a kin – a fellow human being and instead engages in creating a protective barrier between them. Therefore, the separate worlds of the community and the mode of class-consciousness with their respective attitudes of suspicion and bitterness to each other is unbridgeable, and the only solution is abolishing capitalism with its artificial and fixed power structures.

Issue Frame: Betrayal, Propaganda, and Newspapers

The text worlds created in the issue frames painted a very dark view about the United States or future prospects to continue living in the USA. Approaching the era of Great Depression, propaganda machinery—the Finnish-language leftist press – started to receive additional potent aid from the Finnish communist agitators and Soviet-Karelian recruiters. One of the most high-profile speakers and agitators was John (Jussi) Latva whose recruitment speech in Vancouver 1930 aroused great enthusiasm in Finnish communities both in Canada and in the United States. Being one of the main organizers of Karelian Fever, the head of Toronto office of the Karelian Technical Aid Committee,[2] and the editor of the Communist newspaper Vapaus (Freedom), his affect-induced propaganda speech electrified all that information of the benefits of Communism that had already been repeated and forged in the radical newspapers. His speech is a rhetorical performance that builds up "feelings of we-ness" (Appadurai 2006, 59) and belonging. He is able to construct a sense of home that restores the sense of security:

> But I will give you a message of joy and hope. There is room in the Soviet Union for all of you and your families. In the sunny, warm Soviet Union, the world's largest imperium, where the sun never sets. In Soviet–Karelia there is now a great shortage of labor. And just for you, the Finns, tens of thousands of cozy jobs are offered in the immediate vicinity of old homeland, in beautiful Eastern Karelia, where the deep coniferous forests seem to hum our mother country's beautiful hymns. There, modern, bright, warm factories invite you to start your work. And remember, you come to a country that speaks your language and knows your culture. Lenin himself has promised that Eastern Karelia will always remain an autonomous Soviet republic where Finnish will remain the main language. And what Lenin has promised Stalin will keep.

It is easy to dismiss such blandishments as simple deceit but stating a fact that over six to twelve thousand North-American Finns put their trust on Communist ideology and the promise of the Soviet Communist regime, raises the question of what made these Finns so susceptible to Latva's oratory. One theory of what is happening is that Latva reinvents Finnish ethnicity and ethnic identity that had been weakened due the acute sense of social vulnerability in the middle of Great Depression and unemployment. He offers certainty that is purged of all insecurities and cruelties of the capitalist society. In his speech, Latva relentlessly uses feelings. They can influence both thoughts and actions (Berkowitz 2000, 3), and therefore, they are one of the most powerful tools of propaganda. In Latva's speech, the feelings operate as a betrayal mechanism that evoke ultra-positive mental images that fired the Finnish audience's imagination. Latva's speech can be understood as a kind of "delivery speech" that conveys almost a Biblical like message that Finns now have an opportunity to leave their "wage slavery" to which they have been submitted in the Capitalist America. He conjures up a mental landscape that leads Finns back to the old familiar solidarities of ethnically defined national community. In Latva's speech, the core stimulus "Karelia" operates as an emotion related to the stimulus that represents not only a familiar phenomenon of Finland's geography, but also carries the spiritual notion synonymous to home.

In North American context, the Finns had portrayed solidarity in the forms of national belonging, ideological partisanship, and party politics. However, solidarity is not immune to betrayal but can become a tool for betrayal when the idea of solidarity is politicized (Ardent 1995, 16). Combining political ideology and solidarity forms "narrowness" that cause a distortion of reality by "giving a rise to a definite world view which, once adopted, is immune to further experiences in the world because it has hitched itself firmly to one perspective" (Ardent 1995, 7–8). In Latva's speech, the Finns' ideological and national solidarity created the notion of "special peoplehood" evoking their own sense of national self-worth that in America had been become tarnished. Latva showed them the possibility for agency, and transformation. Socialism that they had been reading about in newspapers had now a human face that looked like a Finn. The betrayal emerges not only from Latva's enhancement of ideas and promises of Communism but its capacity to alter the perception of reality that, in turn was enhanced by the Finns' own idealization of the Proletarians as a superior group with superior ideals.

In an effort to represent a new socialist reality in Soviet Karelia that was still in the process of emerging, the newspapers adopted a strictly anti-capitalistic stance and idealization of Karelia. If Karelia was not able to compete with American material wealth it did so with Karelian spirit. Even the news of poverty, griminess, and occasional hunger was reported in such a way that they became to represent privileges not hardships. The ultra-positive attitude was not self-deception but true faith in what had been promised. Battle cries from Karelia were reported regularly in different radical newspapers. They all followed the same style and content as illustrated in Hannes Järvimäki's correspondence from 'Little Karjala:' "There has been a big change in our little Karelia. The change that has made the Capitalists nervous. They have now a dangerous competitor who has already made a big cut in their purses, and in the future, it seems to be becoming even more threatening (Toveri November 16, 1930).

Conclusion

Studying the Karelian Fever experience from the perspective of Betrayal Trauma Theory, Frame Analysis, and the Text World Theory, the research interest focused on Finnish-American radical communist newspapers and their role in creating Karelian Fever in the Finnish-American community. Alleged institutional betrayal perpetrated by the radical Finnish language newspapers is embedded in their narrowness. The newspapers explicitly produced by and for the working class, and, thus, they indulged in their own political preferences. They did this openly, but at the same time hid the fact that their framing policies will narrow the readers' access to any alternative information. This raises a question of who had the real the power: the readers or radical newspapers? It can be argued that newspapers had the power, but right away this answer raises another question: Did the radical Finnish language newspapers betray their reading audience. The answer to that question is ambiguous. On the other hand, being ethnic, the leftist Finnish-American newspapers were on the side of the Finns in a strange and often hostile environment but at the same time they themselves created hostility toward North American; they voiced the real grievances of the Finnish immigrant community but at the same time perpetuated hate speech and blame; they wowed to strengthen the Finns' resolve and belief in the universal Proletarian cause (Hummasti 1981, 182), but at the same time required unflinching loyalty to Communism. They identified betrayers everywhere, but because of their unwillingness not to engage in any critical dialogue, they did become betrayers.

From the vantage point of 2021, it is hard to conceive of a period in the USA's history when immigrant Finns were considered dangerous and unwanted radicals. Notwithstanding, the Finns caught in Karelian Fever were people who imagined it possible to become their own masters of workers' emancipation; agents who could reconstruct their society in new, more egalitarian, and just ways. They were not mindless zealots whose devotion was a form of false consciousness caused by relentless propaganda. They became a tool for the Soviet Communist agendas through their faith in collective struggle and solidarity. In the framework of the current world, where the rise of radical ideas and movements (ISIS, Brexit, Yellow Vest movement, the resurgent right-wing nationalism, hybrid war, false news), increasingly punitive anti-immigrant policies (detention, an increasing number of denial of refugee status, and deportation), and generally more restrictive attitudes toward immigrants have a disturbing parallel to Karelian Fever that suddenly does not seem such a historically distant or politically and socially irrelevant event. Millions of peoples around the world are on the move, looking for social change that could improve their living standards. It is sobering to reflect that Finns' vision of the better life and future in the Proletarian Paradise in the Soviet Karelia is still utopian for so many living in the contemporary world. To quote Arendt, it was then as it is now "to do something, heroic or criminal, which was unpredictable and undetermined by anybody else."

Notes

1 Gylling wanted at least 50 per cent of the population to consist of Finns and Karelians (Elmgren 2015, 305).
2 Headquartered in New York, the Karelian Technical Aid Committee was the main office responsible for the recruitment and emigration of Finns to Soviet Karelia; it had several local offices in the areas with large Finnish population (see Golubev & Takala 2014, 29).

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Odd One Out: Writers Addressing Othering and Exclusion in Finland

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Abstract
This article examines how authors with migrant backgrounds address 'othering' and exclusion and the consequences of these processes in Finland. The article elicits various viewpoints on the so-called insidious trauma and explicates harmful interaction in everyday encounters that may give rise to insidious trauma. The research material includes three autobiographical works, one novel, and one collection of short stories. The material was analyzed through qualitative content analysis. In the material, othering appears as exoticization or categorization of 'the other,' based on any difference or assumption of difference. The means of exclusion can be direct or indirect; rejection, silence or silencing, ignoring, language exclusion, microaggressions, and institutionalized exclusionary discourses. The repetitive and continuous experiences of othering and exclusion may cause an insidious trauma and hinder the development of agency, cultural citizenship, and belonging for people entering new communities.

Keywords: insidious trauma, othering, exclusion, migration, harmful interaction, cultural citizenship, Finland

Introduction

> What can be done, for example, with ice? While we may approach it in a spirit of friendship, as we do the country we now call home, it pins us down. It leaves us bruised, hurting, and fearful. And if, in the end, it opens itself up to us, it does so only to swallow us up and drown us. (*Sinut*, 63)[1]

The above extract describes how a person who, upon emigrating to Finland, compares settling in their new home country to encountering ice. It causes bruising, pain, and fear until it finally gives way to them, swallowing them up and drowning them. On a broader level, this example suitably describes a situation in which an individual attempts to achieve agency in their new home country, integrate into a new society, and embody a cultural citizenship in which their difference is recognized. In this example, the attempt is unsuccessful and the experience is negative, harmful, and even violent.

According to the EU-MIDIS-II (2017) survey, immigrants, their descendants, and ethnic minorities experience discrimination in Europe in all aspects of their lives. The survey was completed by 25,515 people of whom 38% had experienced discrimina-

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tion based on their migrant background during the last five years or in more than one area of their everyday life (EU-MIDIS-II 2017, 13–14, 21). Discrimination occurred in professional settings, access to housing, interacting with educational administrators, or when accessing public and private sector services (Ibid). Furthermore, 24% of respondents had experienced hate-motivated harassment (ibid., 16). The majority experienced harassment in the form of offensive or threatening comments, offensive gestures or inappropriate staring, or, for example, harassment online.

The report states that discrimination and harassment diminish the trust minorities and migrant groups place in their societies. Moreover, these experiences reduce the likelihood of these people participating in their local labor markets, education systems, and general society (EU-MIDIS-II 2017, 18). In Finland, individuals with migrant backgrounds face similar problems (e.g., Heponiemi et al. 2018; Liebkind et al. 2016; Makkonen 2000; Rastas 2005; 2007; Öblom & Antfolk 2017). According to a national survey published in 2019, approximately 40% of the population with a foreign background had experienced discrimination in Finland (Rask and Castaneda 2019, 229, see also summary in English ibid., 272).

Repetitive and continuous discrimination, bullying, or other harmful forms of interaction, such as various forms of microaggression (Sue et al. 2007; Nadal et al. 2015), can negatively impact a person's wellbeing, their ability to work, and their feelings of self-worth (e.g., Nadal et al. 2015, 158–59; Hawker & Boulton 2000; Rigby 2001). For example, exclusion – or the persistent threat of it – causes individuals to experience quantifiable social pain (Wesselmann et al. 2016, 3). At worst, the prolonged presence of these kinds of stressors in a person's life, coupled with the person's attempts to adjust to a stressful situation, can lead to the so-called insidious trauma (Kaplan 2007, 143; Facemire 2018, 9–10; Witte 1996, 13–22; Perez Foster 2001; Brunnet et al. 2020). Traumatic experiences may hinder the development of agency, participation, and feelings of belonging in traumatized individuals further complicating the construction of cultural citizenship.

This article[2] examines how migrant narrators address othering (otherizing) and exclusion in their works and how these processes affect their sense of belonging and constructions of cultural citizenship in their new home country, Finland. This article seeks to answer two main research questions: 1) What kinds of experiences of othering and exclusion do authors with migrant backgrounds in Finland address in their work? 2) How are experiences of othering and exclusion reflected in the narrators' sense of self and belonging? Through these questions this article attempts to elicit perspectives on insidious trauma and explicate the potentially harmful experiences of othering and exclusion in everyday encounters.

The aim of this article is to consider the possible connection between the processes of othering and exclusion and the development of insidious trauma. As Burge (2020) has noted, literature can provide an essential perspective on the lives, cultures, and identities of migrating people that contributes to the overall understanding of contemporary migration and its history.

This article is not an examination of migrant literature but an attempt to shed light on the phenomenon of insidious trauma through literary works written by migrant

and border crossing authors in the context of Finland. Nevertheless, the subject of this article is situated in the larger context of the so-called migrant literature (“migration literature,” “migrant writing”), which has been recognized as one of the significant new literature genres in the 21st century (Glesener 2016). According to Glesener (2016), migrant literature has been called “new world literature” that reflects peoples’ everyday experiences in contemporary multicultural and multilingual contexts in a globalized world.

Glesener finds migrant literature also reflects many themes linked to feelings of exclusion and othering that represent a global condition of migrating and border-crossing people. Therefore, the works analyzed in this article do not only reflect migrants’ experiences in the context of Finland, but also the experiences of many migrating people in today’s world. Furthermore, the works analyzed in this article could also be characterized by concepts of ‘transnational literature’ and ‘cross-border literature’ that, according to Nissilä (2018, 115), do not stress the national background of the authors but promote conceptual thinking outside national frames.

Plenty of research has been published on migrant literature and different types of traumas, especially traumas that often result from violence, war, terror, catastrophe, and similar large-scale traumatizing events. Other types of traumas, such as insidious trauma, CPTSD[3], repetitive, everyday encounters, such as othering and exclusion, that are traumatizing to some groups of people, have also been discussed in recent literature and film research (Bekers, Helff & Merolla 2009; Wang 2016), however, significantly less than the first type of trauma.

Theoretical Background and Key Concepts

The theoretical background of this article lies at the intersection of multidisciplinary trauma research, communication studies, and multidisciplinary research into borders and mobilities, including migration research. In the field of multidisciplinary trauma research, the article is situated within the new wave of trauma research that began in the 1990s and started to evolve towards increased multidisciplinarity (Caruth 2016, Afterword, 1–3; Kaplan 2005, 25). At the same time, new alternative conceptualizations of trauma were formulated, and the so-called insidious trauma, experienced by many ethnic and other minorities, became recognized as a research topic (Brown 1991: 128). In the 2000s, the focus of multidisciplinary trauma research shifted from the psychology of trauma toward the cultural and societal contexts of trauma, its language, and, for example, the power relations that control and regulate the narration of trauma (Balaev 2014, 2–6).

In the context of communication and interaction studies, the article is connected to research on harmful interaction from the perspective of the asymmetrical and harmful use of power (Herkama 2012; Monks & Coyle 2011; Pörhölä 2009; Salmivalli & Peets 2018, 303). In the field of multidisciplinary research into borders and mobilities, the article centers on the debate around the encountering and crossing of different societal and cultural borders, various bordering processes (Wilson & Donnan 2012; Van Houtum & Van Naerssen 2002), the construction of cultural citizenship, and the participa-

tion and agency of migrants in their new home countries (Jensen 2011; Andrew et al. 2005; Ong 1996; Rosaldo 1994). Within this theoretical framework, the key concepts in this article are the processes of othering and exclusion, insidious trauma, and cultural citizenship, which are fundamentally connected to the concepts of agency and inclusion.

In this article, othering and exclusion are understood as forms of asymmetric or abusive use of power and as a form of oppression between individuals and groups (Facemire 2018, 9). More broadly speaking, othering refers to situations in which a person or group of people are seen as being fundamentally or naturally different or alien. Through the processes of othering, a person or a group of people are represented through stereotypes and are objectified and essentialized, sometimes in simplifying or exaggerating ways (Westinen & Lehtonen 2016, 17–18; Lehtonen 2015, 264–68; Juhila 2012, 175–225; Pälli 2003, 123–25; Hall 1997b, 257–58). Othering is based on demarcating 'we' and 'other' from each other. However, this demarcation creates homogenous assumptions of both 'we' and 'other' and hides the particularity of individuals and the heterogeneity of both categories (Lehtonen & Löytty 2003, 7–8).

The academic debate around othering has involved proponents from various disciplines (Hall 1997b, 234–38). One of the main driving forces behind the debates is Edward Said's *Orientalism* (1978), which addressed othering in the context of postcolonialism. *Orientalism* critically examined the notion of the non-European 'other' produced in the discourse of colonial Europeans and the image of 'the other' in relation to Europeans, whereby 'the other' was presented "in a reductionist, distancing, and pathologizing way" (Jensen 2011, 64; Said 1978). Indeed, 'the other' was simultaneously "exoticized," "strange," and an inferior or negative counter-image to that of 'the European' (Harris 2018, 117).

According to Jensen (2011, 64–67), Gayatri Spivak has been considered one of the first researchers to define othering as a concept systematically. In Spivak's definition, othering is a multifaceted process, including interlocking systems of oppression. Othering may take the form of racism, sexism, or symbolic denigration based on social class and the formation of an identity connected to this denigration. In Spivak's conception of 'the other,' the question is not one of its exoticism but, rather, one of solely viewing 'the other' as inferior. Othering has also been discussed in terms of intersectional othering enacted at the intersection of various factors, such as 'race,' ethnicity, and gender (Jensen 2011, 67; Hall 1997b, 225). In cultural studies, Stuart Hall (1997a) has been one of the central scholars to continue and deepen the theorization of 'the other' and the processes of othering.

We understand exclusion as a social phenomenon that arise from the interactions between several people. In this kind of interaction, someone is (intentionally) excluded from everyday activity. Therefore, for example, Abrams & Killen (2014, 2), Pikkumäki & Peltola (2017, 10), and Salmivalli (2010) understand exclusion as a phenomenon strongly connected to group identity. Exclusion also refers to an individual's experience of isolation from others, both physically and emotionally (Sunwolf & Leets 2004, 206–210; Wesselmann et al. 2016, 5).

Furthermore, exclusion refers to individuals or specific groups being denied the

means of entry to the social spheres in which matters about themselves are managed: they are invisible and unheard. For example, exclusion can be understood as a consequence of othering of migrants (Löytty 2016, 161–62), who are excluded from the participatory social space in which people can become visible agents or negotiate their inclusion in this space (Zobl & Drüeke 2012, 1). Moreover, according to Grosz (2003), exclusion can emerge as a product of the discursive violence inherent to language, writing, and cultural practices that can other, humiliate, and invalidate. Discursive violence can not only take the form of aggressive hate speech, but it can also become manifest through refined, subtle, and hurtful language usage (Heywood 2021).

At one extreme, othering and exclusion may involve physical and verbal violence or the threat of violence. At the other extreme, everyday encounters constitute othering and exclusion through more subtle, refined, and hidden means, such as various forms of microaggression (microassaults, microinsults, and microinvalidations) (Sue et al. 2007). Sue et al. (2007, 273) note that the forms of microaggression toward ethnic minorities are everyday verbal, behavioral, or humiliating acts, which, intentionally or not, communicate hateful, demeaning, or otherwise harmful racial slurs. The perpetrators of microaggression, however, are sometimes unaware of their negative actions when they interact with racial or ethnic minorities.

While othering and exclusion are not automatically understood as bullying, they share some of the same qualities as bullying when experienced constantly and repeatedly. Bullying is also a matter of the systematic abuse of power (Monks & Coyle 2011, 2; Rainivaara & Karhunen 2006, 10; Salmivalli & Peets 2018, 303). Bullying is defined as a long-term process in which an individual is subjected to systematic and repeated offensive and/or aggressive behavior by another individual, group, or community, and the target finds it difficult to defend themselves or to escape the situation (e.g., Einarsen 1999, 16; Rainivaara & Karhunen 2006, 9).

In this article, insidious trauma refers to the cumulatively traumatizing experience of, for example, situations in which a person is repeatedly othered and excluded (Craps 2010, 54–55; Facemire 2018, 9–10; Nadal et al. 2015, 58). In contrast to trauma caused by sudden events, insidious trauma is not caused by isolated incidents of violence or forceful or threatening events; instead, it gradually accumulates over a long period, for example, in 'everyday' chronic conditions (Brown 1991; Oakley 1996). Insidious trauma may also be caused by difficult experiences that, as the subjects of discrimination, specific subordinated individuals or groups experience in their everyday lives as a result of social structures (Kaplan 2007, 144; Nadal et al. 2015). Insidious trauma may also be experienced by an individual from an oppressed or subordinated minority group that has been subjected to violence, the threat of violence, or discrimination, even though the individual has not directly experienced violence or discrimination in their own life (Kaplan 2007, 144; Jasinskaja-Lahti, Liebkind & Vesala 2002, 142–45; cf. *minority stress* Meyer 1995).

In insidious trauma, violence does not necessarily threaten a person's physical wellbeing; instead, it is a question of violence against one's soul and spirit (Brown 1991, 128). Accordingly, behind the trauma lies an attack (aggression) against the subject's own identity, which fundamentally shatters the individual's sense of self-worth

and acceptability (Kaplan 2007, 147). Insidious trauma may appear as depression, feelings of shame, withdrawal from social relationships, social anxiety, or the belief that one is not as good or capable as others (Kaplan 2007, 143).

Individual's experience is significantly affected by how their surrounding community relates to their group and experiences. Migrant people in new communities are often treated similarly to other targeted minorities. In Kaplan's view (2007, 144), for example, gendered minorities often experience that they are regarded as being "less than other citizens and inherently wrong." This article does not contend that every migrant would experience trauma due to othering and exclusion. According to Facemire (2018, 10), traumatization can be affected by, for example, an individual's susceptibility to stressors. A person in a fraught or vulnerable position may be traumatized by relatively mild stressors, whereas a less vulnerable person may only react to major or catastrophic stressors. Conversely, the cumulative effect of even the mildest of stressors, the simultaneous presence of several stressors, or prolonged exposure to these stressors can eventually result in trauma in Facemire's view (2018, 10).

Moreover, insidious trauma is not visible to everyone; for example, the dominant groups in society may not recognize it (Craps 2010, 54–55; Gibbs 2014, 15–17). The invisibility or visibility of insidious trauma may also be political. In this article, we reference Hannah Arendt's (1958) definition of the politics of visibility and invisibility. Arendt defines the political world as a space where "'I' become visible to others and others become visible to 'I'" (Borren 2008, 214). In this space, individuals act, become visible, express their opinions, and become heard; however, becoming visible requires a spectator, an audience (Borren 2010, 164). People who have experienced insidious trauma do not necessarily become visible and heard; for example, the majority may invalidate or suppress their experiences.

Later in this article, we consider the consequences of othering and exclusion through the concept of cultural citizenship. Cultural citizenship refers to the opportunities an individual has to function as a member of a culture and society, participate in decision-making processes about themselves, and experience belonging and inclusion. Cultural citizenship holds that an individual's ethnic, linguistic, and cultural background is also recognized (Rosaldo 1994, 402; Huttunen 2004, 134–54). Therefore, cultural citizenship involves both "movements from below" (participation, feelings of belonging, identity, informal recognition) and "action from above" (governance, formal recognition) (Andrew & Gattinger 2005, 4; Beaman 2016). We understand the construction of cultural citizenship as a social process in which participation and agency are created in everyday encounters and interactions. Here, cultural citizenship is examined through narratives, especially from the perspectives of agency and participation and inclusion and exclusion.

Research Material and Method

Material

Finland has experienced a significant increase in immigration since the 1990s. More-

over, “a wide array of authors from every corner of the globe” have arrived in Finland during the 2000s (Nissilä 2016, 19). In her research, Hanna-Leena Nissilä has compiled a list of 90 so-called transnational authors or writers with a migrant background in Finland since the turn of the 21st century (Nissilä 2016, 19–20; problematizing the concept of migrant literature e.g., Löytty 2013, 261–79). Many authors address themes of migration and cultural and linguistic encounters based on of their own experiences through biographical narratives, but these themes are also explored in fiction, through multiple voices, and through the utilization of different cultural and linguistic codes (Nissilä 2016; Sorvari 2018a; 2018b; 2016; Kurki 2018a; 2018b; Melkas 2018).

This article is based on the idea that authors, with various writing strategies, can make visible and audible the experiences shared by many people with a migrant background. Therefore, they can address questions relating to migration more broadly than merely at the individual level. Authors can also elucidate those hidden forms of othering and exclusion that remain invisible, for example, to members of the dominant cultures in everyday encounters.

The research material of this article includes the autobiographical works of immigrant authors in Finland who have lived in the country for approximately twenty years. In addition, the material includes some works of fiction where the authors with immigrant backgrounds address the themes of migration and cultural encounters from the perspective of an individual. The article treats the autobiographical accounts and the works of fiction with equal weight: the different writing strategies and literary genres function as instruments with which the authors address the multidimensional experiences of othering and exclusion. Literary fiction can apply different narrative strategies than narratives based on documentary or eye-witness accounts. Therefore, it may be easier to address complex or sensitive themes in fiction than in documentary or autobiographical writing.

According to James Anderson Winn (2008, 7), poetry constitutes a means of presenting the multilayeredness and complexity of traumatic experiences, which would not otherwise be possible if narrative attempts to adapt solely a documentary style or a style that rigidly follows eye-witness accounts. In Anne Whitehead’s view (2004, 83–84), instruments of fiction, such as estranged points of view and distancing, may, in some circumstances, be the only possible means by which difficult and traumatic experiences can be addressed. Consequently, there are justifiable grounds for employing autobiographical and fictional accounts to examine experiences of othering and exclusion.

Five works of literature published in Finnish from five different narrators have been selected as the research material in this article. Of these, three are autobiographies, and two are works of fiction: a collection of short stories and a novel. The authors emigrated to Finland toward the end of the 20th and at the turn of the 21st centuries and represent different narrative positions. The authors and narrators are Inna Latisheva, Abdirahim Hussein, Umayya Abu-Hanna, Zinaida Lindén, and Arvi Perttu. Latisheva, Hussein, and Abu-Hanna have published autobiographical works that describe their experiences of life in Finland and integrating into Finnish society. Lindén and Perttu use fiction to address the experiences of people struggling between

different countries and cultures.

Inna Latisheva (b. 1955) was born in Baku, Azerbaijan, formerly part of the USSR. She moved from the USSR to Finland at the end of the 1980s when she married a Finn and went to live in Finland for almost twenty years before she left Finland for Spain. During her time in Finland, she studied export marketing and worked in commerce as an export director and CEO of Finnish companies. In this article, we examine her autobiographical book, *Ryssänä Suomessa: Vieras väärästä maasta* [A 'Russki'[4] in Finland: A Guest from the Wrong Country] (2010, 238 p.). The book describes Latisheva's experiences of life in Finland. She wrote the manuscript for the book in English, and it was published in Finnish in 2010. The book was adapted into a documentary film (*Ryssänä Suomessa*) [A 'Russki' in Finland] in the same year.

Abdirahim "Husu" Hussein (b. 1978) was born in Somalia and came to Finland as a 15-year-old asylum seeker in 1994. Hussein was educated in Finland and has produced many works, being especially well-known as the co-presenter of the '*Ali and Husu'* radio show broadcast between 2013 and 2016. In Finland, Hussein has also been active in municipal politics. This article examines his autobiography, *Minä Husu, suomalialainen: Abdirahim Husseinin tarina* [I, Husu the SomaliFinn: The Story of Abdirahim Hussein] (2017; 251 p.). The book was written by Abdirahim Hussein in collaboration with author Markku Hattula and was based on Hussein's account of his life and interviews conducted with him.

Umayya Abu-Hanna (b. 1961) was born in Israel and moved to Finland in 1981 after marrying a Finnish spouse. Abu-Hanna lived in Finland for approximately thirty years before moving to the Netherlands. Having a varied career during her time in Finland, she worked as an author, a journalist, and a politician. Abu-Hanna has written several books about her experiences of life in Finland. This article examines her book, *Sinut* [You] (2007; 246 p.). The book consists of Abu-Hanna's journal entries, letters and correspondences, lectures, and press articles and, in her own words, tells the story of life in Finland from the early 1980s through the experiences of a migrant.

In addition to the aforementioned autobiographical works, the research material consists of two works of fiction: Zinaida Lindén's collection of short stories, *Nuorallatanssija* [The Tightrope Walker] (2009; 179 p.), and Arvi Perttu's novel, *Skumbria* [Skumbria] (2011; 366 p.). Zinaida Lindén (b. 1963) was born in Leningrad and moved to Finland in 1991. Lindén has worked as an author and translator in Finland. She writes in Swedish, the second official language in Finland, and has published numerous books. Lindén's collection of short stories, *Nuorallatanssija,* describes different people who "are not at home in Finland but are already alienated in their own country." In her short stories, Lindén paints a picture of people struggling to exist in the mobile world and trying to cope with the sense of in-betweenness and non-belonging. The original Swedish language version and its Finnish translation were both published in the same year, 2009.

Arvi Perttu (b. 1961) was born in the former USSR, studied, and worked in Petrozavodsk in Russian Karelia. He moved to Finland in 2001. His career as a writer began while in the Soviet Union, and he has continued his writing career in Finland. Al-

though he was educated in Russian, his mother tongue is Finnish, and he also writes in Finnish. In his novel, *Skumbria*, Perttu describes the relationship between a Russian man, Pauli, and a Finnish woman, Katri, and their life in Russia and Finland at the turn of the 21st century. The themes of otherness and being an outsider, living betwixt and between two countries and different cultures and languages, and the challenges of this existence are also present in the story of Pauli and Katri.

In bringing together the various narrative positions and narrative voices present in the previous works, it is possible to examine othering, exclusion, and other manifestations of so-called harmful interactions, as well as their mechanisms and consequences for the lives of individuals, from multiple perspectives and through multiple voices. By employing various narrative strategies, the authors make visible how othering and exclusion are enacted in everyday encounters; these methods may be explicit, invisible, or even unknown to members of the dominant culture.

The previous research shows that many factors that serve to other and threaten the individual's sense of belonging and social connections are subtle, ambiguous, and sometimes unintentional (Wesselmann et al. 2016, 3). Therefore, it is also essential to make visible the more hidden instruments of othering and exclusion. Making these instruments visible allows us to improve our understanding of experiences of being othered and excluded. The authors' accounts of othering, exclusion and the consequences of these experiences can, on a more general level, widen the perspectives on the development of structural, insidious trauma and the possible means of preventing insidious trauma.

Methodology

The material was analyzed through qualitative content analysis (e.g., Rapley 2016, 331–35; Tuomi & Sarajärvi 2004, 93–95). During the analysis phase, the content of five literary works (a total of 1,280 pages) were explicated according to the themes of othering and exclusion. For this article, we have systematically collated the narrators'and protagonists' narratives on being othered and their accounts of being rejected by society or excluded from society's participatory space. The narrators and protagonists also describe such encounters where they are forced to conceal part of their identity not to be excluded. In addition, they describe how the experiences of othering and exclusion impact their sense of self and belonging. These interactions have been collated and analyzed in this article as well. The themes of othering and exclusion elicited from the research material are examined more closely in the following sections.

The Experiences of Othering and Exclusion

This article considers othering and exclusion (from the participatory space) as tightly interwoven phenomena. In their study on bullying in kindergarten, Pikkumäki and Peltola (2017, 15) note that such children who were slightly different from the group were often excluded. The research material also describes similar responses to difference and the consequent exclusionary practices. Consequently, the perceived differences become factors that demarcate 'us' from 'them' or 'the other.' Here, difference is

rendered as an instrument of exclusion and an uncrossable border. Moreover, othering and exclusion may intertwine into various cultural codes; for example, national anthems, national symbols, and linguistic conventions may delineate and exclude. On the other hand, repetitive exclusion also produces experiences of otherness.

According to Wesselmann et al. (2016, 4), rejection takes several forms, including, for example, the use of dehumanizing language, discrimination and stigmatization, and different forms of microaggression and ostracization, such as averted eye gaze, being forgotten, information exclusion, language exclusion, and uncomfortable silence. In the works analyzed in this article, exclusion appears as, among other things, various forms of direct and indirect (or hidden) rejection, isolation, exclusion, avoiding, and neglect.

These works of literature also describe the contempt, taunting, hate speech, and the direct violence and threat of violence that the narrators personally experience or witness in their daily living environment (e.g., *Minä Husu*, 55, 176–78; *Ryssänä Suomessa*, 96–97; *Sinut*, 23–24, 47; *Skumbria* 236–37). At worst, physical violence or its threat may be ever-present in the lives of people with a migrant background. People from the dominant cultural group do not necessarily always have a clear understanding of this violence (e.g., *Sinut*, 174–75), nor do they necessarily respond to it by, for example, intervening or defending the subject of such an attack, even when they happen to be present (e.g., *Minä Husu*, 100–01, 108–09). Nevertheless, this article focuses on examining the less obvious and more difficult forms of othering and exclusion to recognize. In the research material, these forms become visible when the narrators or protagonists describe harmful interactions or reflect on implicit cultural codes and various cultural categories they have observed but do not feel part of. These forms of othering and exclusion affect how the narrator experiences a sense of belonging and their ability to act as members of society. For example, Wesselmann et al. (2016, 4) suggest that negative experiences of rejection, ostracization, and dismissal, may make an individual think that other individuals, groups, or even society consider them inferior.

Living as 'The Other' in Finland

The material is replete with descriptions of the 'us/them' categorization that occurs in various everyday interactions: where 'the other' is classified as suspicious, dangerous, or inferior based on a perceived difference (e.g., a certain kind of name, nationality, ethnic group, outward appearance, style of clothing). Moreover, othering may be rendered visible via exoticization, the assumption of difference, emphasizing difference, or even by the authorities' actions. The categorization of 'the other' is often made and reaffirmed during everyday encounters, either indirectly, implicitly, or even very explicitly. The media may also function as an enabler of unilateral categorizations.

The authors describe several instances in which they have encountered being othered by different authorities. In her book, Abu-Hanna writes about the time her mother visited her in Finland, with the police calling at Abu-Hanna's door on the first day of her mother's visit to ask whether her mother intended on moving to Finland, as she had brought such a large suitcase (*Sinut,* 18–19). On another occasion, the narrator's

e-mails from her workplace, the Finnish National Gallery, do not reach her British colleague in the UK. Soon it is revealed that the messages never reached their intended destination because of Abu-Hanna's surname: the British server blocks any messages sent from e-mail addresses containing the "Abu" prefix. (*Sinut*, 220–21). She is categorized as suspicious or dangerous merely based on her name. Similar categorization as suspicious occurs when she orders a DNA test from the US. When the package arrives in Finland, the customs officials call her to ask about it:

> My cell phone rings: "Hello. This is Finnish customs calling." They want to know why this Arab type has ordered a package stamped with "medical material" all the way from America. We live in a time when the words 'Arab', 'laboratory', and 'package' don't go well together. Even I feel confused. "Well, I'm looking for my roots", replies this Finn who often hears that she doesn't come from anywhere. (*Sinut*, 198)

In the story of *Ofelia* [Ophelia], included in her collection of short stories, *Nuorallatanssija*, Zinaida Lindén describes the Russian protagonist's life in Finland and her relationship with Paavo, a Finnish man. When the relationship hits a rocky patch, the couple decides to go to therapy in Finland:

> Our therapist didn't necessarily require us to do any homework, but began, instead, with conversations. She was a tactful lady. She referred to sex as 'intimate socializing' or courting. She sympathetically asked me about the 'clash of cultures.' She appeared confused when I said that I enjoyed life in Finland and that I'd never been discriminated against here. (*Nuorallatanssija*, *Ofelia*, 169)

In this example, the therapist others her client with her automatic assumption that 'difference' and a different cultural background has caused her to experience difficulties. An assumed difference is typical of offensive and othering communication (Capodilupo et al. 2010, 202).

The research material includes numerous everyday encounters where Finns regard migrants with suspicion solely based on their different backgrounds or appearance. Inna Latisheva gives an example of a time when she was at a grocery store checkout with her son:

> I was sad because Toni was embarrassed by his mother's Russianness, even though I could, of course, understand how he felt. There was this time when he was with me queuing to pay at the store checkout. The woman ahead of us began to shout that her purse had been stolen. She looked at us, as she heard me speaking to Toni in Russian, before announcing in a raised voice: "It's no wonder that it's been stolen. There are Russians here!" My son was so embarrassed that he left the line. I couldn't blame him. Soon after, the woman found her money. She didn't, of course, apologize to us. (*Ryssänä Suomessa*, 85–86)

Latisheva also describes discrimination in working life: the dentist and hairdresser who have Russian backgrounds go without customers, because their clients cancel

their appointments when they find out they would be served by a Russian (*Ryssänä Suomessa*, 17–18). Even the smallest of everyday differences is enough to cause othering: in Lindén's short story, *Romeo ja Julia* [Romeo and Juliet], the protagonist is of Russian background and highlights the indignation she feels as a result of her distinctive clothing style:

> I was hanging out at a wedding reception with a fellow countrywoman, who told me that she had unknowingly annoyed some Finnish mommies by appearing in the children's playground in her high-heeled leather boots. (*Nuorallatanssija*, *Romeo ja Julia*, 102)

Abu-Hanna continues this theme when she narrates about her neighbor getting annoyed by the smell of her cooking:

> I was frying some vegetables when the doorbell rang. I opened the door only to be confronted by this old lady who, staring at my shoelaces, announced abruptly: "Do you know that decent people live in these parts?" I smiled, although somewhat startled. Did this woman want to put me in my place? I waited. A moment's silence passed before the woman continued, her lips askew: "If you make spicy food, the smell is going to come under the door, into the hallway, and all the way into the paintwork." […] I remembered the good old days when they came to tell the Arabs that 'decent white people live here, so get lost!' I smiled and thought to myself, thank goodness that times have changed. (*Sinut*, 102–03)

The authors describe othering, forever being labeled as "the other," and their disbelief that, even after having lived in Finland for many years, they continue to be seen first and foremost as 'others,' as lesser citizens in Finnish society:

> In Finland, the kind of person I was did not matter at all. I was Russian and, therefore, could never be one of them. [...] I had imagined that, if the President of Finland had granted me Finnish citizenship ten years earlier, I would have been considered to be of equal standing as any other Finn. (*Ryssänä Suomessa*, 223–24)

The second quote from Abu-Hanna's novel further reflects the binary opposition of "us" and "others":

> With what goddamn right am I classed a foreigner? When I considered this, my officially sanctioned role, I ended up wondering why people characterize the world through a dichotomy. There are us and there are them. And it's obvious who we are and who they are. Even after eighteen years, I am still a foreigner. Why and how am I revealed to be an outsider, a stranger, 'other,' unseen? (*Sinut*, 54–55)

The media can participate in othering by creating and maintaining representations of otherness (Raittila 2002; Karvonen 2000). The research material also reveals a few examples of how an individual can experience being othered by the media. The media

can create and perpetuate prejudices by, for example, disseminating negative news stories about migrants (e.g., crimes committed by migrants) and forgetting to mention the positive stories (e.g., a successful collaboration between a migrant organization and a government agency) (*Minä Husu*, 217–18). Whereas crimes committed against migrants do not necessarily pass the threshold of newsworthiness, crimes perpetrated by migrants are quick to make the headlines (*Minä Husu*, 48–49). The media can also ascribe a biased and stigmatizing image to a specific group of people, leading to individuals viewing themselves as reduced to only being "part human" (*Sinut*, 136–37; 173–74).

> How can you love a society in which you are a monster or a clown by mere virtue of your existence? How can you be trusting when the media turns you into a source of fear and then fosters the belief that Finns are the most honest and genuine people out there? (*Sinut*, 63)

Abu-Hanna writes about an example of how even the attempts to support minority groups may unintentionally turn into discrimination (*Sinut* 2007, 142–43). If people from minority groups are publicly viewed solely in three categories—as victims in need, as exotic, or as the source of fear—it can be hard for them to be treated equally as, for example, a colleague or advisor (Horsti 2009, 77–85; Aden 2009, 25–32). In addition, if a person is constantly categorized solely as 'an immigrant' and their particularity as an individual is ignored, they become excluded from many critical everyday social networks (Huttunen 2004, 140).

Exoticization may not only evoke surprise and admiration directed at "the other," but often also invokes the notion that the 'exotic other' is somehow simultaneously inferior (Harris 2018, 117). Stereotypes associated with exoticization create reductionist notions that can emphasize juxtaposition or the differences between groups. According to Jensen (2011, 64), exoticization serves to address 'the other' through one-dimensional stereotypes.

Perttu's novel *Skumbria* shows an example of exoticization that demarcates the protagonist as "the other." In *Skumbria,* the character of Pauli is subject to a discourse that emphasizes his "Slavicly smoldering" masculinity while simultaneously reducing him to the same status as an "animal" or a "child" who, perhaps, does not understand everything around him.

> I felt snared, like a woman's prey on a mission of conquest, like an ape brought from afar as an exotic gift. I snatched an empty glass from the table and filled it with liquor. The women talked to me like they would a child or an imbecile, with raised voices and simplified language. Even Katri, who usually treated me equally at home. (*Skumbria*, 194)

Indeed, the category of "the exotic other" may include every one of "them," who differs from "us." Consequently, "the other" appears as if part of a homogenous whole, with relative individuality or distinctiveness unseen or ignored. For example, Abu-

Hanna describes how she—a Palestinian Arab who had moved to Finland from Israel—was shouted at in the street and believed to be a "Gypsy" (*Sinut*, 11–12). Abu-Hanna also recalls another incident at a public swimming pool in Finland, where she became subjected to the exoticizing gaze (*Sinut*, 185–88):

> When in the locker room, she pulled down her underwear. The silence cut like a knife as the elasticated waistband dropped to her ankles. It was almost as if the falling elastic let out an ultrasonic sound that only the blondes could hear. The blondes stopped in their tracks and the room was not just quiet, it was silent. She marched, naked, towards the intelligence test that was the showers. The blondes stood up to get a better look [...] Their gazes scanning her entire body. They were fixed on her hair for a long time, confused. Their eyes panned down, along her back, towards her buttocks. Caressing the surface of her skin, their gaze tried to reach around to her front, where there was a small black curly mound. Afro pubic hair. Black. (*Sinut*, 185–88)

Ignoring and Rejecting 'The Other'

The authors make visible the various means of exclusion enacted in everyday encounters—be they explicit or hidden, or even unknown to the majority members. Nevertheless, these subtle instruments of exclusion negatively affect well-being, self-confidence, and, for example, individual's sense of belonging and agency. The explicit means of exclusion elicited in the research material can be seen, for example, in interactions in which a person is told, either directly or indirectly, that they are not welcome to participate in society. The direct means of exclusion presented in the material are 1) direct exclusionary speech and rejection, 2) silence, speechlessness, and being ignored, and 3) language exclusion.

In the works examined, these direct exclusionary instruments are present in different social situations, for example, in the workplace, where the other people are not willing to communicate or have anything to do with the author (*Minä Husu*, 112–13; *Ryssänä Suomessa*, 34–38). They also tell him that 'he'll never be Finnish no matter how hard he tries' (*Minä Husu*, 241). In these situations, it also becomes apparent that there is an unwillingness to accept different kinds of people and that there is no room in Finland for these people or people of their kind (*Ryssänä Suomessa*, 9–10; 226–27).

Direct exclusionary means are also described in the examples where the narrator is ignored or rejected because they do not fit the prescribed image of the 'migrant' while simultaneously they are not recognized as a member of the dominant culture. Not-fitting in any predetermined conceptions of immigrant becomes apparent when the expertise of the narrator is not acknowledged, ignored, not recognized, or identified; the narrator is merely seen as a 'migrant' and, therefore, a non-expert. In *Sinut*, the writer describes applying for a job as a journalist in a Finnish media company. On this occasion, she is seen primarily as an immigrant—not as a professional journalist—and is, therefore, not thought to be suitable for a mainstream media channel (*Sinut*, 132–33).

In *Minä Husu*, the narrator's knowledge of refugee issues is not recognized despite him having fled to Finland from Somalia and having experienced what it was like to be a refugee in Finland in the 1990s (*Minä Husu*, 173). The author also feels that he

has not been able to progress in his political career at the same pace as other young politicians because of his Muslim background (*Minä Husu*, 169–70). In *Sinut*, we see how the media ignores the narrator when she stands in a parliamentary election and attempts to raise discussion about the life of migrants in Finland (*Sinut*, 178–79). In the examples above, the narrators' agency and ability to participate are disavowed; they are prevented from discussing and addressing this matter on equal footing with others. The negation of the narrators' knowledge, expertise, and voice shows how a person with a migrant background is only permitted to visibly participate in public debates when a member of the majority 'finds' or 'notices' them (*Minä Husu*, 187).

The writers also described being directly excluded when they attempt to participate in various social events only to feel they are in the wrong place or they look or act in the wrong way. Consequently, they are rejected or feel they have no agency. These situations highlight such differences between the narrator and the majority that the majority interprets negatively. For example, in *Sinut*, the writer describes receiving negative feedback from audiences when she worked in television. The feedback stemmed from her not being seen in the 'right arena,' referring to her migrant background (Sinut, 60–61). The audience did not see her as competent enough to comment on social affairs in Finland (Ibid). The fact that Abu-Hanna's journalistic expertise was ignored led her to the conclusion that "Finnishness is a one-dimensional concept" that had no room for her (*Sinut*, 60–61). Examples of similar transgressions of invisible boundaries can also be found in *Ryssänä Suomessa*, when the narrator receives complaints about using Russian, her native language, at her workplace, where the majority speaks Finnish.

> [...] some of the people at the office complained about me talking to my Russian assistant in Russian. I explained that it was only natural, as Russian is our mother tongue and it is much easier for us to use it when there are no others involved [...] The reason behind the complaint was, perhaps, the fact that it was a Finnish company and, knowing what the general attitude of the Finns was regarding Russians, it was clear that they didn't like having a Russian woman at the top and having to listen to Russian in their workplace. (*Ryssänä Suomessa*, 184)

In *Minä Husu* (170–71), the narrator wishes to join the Centre Party of Finland. However, he is told by his acquaintances that he is in "the wrong party"; owing to his Islamic background, the belief is that "they [the members of the Centre Party] are hardly likely to ever accept you as one of their own." In addition, explicit exclusion may be implemented even by one's family members. In *Ryssänä Suomessa*, the writer describes how she realizes that her husband and son are ashamed of her ethnic and linguistic background (*Ryssänä Suomessa*, 19, 83–84).

> I didn't yet know at that time that he [the author's husband] was embarrassed to be seen with a Russian woman in public. He always spoke to me in English so that he could keep my 'Russianness' a closely guarded secret. (*Ryssänä Suomessa,* 52)

> I would never have guessed, then, that years later he [the author's son] would be embarrassed to be seen with me or worry about someone hearing me speak to him in Russian. Nor could I have guessed that he would dismiss his Russian roots and tell everyone he was a full-blooded Finn. (*Ryssänä Suomessa,* 69–70)

These exclusionary experiences make the writer feel that she is 'the wrong sort,' not passing or otherwise inferior to those around her. Such experiences classify as negative social encounters and harmful interactions (Wesselmann et al. 2016, 4; Jerman 2009, 97–105).

The narrator may also experience the silence, speechlessness, or quietude of Finnish conversational culture as rude, inconsiderate, isolating, and dismissive (Wesselmann et al. 2016, 11; Carbaugh 2009, 43–61; Wilkins & Isotalus 2009, 13), even though the majority would regard the same situations as part of the culture of everyday conversation. For example, the strangeness and unfamiliarity of Finnish conversation culture was experienced negatively by the narrators. The moments of silence that punctuate conversation are perceived as distressing and oppressive (*Skumbria*, 202), problematic (*Ryssänä Suomessa*, 224–25), and impolite (*Nuorallatanssija*, *Ofelia*, 167). In these examples, silence is interpreted as meaning that Finns are too bashful to join in the conversation (*Ryssänä Suomessa*, 62) or that the narrator has been abandoned in this 'land in which nobody talks,' which feels to him like being in 'hell dressed up as utopia' (*Skumbria*, 346).

Silence and speechlessness are mainly interpreted as exclusionary measures when the narrator feels they do not have access to enough information about different cultural practices and the ways of doing things, nor are they directed to relevant sources of such information (Wesselmann et al. 2016, 9). This phenomenon is known as knowledge exclusion. For example, in *Minä Husu* (18–19), the author is not provided with information about being detained when trying to enter the country. In the novel, *Skumbria* (177), the narrator wonders about the various sanctions and rules he does not understand where he lives and about which he is not offered any explanation. In *Ryssänä Suomessa* (9–10, 17), the writer longs for someone to explain how the Finnish 'system' concerning things like ATMs, restrooms, washing machines, coffeemakers, and using the bus. In addition, the research material shows examples of other types of exclusionary silences. In these examples, the narrator may experience speechlessness as hurtful and exclusionary, especially when the silence becomes a signifier of difference. For example, the narrator may mispronounce or use a wrong word and may find the resulting, confused silence exclusionary (*Sinut* 13–14, 21–22).

The notion of silence can take on forms of exclusion such as being ignored and silenced, (Böckler, Hömke & Sebanz 2014, 142). In the analyzed works, the authors describe occasions on which, for example, their requests for help are ignored (*Sinut*, 12–13), they do not receive encouragement, are not praised for their success (*Ryssänä Suomessa*, 42–43, 179–80), almost as if they had not been noticed by the other people at all. They are not greeted, their questions go unanswered, and their attempts to strike up a conversation go ignored (*Sinut*, 11; 182; *Ryssänä Suomessa*, 21–22, 36–40, 62–64; *Nuorallatanssija*, *Ofelia*, 76) or the narrator is left to fend for himself when he first ar-

rives in Finland (*Minä Husu*, 16–17).

The narrators describe conversations where the conversation partner does not look them in the eye, with the narrator left to feel as if they do not exist (*Ryssänä Suomessa*, 60–61; *Skumbria*, 202). Sometimes it seems the neighbor does not want to interact with them (*Skumbria*, 201; *Ryssänä Suomessa*, 60–61) or, rather than engaging in conversation, the neighbor posts letters through the narrator's mailbox to complain about the overpowering smell of cooking (*Sinut*, 62–64). The narrator interprets Finnish politeness, for example, in the case of social greetings as 'nothing at all'. In this interpretation the greeting can be included in the same category as being ignored and overlooked (*Skumbria*, 269). This also extends to the floral tributes the narrator receives from her work colleagues while in hospital. The narrator finds the flowers meaningless and an empty gesture because her colleagues have never previously shown any interest in her.

> I have lived in Finland for five years, but nobody has wanted to be friends with me. Did I really have to be hospitalized with peritonitis to discover I was liked and respected? I received a bouquet of lilies and a greetings card signed by all the staff. (*Nuorallatanssija, Juice ja muita huolia*, 75) [The Tightrope Walker: Juice and Other Concerns. Note: *Juice* is a man's name]

According to Wesselmann et al. (2016, 9–11), language exclusion refers to situations where a language is used in a way that others do not understand. It can also refer to other exclusionary utterances, such as those that employ sexist or racist language. In the research material, the narrators describe experiencing language exclusion in terms of their feeling unable to adequately express themselves in a language other than their mother tongue, which prevents them from participating in social interaction. In *Sinut*, the narrator attempts to join in by speaking Finnish, only to use the wrong words; she finds this experience troubling as if she has failed (*Sinut*, 13–14, 20–22, 176, 189).

> She couldn't hear my outpouring. I made a note of it in my mind — in Russian. I am not able to express myself so boldly in this foreign language. (*Nuorallatanssija, Juice ja muita huolia,* 80–81)

> People's faces contort as they tried to understand me; only understanding half of what I say. As for me, I only understand half of everything they say. I am exhausted every goddamn evening. (*Sinut*, 176–77)

Some exclusionary experiences in the research material result from the difficulties the narrators encounter while attempting to understand implicit cultural codes (*Nuorallatanssija*, *Ruusun suudelma* [The Tightrope Walker: A Kiss from a Rose], 46, 48; *Sinut*, 29–30) or through inadequate language skills and an inability to interpret the cultural codes embedded in the language (*Nuorallatanssija*, *Juice ja muita huolia*, 80–81; *Minä Husu*, 22; *Skumbria*, 249; *Sinut*, 32–33, 39, 189). In *Sinut*, for example, the narrator answers her door at Easter to be greeted by trick-or-treaters. She does not understand

what is happening. She thinks that it must be some interactive performance and starts acting like a chicken, at which point the whole situation becomes, in the narrator's eyes, "embarrassing," and she feels "sad" that "everything remains a complete mystery to her" (*Sinut*, 24–25).

Insufficient language competence or a level of fluency that is not quite up to the same standard as a native speaker can also be used as an instrument of exclusion in the context of, for example, seeking work or in everyday communication:

> During a Labor shortage, I applied for a job packing cookies at the Fazer factory. How could I have been so stupid not to remember that Swedish[5] is the A and B of boxing cookies! (*Sinut*, 179)
>
> I answered a newspaper ad for a teaching position at a 'Russian-English school'. I was soundly rejected over the phone. They told me that my Finnish wasn't fluent enough. A month later, I happened to meet a fellow countrywoman of mine from the city of Irkutsk. She had got the job. The hag didn't even speak a word of Finnish. (*Ryssänä Suomessa*, 43–44)

Language exclusion can also manifest when Finnish is not used while talking to a certain person because they are not assumed to be fluent enough.

> When I first came to Finland and didn't yet speak a word of the language, we used to speak English with each other. Later, when my Finnish was pretty good, I asked him to talk to me in Finnish because I needed practice. He told me that my Finnish wasn't good enough and then started speaking very quickly, using complicated words, the kind of which he wouldn't ordinarily use. Afterwards, he asked me if I'd understood. Naturally, I had not. (*Ryssänä Suomessa*, 160–61)
>
> Once, I said to him that from now on I am only going to speak to everyone in Finnish. 'Fine', he replied, in English, and never said another word to me in Finnish again. After this, I couldn't even be bothered trying. (*Ryssänä Suomessa*, 160–61)

Lack of language skills alienates the narrator from the people around her. In some examples, native speakers think her incompetence in Finnish reflects on her intelligence. On other occasions, native speakers consider the lack of language competence amusing, even though the narrator herself does not necessarily see the humor in the situation.

> 'Stupid Israeli bitch' was one of the first sentences I learned to say [in Finnish]. [...] The cause of my stupidity soon became clear [in kindergarten where the writer was working]: "An adult that can't even SPEAK!" 'Can't even speak' meant that this adult 'can't speak Finnish'. Intelligence is demonstrated in speech and all I could do was slur, unable to speak Finnish. (*Sinut*, 20)
>
> I don't understand why they laugh at me when I join in with the small talk: 'Ilima on

> helevetin huono tänään' [The we-e-ather is hellishly bad today]. I'm from Naantali and I'm an Arab who has learned how to say a few sentences in a Savo dialect.[6] Why are they laughing? (*Sinut*, 176)

In the latter example, the dialectical qualities of the migrant's speech amuse her conversation partners. The narrator is confused because she is unaware of the associations people have with the various regional Finnish dialects (cf. Mielikäinen & Palander 2014; Nupponen 2011). Using the Savo dialect rather than standard Finnish during a conversation where it is not expected creates a strong contrast and surprise in the party.

Invisible Exclusion

The indirect forms of exclusion in the research material are 1) different forms of microaggression and 2) institutionalized exclusionary discourses (e.g., demarcatory discourses embedded in the national narratives). According to Capodilupo (et al. 2010, 202), microaggression refers to forms of communication, such as sexist language and gestures, that categorize someone as a second-class citizen or inferior, ascribing traditional gender roles, or making assumptions based on a person's ethnicity. The various forms of microaggression, such as microassault, microinsult, and microinvalidations, are hidden and, sometimes, even unknown to the perpetrator (Sue et al. 2007).

A microassault is closely related to racism but functions at the individual level or in "microsituations" (Sue et al. 2007, 274). It can be a spoken or unspoken attack intended to hurt someone by, for example, insulting them, behaving evasively, or in discriminatory ways. In *Minä Husu* (87), the author describes how his boss, a funnyman, "sometimes tells 'negro jokes'" but "is otherwise a good guy." Similarly, the writer in *Sinut* wonders about the racist nature of the term "negro" when she hears it used in Finland: "I often hear that the word 'negro' [in Finnish, *neekeri*] is neutral in Finnish and that it's been a part of Finnish culture since the 1950s. Here, neutral means that Finland did not take part in the slave trade. But neutral in whose ears?" (*Sinut*, 134–35). In *Ryssänä Suomessa*, the writer explains how one of her acquaintances says how "abhorrent everything to do with the Soviet Union is" for her and that "she never would have imagined that she'd have a Russian friend and even go to a Russian music concert" (94–95). The writer is also told that there are "lots of Russians" living in her apartment building, even though the only Russians are, in fact, herself and another girl. The meaning of this insinuation is that "the building's reputation has been ruined" implying there are too many Russian residents (95).

According to Sue et al., a microinsult is an utterance that rudely or insensitively refers to a person's heritage or identity (2007, 274). Microinsults may also be ambiguous and hard to identify. In *Sinut*, the writer describes how she was called a 'Christmas tree' because of the colorful way she dresses (29). She does not interpret this as an insult, considering it instead as a compliment. The offensive nature of the moniker only becomes apparent to her later on.

Microinvalidation is another form of hidden exclusion enacted in everyday com-

munications. Sue et al. observe that microinvalidation is a form of exclusionary communication, typically involving invalidating an individual's thoughts, ideas, feelings, and experiences (2007, 274). The authors in both *Sinut* and *Minä Husu* describe situations where their experiences of racist attacks or bullying have been invalidated and not taken seriously (*Sinut*, 162–165; *Minä Husu*, 108–09). For example, in *Sinut* (150–52), the writer is confused and criticizes the racist use of the word 'negro' in Finland, only for her experiences of racism to be invalidated and not considered important.

In the research material, examples of microinvalidation are present in situations where persons with a migrant background are repeatedly told that their Finnish is very good even though their primary language is Finnish or when they are repeatedly asked when they are going home (*Sinut*, 19). As a result, people with migrant backgrounds feel that they are defined as "forever foreigners" and are not accepted as members in Finnish society and culture (Sue et al. 2007, 274). A person living in Finland may be called a "foreigner," even after receiving Finnish citizenship, and the fact that someone speaks Finnish fluently does not make themself a Finn (Lepola 2000, 367). Citizenship and fluent Finnish are not necessarily enough to make them part of the community.

> "What is this? A Russian passport! Why do you speak Finnish so well?" (*Skumbria*, 181)

> But every time I went to renew my residence permit, I had to fill out a form that asked: "When are you returning to your home country?" (*Sinut*, 19)

Parallels can be drawn between the examples above and a study about the experiences of second-generation Asian Americans (Sue et al. 2007, 274). They, too, are repeatedly praised for their excellent English, or they are constantly asked where they were born. According to Sue et al. (ibid.), this kind of treatment denies their identity as Americans and signifies them as 'forever foreigners.'

In addition, various kinds of national narratives, which can be read from, for example, national cultural institutes and national symbols, such as national anthems, may also be exclusionary. For example, a museum exhibition can tell the story of a single, homogenous people, whereas the true diversity of these people is excluded from this story (*Sinut*, 173–74; Davydova-Minguet 2018). Indirect and everyday forms of exclusion can be seen on festive occasions colorfully emblazoned with national symbols, in which, with the aid of cultural categories, symbols, and language, certain groups are excluded from the "us" of the occasion. In *Sinut*, the author goes, as an invited speaker, to a high school prom, during which the Finnish flag is raised, and the Finnish national anthem is sung (89–91). She does not feel she belongs to the people about whom the song's lyrics tell, to "the land of the forefathers," and consequently sees herself as an outsider (*Sinut*, 89–91):

> It was the fall, a time to celebrate Finnish Independence Day and graduation from high school, and we had reached that time of the prom when the national anthem was to be sung. And I sang "Oh Our Land Finland Fatherland." [...] I was born to a Palestinian

> woman in a Jewish hospital in Mount Karmel and, yet, Finland is still the country I call home. At this point of the song, a little adjustment is required. (*Sinut*, 89–91)
>
> We were coming to the end of the "This Precious Land of Our Fathers" section. [...] Finland is indisputably my land, too, even though it is not of any "fathers". It's soon my turn to speak. I have to change my speech because I don't quite feel at home here. (*Sinut*, 91–93)

In addition to these national narratives, exclusionary discourse may be embedded in everyday encounters with advertising or the media. An example of this is the Elovena brand of traditional Finnish oat flakes, which for years has used the image of a blonde-haired female dressed in the Finnish national costume on its packaging. This female character has become a logo that represents everyday Finnishness. In *Sinut* (203), the narrator recalls when the 'Elovena woman' was replaced in a newspaper ad by a dark-skinned version and the uproar it created. The inflexibility, or the selected flexibility, of the national discourse associated with this brand, was demonstrated at a later date when the flaxen-haired Elovena character was pictured wearing sneakers emblazoned with the Chanel logo—without any uproar. At the everyday level the national discourses play a part in deciding who is included in and excluded from national narratives.

The Consequences of Othering and Exclusion

The authors described several consequences of othering and exclusion, affecting their sense of well-being and their ability to participate and have agency in society. Some of the more prominent consequences of othering and exclusion included, for example, loneliness, feelings of inferiority, depression, isolation, non-belonging, and a loss of hope about the future. For example, the narrators describe being "constantly" or repeatedly "alone" (*Ryssänä Suomessa*, 41–42; *Skumbria*, 246, 346; *Nuorallatanssija*, *Juice ja muita huolia*, 75), feeling "lonely" and "helpless" (*Ryssänä Suomessa*, 75, 156–57), and being at a point in their life when they had "no Finnish friends at all" (*Ryssänä Suomessa*; 22, 82–83; 162, 220, 221), nor a friend with whom to converse, "laugh," "gossip or cry" (*Skumbria*, 276, 311). The authors also described either their own or the protagonist's experiences of isolation. We can see this when the narrator feels that they are "isolated" from the rest of the world (*Sinut*, 17), or that their world has shrunk to the walls of their apartment (*Skumbria*, 248), "my world centered on Katri and the occasional messages from the world outside were distant and insignificant" (*Skumbria*, 183). The writers describe experiencing exclusion through the metaphor of being lost (*Skumbria*, 253–54), being a prisoner in a strange land, or becoming dependent on their spouse as a consequence of being excluded (*Ryssänä Suomessa*, 156–57, 246), and being set adrift from society "like a cow shit in space" that "cannot find its place" (*Skumbria*, 250).

When the effects of exclusion and othering are continuously present and repeated over a long period, the person can experience alienation, depression, helplessness, and insignificance (Wesselmann et al., 2016, 4) and feel like they cannot be seen or

are repeatedly misunderstood (Søndergaard 2012, 360). Similar social and psychological symptoms and traumatization may also occur when a person is bullied (Einarsen 1999, 17). The narrators in the material describe life feeling empty and sad, they experience a fear of violence and shame, and they think of themselves as second-class or 'B' grade citizens (*Minä Husu*, 179; *Ryssänä Suomessa*, 88–89, 234–35).

> Yes, racist hate speech hurts, and hurts deep. It breeds a fear that can sometime paralyze and render you helpless. It consumes your dreams and all the joy in your life. (*Minä Husu*, 179)

> If only he would have known just how much worse my life had become since coming to live in his country. For most of the time, my life in Finland was — almost without exception — so empty and sad that I could hardly remember a time when I had been happy. (*Ryssänä Suomessa*, 88–89)

Another effect of exclusion and othering is forgetting oneself or making oneself invisible. In *Sinut*, *Skumbria*, and *Ryssänä Suomessa*, the writers describe how they or their protagonists deny or hide part of their identity to participate and blend in with the majority. The narrator might, for example, play down their ethnic background, stop using their mother tongue, or change their name to make it easier to pass as belonging to the majority. There are situations in which the narrator feels that their own culture and language will prevent them from becoming equal citizens or one with the (nationally determined) majority: "it is difficult to participate as myself" (*Sinut*, 58–59).

Moreover, in *Sinut*, the narrator makes herself invisible by anonymizing her e-mail address so that her ethnic background or culture of origin cannot be discerned based on her name and she could not be defined by stereotypes: "When I want to get my point across, I prefer to present myself as anonymously as possible. The reason for this is that any identity I offer can delimit the receipt of my message" (*Sinut*, 88). In the novel *Skumbria*, Pauli considers becoming a naturalized Finn to feel belonging. He thinks about changing his surname to make it Finnish before concluding that "it would never help anyway—I'm going to be a Russki for the rest of my life" (*Skumbria*, 236). He has a mortgage, a job, and can speak Finnish, but he no longer dares to use Russian in public, because it makes him stand out too much (*Skumbria*, 361).

> When we moved to our new home, I stopped talking on the phone in Russian when I was in the back-yard smoking. And if Russians came to visit, we stayed indoors. I didn't want the neighbors to know anything about my background. I had to bury my Russian identity deep down and for good. (*Skumbria*, 361)

In *Ryssänä Suomessa* (160–61, 226, 234–35), the writer avoids using Russian and hides any signifiers that she is a Russian speaker. She sees the way 'Russianness' is denigrated in her surroundings and fears that people will judge her based on her background.

> I was standing among a crowd of people at the bus-stop when I noticed the Russian

> newspaper in my bag was there in plain view of everyone. My first reaction was to hide it so that nobody could work out I was Russian. It was still top secret. It was clear to me that the feeling I had, that I felt like a 'Russki', was so deeply entrenched that it would probably take the rest of my life to shed. I was always going to be an outsider in this country. (*Ryssänä Suomessa*, 226)

In *Fauni* [The Fawn], one of the short stories in the *Nuorallatanssija* collection, the narrator alters her typically self-expressive style of dress so that she does not stand out from the crowd at work from the Finns: "When the ice had only melted a little, I realized I was getting some strange looks as I turned up to a party wearing fancy clothes. I started to dress in a drab way in honor of the local customs and to avoid being picked on" (*Nuorallatanssija*, *Fauni*, 117). The writers also describe changing their everyday habits (e.g., preparing food) to not stand out from their neighbors (*Minä Husu*, 31–32; 33–34). The loss of elements of one's identity or background can also lead to the individual being harmfully rendered invisible (Borren 2008; Borren 2010) and unable to enter the participatory space as a whole person.

Agency, participation, and cultural citizenship are constructed in everyday interactions. In describing their experience of being excluded, the authors remark that they "have no space" in Finnish society (*Ryssänä Suomessa*, 9–10) or that the "environment pushes them away" despite their desire to belong and to participate (*Sinut*, 62–64). The authors describe how their communities do not seem to want them to ever become Finnish (*Minä Husu*, 241–42). They express how they are always being viewed as different, a foreigner, and an outsider, regardless of how long they have lived in Finland or even when the person in question was born and raised in Finland (*Sinut*, 54–55, 140–41). The result is tragic as the protagonist in *Skumbria* states: "The chasm between themselves and the average working Finn was impassable" (*Skumbria*, 257–58). Experiencing exclusion and othering can also lead to a situation where the migrant does not want to be part of society or share the same cultural conventions, values, and ideals (*Ryssänä Suomessa*, 63–64, 226–27). Moreover, non-belonging can also result in a situation in which the narrator cannot participate or have agency in their new country at the same time as their connection to their ethnic homeland is broken: "I simply no longer have any ties there. As if the umbilical cord has been cut" (*Skumbria*, 311).

Experiencing exclusion and othering can give rise to insidious trauma. Here, the trauma is not necessarily triggered by an isolated event but by the person's attempts to fit in and conform to the dominant norms. In Kaplan's view (2007, 143–44), members of minority groups repeatedly experience traumatizing stress in their attempts to conduct their everyday affairs. Their attempts to adapt to their new living conditions and the processes of othering and exclusion cause them to experience depression, hopelessness, a lack of ambition or hope about the future and believe that they are not as good as others, and feel self-hate. The research material is replete with descriptions of these kinds of experiences. At worst, the experiences of exclusion and othering lead to self-denial, shame, and even self-directed hatred and aggression.

Furthermore, it has been noted that different types of perceived discrimination have a long-term negative impact on an individual´s mental and physical health and

social wellbeing (Rask et al. 2018; Castaneda et al. 2015). In *Ryssänä Suomessa*, the narrator compares her life in Finland to the feeling of having lost a leg in an accident, and how all the enjoyment in her life have disappeared:

> I compared myself to a person who had lost their leg in an accident and constantly thought about how wonderful my life would have been if only I was still able to walk, to dance, and to travel. I now had to forget all those pleasures and learn to live in a wheelchair. [...] I started to learn what life as a Russian in Finland was like. (*Ryssänä Suomessa*, 82)

The narrator goes on to describe the subconscious burden imposed by the acts of aggression she encounters towards Russians (*Ryssänä Suomessa*, 237) and the way they have destroyed her self-esteem and her happiness (*Ryssänä Suomessa*, 196–97). Her eyes are filled with tears of pain when she hears Finnish being spoken at an international airport and understands at that moment that she no longer wants to return to Finland (*Ryssänä Suomessa*, 87–88).

In *Sinut*, the author explains how her negative experiences cause her to feel self-loathing and contempt:

> It is more often the case that true hatred and contempt is directed at oneself. And with the constant inability to access an arena in which one can be oneself, the sense of anxiety grows. I do not recognize myself in the person who speaks and presents herself under my own name. (*Sinut*, 58–59)

When a person becomes the subject of exclusion, they may also experience aggression, which serves as one of their coping strategies. This aggression is directed at the person enacting the exclusion (the custodian), other people with whom the subject is interacting, and even at 'innocent' bystanders (Dongning, Wesselmann & Kipling 2017, 34). In the extreme, rejection and exclusion can even lead to acts of violence (Dongning, Wesselmann & Kipling 2017, 34; Leary et al. 2003).

The situations above and the emotional experiences shape the narrators' conception of their opportunities to participate and function as members of society. In some cases, the person may exist in a liminal state, in which they do not experience attachment to anywhere (*Ryssänä Suomessa*, 147; *Skumbria*, 173). As such, the person is also unable to access the participatory space. According to Jensen, othering can lead to a particular form of agency (2011, 73). In this case, an individual may construct their agency by emphasizing the otherness, especially when 'the other' is exoticized and fascinated.

In Jensen's view (ibid.), another strategy for coping with othering is through denial: a person or group does not want to accept the position of 'the other.' Jensen goes on to describe attempts to define a so-called third space, in which there is no "firstness" or "otherness," no particular nationality or 'other' defined in opposition to this, and no majority or minority; instead, attempts are made for these definitions to transcend the various oppositional dichotomies (2011, 74). Nevertheless, in their

accounts of their relationship to the majority, the narrators in the works examined do not experience being able to access this kind of third space. They continue their stories as 'the other,' liminal, as outsiders.

As the analysis in the previous sections reveals, the negative psychological and physical consequences of exclusion and othering may have both short-term and long-term consequences (Wesselmann et al. 2016, 3, 6; Rastas 2004, 156 n7; Jasinskaja-Lahti, Liebkind & Vesala 2002, 41–50, 110–114; Garoff, Kangaslampi & Peltonen 2019). Among the consequences of prolonged and continuous exposure to exclusion and othering are, for example, antisocial behavior, a diminished sense of belonging and alienation, poor self-image, stronger negative emotions, feeling pain, feeling increasingly helpless and rejected, experiencing insignificance, and depression (Wesselmann et al. 2016, 6; Dongning, Wesselmann & Kipling 2017, 34; Paradies et al. 2015). Socially exclusionary practices and processes can affect a person's ability to form interpersonal relationships, limit their ability to get information and use assets, and, in extreme cases, lead to depression, the development of insidious trauma, and even lead to acts of violence (Kaplan 2007; Böckler, Hömke & Sebanz 2014, 140; Facemire 2018). Being excluded can have a significant impact both on the individual being excluded and on society more broadly.

Conclusion

> When there are so few outsiders and the dominant culture exerts a powerful pressure to conform, no degree of originality, creativity, or conviction is enough to perpetually foster life in a society that one is rejected by. (*Sinut*, 58–59)

This article examined phenomena associated with othering and exclusion, which together constitute one means of approaching and addressing insidious trauma in the context of migration. The following forms of othering were found in the research material: exoticization, categorizing the 'other' as suspicious, dangerous, or inferior, emphasizing the differences, and signifying the perceived differences as negative and inferior. Furthermore, exclusion appears in various direct and hidden forms. The forms of direct exclusion were direct exclusionary speech and rejection, silence, speechlessness and being ignored, and language exclusion. The hidden or indirect forms of exclusion included the forms of microaggression (microassault, microinsult, microinvalidation) and institutionalized exclusionary discourses (for example, demarcatory discourses embedded in the national narratives).

The analysis of the research material demonstrated that othering and exclusion have a significant impact on an individual's sense of self and their ability to function as an active member of society. For example, othering and exclusion may cause loneliness, inferiority, depression, hopelessness, lack of ambition, self-loathing and contempt, self-denial, shame, and even self-directed hatred and aggression. Overall, these experiences resulted in the feelings of being a second-class citizen. Similar to previous research (Brunnet et al. 2020; Castañeda et al. 2015; Paradies et al. 2015; Rask et

al. 2018), this article highlights the association between perceived discrimination and health problems among migrants. Therefore, in Finnish health care and more broadly in Finnish society, it is crucial to recognize the possibility of insidious trauma and address and act against the causes of insidious trauma (see also Castañeda et al. 2015; Rask et al. 2018).

The article approached the research questions by referencing factual autobiographies and works of fiction. In their works, the authors discuss the subtle mechanisms of othering and exclusion whereby participation is delimited, and the construction of agency is prevented. Moreover, by employing autobiographical and fictive tropes, the authors also make visible how people experience harmful interaction in their lives and how this negatively impacts their sense of agency and their ability to participate. According to previous research (e.g., Jasinskaja-Lahti, Liebkind & Vesala 2002, 34–36, 134–37), a migrant's background (e.g., age, gender, language, religion, ethnic background) affects the extent and type of discrimination the migrant possibly faces in Finland.

Instead of focusing on these kinds of factors, our emphasis has been on the insidious trauma and its causes, such as the experience of othering and exclusion. The analysis of selected works shows that participation and agency, and the cultural citizenship constructed through these phenomena, must be considered when addressing questions of belonging and attachment after having emigrated to a new home country. Citizenship or permanent residency consolidates a person's sense of belonging in the country of living (EU-MIDIS-II 2017, 19). However, individuals also need the kind of cultural citizenship that is fundamentally connected to their ability to experience agency and participation without constraining or losing a part of their identity. This approach to citizenship could mean that people with immigrant backgrounds are recognized as a part of society and, at the same time, they can retain their own linguistic and cultural background. DeVeraux & Griffin (2013, 140) and Lehtonen (2015, 268–71) also argue that when discussing (cultural) citizenship, it is necessary to examine how borders of inclusion and exclusion are defined. The cultural point of view allows a better understanding of the multilayeredness of these demarcations. However, in addition to (nation)states, globalization, transnationalism, and the new neighbor relations realized as a result of mobilities also form essential contexts for constructing cultural citizenship (cf. Clarke 2013, 464–65; Castaneda et al. 2018, 13). Othering and exclusion are present in their various forms precisely in people's everyday interactions in these new neighbor relations.

This research has shown that examining themes of othering, exclusion, and insidious trauma through the utilization of literature is meaningful. By employing documentary and fictive instruments, authors can illuminate the more hidden forms of othering and exclusion for discussion in the public realm that could otherwise remain unseen by the mainstream. In addition, these subtle forms of othering and exclusion could be difficult to reveal in, for example, interviews (cf. Rastas 2004, 33–55). The authors also elicit the potential consequences of othering and exclusion through the experiences and accounts of individuals. In the examined works, the authors describe the negative consequences of harmful interaction on the narrators' sense of self, their

status in their new country, and their ability to function as part of society. According to Sue et al. (2007, 272), modern-day racism in the US is, for example, more hidden, ambiguous, and is, consequently, more difficult to identify and name. Therefore, it is essential to utilize literature and other forms of artistic expression to bring to the fore harmful forms of interaction and the consequences of these interactions on the lives of individuals.

In the context of multidisciplinary research on trauma, this article has attempted to render visible how examinations of othering and exclusion can elicit the processes that potentially lead to the triggering of and fostering insidious trauma. This article emphasizes how everyday interactions form a significant arena where the bordering processes of inclusion and exclusion occur and may cause insidious trauma. In addition to the context of migration, other stressful circumstances can cause insidious trauma as well (e.g., bullying, hidden domestic violence, the experience of marginality). This article also contributes to examining those invisible borders in culture and society that the migrants encounter when settling in Finland and which often cause insidious trauma. Consequently, this article focuses on insidious trauma and encourages discussion of how it can be prevented from occurring in migrant experience.

Notes

1 Translations of the citations are by the authors of this article and Semantix Finland Oy.

2 This article was published as part of the research project *Traumatized Borders: Reviving Subversive Narratives of B/Order, and Other,* Academy of Finland, SA 297533.

3 CPTSD is a complex post-traumatic stress disorder that refers to chronic and prolonged traumatizing experiences that take place repetitively for months and even years (PTSD: National Center for PTSD).

4 The term ‘Russki’ [in Finnish ‘ryssä’] is a pejorative and insulting term in Finnish language that refers to a Russian person. The term is used by Inna Latisheva in the title of her novel to illustrate discrimination and aggression that she has experienced in Finland.

5 Swedish is the second official language of Finland, spoken by a minority mainly in the West and South coast of Finland, and in Åland Islands.

6 Naantali is a town in southwestern Finland, whereas Savo is a region in the east of the country, and the dialects spoken in these areas differ greatly from each other.

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Response

Trauma at the Borders

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The concerns of this special issue, which address responses to trauma, are timely, globally significant, and show the relevance of cultural research in the field. The issue reflects current trends in the cultural study of trauma, replacing the event-based model popularized by scholars such as Cathy Caruth (1991) with the insight of more contemporary approaches such as Michelle Balaev's (2014) pluralistic model, which recognizes the multiplicity of theories used in the study of trauma. In their introduction, the editors of this issue emphasize the latter model's ability to address trauma's political and social aspects.

Although it may appear limited that this issue only focuses on the nation-states of Estonia, Finland, and the Soviet Union in the interwar years, the three case studies testify that all three localities are firmly embedded in global politics that have generated wide-ranging cultural and collective traumas in a variety of ways. In Liisi Laineste's analysis, dark humor is offered as a means to understand the traumas of Soviet invasion and deportation; the use of such humor is found embedded in the colonial history of Estonia. In Saija Kaskinen's text, the trauma of betrayal is addressed in radical Finnish-American journalism and its connection with decisions to migrate and construct an allegedly more egalitarian space in Soviet Karelia in the 1920s and 1930s. In Tarja Tanttu and Tuulikki Kurki's analysis of migrant exclusion and insidious trauma in contemporary Finland, the negative experiences of migrants stem from the host population's racist and xenophobic views.

By revealing transnational connections, the analyses contextualize trauma in discourses of nationhood and the need to challenge established positions. Consequently, the three texts show the power of bordering in the generation of traumatizing experiences, revealing effective and cognitive responses to them, and underline the need to generate alternative stories and counterdiscourses to come to terms with monological national narratives and establish a sense of belonging. What is shown through the analyses of trauma is how the private and public spheres cross borders and connect (see Schimanski & Nyman, 2021).

The ideas of bordering and borderscape, belonging, nation, and affect appear as themes that provide innovative perspectives for further research. The articles emphasize how the act of setting up different borders (e.g., geopolitical, ideological, ethnic, and national) and maintaining them through varied forms of discourse (e.g., media, journalism, and the everyday) play a key role in all narrative, distinguishing Estonians from Russians, radical Finnish-Americans from their conservative confrères, and excluding migrants in Finland from the body of the host population. While all of the encounters explored are enacted in the borderscape, i.e., the contact zone where different people and views meet, its functions appear to be traumatizing rather than offering belonging and becoming, as theorists such as Chiara Brambilla (2015) have suggested.

Cultural Analysis 20.2 (2022): 81–83
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While some traces of new identities are outlined in the studies, and perhaps most overtly in Laineste's exploration of humor as a means to negotiate sensitive topics such as traumatic national pasts, Tanttu and Kurki suggest that in the case of insidious, often directly experienced, trauma, many migrants appear unable to leave their liminal position and access a space of hybridity. However, it could also be suggested that many migrant narratives are counterdiscursive and performative since the centered national identity can be appropriated and performed otherwise, as in the case of Arvi Perttu's work investigated here by the authors. Of course, such performances add to the migrants' visibility, which is sometimes a risk and may lead to further exclusion.

In addition to bordering, the idea of belonging emerges as a key issue in the articles and deepens their insight. In her study, Nira Yuval-Davis (2006) distinguishes between how the sense of belonging is negotiated on the everyday level, involving one's relationship with different social groups, identity categories, emotional attachments, values, and what she calls "the politics of belonging" (2006, 199) associated with citizenship. From this perspective, the articles show that trauma operates on both levels, invariably complicating one's relationship with others and the nation. As an example of the first level, which involves different groups and emotional attachments, Laineste's analysis of contradictory responses to the humor of the Mood Spoiler group reveals that for some audience members, a comic representation of the trauma of forced deportation is in breach of an expected Estonian identity. In contrast, others understand the target of such humor to be Russian perceptions of the past.

The issues of emotional investment and identity are present in the polarizations that Kaskinen locates in the discourse of the radical press of the 1920s and 1930s, where the US state is openly blamed for betraying the immigrant workers, contributing to their sense of exclusion. In the narratives that Tanttu and Kurki examine, the processes of othering and exclusion are felt at the level of individuals who see themselves as second-class citizens. They lack what Yuval-Davis (2006, 208) defines as the "spatial rights," to enter and live in a political community, which is explicit in some narratives as the migrant's decision to leave Finland for a better life elsewhere.

The sense of anger and disappointment demonstrated in all of the articles underlines the importance of paying attention to its effect on further work on migration, borders, and encounters as a new direction for such research. While topics such as fear and hatred have been researched, especially in xenophobia and anti-migration discourse, feelings like hesitation, confusion, depression, and worthlessness deserve further attention. Here the cultural turn in border studies may be a fruitful point of departure, and materials such as autobiographies, fiction, essays, documentaries, and ethnographic interviews could provide valuable perspectives in future analyses. Through in-depth readings of discourse, metaphor, silence, and gaps, it will be possible to investigate and understand the trauma experiences of migrants and hosts in new ways. The plural trauma approach developed in this special issue will undoubtedly be helpful in future studies.

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Reviews

Rites of Spontaneity: Communality and Subjectivity in Traditional Irish Music Sessions. By Augusto Ferraiuolo. Cambridge: Cambridge Scholars Publishing, 2019. Pp. 278, acknowledgements, introduction, footnotes, bibliography, illustrations, tables.

In 2006, I enjoyed American and Irish-sounding folkloric songs performed by Bruce Springsteen and his Seeger Sessions Band, replete with banjo, fiddle, guitar, accordion, percussion—seemingly the instruments of traditional Irish sessions bands. Springsteen's title and sound paid homage to traditional Irish music. However, his use of horns and electric instruments, a front-facing live performance (lacking musicians' verbal games), and pop-music structures violate many of the Irish sessions' rules Augusto Ferraiuolo examines in *Rites of Spontaneity*. The subject of his study is traditional Irish music sessions, akin to an urban pickup game of basketball (my comparison), where underlying transactional rules about humility, Irish musical knowledge, deference to group leaders, and varieties of verbal/musical discourse exist to establish a player's acceptance and membership. Ferraiuolo argues that within the performers' circle (musicians face each other on the patron's floor), "[i]dentity, belonging, and power are continuously exercised and negotiated, suggesting at the same time an imagined cohesive" musical group (160). While Irish sessions bands exist across the world, and Irish ethnicity is not required, some essential traits of "Irishness are necessary to create an imagined Irish community" such as storytelling, slagging (teasing in negative terms), gossiping, and musical knowledge, to name a few. Players must negotiate predictable sociability and musicality in quite structured ways. As enjoyable as Springsteen's "Sessions Band" was, it did not reproduce the social and musical intricacies Ferraiuolo illustrates need be present for traditional Irish sessions music.

The Irish term "*ceol agus craic*" ("music and good times") ties together Irish-themed pubs around the world where people gather to drink beer, make conversation, and play traditional Irish songs. Ferraiuolo's central question considers what comprises the *subject* of a session, and he decides that a gestalt of the pub's complex sensory, musical, and social situ does. He points out that the "*craic*" is a mid-20th century English neologism appealing almost exclusively to male Irish/English workers looking for "reciprocity between factual and symbolic kinsmen" (41). Ferraiuolo's multi-faceted study orbits folklore's and anthropology's theoretical constellations, making this a rich book for ethnomusicians, anthropologists, and others interested in the intersectionality of ethnicity, music, and/or social dynamics.

Each of the book's five sections handle different aspects of Irish sessions' subjects. The first three chapters deal with social dynamics, describing what constitutes a session, and the roles that tradition, physicality, and identity play in the music's social performance, respectively. The most intensive ethnomusical section is Chapter 4, which considers rhythmic and harmonic rules, song-structure, and live performance. More than a passing familiarity with music theory is helpful in

Cultural Analysis 20.2 (2022): R1-R3
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navigating Ferraiuolo's details. In fact, the text would benefit from MP3 recordings, internet links, or even a glossary of terms. Chapter 5's conclusion, the headiest of the theory-rich chapters, waxes philosophically about how subjectivity influences identity and the musical community. Conceptually, the term "community" minimalizes the set of "structured rules and recognizable style, performed in rituals…even if the suggested cultural trait is a de-structured and free-to-do spontaneity" (240). Ferraiuolo thinks of the session as a *heterophonic community* (217-218). Musically, heterophony is a voice that parallels a melody at a constant tonal interval, such as the major third—defying the tonal structure of most scales. A session member (even those passively seeking membership) must negotiate the rules and dynamics of the group that allow for predictable individualized variability, intensified by the values and materials of Irish identity.

Ferraiuolo's previous ethnographies focused on Italian transnationalism (*Religious Festive Practices in Boston's North End,* 2009) and Southern Italy's folk tales and oral narratives (*La Storia, la Memoria e I Racconti*, 1982). As a native Italian educated in Boston, he views ethnicity from transnational and diasporic perspectives. He is a participatory scholar in his sessions research, playing bodhrán (one of Ireland's oldest percussive instruments) in pubs for several years. In his self-reflexive analysis, he finds that pubs become "third places" (ala Ray Oldensburg), where regulars meet for a sense of belonging, identity, and fun. Historically, diasporic Irishmen in search of a livable wage, went to England and America and found enough money to warrant camaraderie and leisure in ethno-Irish pubs. Ferraiuolo emphasizes the masculinity of pub life, asserting that, though "[t]hings have certainly changed, …the pub is still a man's place" (40). Because his direct experience lies at the heart of this study, Ferraiuolo's focus is strictly limited to masculinity.

Transnationalism and the Irish diaspora helped commodify traditional music not only through the "*ceol agus craic*" in pubs but also via recordings and radio in the Chicago, Boston, and New York markets. Ferraiuolo argues that live sessions exceed mere consumption because pubs and music contribute to a complex expression of subjective values, tastes, and identities. While the irrepressible demand to notate music and judge performances stymied melodic ornamentation, playing speed, rhythm, and even competitive playing, his emic view concludes that musical individualization brings "authenticity and pureness [to] traditional music" (210). Even slight, subjective variations in performance elements can create complexity strong enough to alter a song's identity, when "group and subject interact dynamically and constantly" (216). Consequently, Theodor Adorno's idea that popular music's strict harmonic structure strangles individuation cannot be sustained in considering the Irish session.

While the music chapter is astute in analysis, clearer illustrations in both print and explanation would be helpful. Much of the notation and tables are not crisply reproduced and are challenging to follow. While not essential to understanding the argument, these provide supportive details that enrichen the analysis. Nevertheless, Ferraiulo's point remains an important contribution to ethnomusicology.

"Irishness" requires identifiable elements, particularly verbal play, even in musical sessions. If regulation chokes the session's *ceol* (music) and "craic" (fun), then essentially Irish-performative rituals and variations enliven the process, the event, and, ultimately, group identity. Even in Rome, where Italian owners recreate the Irish phenomenon, one need not *be* ethnically Irish to use the rites that form an imagined Irish community—one that is recognizably and viably Irish. Irish stylized communities may exist anywhere the rites of Irish music (*ceol*) and fun ("craic") are reproduced.

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