ANNA OVASKA

Shattering Minds

Experiences of Mental Illness in Modernist Finnish Literature

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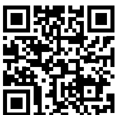

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Contents

Acknowledgments 7

1. **Introduction** 8

2. **Shattering Minds and Worlds of Fiction** 15
   Modernist Minds 16
   The Embodied Mind and Mental Illness 19
   Reading Closely and Taking Distance 22
   Finnish Modernists 30

3. **A Transgressive Soul: Helvi Hämäläinen's *Kaunis sielu* (The Beautiful Soul)** 42
   The Experiential World 45
   Inner and Outer Worlds 53
   Affective Patterns and Shaping Norms 60
   Affective, Aesthetic, and Political Transgressions 73

4. **A Divided Mind: Jorma Korpela's *Tohtori Finckelman* (Doctor Finckelman)** 76
   On the Borders of Fiction and Reality 79
   Psychological and Metafictional Readings 89
   The Unreliable Doctor 101
   The Other World 113
   The Ethics of Reading Others 128

5. **Trauma and Tragedy: Timo K. Mukka's *Tabu* (Taboo)** 137
   Reading Trauma and Abuse 140
   Construction of a Tragedy 151
   Shared Madness and Trauma 162
   A Strange Atmosphere 170

6. **Meanings of Psychosis: Maria Vaara's *Likaiset legendat* (Dirty Legends)** 175
The Loss of Self 179
A Shattering World 184
Stories of Psychosis 191
Forms of Knowledge 201

7. **Conclusion** 204

Notes 208
References 241
The Author 255
Abstract 256
Index 257

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1. Introduction

> My God, my God, am I going insane? Everything is muddled, I cannot arrange events in my mind.
>
> – Helvi Hämäläinen, *Kaunis sielu*[1]

> I didn't have any kind of illness, it was otherwise hard. I wonder if other people feel the way I do, I thought then.
>
> – Jorma Korpela, *Tohtori Finckelman*[2]

> I was afraid that she had lost her sanity. I was afraid that also my own thoughts had lost their everything.
>
> – Timo K. Mukka, *Tabu*[3]

> Maria has gone away, I have gone away. The others have come.
>
> – Maria Vaara, *Likaiset legendat*[4]

This book grew out of my interest in literary representations of unusual and unsettling experiences that are often interpreted (either by the experiencers themselves, by other fictional characters, or by readers) as signs of "mental illness" or "madness." The four narrators of Finnish modernist novels discussed in this book bring forth diverse experiences of shattering, distress, confusion, alienation, and pain. They offer descriptions of hallucinations and delusions, as well as portrayals of a loss of borders between the self, the world, and others. The narrators also often try to "diagnose" themselves, although this task usually proves difficult, and they try to make sense of their experiences by giving them a narrative form.

Another starting point for this book was the sense of "access" to other minds afforded by literary narratives. There is a shared understanding that stories in general, and first-person narrated texts in particular, are able to generate strong feelings of being and interacting with other human beings.[5] Literary works, in their descriptive detail and affective power, are some of the most powerful ways of evoking and inviting reflection on subjective experiences, also ones that may be unsettling for those experiencing or witnessing them. In addition to the experiences of shattering and distress evoked in literature, this book focuses on the ways literary language and narrative form can convey experiences and bring readers close to the minds of others—even feel that we are "inside" another person's experiential world.

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Particularly modernist literature is filled with evocative portrayals of shattering and distress that seem to capture the lived meaning of such experiences. This has been noted, for example, by phenomenologist and psychologist Louis Sass in his book *Madness and Modernism* (1992). According to Sass, there is an affinity between experiences of "madness" and modernist art: for example, an acute sense of self-consciousness and self-awareness ("hyperreflexivity", as he calls it) combined with experiences of alienation from the shared world and detachment from oneself.[6]

It is not surprising that psychologists, psychoanalysts, medical practitioners, sociologists, and other researchers interested in the margins of being have been looking to literary fiction for insight.[7] In the past 20 years interdisciplinary fields of research like medical and health humanities, narrative medicine, and madness studies have further developed these connections between the medical sciences, humanities, and social sciences and paid special attention to the ways different forms of knowledge about illness and health are entangled.[8] Fictional and autobiographical narratives of (mental) illness are used, for example, in medical education: to bring focus to the patients' perspectives and experiences and to resist biomedical reductionism. However, there is a growing awareness that literature cannot be seen as a mere tool for enhancing healthcare. Literature shapes the way we understand—the way we *read*—ourselves, others, and the world. Cultural artefacts like literary narratives participate in the construction of social reality and knowledge. Furthermore, many literary scholars have emphasized the need to analyze the distinctive features of literary and narrative discourses and the specific techniques authors use to evoke minds and experiences and to affect their audiences (see, e.g., Cohn 1978; 1999; Wood 1994; 2013). Literature is a valuable source of understanding about our being in the world and with others, but it creates its own techniques and realm of aesthetic meaning, which deserve further investigation.

To discuss how literature represents, enacts, and reconfigures unusual and unsettling experiences and how readers engage with them, I bring narrative theory into conversation with philosophical, feminist, and cultural perspectives on the mind and mental illness. Drawing from phenomenological and embodied cognitive theories about the mind, body, illness, self, and intersubjectivity as well as narratological research on fictional minds and text-reader interaction, I develop theory and analyses about the narrative construction and reading of shattering minds and experiential worlds. The book poses a series of questions about how fictional representations of mental illness work and how we approach them: What techniques do literary texts use to create shattering minds and experiential worlds? How are readers invited to engage with such minds and worlds? What kind of power relations are involved in narrating and reading about experiences that are distressing and painful? How do literary texts construct knowledge and understanding about mental illness?

The focus of analysis is on four modernist and late modernist novels—Helvi Hämäläinen's *Kaunis sielu* (1928/2001), Jorma Korpela's *Tohtori Finckelman* (1952), Timo K. Mukka's *Tabu* (1965) and Maria Vaara's *Likaiset legendat* (1974)—which each pay special attention to the margins of

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subjectivity and strive to turn experiences of illness, distress, and shattering into words, stories, and storyworlds. The four novels offer particularly compelling portrayals of mental distress from a first-person perspective: they invite reflection on the possibilities of literature to convey subjective experiences as well as on the cultural meanings of mental illness.[9] The works also offer a temporally wide-ranging overview of Finnish modernist prose: the analyses shed light on how Finnish modernist writers used the technique of first-person narration and offer new readings of Finnish modernist novels written from the late 1920s to the early 1970s, some of which have not been extensively studied before.

One of my tasks when reading the novels and writing about them has been to create interpretations that do not reduce the experiences portrayed in them to diagnostic or psychiatric categories. The notions of "mental illness" and "madness" are understood here as value-laden and culture-specific interpretive tools that are used to categorize and label a great variety of experiences and behaviors that feel strange or unsettling for those experiencing or perceiving them (see Abbott 2018, 18).[10] This is not to say that mental illnesses or psychiatric disabilities are not real. In real life, diagnoses and labels are needed to provide people with the right kind of treatment, and for many practical reasons, for example to ensure disability allowance. At the same time, diagnoses create what philosopher Ian Hacking (1998; 1999) has called "looping effects": being diagnosed, for example, with schizophrenia, affects how a person understands themselves and how they experience the world. A correct diagnosis—a "correct interpretation"—can help a person to make sense of their experiences and to cope with distress and disability. But many diagnoses still carry negative social and cultural meanings—stigmas—and in the worst cases, they may become self-fulfilling prophesies that hinder recovery. As such, diagnostic labels are linked to restrictive and oppressive cultural narratives about psychiatric disability. Because fictional works employ, repeat, and reconfigure categories and narratives of mental illness, they may shape not only readers' conceptions thereof, but even the experiences that readers who suffer from psychiatric disabilities have: our self-understanding and identity.

Another reason to maintain a critical distance to diagnostic interpretations is connected to literature as a form of art. The objects of this study are artificial constructions: the characters and their minds are fictional, and they are brought to life in the experiences of each individual reader. Instead of diagnosing fictional narrators or characters, or answering questions about how psychiatric disabilities are or should be labeled or categorized, I ask what functions the experiences of shattering and distress, and interpreting them as "madness" or "mental illness," have in the texts, and what kind of cultural work they do: How do the texts guide our reading and interpretation and why do we read the way we do? How do they affect our perception and understanding of the mind and mental illness?

Fictional representations of mental illness often purposely call their readers to reflect upon the causes of the characters' experiences and to try to fit them into different diagnostic categories—as if the literary characters were actual people (and as if readers were doctors or psychiatrists). However,

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this investigative and diagnostic work is constantly interrupted, as we will see. Literary narratives often fight against the human need to classify and label, even though they also employ our habit of attributing mental states and experiences to other people. The analyzed novels direct their readers to pay attention to the experiences of shattering and distress, not just as symptoms of some mental illness or disorder that must be diagnosed, but as meaningful in their own right. Most importantly, the novels invite the readers to reflect on our ways of reading and approaching unsettling experiences.

The analyses conducted in this study show how fictional portrayals of mental illness both use and challenge our cultural and scientific understanding of what is considered pathological or "abnormal," as well as common diagnostic labels such as "schizophrenia." They renegotiate the scope of "normal" and question the ways we understand the mind and consciousness. The modernist texts, for example, problematize the dominant cultural narrative according to which mental illness is something that is "inside the head." Instead of presenting minds and illness as disembodied or disengaged from the world, the texts conceive them as bodily and embedded in the world, enacted in intersubjective relations with other people, and entangled in socio-cultural norms and narratives that shape identity, gender, and sexuality. As such, the novels have ethical and political significance. Furthermore, and just as importantly, they guide their readers to pay attention to the narrative techniques and aesthetic forms: to the way stories can evoke experiences and how representations create meaning. In other words, they remind us of the narrative and artistic construction of the experiences they portray. The novels are thus simultaneously lifelike and metafictional: both experiential and aware of their own fictionality. They invite their readers to imagine ways of honoring unusual and unsettling experiences without stigmatizing them and to acknowledge the complexity of experiences and knowledge constructed through narratives.

As narrative scholars Käte Hamburger and Dorrit Cohn have famously argued, narrative fiction is a distinctive form of art because of its ability to provide a sense of access into minds other than one's own (Hamburger 1973, 83; Cohn 1978, 4–6). In *Transparent Minds*, Cohn writes that:

> [N]arrative fiction is the only literary genre, as well as the only kind of narrative, in which *the unspoken thoughts, feelings, perceptions of a person other than the speaker can be portrayed*. (Cohn 1978, 7, emphasis mine.)[11]

Cohn refers to the "magical power" authors have: the way they can reveal the experiential worlds of their characters and make readers feel *as if* they entered the thoughts, feelings, and perceptions of another human being. In third-person narration the uncanniness of this power is at its height: narrative techniques like psycho-narration (thought report) and narrated monologue (free indirect discourse) invite readers to encounter experiences that are invisible to an outside observer and that can be unconscious, unspeakable, or on the edge of verbalization even for the characters themselves (Cohn 1978, 103; also Palmer 2004, 75–86).[12] First-person narrators, in turn, invite readers inside their *own* lives: as monologists, diarists and memoirists they

https://doi.org/10.21435/sflit.13

reveal their past and present experiences to their readers and persuade us to adapt to their perspective of the world. Yet although first-person narration is lifelike in this sense, first-person narrators often break the "mimetic code"—what is plausible or possible to do or know in real life—in many ways. They, for example, have knowledge that would be impossible to have in reality or they narrate what is happening to them simultaneously with the events. As such, first-person narrators often point toward their own fictionality and constructedness. (See Cohn 1978, 209–215; also Phelan 2005; 2013.)[13]

First-person narration also reveals and takes advantage of the doubled nature of the speaking subject. First-person narrators are always looking at themselves as if from the "outside": there is a constant gap between narration and experience, between the narrating I and the experiencing I. Such narrators are often painfully familiar with the insufficiency of language and narration. They are faced with a lack of words to describe their experiences and with a lack of self-knowledge, and they thematize this in their narration. An important characteristic of the narrators of their own lives is that they are often unreliable. As narratologist Greta Olson (2003) notes, unreliable narrators can be either "untrustworthy" or "fallible." Whereas untrustworthy narrators try to purposefully deceive their audiences (for example, to show themselves in a better light), fallible ones make mistakes in their perceptions and judgments about themselves and the world around them without realizing it (see also Cohn 1978, 144; Palmer 2004, 125). When encountering unreliable narrators, it becomes the readers' task to detect this unreliability and to construct what "actually" happens in the story, using clues provided by the text and its implied author (see Nünning 2005; 2008; Phelan 2005). The doubledness, untrustworthiness and fallibility are all features of the first-person perspective that authors use for aesthetic and political purposes, as we will see.

The reader's position, when reading a first-person narrator's account of themselves, is also doubled in its own way: a reader, an I, is faced with another I. Phenomenologist Georges Poulet has described the experience of reading fiction even as an experience of becoming "invaded" by another mind:

> Because of the strange invasion of my person by the thought of another, I am a self that is granted the experience of thinking thoughts foreign to him. I am the subject of thoughts other than my own. My consciousness behaves as though it were a consciousness of another. (Poulet 1969, 56.)

A reader becomes a subject of "alien" thoughts. This kind of readerly experience, although extreme, may arise in any narrative situation (whether the text is narrated in first, second, or third-person), but it appears pronounced when engaging with first-person narrators or "figural" third-person narrators who adapt to the character's perspective[14]—and it becomes particularly interesting when talking about experiences such as hallucinations, alienation, estrangement, and other ways of being in which the connection between the self and the world has become altered. The experience of reading can even resemble hallucinating, with the important difference that it happens inside an "aes-

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thetic frame," in the safe space provided by the aesthetic work where readers know that fiction is fiction, no matter how lifelike or vivid it may appear.[15]

The fictional works discussed in this book invite readers to imagine thoughts, feelings, and perceptions other than their own. They can evoke what trauma historian Dominic LaCapra has called "empathic unsettlement":

> a kind of virtual experience through which one puts oneself in the other's position while recognizing the difference of that position and hence not taking the other's place. (LaCapra 1999, 699.)

Fictional texts can make us attentive to the experiences of others. They can push us to imagine the experiences of others while understanding the difference between the self and the other—what Emmanuel Lévinas (1969) described as the "otherness" of the other. While we can never step outside of our own bodies and our own perspectives and feel what another person is feeling, it is possible to recognize the experiences of another and listen to them carefully. As noted earlier, fiction can also modify the way we perceive unusual experiences and the borders between "normal" and "abnormal." Fictional stories are able to challenge our dominant cultural narratives and folk psychological notions of mental illness. They do this by exploring experiences of shattering and distress in an artful form. At the same time, fictional narratives are artistic constructions that have aesthetic meanings. Fiction evokes particular aesthetic experiences: a sense of lifelikeness and reality but also, as narratologist James Phelan puts it, a "thematic, ethical and affective significance and force which real-world experience does not have" (Phelan 2013, 171).

The following chapters are guided by two main theoretical and methodological goals. First, my aim is to bring together "psychological" and "metafictional" perspectives on fictional representations of shattering minds: to analyze their lifelikeness and constructedness side by side. Second, I supplement these perspectives with close reading, which pays attention to the cultural work that narratives do in the world and to the ways both the narrative texts and the interpretations we make of them are shaped by cultural and political structures. The analyses thus combine narratological insights about fictional minds and consciousness presentation with politically oriented and feminist approaches to narrative forms and ways of reading.

In Chapter 2, I discuss in more detail the modernist representations of shattering and distress. I focus on the ways modernist texts construct the mind and mental illness as embodied and shaped by the social and material environment. The chapter also elaborates on the interaction between the reader and the text, especially on the affective and reflective engagements, diagnostic efforts and failures, and empathic unsettlement invited by the modernist novels. Chapters 3 to 6 proceed from close readings of the fictional minds in each novel to explorations of the interpretive paths that the texts offer. I look at how readers are faced with the ambiguity of the texts and directed to oscillate between different, sometimes contradicting frames of reading and interpreting the narrators' "madness." In Chapter 3, I investigate the transgressive, norm-breaking, and queer fictional mind that

https://doi.org/10.21435/sflit.13

is created in Hämäläinen's *Kaunis sielu*. Chapters 4 and 5 focus on two very different kinds of stories about sexual abuse and trauma: Korpela's *Tohtori Finckelman* (chapter 4) and Mukka's *Tabu* (chapter 5). Although the first novel is narrated by a possible perpetrator and the second by a victim of abuse, both bring forth questions about narrators' unreliability, narration of traumatizing events, and ethics of reading. In Chapter 6, I explore the representation and meanings of psychosis in Maria Vaara's autofictional work *Likaiset legendat*. Finally, in the concluding chapter, I return to the questions about the forms of reflection, understanding, and knowledge created through fictional portrayals of shattering minds.

https://doi.org/10.21435/sflit.13

2. Shattering Minds and Worlds of Fiction

> But he [Septimus] would not go mad. He would shut his eyes; he would see no more.
>
> But they beckoned; leaves were alive; trees were alive. And the leaves being connected by millions of fibres with his own body, there on the seat, fanned it up and down; when the branch stretched he, too, made that statement. The sparrows fluttering, rising, and falling in jagged fountains were part of the pattern; the white and blue, barred with black branches. Sounds made harmonies with premeditation; the spaces between them were as significant as the sounds. A child cried. Rightly away a horn sounded. All taken together meant the birth of a new religion ---
>
> "Septimus!" Said Rezia. He started violently. People must notice. (Woolf 2004, 18.)

Virginia Woolf's famous portrayal of Septimus Warren Smith's experiences in *Mrs Dalloway* (1925) offers an interesting viewing point for the modernist representations of mental illness. Through Septimus's character, Woolf created a seminal representation of trauma and loss of borders between the self and the world, which reveals features that are also important in the Finnish modernist texts. In the passage quoted above, Woolf constructs the experiential world of Septimus, a young First World War veteran suffering from what would today be likely identified as post-traumatic stress disorder. The narrator renders Septimus's thoughts through narrated monologue in which the voices and perspectives of Septimus and the narrator are entangled. The passage focuses on the way Septimus experiences his body as merging with his environment, moving and thinking with the world, and feeling nature around him (the trees, leaves, and sparrows) as part of his body. The borders between himself and the world are breaking down, and the world takes on a curious meaning, creating something similar to what phenomenological psychiatry has called a "delusional atmosphere": a strange, enigmatic atmosphere that sets in before psychotic hallucinations or delusions take hold (see Jaspers 1963, 98; Sass 1994, 44–45).

At the beginning of the passage, the experience is framed as "madness," but this is done through negation—"he would not go mad"—leaving room for other interpretations. The main reason why readers are likely to interpret Septimus's experiences as symptoms of a mental illness (and not, for instance,

https://doi.org/10.21435/sflit.13

through a religious frame, which the text also offers) is that soon after this passage the experiences become disturbing and painful: he goes through distressing hallucinations, which take him back to the death of his officer in the war. However, the focus of Woolf's narration is not on finding a diagnostic label for Septimus, but rather on the *way* he experiences the world after a series of traumatic events. As David Herman (2011b, 244) emphasizes, "Woolf uses Septimus not just to thematize mental disability but to enact the way the world is experienced by someone suffering from psychotic delusions."[16] More important than any diagnosis are the experiences themselves and their articulation through narrative means: Woolf shows how the world becomes strange and unsettling as a result of trauma.

Modernist Minds

Interest in unsettling and strange experiences is often seen as one dominant strand of modernist literature and thought. This attentiveness to the margins of being connects with the modernist writers' more general thematic and formal concern on the "individual, subjective consciousness," as Randal Stevenson (1992, 2) puts it. Likewise, David Herman (2011b, 243) writes that "despite their surface differences," modernist writers shared a common project: "the project of foregrounding […] the domain of the mental, including sense impressions, emotions, memories, associative thought patterns and so on." Modernists all around the world focused on moments and situations in which the borders between the self, the world, and others become fragile and subjectivity becomes precarious, and they sought to communicate to their readers experiences like hallucinations, delusions, and feelings of alienation and distress.

The theme of mental illness and the focus on experiences of "shattering" offered many writers a chance to explore the relations of the mind, the body, language, and the world and to develop new techniques for representing the individual consciousness and the subject's perspective on the world. Furthermore, these investigations were responses to the changing social reality, structures of power, scientific advancements, and the destructive wars of the twentieth century. This can be seen in the work of numerous modernist writers and their followers, from Virginia Woolf to Albert Camus, Franz Kafka to Vladimir Nabokov, and from Charlotte Perkins Gilman to Janet Frame and Sylvia Plath, and the authors discussed here—Hämäläinen, Korpela, Mukka, and Vaara—participate in these modernist thematic discussions and formal experimentations from a Nordic perspective.

In *Kaunis sielu*, Hämäläinen creates a first-person narrator, a monologist who is constantly, obsessively, reflecting on her mental states, bodily experiences, and the world around her—bringing forth an experience that Sass (1994; 1998) has called "hyperreflexivity." The narrator fears that she is going insane, but also goes through feelings of pleasure and wonder engaging with her environment. The novel is examined more closely in Chapter 3, but let us take a brief look at one passage here, since it demonstrates some recurrent features of modernist explorations of (shattering) minds. Namely,

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how the mind is portrayed in interaction between the self and the world and how the borders between the "inside" and the "outside" become hazy:

> 6. My head aches. The lamp disturbs me. Everything disturbs me, even my own clothes; there should not be any light, no chair, no table. Should I break the lamp, bite my hands? My God, My God, am I going insane? Everything is muddled; I cannot arrange events in my mind. A table leg appears in my thoughts, it was varnished, shorter than the others, he sat there, at that table, when we first met. Now the table leg is the only clear image in my mind. [...] I must first explain, explain carefully the table leg before I can begin. That table leg hovers around me, in my eyes, in the empty space. I bite my hands and repeat to myself: it must be explained, I can see it clearly. Varnished and some string, shorter.

> 6. Minun päätäni särkee. Lamppu häiritsee minua. Kaikki häiritsee minua, omat vaatteenikin, valoa ei saisi olla, ei tuolia, ei pöytää. Lyönkö lampun rikki, purenko käsiäni? Jumalani, Jumalani, tulenko hulluksi? Kaikki on sekaisin, en voi järjestää tapahtumia mielessäni. Ajatuksissani häilähtelee pöydänjalka, se oli vernissattu, lyhyempi muita, sen pöydän ääressä hän istui, kun näimme ensi kerran. Nyt on pöydänjalka ainoa selvä kuva mielessäni. [...] Minun on ensiksi selitettävä, selitettävä tarkoin pöydänjalka ennen kuin pääsen asiaan. Tuo pöydänjalka keikkuu ympärilläni, silmissäni tyhjässä ilmassa. Pureskelen käsiäni ja toistan itsekseni: se on selitettävä, näen sen aivan selvästi. Vernissattu ja lankaa, lyhyempi. (KS 9.)

Like Septimus in Woolf's novel, Hämäläinen's narrator suffers from a pressing fear that she is going insane. Whereas for Septimus in the passage quoted above the world appears in a new light and full of strange meaning, for the narrator of *Kaunis sielu* the world is, at this moment, disturbing and all meaning seems to escape her. Hämäläinen constructs a monologue in which the narrator-protagonist reports her experiences as they appear to her: there is a headache, a feeling of being disturbed by the objects around her, and a feeling of confusion. The narrator is describing her bodily reactions to her immediate environment, the disturbing lamp, the table, the chair, as well as her inner thoughts, and particularly a specific memory of a table leg, simultaneously constructing her "inner" experiences and the "outside" world. The passage creates a vivid impression of the narrator's experience of being bodily present in the world. At the same time, the overall feeling of distress leads her to fear (and to self-diagnose) that she is going insane.

Hämäläinen's evocative portrayal of a mind in action—in constant movement, responding to and intermingling with the surrounding world—is a good illustration of some of the remarks Woolf made about the representation of consciousness in her famous essay "Modern Fiction" (1919/1921). Woolf outlines the objectives of modernist literature, emphasizing the effort to capture experiences as they arise for the feeling and thinking subject:

> The mind receives a myriad impressions – trivial, fantastic, evanescent, or engraved with the sharpness of steel. From all sides they come, an incessant shower of innumerable atoms; and as they fall, as they shape themselves into the

https://doi.org/10.21435/sflit.13

> life of Monday or Tuesday, the accent falls differently from of old; the moment of importance came not here but there; so that, if a writer were a free man and not a slave, if he could write what he chose, not what he must, if he could base his work upon his own feeling and not upon convention, there would be no plot, no comedy, no tragedy, no love interest or catastrophe in the accepted style, and perhaps not a single button sewn on as the Bond Street tailors would have it. (Woolf 1984, 160.)

In other words, modernist writers sought to put into words what life "feels like": the way the fragmented impressions of the world are shaped into an uninterrupted stream of consciousness. Woolf continues in a famous passage:

> Life is not a series of gig lamps symmetrically arranged; life is a luminous halo, a semi-transparent envelope surrounding us from the beginning of consciousness to the end. Is it not the task of the novelist to convey this varying, this unknown and uncircumscribed spirit, whatever aberration or complexity it may display, with as little mixture of the alien and external as possible? (Woolf 1984, 160–161.)

A writer's job is to share this experience of being alive, of being conscious, as it emerges, and to free the portrayal of the mind—"the unknown and uncircumscribed spirit"—from the old literary conventions. As Jesse Matz (2006, 220) aptly notes, "the modern novel searches for a new realism in the actual incoherence of the human mind."

The modernist interest in the mind and consciousness has often been characterized as an "inward turn," toward "inner worlds" or "interior depths" of the psyche (see Kahler 1973; Cohn 1978, 8, 114; Eysteinsson 1990, 26). However, as David Herman suggests in his article "Re-Minding Modernism," modernist efforts to capture the workings of minds are perhaps more aptly described as a turn toward *worlds-as-experienced*—subjective worlds that are constructed in interaction between the self and its environment. He thus proposes a reconceptualization of modernist techniques and their functions:

> Modernist techniques for representing consciousness can be seen as an attempt to highlight how minds at once shape and are shaped by larger experiential environments […]. Modernist narratives, in other words, stage the moment-by-moment construction of worlds-as-experienced through an interplay between agent and environment. (Herman 2011b, 249–250.)

As Herman argues, the way many modernist writers depicted the mind and consciousness as interacting with and rooted in the world resonates with the phenomenological and embodied cognitive understanding of the mind as embodied, enactive, embedded in, and extending to the world. For example, the focus of Hämäläinen's narration in *Kaunis sielu* is not solely on representing the inner thoughts of the narrator-protagonist; rather, the fictional consciousness is constructed as a space in which thoughts and memories, bodily sensations, and objects of the world come together. She creates a narrative technique through which the mind is shown as embedded in and intermingling with the world. Following Herman, I suggest that phenomenological and embodied cognitive theories—which have their roots

https://doi.org/10.21435/sflit.13

in the early twentieth-century notions of the relationality of the mind—help to illuminate how experiences are constructed by many modernist writers: their texts do not focus on the "inside" of the mind, but rather on experiential worlds, lived bodies and spaces, and the entanglements of the mind and the world.[17] Moreover, this view highlights the political character of modernist texts: they reveal how subjects are shaped by their cultural and material environments. Let us now look more carefully at embodied cognition and its connections to the modernist minds and experiences of shattering.

The Embodied Mind and Mental Illness

The theories of embodied cognition (or the "four E's": the enactive, embodied, embedded, and extended mind) emphasize that the mind and consciousness are not produced solely by the brain, but through the whole body's interaction with the world.[18] Cognitive processes like perceiving, thinking, remembering, and imagining are enacted by the living organism that is embedded in its environment: our bodies provide a perspective on the world, and our experiences are situated in the world, shaped or even constituted by the interaction with the material environment. Likewise, other people and the social environment have an important role shaping our cognition, as phenomenologist Thomas Fuchs writes:

> The individual mind is not confined within the head, but extends throughout the living body and includes the world beyond the membrane of the organism, especially the interpersonal world of self and other; this is also the world in which mind and brain are essentially formed. (Fuchs 2009, 221.)

In other words, the mind is deeply rooted in its environment, in our interpersonal and social relations to other people, and also in the material world, in our interactions with objects of nature, tools, and instruments. The material and social environment is also part of our "affective scaffolding," regulating and supporting our affects, emotions and moods, offering possibilities for action or restricting our movements in the world (see Colombetti & Krueger 2015).

The embodied perspective also has consequences for how psychiatric disabilities are understood.[19] The mind is not confined to the brain, and neither are mental illnesses "inside the head." Rather, they are alterations in our embodied being in the world: in the way we interact with or make sense of our environments. As philosopher and cognitive scientist Giovanna Colombetti (2013, 1097) suggests, following biologist Jakob von Uexküll's (1864–1944) notion of *Umwelt* (life-world or experiential world): "psychiatric disorders are to be understood as shifts in sense-making, resulting in an extraordinary and therefore often disconcerting *Umwelt*." In other words, psychiatric disabilities can be perceived as changes in the first-person perspective provided by our bodies, our embeddedness in and extendedness into the world, and in our ways of interacting with other people and the world. For example, hallucinations, delusions, and feelings of alienation and

https://doi.org/10.21435/sflit.13

detachment involve alterations in a person's immersion or sense of presence in the world, in the experience of their own body, and in interpersonal relations.

The idea of the relationality of the mind and mental illness is not anything new in itself. Current phenomenological and embodied cognitive views draw from the twentieth century traditions of psychoanalysis, phenomenological psychiatry and phenomenology of illness. In many of his writings, also Freud understood the ego as embodied and deeply entangled in social relations (see Freud 1923/1962; also Grosz 1994, 31–39) and stressed how, for example, hallucinations are connected to the interpersonal world, characterizing them as internalized voices of the family and society (see Freud 1914/2012). Phenomenologists like J. H. van den Berg, in turn, understood experiences of illness as alterations in a person's experiential world: "The patient is ill, that means, his world is ill" (van den Berg 1972, 46).

Another important background for contemporary phenomenological and embodied cognitive perspectives on psychopathology is psychologist James J. Gibson's (1979, 127) ecological psychology and his notion of "affordances": the possibilities for action that the world offers for a living being and that constitute their experiential world. Drawing on Gibson, changes in a person's experiential world can be understood as a diminishment or loss of affordances—loss of possibilities to act—in the world. Or to use Colombetti's and Krueger's (2015) notion of "affective scaffolding": in psychiatric disability the scaffolding, the support provided by the world, is diminished or lost.[20]

The modernist portrayals of shattering minds and worlds discussed here can be aligned with such phenomenological, embodied cognitive, psychoanalytical, and ecological descriptions of how a person's experiential world is changed in (mental) illness. I show in the following chapters how fictional works can highlight the relationality of the mind: its construction in interaction with the world and other people. This is what happens in the cited passage in *Kaunis sielu*, and in Septimus's scene in *Mrs Dalloway*. Likewise, in Korpela's *Tohtori Finckelman* the unnamed narrator-protagonist depicts how the world around him becomes unsettling after a series of distressing events:

> Everything is quite strange, nothing is as it should be. It feels empty, stagnant, as if nature had had a stroke. Something has happened, I realize, something that very unpleasantly pushes its way into my life too. It is as if some kind of ropes were pulling my world off its rails, invisible ropes. This is none of my business, nothing that has happened, I say, not at all, there's no point in pulling… Leave me alone, I am an outsider… But still they force their way through, something keeps pulling the raft on which I am standing […].
>
> Kaikki on perin kummallista, ei mikään ole niin kuin pitäisi. Tuntuu tyhjältä, seisahtuneelta, on kuin luonto olisi saanut halvauksen. On sattunut jotakin, havaitsen, jotakin joka hyvin epämiellyttävästi työntyy minunkin elämääni. Jonkinlaiset köydet ikään kuin kiskovat minunkin maailmaani pois raiteiltaan, näkymättömät köydet. Ei tämä minulle kuulu, tämä kaikki mikä on tapahtunut, sanon, ei ollenkaan, turha kiskoa… Jättäkää rauhaan, olen sivullinen… Mutta ne työntyvät sittenkin, jokin vain kiskoo sitä lauttaa jolla seison […]. (TF 315.)

https://doi.org/10.21435/sflit.13

Like Hämäläinen's and Woolf's portrayals of unsettling experiences, *Tohtori Finckelman* directs the readers' attention to the fictional character's affective and bodily engagement with his physical and social environment. The text not only thematizes the mental distress of the character or creates metaphors for the experience (the "rope" that is pulling) but also enacts what it *feels like* to go through such experiences. These modernist works, in other words, construct the first-person perspective of someone whose experiential world is changing: Hämäläinen and Korpela through first-person narration, and Woolf through figural third-person narration. The novels create phenomenologically insightful descriptions of shattering and distress. Most importantly, these texts do more than portray: they convey experiences to readers by inviting us to reflect on our own experiences of being embodied subjects embedded in the world—a topic to which I return in the next section.

At the same time, it is important to stress that the modernist portrayals of the mind and experience are products of specific cultural situations and contexts. As many researchers of modernism have noted, along with interest in the mind and its relation to the world came skepticism and doubt about the modern world and society (see Eysteinsson 1990, 26–30; Matz 2006, 215). Modernist literature is even sometimes characterized as literature of trauma: modernist works transform into words the traumas of the two world wars, oppressive social systems, or the trauma of modernity itself (see Cvetkovich 2003, 17; Kaplan 2005, 24; Taylor 2012, 29–32). Modernist texts repeatedly make visible the growing understanding of how subjects are shaped by their social and cultural environments and how hidden or unconscious social restrictions and norms govern the subjects' possibilities for action in the world. Moreover, they reveal how traumatic events, loss, damage, and oppressive environments affect the subjects' lived worlds. The novels pay close attention to how subjects are situated in the world and afforded different kinds of possibilities for agency and action.

The understanding of possibilities for action (or affordances) also resonates with recent feminist phenomenology which focuses on the embodied experiences of marginalized subjects (see, e.g., see Cohen Shabot & Laundry 2018). For example, Sara Ahmed (2004; 2006) has examined how social and cultural norms, scripts, and narratives regulate bodies, experiences, and agency by controlling what different kinds of bodies (female, queer, racialized) can do in the world. She compares the way cultural norms work on bodies to repetitive strain injuries, highlighting how society and culture shape bodies and possibilities for action:

> Through repeating some gestures and not others, or through being orientated in some directions and not others, bodies become contorted; they get twisted into shapes that enable some action only insofar as they restrict capacity for other kinds of action. (Ahmed 2004, 145.)

Ahmed focuses on experiences of pain and suffering that are caused by the cultural norms and scripts that govern gender and sexuality: she asks what kinds of behavior are allowed for different subjects, what forms of sexuality

https://doi.org/10.21435/sflit.13

are culturally acceptable, and what it means if a person deviates from the norms. In this view, experiences of suffering are not pathologized. Rather, Ahmed directs our attention to how experiences of distress and shattering are connected to the possibilities afforded or denied in society and culture.

In the analyses of Hämäläinen's, Korpela's, Mukka's and Vaara's works, we will see how socio-cultural circumstances shape experiential worlds and how the modernist representations of shattering, pain, and distress are closely tied to, for example, gender and sexuality and the cultural narratives surrounding them. The analyzed novels embody the modernist desire to challenge normative ideas and ideologies, and ways of being and knowing, and pay attention to oppressive and violent social systems and structures (see also Kahan 2013, 348). I return to the analyzed texts and their specific contexts in Finnish literary history in the final part of this chapter, but before that, let us briefly focus on the questions of the text-reader interaction and reading "shattering minds."

Reading Closely and Taking Distance

Our lives and our existence in the world are first and foremost bodily, and also when we read, we respond to texts through our bodies situated in space and time. Reading is an environmental and embodied experience, as Woolf suggests in her essay "Reading" (ca. 1919):

> [A]nd somehow or another, the windows being open, and the book held so that it rested upon a background of escallonia hedges and distant blue, instead of being a book it seemed as if what I read was laid upon the landscape not printed, bound, or sewn up, but somehow the product of trees and fields and the hot summer sky, like the air which swam, on fine mornings, round the outlines of things. (Woolf 1988, 142.)

When reading, we are attuned to the experiences and the storyworlds constructed in the texts while at the same time remaining in our own bodies and worlds.[21] There is an overlapping or doubling of space, time, and subjectivity: me reading in Helsinki, in the summer heat or in the darkness of winter how Septimus experiences his body merging with nature in Regent's Park in London after the First World War; or how the narrator of *Kaunis sielu* is disturbed by the objects around her in Helsinki in late 1920s; or how the narrator of *Tohtori Finckelman* feels the world as empty and stagnant in an unknown time in an unknown place.[22] Even though flesh-and-blood readers and their readings are inevitably different, we all share experiential structures that the texts can employ. Most importantly, we are all feeling and thinking creatures situated in a world.

The "reader" is thus understood here as a being who is—using the terminology of embodied cognition—embodied, enactive, embedded in, and extending into the world. I suggest that the model reader invited by the text and its implied author (see Phelan 2005, 19; 45) should not be seen as disembodied or disengaged from the world, affective and bodily experiences,

https://doi.org/10.21435/sflit.13

or political and ethical considerations (see also Rosenblatt 1995, xix; Felski 2008, 16; Kukkonen 2014; Olson & Copland 2016).[23] Authors and texts seek to solicit responses in their readers and reading is an interactive process, an engagement between the reader and the text, which involves the body, emotions, cognition, and the reader's personal and cultural background. David Herman expresses the dynamics of reading and interpretation as follows:

> Interpreters of narrative do not merely reconstruct a sequence of events and a set of existents, but imaginatively (emotionally, viscerally) inhabit a world in which, besides happening and existing, things matter, agitate, exalt, repulse, provide grounds for laughter and grief, and so on – both for narrative agents and for interpreters working to make sense of their circumstances and (inter)actions. (Herman 2009, 119.)

When we read, we are invited to "inhabit" a world of meaning in our imagination, following the cues offered by the texts, responding (or failing or refusing to respond) to the invitations designed by the authors.

It is especially worth emphasizing how readers' personal and cultural backgrounds affect reading, even the critical practice of close reading. In literary studies, close reading is usually understood as a method of reading in which readers focus on texts and their aesthetic structures, aiming for an "objective" reading that is not distracted by social concerns or readers' "subjective" reactions. However, there have always been perspectives that underscore the way reading and interpretation happens in specific social and cultural contexts (see, e.g., Rosenblatt 1995). In these views, what becomes important is not just the close reading of texts but also the close reading of *readers* themselves (see Rosenblatt 1995; Booth 1995, ix): attention to the modes of reading and the interpretive frames we use, to the preconceptions that are projected into the texts, and to the ways texts shape readers' responses. From this perspective, close reading can be understood as the cultivation of the readers' self-reflexive engagement with texts (see Rosenblatt 1995, 101, 297; Federico 2015, 9; Kortekallio & Ovaska 2020). It is a form of affective engagement with the text (becoming immersed in the story, feeling with the narrators, characters in the storyworlds) but also reflection about the ways texts are constructed, about their aesthetic and artistic features, about the frames of reading that readers use, and about the ethics and politics of reading.

In the following, I look more closely at readers' engagement with shattering fictional minds: the affective and reflective modes of reading, the diagnostic interpretive frames as well as the empathic unsettlement and ethical distance invited by the texts. In practice, different forms of readerly engagement are always intertwined: the same text may invite psychological modes of reading and affective responses at the same time as it invites ethical and aesthetic reflections. I outline some narrative techniques and strategies that authors and texts use to invite responses in readers, but it is important to keep in mind that the effects of specific narrative techniques are always tied to the overall design of the whole work of art and that the responses of actual

https://doi.org/10.21435/sflit.13

readers are inevitably different (see Keen 2007; 98; also Sternberg 1982; Booth 1983). As Suzanne Keen (2007, 4) writes: "No one text evokes the same responses in all of its readers, and not all texts succeed in stimulating readers to feel and act as their authors apparently wish."

Affective and Reflective Engagement

In recent years, cognitive narratologists have paid special attention to the ways fictional texts can invite a sense of being immersed in fictional worlds and engaging with other minds. Drawing from earlier work on readers' engagement with literature, they emphasize that narratives activate our bodily experiences, perceptions, emotions, memories, imagination, and other ways of relating to the world.[24] By inviting our experiences, narratives can create what Monika Fludernik (1996, 12) has called "narrative experientiality": "the quasi-mimetic evocation of real-life experience." She describes the ways texts solicit readers' basic experiences of being embodied, intentional, and temporally situated subjects who find meaning and value around them (see Fludernik 1996, 30). Following Fludernik, Marco Caracciolo (2013; 2014a, 46) has conceptualized the experiences evoked in fiction as "story-driven experiences" to underline that the focus is on experiences that are enacted in the process of reading.[25] Story-driven experiences are brought forth in interaction between the text and the readers' "experiential background": their bodily experiences, perceptions, emotions, memories, imagination, and knowledge of socio-cultural practices. Readers, in other words, respond to texts based on their memories of past experiences and their capacities for imagination and mental simulation, and this engagement with texts gives rise to new experiences. (Caracciolo 2014a, 5; 55–73; see also Rosenblatt 1995, xix.)

In the analyses, I look at the ways literary works that portray experiences of shattering and madness from a first-person perspective invite readers to imagine and navigate unsettling experiential worlds.[26] The novels construct distressing experiences by manipulating the perspective, temporality, and spatiality of the stories—some of the core elements of narrative. They tap into readers' basic experiences of having an embodied first-person perspective on the world, a sense of time and space, and a sense of being connected to the world and others, and invite readers into unsettling storyworlds in which these core experience are altered. As a result, they not only create representations of distress but can also evoke experiences and invite readers to reflect on them.

However, it is important to emphasize that engaging with fictional texts and the worlds constructed in them always happens inside an aesthetic frame. Although aesthetic experiences draw on readers' experiential backgrounds, they have meaning and significance that real-world experience does not have. Reading fictional texts comprises an understanding of their fictionality. Engaging with fiction, the sense of being immersed in a storyworld or in the act of reading, is about responding to the text on the basis of one's bodily, affective, and perceptual experiences and imagination (see Caracciolo 2014a, 58; also Ryan 2002, 98), but also about reflection and ability to distance oneself (see also Rosenblatt 1995, 295; Noë 2015, 58). As Merja Polvinen (2012, 108)

https://doi.org/10.21435/sflit.13

writes, "a crucial part of the experience of fiction is the knowledge that we engage not only with characters and events, but also with an artistic object." Fictional, artistic narratives not only invite us to inhabit fictional worlds and engage with fictional characters but also to pay attention to, and become enchanted by, elements like language, words, and style (see Felski 2008, 63). Readers are invited to feel the affective power of narrative texts, but also to reflect on them, their fictionality, their aesthetic significance, and their ethical meanings, as we will see.

This understanding of readerly engagement with fictional worlds as simultaneously affective and reflective is in line with James Phelan's view on the construction of fictional characters. He has distinguished between characters' mimetic, synthetic, and thematic functions: they may resemble living beings (mimetic function), but they are nonetheless artificial constructions that have an aesthetic role in the text (synthetic function), and they contribute to the thematic meanings of the text (thematic function) (Phelan 1989, 2–3; 2005, 20; 2013, 171). These functions are always more or less intertwined, and although fictional minds can (and often are) read through our experiential knowledge and psychological frames, they are nonetheless different from actual minds in their structural determination, artificiality, and constructedness. Thus, real-life-based frames of reading are not alone sufficient for explaining their meanings.[27]

As discussed in the introduction, "mental illness" or "madness" is a label that is often used to name what is felt as puzzling, distressing, or unintelligible (see also Abbott 2018, 18). The narrators discussed here repeatedly fear that they are going "insane" and categorize their experiences as "mad" to make sense of them. For example, the narrators of Hämäläinen's *Kaunis sielu* and Mukka's *Tabu* repeatedly try to interpret their own minds as well as those of others, and readers are invited to a similar interpretive process. As cognitive narratologists often emphasize, readers tend to "attribute" mental states and experiences to characters almost in the same way as we do in real life to actual others.[28] Our basic intersubjective skills guide us to perceive fictional characters—who consist of words on a page—as creatures that have experiential worlds, emotions, perceptions, thoughts, and memories.[29] By soliciting our experiential knowledge about actual human beings, texts invite us to view portrayals of characters' thoughts, speech, actions, and behavior as signs of "inner" experiences. The same applies to the moments in which we encounter portrayals of distress, pain, and shattering: as in real life, when engaging with fiction, similar phenomena may function as signals of mental distress and guide readers to make psychological or even diagnostic interpretations. Such "folk psychiatric" signals can range from the presentation of alterations in a narrator's or character's emotions and perceptions to changes in behavior and interaction with other characters.[30] We are invited to evaluate the mental states of a fictional character from what we see and hear, how they talk about themselves, behave, and express their experiences, thoughts, and emotions—and we can compare all this to what we understand to be "normal" or "usual." As such, psychological and diagnostic interpretations depend on each reader's socio-cultural background, situation, and worldview as well as on the cultural narratives

https://doi.org/10.21435/sflit.13

about mental illness that surround us: whether particular experiences, actions, and behavior are deemed "normal" or "pathological" in a certain time and place.

However, fictional texts can also invite readers to go beyond psychological and diagnostic interpretations. Whereas cognitive narratology often focuses on the processes of reading and interpretation and on readers' engagement with fictional worlds and minds, the so-called "unnatural narratology" has emphasized the value of close reading and interpretation of specific literary works and their distinctiveness as literary artefacts.[31] As Maria Mäkelä argues, the reader should not be construed "as a mere sense-making machine"—someone who reduces fictional minds to actual human psychology—"but as someone who might just as well opt for the improbable and the indeterminate" (Mäkelä 2013a, 145; also 2013b, 130). Readers can, in other words, have desires other than to create "lifelike" fictional characters and minds, and fictional minds can be read, and often are read, in ways that differ from our interactions with actual minds (see Richardson 2006; Alber, Nielsen & Richardson 2010; Iversen 2013a; 2013b; Mäkelä 2013b).[32]

For example, when reading Korpela's *Tohtori Finckelman*, readers may come to understand that the narrator (who is a psychiatrist) is not only using the institutional powers of his profession to control his patients, but his mind actually governs all the other minds in the novel, and the other characters can be read as his doubles.[33] The novel thus creates a version of what cognitive narratologists would call a "social mind" (Palmer 2010; 2011) which is, however, ontologically impossible and could not exist in the real world, but that is nonetheless important for the aesthetic whole of the novel. This fictional mind does not follow any mimetic or natural models but thematizes and emphasizes problems in psychiatry and thus has ethical and political meanings. The ontological strangeness of the narrator of *Tohtori Finckelman* can be explained away ("naturalized" in Jonathan Culler's terms, 1975, 138) by diagnosing the narrator as a dissociated or psychotic character, divided into two people, or as an intertextual figure, for example as a rewriting of Stevenson's *Dr Jekyll and Mr Hyde*. However, there is no need to stick to one interpretation. Real-world-based folk psychological and folk psychiatric frames may first guide readers to interpret the narrator-protagonist as someone who suffers from mental illness, but when reading the text further, it becomes clear that the character and its meanings cannot be reduced to psychological interpretations.

Fictional characters are always constructions with meanings that go beyond psychological insights. Texts often thematize this constructedness, for example through characters who try to figure out the minds of other characters (as we will see in *Kaunis sielu* and *Tabu*) or characters who experience themselves as artificial creatures (as we will see in *Tohtori Finckelman*). Throughout the close readings of the following chapters I show that these perspectives—fictional mind as a literary construction; texts evoking experientiality and lifelikeness—do not need to be seen as conflicting. It is possible to emphasize both the constructed nature of fictional minds and the affective and bodily meanings that arise in the interaction between the reader and the text. The stories invite readers to feel with the characters and

https://doi.org/10.21435/sflit.13

to inhabit the storyworlds, but at the same time their significance cannot be reduced to real-life experience and psychological frames of reading. It is possible to maintain both a sense of immersion in the fictional reality and an understanding that it is an aesthetic, artificial construction.

This is a recurrent feature in modernist novels: an effort is made to capture what it feels like to go through experiences of distress and illness, but the texts are also ambiguous and self-reflexive, and a metafictional understanding of the artificiality of the fictional minds is often a built-in theme in the texts. For example, *Kaunis sielu* and *Tohtori Finckelman* evoke affective experiences of shattering minds, but they are as as much stories about the possibilities of artistic creation and about the failures of language and communication as they are about conveying experiences or constructing psychologically convincing experiential worlds, as we will see. This self-reflexive emphasis on questions of communication and problems of conveying experiences also pushes readers to take an ethical distance from the narrators and characters and to reflect on the problem of "reading" other minds.

From Unreadability to Empathic Unsettlement

Many narratologists have emphasized the importance of interpretative strategies that leave strange and unfamiliar fictional minds "as they are" (see Abbott 2008; 2013; Iversen 2013a; 2013b; Mäkelä 2013a). Porter Abbot writes about "unreadable minds" that prevent us from reading them through labels like "madness." As he puts it, there are texts "that work best when we allow ourselves to rest in that peculiar combination of anxiety and wonder that is aroused when an unreadable mind is accepted as unreadable." (Abbott 2008, 448.) "Unreadable" characters remind readers that it is not always necessary to find (psychological) explanations for phenomena that appear strange or unsettling. It is possible, and often necessary, for a reader to encounter a mind that breaks psychological frames of reading without pathologizing or categorizing it. Different psychological and diagnostic interpretations are often interrupted in fictional texts: we are prevented from reading the characters through psychological frames—and the characters fail to read one another.[34]

The notion of unreadability—and the call for readers to allow themselves to rest in the "anxiety and wonder" raised by minds that cannot be known—resonates with LaCapra's description of "empathic unsettlement" (see introduction), as well as with the phenomenological understanding of empathy which underscores the difference between the self and the other. For LaCapra and for phenomenologists, empathy is a form of perceiving and recognizing the experiences of another while acknowledging their difference. As phenomenologist Matthew Ratcliffe puts it:

> [E]mpathy is not—contrary to popular belief—a matter of 'simulating' another person's experience. It involves being open to varying degrees and kinds of interpersonal difference, rather than attempting to eliminate those differences by experiencing what the other person experiences in the same way that she does. (Ratcliffe 2015, 230.)

https://doi.org/10.21435/sflit.13

In other words, empathy should not be understood as a form of sharing experiences in the sense of having or imagining having the *same* experience as another being. This would create what narrative theorist Amy Shuman (2005) has described as a false sense of closeness. Rather, in the phenomenological sense, empathy refers to our ability to recognize the experience of the other as other and to feel with the other while understanding their difference from ourselves.[35] As such, phenomenologists have described empathy as a form of perception directed toward the other: I perceive the experience of the other and I understand it to be theirs.[36] It is a form of attentiveness to another, recognition of the other and their difference from the self.[37]

Thus, rather than about "simulating" or "sharing" others' experiences, empathy is about encountering the other being as a person, as an experiencing agent (see Ratcliffe 2015, 233–234.) This also involves an appreciation of the fact that we are *unable* to experience another person's experience in a first-person way: "A more profound failure of empathy […] is when you fail to recognize that there is a difference." (Ratcliffe 2015, 240.) Empathy can thus be characterized as a mode of being attuned to another being, understanding the difference of another. This kind of reflective empathy maintains an ethical distance from the other. Likewise, many literary and narrative theorists have emphasized this kind of empathy: for example, Doris Sommer has paid attention to the techniques that fictional narratives use to remind readers of the difference between the self and the other, and to keep them engaged with difference (Sommer 1999; see also Coplan 2004, 143; Shuman 2011; Meretoja 2018, 113; 232–234).[38]

As discussed in this chapter, works of fiction create an aesthetic frame that offers a safe space for readers to experience and reflect. Literary works may defamiliarize us from our ordinary experiences and ways of conceiving the world (this is often a more important function of literature than the evocation of lifelikeness, as both cognitively oriented and other narrative researchers agree). When engaging with fictional minds, we respond to texts based on our experiential background: our sense of being embodied subjects situated in the world, our folk psychological and cultural frames of reference, our scientific knowledge, and our knowledge about literature and narrative forms (narrative techniques, intertextuality, genres, etc.). Even though we tend to read fictional characters based on our own bodily and affective responses and common psychological and cultural frames, the texts often invite us to let the unfamiliar, the strange and the unsettling puzzle us and to reflect on our ways of reading.

As a result, the texts can challenge cultural narratives about mental illness and increase our understanding of experiences that may be unfamiliar to us. This is also recognized in cognitive narratology. As Caracciolo (2014b, 43) suggests: "Some texts invite readers to empathize with minds radically different from ours, providing them with a disconcerting experience that challenges their core assumptions (including their folk psychology) and conventions." Fiction may change the ways we "read" minds in real life: the folk psychological and folk psychiatric frames that we tend to use when encountering experiences that seem strange or unusual.

https://doi.org/10.21435/sflit.13

The texts may also disrupt the intuitive and culturally bound ways we think about the mind and consciousness more generally. Some texts are evocative precisely because they disrupt our folk psychological thinking while tapping into the ways things actually are in our experience, as Emily Troscianko (2014, 343) suggests in her reading of Kafka's works (see also Palmer 2004, 245). Such texts solicit the readers' bodily rootedness in the world and challenge, for example, the dualistic notion that the mind is separated from the body, emphasizing the embodied and relational nature of the mind.

Moreover, literary texts may unsettle the boundaries between what is considered as "normal" and "abnormal." As Lars Bernaerts (2009, 384) emphasizes in his study on "mad" characters and narrators, the experiences evoked in literature never fully correspond to pathological labels and diagnostic categories. While fictional texts often invite readers to employ psychological and diagnostic frames of interpretation, fiction also challenges them by reminding us of the complexity and ambiguity of experiences.

Fictional minds are constructions that are created in a particular historical situation, and representations of mental distress and shattering always shed light on the ways minds, consciousness and mental illnesses are understood in a certain time and place. The texts can guide us to reflect on the possibilities available for people suffering from mental illness, as well as on the ways experiences of shattering are tied to the loss of possibilities in the world, as discussed above. For example, Hanna Meretoja pays attention to how narratives may expand or diminish our "sense of the possible":

> Narratives can contribute to our sense of how to live in a historical world (including our own) is to live in a particular space of possibilities in which it is possible to experience, perceive, think, feel, do, and imagine certain things, and difficult or impossible to experience, perceive, think, feel, do, and imagine other things. (Meretoja 2018, 16.)

Representations of shattering minds can invite us to reflect on how both social structures and narratives (that are repeating and reconfiguring these structures) shape experiences. To take one step further, they may even create new ways of experiencing. Following Hacking's notion of "looping effects," narratives about illness can shape the way illness is experienced.

As discussed in this chapter, readers are bodily subjects embedded in the world, engaging with texts based on their experiential background and their particular historical and cultural situations. The understanding of reading as an embodied process helps us to pay attention to the ways both readers and texts are shaped by their environments, societies, and cultures. The analyses that follow aim to deepen these discussions to the level that is most important and interesting when talking about literature: reading and interpretation of specific texts. The kind of knowledge and understanding that fiction creates, the cultural work fiction does, and the affective, aesthetic and ethical meanings it has are always dependent on individual texts and their contexts: each text does its work in its own way. Before turning to the analyses, let us take a brief look at the historical environments in which Hämäläinen, Korpela, Mukka, and Vaara wrote their works, and some of their earlier readings.

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Finnish Modernists

In Finnish literary history, the term "modernism" is sometimes used in a very strict sense, referring to the literary developments of the 1950s and early 1960s. However, Finnish writers started to develop new perspectives on the mind, the self, and the subject's relation to the social and material world starting in the 1890s, and influential modernist texts were translated in literary magazines throughout the first decades of the twentieth century. In the 1920s, literary groups enforced new trends and explored, for example, vitalistic and psychoanalytical ideas about the psyche and the unconscious. (See Riikonen 2007, 847–848; Ihanus 1994; Koivisto 2011.) In the 1930s, writers like Helvi Hämäläinen and Iiris Uurto examined questions of female sexuality, motherhood, and social justice (see Koivisto 2011; Juutila 2012), and at the same time, male authors like Volter Kilpi and Joel Lehtonen wrote experimental novels that were widely acclaimed (and criticized) as modernist. In the 1940s, central modernist authors (Joyce, Kafka, Camus, Sartre, Hemingway, Faulkner etc.) were translated into Finnish, creating a background for the formal developments and themes of the 1950s and 1960s (see Riikonen 2007, 851).[39]

The texts discussed in this book are less researched, yet important examples of the first-person narrative form in Finnish modernist literature from the late 1920s to the early 1970s. The authors, Hämäläinen, Korpela, Mukka, and Vaara, created affective languages and narratives that are both evocative and unsettling. Their works repeatedly emphasize their own fictionality and constructedness, while inviting readers' affective and bodily responses and reflection. The first-person narration highlights the fallibility of the subjective perspective and is closely linked to questions about the margins of subjectivity, about the borders of the self and the world and fiction and reality, as well as about gender, sexuality, and power relations.

These novels are not, however, the only examples of works developing themes of mental distress and shattering in the Finnish modernist tradition. Researchers have touched upon the meanings of madness and mental illness in decadent and early modernist literature of the 1900s, for example, in L. Onerva's, Maria Jotuni's, and Joel Lehtonen's works (see Lyytikäinen 1997; 2014; Rossi 2010; 2011; 2020; Ahmala 2016). This book also builds on feminist scholarship on the ways writers like Onerva, Aino Kallas, Elsa Heporauta, Elsa Soini, and Iiris Uurto experimented with the narrative form and portrayed gender, sexuality, and social constraints in the 1920s and 1930s (see Hapuli, Koivunen, Lappalainen & Rojola 1992; Juutila 1999; 2012; Melkas 2006; Lappalainen & Rojola 2007; Parente-Čapková 2014; Tuohela & Hapuli 2015).[40]

After the Second World War, Finnish modernism is often divided into two main strands, a "behaviorist/objectivist" strand that aimed at emotional restraint and precision of language and form, and an "existentialist/subjective" strand to which particularly Korpela's psychological and self-reflective works are connected. Evocative portrayals of mental illness and shattering can be found in the 1950s and 1960s works of, for example, Eeva-Liisa Manner, Marko Tapio, Kerttu-Kaarina Suosalmi, Marja-Liisa Vartio, and Tove Jansson (see also Makkonen 1991; 1992; Nykänen 2017; 2018; 2022).

https://doi.org/10.21435/sflit.13

Until the late 1960s, the representations of mental illness in Finnish literature were mostly fictional or fictionalized. However, the early 1970s saw the rise of autobiographical novels, memoirs, and illness narratives, and Maria Vaara's novels can be linked to this new emergence of life writing. The 1970s can also be seen as a period of transition from (late) modernism to postmodernism.[41]

The Beautiful Soul

Helvi Hämäläinen (1907–1998) wrote her first novel *Kaunis sielu* (The Beautiful Soul) during the winter and spring of 1927–28 when she was 20 years old. As an emerging writer in the late 1920s Helsinki, she participated in new literary groups and became familiar with the modernist ideas promoted in the literary magazines. In the novel, she develops new narrative techniques and experiments with the monologue and diary forms, but since the manuscript was not published until 2001, its norm-breaking form and content stayed hidden from literary historians' view for a long time. Between the writing of *Kaunis sielu* and its publication, Hämäläinen became one of Finland's most prolific and well-known authors, and she published over thirty novels, plays, and collections of poetry during her career from the early 1930s until the 1990s.

The exact reasons why *Kaunis sielu* was not initially accepted for publication can only be speculated, but as Katri Kivilaakso and Alexandra Stang have argued in their works on queer topics in Finnish literature, and as Hämäläinen herself suspected, the theme of same-sex desire was likely the main one (Kivilaakso 2012, 151–155; Stang 2015, 225–230; 239; see also Haavikko & Hämäläinen 1993, 93). In a series of interviews in the 1970s and in her memoir, Hämäläinen recollects that the content of the manuscript shocked the men working at a publishing house to which she offered the text. She describes a strange mood when she was picking it up: "I remember a disconcerting feeling arising in me because the men were looking at me so queerly. I began to understand that something was wrong."[42]

After having debuted as an author with another novel, Hämäläinen offered the manuscript to different publishing houses, but eventually gave up the effort.[43] In the memoir, Hämäläinen reminisces (though quite vaguely) that the novel depicted a "tragedy," a woman shooting her male lover, as well as an erotic relationship between women, but claims that she did not know anything about homosexuality when she wrote the text (Haavikko & Hämäläinen 1993, 93; also Juutila 1989, 425; Stang 2015, 229–230).

The manuscript was ultimately hidden or lost in Hämäläinen's personal archives from the late 1930s until the late 1990s.[44] Finally, in 2001—seventy-three years after the text was written and two years after the author's death—Hämäläinen's long-time publisher began a series of her previously unpublished manuscripts and the novel was released in print. If *Kaunis sielu* had been published at the time of writing, it would have joined other transgressive portrayals of gender and sexuality of the late 1920s, like Radclyffe Hall's *Well of Loneliness* (1928) and Woolf's *Orlando* (1928) (see also Stang 2015, 224; Kivilaakso 2012, 151).[45] The difference is, however, that

https://doi.org/10.21435/sflit.13

Kaunis sielu is to some extent unfinished and the motif of homosexuality, although explicit in the text, is developed only fragmentarily.

The novel consists of 106 short sections or fragments that can be interpreted as parts of a diary or a confession. An apparent model for the narrative situation (and the narrator) is Dostoyevsky's *Notes from the Underground* (1864)—with the exception that the narrator is female and Hämäläinen seems to aim for an even more evocative and detailed description of bodily experiences, thoughts, and emotions. The themes of crime and guilt seem to be, in turn, borrowed from *The Crime and Punishment* (1866). The story of *Kaunis sielu* is simple: an unnamed narrator tells an (imagined) audience that she is in an adulterous relationship with a man whom she has started to hate, and ultimately murders him. She is hospitalized for a short time and dies at the end of the novel. The narration moves forward almost simultaneously with the events: the narrator often explains what has just happened or what she is experiencing at the moment of narration. She describes her dreams, imaginings, and hallucinations and reports how she plays with her fantasies. She repeatedly insists that she can distinguish what is real and what is not, but at the same time suspects that she is going insane.

From a twenty-first-century reader's perspective, *Kaunis sielu* is an intriguing example of late 1920s experimental writing, situated between and drawing influences from different literary movements and periods. Hämäläinen crafts a detailed description of rage, disgust, guilt, shame, love, and wonder, creating a modernist language and form and even anticipating existentialist literature.[46] At the same time, the text is a transgressive portrayal of gender, sexuality, and a "madwoman's" possibilities for self-expression and artistic creation in late 1920s Helsinki.

In addition to the late nineteenth and early twentieth century topics, an influence of romanticist thinking is visible in the narrator's emotional discourse and in the intertexts that are evoked in the novel. In her memoir, Hämäläinen explains that while writing *Kaunis sielu*—"the beautiful soul"[47]—she had a strong interest in aesthetic experiences and feelings of "beauty" and "goodness":

> I was controlled by an aesthetic worldview. My mind had not opened itself to any social feelings or views, although there would have been a lot of material around me. But in my dark cellar room I went through passionate poetic experiences and wrote about beauty and goodness. I was deeply affected by a strong love for, and sense of, beauty.[48]

Hämäläinen was inspired by German and English romantics like Goethe, Schiller, and Shelley (see Haavikko & Hämäläinen, 83–84; 657), and romantic portrayals of nature, beauty, and enchantment can be traced in her works throughout her career (see Kähkönen 2004). However, the kind of "virtuous" aestheticism recollected by Hämäläinen in her memoir and suggested in the title of *Kaunis sielu* is strongly contrasted with the negative and unsettling experiences that are constantly foregrounded in the text: the novel is filled with naturalist and decadent motifs of degeneration, illness and madness.[49]

https://doi.org/10.21435/sflit.13

Moreover, although Hämäläinen denies that she would have been able to discuss any "social views," the novel itself raises multiple social, political and ethical questions, starting from the portrayal of queer sexuality (see also Stang 2015, 232).

The text thus offers several different interpretive frames for the narrator and her self-declared "madness." The novel can be read through the motifs of romantic madness or naturalist degeneration or through its links to Dostoyevskian abject heroes, the madwomen of the late nineteenth century, or the femme fatales or "New Women" of the 1920s. Particularly visible is the idea of a subject governed by unconscious forces and entangled in oppressive social norms. The narrator's mental distress can be easily read as a metaphor for a (failed) female rebellion—similar to Charlotte Perkins Gilman's *The Yellow Wall-Paper* (1892) or Kate Chopin's *The Awakening* (1899). *Kaunis sielu*, in other words, develops and reconfigures the madwoman motif and connects it particularly to the early twentieth-century psychological and psychoanalytical discussions about the psyche and sexuality.

In the late 1920s and early 1930s, psychoanalytical influences became increasingly visible in Finnish literature, and although Freud's theories were not known very thoroughly, psychoanalytical concepts were used, for example, to discuss female sexuality and to rebel against Christian-Conservative norms.[50] *Kaunis sielu* anticipates these discussions, but without creating any direct or coherent connection to psychoanalytical thinking. Rather, the ideas about the unconscious are brought forth through the narrator's self-reflections as she recognizes that there are experiences that she cannot understand or verbalize.

Representations of sexuality and discussions about sexual "drives and instincts" raised vivid debates about the morality of literature in Finland in the mid-1930s, and Hämäläinen's later novels *Lumous* (The Enchantment, 1934) and *Katuojan vettä* (The Gutter Water, 1935) were among the works that were criticized for "indecency" when they tried to show the ways women's sexuality was controlled in society.[51] In her later works, Hämäläinen continued to try to reshape the understanding of female sexuality and desire. She became famous for her novel *Säädyllinen murhenäytelmä* (A Decent Tragedy, 1941) which depicts the life of cultural circles in Helsinki before the Second World War and caused debates because of its portrayal of recognizable Finnish cultural figures.[52] However, *Kaunis sielu* remains Hämäläinen's most experimental work, which thus far has not received enough critical attention.

Doctor Finckelman

If *Kaunis sielu* is a short, fragmentary text that was rejected by its first readers in a very concrete way, Jorma Korpela's (1910–1964) *Tohtori Finckelman* (1952) is a meticulously crafted complex novel that, as soon as it was published, was considered to be one of the most important examples of Finnish postwar literature.[53] *Tohtori Finckelman* was Korpela's second novel, and from today's perspective, Korpela's works can be seen as prime representatives of Finnish existentialist modernism. He is often read as a modernist who focused on the questions of selfhood and the psyche, in contrast to writers who were characterized as aiming for "objectivity" and

https://doi.org/10.21435/sflit.13

"emotional restraint" (see Makkonen 1992, 95; Hökkä 1999, 71). Literary historian Kai Laitinen (1997, 462) beautifully exemplifies Korpela's position in the literary landscape of the time: "The shattering worldview, which other writers noted down from the outside, so to speak, is in Korpela depicted in structure and in style: the novel itself is a world that is shattered."[54]

The central themes of *Tohtori Finckelman*—suffering, guilt, responsibility, and reconciliation—are repeated in all four of Korpela's novels, and they also recall the trauma Korpela himself suffered in the Second World War (see Vainio 1975, 129; 172; Laitinen 1997, 460; Salin 2002, 223). However, the war is never mentioned in *Tohtori Finckelman* or in Korpela's first novel, *Martinmaa mieshenkilö* (Martinmaa, a Male Character, 1948). As Salin writes, the war seems to be replaced by experiences that attest to trauma and by stories and motifs of violence:

> If one looks for the description of the war or the postwar period in Korpela's two first novels, one has to discover that there is none. The most important proof of the traumatic nature of the war is that it is not spoken about. The horrors of the war force their way out as feelings of guilt experienced by the protagonists, as grotesque characters and events and as an abundance of violent obsessions and embedded narratives.[55]

When the war then becomes a central theme in Korpela's last two novels—*Tunnustus* (A Confession, 1961) and the posthumously published *Kenttävartio* (The Guard Camp, 1964)—the violence disappears (see Salin 2002, 224). In *Tohtori Finckelman* the character of an alcoholic former soldier, Lieutenant Saleva (who is accused and convicted of rape) is the only hint that the storyworld is linked to a postwar period. At the same time, the effects of war can be read in the portrayals of mental illness and the way all the characters are shattered at the end.

As many critics have suggested, *Tohtori Finckelman* seems to be divided into two in several ways: on one level, the novel is a "realist" story, a *Bildungsroman* of a young, orphaned man who inherits his parents' farm and later becomes a psychiatrist. On a more allegorical level, it is a "sur-realist" story about the alienation, dividedness and mental breakdown of the narrator-protagonist (see Sarajas 1963/1980, 61; Vainio 1975, 192–196). The book itself is divided into two parts. The seemingly realistic countryside milieu that Korpela creates in the first part of the novel is, in the second part, turned into a "shattering world" that evokes a sense of a "ghostly mirror labyrinth" in which the different characters reflect and embody different sides of the protagonist, as Laitinen (1997, 461) describes. Moreover, Sari Salin (2002) notes that Korpela's novels are divided and doubled on three levels—linguistic, structural, and thematic: "On the linguistic level, the doubling manifests as verbal irony, on the structural level as the dialogic form, and on the thematic level as the dividedness of a personality and as the doubling of characters (*Doppelgängers*)."[56]

Korpela's subjective and psychological yet ironic, self-reflexive, and metafictional modernism has much in common with international postwar literature.[57] *Tohtori Finckelman* is often linked to existentialist works like

https://doi.org/10.21435/sflit.13

Albert Camus's *L'Étranger* (1942) or Thomas Mann's *Doktor Faustus* (1947) which reflected the questions of guilt and responsibility during and after the war (see Vainio 1975, 102–105; Salin 2002, 99–104). Another important context for Korpela's writing can be found from Dostoyevsky (see Sarajas 1953/1980; Karhu 1977; Envall 1988; Salin 2002). In the first academic reading of Korpela's novels, Annamari Sarajas proposes that Korpela's protagonists are rewritings of Ivan and Alyosha of *The Brothers Karamazov* (1880): "At heart the themes of Dostoyevsky and Korpela are the same. Their works create a similar process of demarcation from the simple compassion of Alyosha to the deadly rationality of Ivan."[58] Other important intertexts for *Tohtori Finckelman* are the Faust legend (also used by Mann) about a scientist who sells his soul to the devil and Nietzschean ideas about the *Übermensch* and the denial of universal morality (see Salin 2002, 100; 126–129). As Kai Laitinen writes, the protagonist "grows from an idealist into a dangerous *Übermensch* who is hungry for power and terrorizes the world around him, but he has to pay a high price for his power […]."[59]

The feelings of guilt, estrangement, and disillusionment with the world that characterized the work of many postwar writers are depicted in *Tohtori Finckelman* especially through a reference to psychiatry and its failures: a science that was supposed to help people ends up creating inhuman methods of treatment and becomes a form of violence in itself. The novel depicts the alienation of a modern individual and disillusionment in the face of scientific advancements and cruel rationality that seem to be guiding humanity toward destruction.

As in Hämäläinen's *Kaunis sielu*, in *Tohtori Finckelman* the narrator-protagonist is a "mad" character who invites both empathy and feelings of unsettlement. The narrator is suffering from something, perhaps a psychiatric disorder, perhaps guilt for the crimes he may have committed, or more generally from the condition of a modern man. Different psychological and diagnostic interpretations are constantly disrupted through the complex narrative structure and intertextual connections which offer new paths for reading. Like *Kaunis sielu*, Korpela's novel is built around a crime, but even more than in Hämäläinen's text, the crime directs the readers toward questions about the narrator's ethics. *Tohtori Finckelman* portrays a rape of a woman who is described as "retarded" and is said (by the narrator) to be in love with him. The narrator-protagonist is suspected of the violence—and many details point to his guilt—but he is ultimately cleared of the charges and the crime remains unsolved. As Salin (2002, 220) has emphasized, the undecidability and ambiguity of the text poses a serious ethical challenge for the readers.

The Taboo

Timo K. Mukka's (1944–1973) distinctive, "arctic" oeuvre from the 1960s has often been contrasted with the formal experimentations of the literature of southern Finland at the time. His six novels, two collections of short stories, and one collection of poetry, portray life in small wilderness villages of northern Finland where the Charismatic Laestadian movement had a strong foothold.[60] However, recent scholarship has started to see Mukka

https://doi.org/10.21435/sflit.13

also as an avant-gardist writer and as a reformer of Lapland's literature (see Arminen 2009; Lahtinen 2013). Like Hämäläinen and Korpela, Mukka was well read in contemporary views about human psychology, subjectivity, and sexuality, and developed modernist themes and techniques in his own ways: bringing together his religious community background, the arctic milieu, and different literary genres.

As Leena Mäkelä-Marttinen (2008, 17) notes, Mukka's early works create a connection to the naturalist tradition: the psychologies of the characters in his novels are not explained, rather human beings are shown as biological creatures who behave and act according to the laws of nature.[61] The intermingling of the characters and their material environments is also part of the "arctic" atmosphere created in Mukka's novels. Moreover, in his first two works the narratives are embedded with what researchers have described as ballad features—songs and prayers—which construct a metafictional, allegorical, and even mythical level to the seemingly realist or naturalist storytelling (see Paasilinna 1988; Mäkelä-Marttinen 2008; Lahtinen 2013). In his later works, Mukka created a collage technique through which he experimented with and contested the referential nature of literature to reality (see Arminen 2009).

Tabu (The Taboo) is Mukka's second work, a novella published only a few months after his breakthrough with *Maa on syntinen laulu* (The Earth Is a Sinful Song, 1964).[62] In the original reception, Mukka's first texts were often regarded as controversial, radical, and even pornographic because of their detailed descriptions of sex and sexuality. They were compared to modernist and postmodernist writers like D. H. Lawrence, Henry Miller, and Vladimir Nabokov, and to Hannu Salama's *Juhannustanssit* (The Midsummer Dance, 1964) in Finland. The books were read in a larger social and political context in which the morals of literature were under scrutiny: the literary portrayals of sex and religion in 1964 and 1965 caused nation-wide debates and even led to a trial in which Hannu Salama was accused and convicted of blasphemy. Mukka avoided the trial apparently because he was a young, twenty-year-old author who had just published his first works. However, at the same time he was less protected from attacks in the media than his more established colleagues. (See Lahtinen 2013, 76–84.)

In popular opinion, Mukka quickly gained a reputation as a writer of "sexual hysteria," and an epithet from one of his reviews, "the sexus of the wild north," started to shape the reading of his works. Mukka's early reception is described by Erno Paasilinna (1974/1988, 91) in the biography *Timo K. Mukka—legenda jo eläessään* (Timo K. Mukka—A Legend in His Own Lifetime, 1974), which was published soon after Mukka's death and which also strongly influenced Mukka's image as an author. As Arminen (2009, 437) remarks, Mukka's works have been largely interpreted in light of his personal life and assumptions about the northern Finnish "way of life." The detailed descriptions of sex and sexual experiences in Mukka's works made them especially susceptible to accusations of "indecency" and "immorality," but at the same time, both *Maa on syntinen laulu* and *Tabu* are highly ambiguous texts in which the "naturalist" descriptions and

https://doi.org/10.21435/sflit.13

narration are disrupted by songs (in *Maa on syntinen laulu*), prayers (in *Tabu*) and mythical and symbolic elements. Both stories are recounted from the perspective of a female narrator or focalizer and they offer potentially contradicting interpretations about gender and sexuality.

The story of *Tabu* is constructed around three people: a thirteen-year-old girl, Milka (the narrator), her widowed mother Anna who live together in a small farmhouse in northern Finland, and a man who arrives at the farm and starts to help them with haymaking and with the house. The readers can observe how the man begins a sexual relationship with the preadolescent girl and with her mother, and how both fall in love with him. Two years later, the man realizes that Milka has become pregnant and he escapes from the village, abandoning the girl and her mother whose minds are shattered. The story is narrated by the adult Milka approximately two decades later.[63] In addition to the description of the events, the narration consists of prayers in which the adult Milka abandons God—a kind of "inversed prayer," as Mäkelä-Marttinen (2008, 189) describes. It is, however, unclear whether Milka addresses her speech to God or to the man who abandoned her. Like *Tohtori Finckelman*, *Tabu* presents its readers with a difficult ethical challenge. We are left to decide whether Milka's story should be read as it is told by the adult narrator—as a story about a failed love affair, loss, and shattering—or rather as a testimony of abuse and trauma, which it is when focusing on the events.

In recent academic interpretations, *Tabu* has been read especially through the many symbols, mythical intertexts, and generic frames it uses, and this has resulted in readings that largely ignore questions of sexual abuse and trauma. For example, Mäkelä-Marttinen (2008) discusses *Tabu*'s connections to Freud's theory of the incest taboo and the effects its transgression has on the characters, family, and community. Toni Lahtinen (2013) focuses on symbols of femininity, female sexuality, and the myth of the virgin birth, and reads the novella as a story about the "sexual awakening" of a young girl. According to him, the "taboo" of the title is the "silenced, sexual and sacred story about the inexplicable pregnancy of a young girl."[64]

The interpretations follow Mukka's own thoughts about his work: in letters and interviews, Mukka describes *Tabu* as a rewriting of the "myth of the virgin birth" and as a "parody of the holy family."[65] According to him, the novella is a "lyrical epic work" that "shows the way a myth is born," and his main aim seems to have been to deconstruct the myth of Christ's birth (see Paasilinna 1988, 74; 76; Lahtinen 2013, 64). Lahtinen also pays attention to how Mukka brings different mythical, biblical, folkloric, and ballad motifs to the northern Finnish milieu. He notes that in the early reception *Tabu* was often compared to Nabokov's *Lolita* (1955, Finn. transl. 1959), and following the early interpretations and Mukka's own descriptions, he reads Milka as a "nymphet," as a liminal figure who inhabits a space between the worldly and the sacred.[66] (Lahtinen 2013, 71; see also Mäkelä-Marttinen 2008, 195; 206.)

Tabu and *Lolita* are connected through the theme and through the shared use of a mythical reference. However, the connection to *Lolita* is important in another way that Lahtinen does not mention and Mäkelä-Marttinen only remarks on briefly.[67] "The taboo" of the title is not the sexuality or the "sexual

https://doi.org/10.21435/sflit.13

awakening" of a young girl, but rather the pedophilia and sexual abuse the novella hints at but never makes explicit. As Outi Oja emphasizes, invitations to allegorical interpretations may distract readers from reading the novella as a representation of abuse. Moreover, since the story is narrated from Milka's perspective, there is no omniscient narrator telling readers how to react to the events. (Oja 2004.) What makes the story difficult to deal with is that Milka herself guides her audience to read the text as a (failed) love story, and the novella is filled with symbolic and metaphorical elements and mythical intertexts that activate allegorical frames of reading. At the same time, the events themselves, as well as the pervasiveness of the theme of mental distress and shattering in the novella, point toward trauma and abuse. In other words, the mythical and allegorical elements seem to conceal sexual violence, which is nonetheless explicit in the story. Even more than *Tohtori Finckelman*, *Tabu* puts its readers in a difficult position: to choose between conflicting paths of reading.

The Dirty Legends

A northern writer like Mukka, Maria Vaara (1931–1992) wrote her works outside the literary circles of southern Finland. *Likaiset legendat* (The Dirty Legends) is the first novel in an autobiographical trilogy published in 1974, 1975, and 1976, followed by three more novels in 1978, 1980, and 1982. In addition to the autobiographical series, Vaara published three collections of poetry and two young adult novels. Her works draw from her personal experiences of mental illness and struggles for recovery. They focus on experiential worlds and strive to turn painful memories, unusual bodily experiences, emotions, dreams, and hallucinations into narrative form. From the perspective of Finnish literary history, the books can be read as late examples of the Finnish modernist tradition, coming close to postmodernist explorations in life-writing and autofiction.

In academic research and literary history Vaara's works have, however, remained almost completely on the margins. There are only a few exceptions: Liisa Enwald writes about Vaara in an anthology of Finnish women writers, *Sain roolin johon en mahdu* (A Role that Does not Fit, 1989), Kari Sallamaa introduces Vaara in *Pohjois-Suomen kirjallisuushistoria* (Literary History of Northern Finland, 2010), and Markku Eskelinen (2016) includes Vaara in his history of Finnish prose fiction.[68] According to Sallamaa, *Likaiset legendat* is "scattered and chaotic, without purposely being 'postmodernist.'"[69] Eskelinen, in turn, writes that the world portrayed in the novel "maintains both its epistemological allure and ontological unsettlement. It is a late modernist novel that is one of its kind: its focal aesthetic, ethical, poetic, and social qualities emerge from the depths of a serious and fatal illness."[70] He also emphasizes the literary value of Vaara's works in addition to, and apart from, the psychological and experiential insights and knowledge they create.

Among health care professionals and readers interested in questions of mental health, Vaara's novels are still well-known, and their popularity and the discussions about them, for example on social media, suggest that they have a continuous influence on how Finnish readers understand experiences of a severe mental illness such as schizophrenia.[71] However, both the literary

https://doi.org/10.21435/sflit.13

and the socio-cultural significance of Vaara's works require more research. In Chapter 6, I focus on the psychotic world created in *Likaiset legendat*. But let us first look at it in the context of the whole autobiographical series and the socio-political and historical situation in which the novels were written.

Likaiset legendat portrays Vaara's life after her first psychotic episode, at the age of 38 in 1969. The novel is divided into two parts: the first part depicts the protagonist Maria's sessions with her therapist and the second part focuses on the psychotic experiences—"the dirty legends" of the title—and Maria's time spent in a psychiatric ward. It was published in 1974, in the aftermath of the Finnish "November" movement which aimed to support people suffering from mental health problems.[72] The publication included an afterword by one of the founders of the movement, psychiatrist and writer Claes Andersson, in which he praised Vaara's ability to challenge the borders between "normal" and "abnormal" and to make the world of psychosis understandable for those who have not experienced it. In the early twentieth century it became customary that autobiographies of people suffering from mental illness were published with introductions by psychologists and psychiatrists. As Mary E. Wood (1994, 125) notes, they "presented the texts as evidence of both their professional ability to cure the patient and the wonders and terrors of mental illness as experienced from the inside." Andersson's (1974) epilogue to Vaara's novel is a late example of this: instead of promoting psychiatry, he uses the text to criticize psychiatry which for long has been "deaf" and "without language skills" to understand the shattered worlds of psychosis, and emphasizes the personal and political responsibility toward the people who are suffering.

Psychiatrists like Andersson who challenged psychiatric practices from inside the discipline understood mental illnesses not only as biological or neurological disorders, but also as symptoms or manifestations of interpersonal traumas and socio-cultural problems. Psychiatric disabilities were seen as meaningful responses to violent and oppressive social systems, norms, and intersubjective relations, and the social stigma around mental illness and inhumane forms of treatment were understood as part of the problem, much like in the international antipsychiatric movement (see, e.g., Laing 1960; Bateson 1972; Szasz 1974). Likewise, Vaara's novels portray how intersubjective relations and socio-cultural structures cause psychiatric disabilities and shape the way they are experienced.

In her works, Vaara repeatedly criticizes psychiatric treatment for worsening the patients' illness. This is emphasized especially in her second novel *Kuuntele Johannes* (Listen, Johannes, 1975) in which medicalization is portrayed as a source of illness and suffering: "I am an addict, I take too many drugs and you talk about new drugs. You are insane. I am ill because of the treatment and drugs, you offer me treatment and drugs."[73] In *Myrkkyseitikki* (The Deadly Webcap, 1980), the chapter titles are named after different drugs and readers are shown the effects of the treatment of schizophrenia with the "first-generation" anti-psychotics (neuroleptics like Melleril) and hypnotic drugs (sleeping pills like Mandrax) which caused severe side effects and addiction. In Vaara's last novel *Tulilintu* (The Fire Bird, 1982), the schizophrenia diagnosis that Vaara received after her first psychotic

https://doi.org/10.21435/sflit.13

episode is finally challenged: “Now Jan-Christian claims: you are not schizophrenic. That I cannot know, but I do think: I am not a schizophrenic person and I have never been, although in the latest medical statements it says *Schizophrenia latens*. Borderline.”; “One has to put in some word as a diagnosis, Jan-Christian explains as if I knew nothing.”[74]

The struggle with addiction and with the problem of diagnostics are central themes in all Vaara’s novels; however, it is important to note that the works are not directed against psychiatric treatment in itself, but rather against forms of treatment that augment the suffering of the patient. The novels also give credit to the Finnish mental health care system in the 1970s: Vaara was able to get therapy after she fell ill, and she received social security benefits and support for childcare when she was hospitalized. She always maintained the custody of her children as a single parent, and she was able to create a career for herself as a writer. As Andersson (1974) emphasizes, Vaara had the ability to turn her experiences into an artistic form despite her illness, and—it should be added—despite the failures in the treatment.

In addition to the Finnish antipsychiatric movement, Vaara’s novels can be linked to the rise of autobiographical writing (documentaries and confessional novels) about mental health. In the 1970s, several well-known authors published books about their struggles with mental health, and Vaara’s works were among the first to portray experiences of severe mental illness and institutionalization in Finland.[75] Internationally, Vaara’s novels align with feminist representations of mental illness and life inside psychiatric institutions: for example, fictional or fictionalized accounts like Janet Frame’s *Faces in the Water* (1961) and Sylvia Plath’s *The Bell Jar* (1963), and autobiographical works like pseudonym Renee’s *Autobiography of a Schizophrenic Girl: The True Story of Renee* (1947, edited by Margarite Sechehaye) and Hannah Green’s (Joanne Greenberg’s) *I Never Promised You a Rose Garden* (1964).[76] In these works illness is seen from “the inside” and it is linked to oppressive social norms and structures of gender inequality: the texts are narrated from a female perspective and they reveal problems of mental health care, focusing on the experiences of patients, particularly women, inside psychiatric institutions.[77]

In Vaara’s novels, restrictive cultural narratives are closely connected with experiences of distress and suffering. In *Likaiset legendat*, the hallucinations the narrator experiences are filled with religious images and stories, revealing the role of cultural norms and narratives in the formation of psychotic experiences: the way the content and meanings of hallucinatory experiences are deeply bound by culture and entangled in a person’s life history. The title of the novel, “The Dirty Legends,” refers to the “visions” the narrator experiences, creating an allusion to medieval mystics like Margery Kempe (1373–c. 1438) and Joan of Arc (1412–1431). However, unlike in R. D. Laing’s praise of hallucinations and visions in his anti-psychiatric *The Politics of Experience* (1967) or other romanticized portrayals of madness of the same era, in *Likaiset legendat* psychotic hallucinations are not viewed as sources of liberating insight (although they do have therapeutic value), but rather as results of illness, trauma and oppressive norms and structures.

https://doi.org/10.21435/sflit.13

Like *Kaunis sielu*, *Tohtori Finckelman* and *Tabu*, *Likaiset legendat* focuses on subjective experiences of shattering and distress, but at the same time it creates understanding about how subjects are shaped by their social, cultural, and material circumstances and how psychiatric disability is often connected to different forms of trauma, abuse, and violence. Like the other three novels discussed in this book, *Likaiset legendat* invites its readers to imagine shattering minds and worlds, to reflect on their meanings, and to pay attention to the ways they are constructed in the text.

https://doi.org/10.21435/sflit.13

3. A Transgressive Soul: Helvi Hämäläinen's *Kaunis sielu* (The Beautiful Soul)

1. Should I murder him? He walks on the street, people are moving around him, there is perhaps some mist in the air, he walks around, he thinks about people, about the shop window, the rain. He thinks about all of this. I must murder him. Do you understand? […] He must not see, hear, or think, he must be thrown into darkness, into infuriating, horrible darkness.[78]

1. Pitäisikö minun hänet murhata? Hän kuljeskelee katua, hänen ympärillänsä liikkuu ihmisiä, ilmassa on ehkä usvaa, hän kuljeskelee, hän ajattelee ihmisiä, myymälän ikkunaa, sadetta, hän ajattelee tätä kaikkea. Minun täytyy hänet murhata. Ymmärrättekö? […] Hän ei saa nähdä, kuulla eikä ajatella, hänet täytyy syöstä pimeyteen, raivostuttavaan, hirvittävään pimeyteen. (KS 5.)

The narrator of *Kaunis sielu* begins her story with questions that reveal her violent thoughts and anxiety. The beginning also positions the readers as receivers of her confession.[79] But can we understand that the man must be thrown into "infuriating, horrible darkness"? The narrator's murderous thoughts transgress all common social and moral norms, and she herself knows it. The way she obsesses about the man's existence (about the simple facts that he "walks," "thinks," "hears," and "sees") appears strange: it is excessive, there is too much emotion. The narrator tries to imagine what the world feels like for the man (the people, the shop window, the rain) and comes to the disturbing conclusion that he cannot have experiences at all. The obsessive thoughts are intertwined with a sense of extreme solipsism: it becomes clear that the man cannot exist in the same world with her.

The narrator's mental state is troubling, but by laying out her thoughts and asking for her readers' opinion, she invites us inside her experiential world. She summons us, if not as her accomplices, at least to participate in the quest of finding out what is happening to her.

Throughout the novel, Hämäläinen focuses on the myriad of thoughts and feelings that arise in a person's mind "from the beginning of consciousness to the end," as Woolf (1984, 160) wrote. *Kaunis sielu* explores how such fleeting experiences can be turned into a narrative form. The text could even be described as an "affect diary" in which the narrator tries to register and make sense of her changing and/or obsessive feelings and thoughts: it is passionate,

https://doi.org/10.21435/sflit.13

repetitive, and constantly contradictory. At the same time, the narrative situation is ambiguous: on the one hand, the narrator seems to be writing down her thoughts and she comments on the writing process; on the other hand, she often deviates from the diary form and we appear to gain direct access to her mind and "stream of consciousness".[80] The text is controlled by the narrator's shifting experiences, and the narration of any "outside" events becomes secondary to the description of what is going on in the narrator's mind.

Kaunis sielu can thus be seen almost as an exaggerated example of cognitive narratologists' view that "narrative fiction is, in essence, the presentation of fictional mental functioning" (Palmer 2004, 5; also Zunshine 2006). One could argue that the narrative in *Kaunis sielu* is *nothing but* movements of the narrator-protagonist's mind: it highlights the experiential dimension of storytelling (see Fludernik 1996; Herman 2009). This does not, however, mean that the text's focus would be solely on the "interiority" of the narrator's mind, not even when it centers on experiences like dreams, fantasies, and hallucinations that have no immediate connection to the surrounding world. Rather, Hämäläinen constructs the narrator's consciousness and experiences as deeply entangled with the world, guided by the possibilities it affords and restrictions it invites, moved and shaped by the social world and other people: as fundamentally affective, embodied, and embedded in the world. This makes *Kaunis sielu* also a political text: a study of the way experiences and subjectivity are shaped by cultural and social norms and narratives.[81]

In what follows, I focus on the transgressive, norm-breaking fictional mind that is created in *Kaunis sielu*. I chart the techniques through which the text invites its readers to engage with the narrator-protagonist's experiences but also to pay attention to their aesthetic, artificial, and fictional qualities and meanings. As discussed earlier, fictional minds are constructed in readers' minds in a tension between a sense of lifelikeness and an understanding of their fictionality. The narrative discourse in *Kaunis sielu* mimics the constantly shifting modes of intentionality (perceiving, remembering, imagining, dreaming, hallucinating) and alterations in bodily experiences and affectivity[82], as well as the fragmentariness of real-life consciousness, creating a sense of lifelikeness. At the same time, however, it underscores the aesthetic, artificial, and fictional quality of the narrator's mind. *Kaunis sielu* could even be read as a study about the construction of fictional minds. From a literary historical perspective, it can be argued that Hämäläinen develops new techniques of consciousness presentation to create an evocative—affective, aesthetic, and politically transgressive—portrayal of the mind and the way it interacts with the world. The text is experimental, modernist, and transgressive, and in many ways contradictory and difficult to approach because of its fragmentariness, repetitive patterns and inconsistencies.[83]

If the story of *Kaunis sielu* consists of (and is controlled by) the narrator-protagonist's shifting states of mind, what actually "happens" in it? When reading the novel, it is impossible to be sure whether the events the narrator recounts really occur in the storyworld or whether she imagines, dreams, or hallucinates them. Nonetheless, readers are invited into a storyworld: we can get a sense of a physical space and time (Helsinki in the late 1920s) and

https://doi.org/10.21435/sflit.13

follow the narrator's movements in the city. She reflects on her adulterous relationship with her lover and makes plans to murder him. We are shown how the obsession with the man is steeped in disgust, hate, and shame, and how she goes through fantasies, dreams, and hallucinations: she has experiences of alienation from the world and other people, imagines "filthy" and "artistic" small devils as her companions, and a sexual desire for women disturbs her thoughts.

The narrator's motivation for telling her story is to "make sense" of herself, especially to find out the reasons for her feelings and actions. Before the murder, she wonders about her mental state: "I am perhaps going insane. I must figure this out."; "Isn't this madness?"[84] And after the murder, she starts looking for reasons for it: "Why did I kill him? I do not have any reason that would seem serious, solemn"; "I must find out why I committed the murder"; "This I feel now: I have to find out why I committed the murder, it is the only thing that matters."[85] As discussed earlier, "madness" is a label that is often used to categorize experiences that cannot be explained: that are puzzling, disturbing, or unsettling (see also Abbott 2018, 18). This is what the narrator of *Kaunis sielu* does: she constantly names her experiences as "insane" when she feels that she cannot understand herself. At the same time, she invites her readers to assess this "diagnosis." Do we agree that she is going insane? How should the experiences depicted in the text be approached?

Toward the end of the novel, it becomes increasingly clear that the narrator's attempts to "make sense" of herself are failing. She starts to discuss her selfhood as a mosaic work that is broken into pieces, connecting it to her inability to arrange events and thoughts, as well as to an uncertainty about who she is. She complains that she is disgusted by her efforts to arrange her thoughts and find reasons for her actions: "Let everything be a mosaic, patterns, futile squares and circles"; "I am only mosaic. Blue, gray, yellow squares. A pile of bricks. A lousy pile of bricks."[86] In the last fragment, the mosaic seems to be the final explanation and the only acceptable metaphor for her selfhood, and it is left for the readers to put everything together: "I am a condemnable maniac; I shall leave you my bricks, my mosaic. Create me; arrange my bluish gray and yellow bricks. Which one of you can understand yourselves?"[87] It is the task of the readers to create and arrange the identity of the narrator by following the movements of her mind and reconstructing her story. The self is shattered, and the fragmentariness of the story becomes a metaphor for it, just like the mosaic. However, from the beginning to the end, the narrator maintains her narrative agency, the ability to turn her experiences into a narrative form and to interpret them, even though the efforts to create a coherent story and a unified identity fail.[88] The novel also asks us to reflect on our own experiences and identities: to what extent is it even possible to "arrange" oneself?

Before I continue to a more detailed analysis, a word about the transgressive powers of representations of mental illness is in order. Even if the depictions of distress and shattering in *Kaunis sielu* were used to create understanding about the mind's embeddedness in the world and the ways social norms shape subjectivity, "madness" is still tied to stigmatization and oppression and it is a problematic metaphor for transgression (see

https://doi.org/10.21435/sflit.13

also Caminero-Santangelo 1998). As Foucault (1993, xii) famously writes, madness implies silence and an inability to speak and to express oneself.

In this context, *Kaunis sielu* offers a transgressive cultural representation of a subject who is given a voice and who is able to speak out her experiences. Unlike her many literary predecessors—for example, Bertha Mason who is locked in the attic in Brontë's *Jane Eyre* (1847), the narrator of Perkins Gilman's *The Yellow Wall-Paper* (1892), Edna Pontellier in Chopin's *The Awakening* (1899) or, in Finnish literature, the female protagonists of Minna Canth's novels like *Salakari* (1887) and *Sylvi* (1893)—the narrator of *Kaunis sielu* is not bound by her social position or physical constraints. She is not married, or imprisoned in her own home or in a hospital, and she even avoids prison after the murder. She is remarkably free, a "New Woman" of the 1920s, exploring the streets of Helsinki as a *flâneuse*, moving freely from one place to another, both physically and in her writing and imagination.[89] Hämäläinen even provides her with what Woolf demanded for female writers the year *Kaunis sielu* was finished: money and a room of her own. "I am not completely without assets,"[90] the narrator claims.

However, she does resemble the rebellious and victimized female characters of the times before (and after) her in that her story ends in death. The novel's conventional, closed ending connects it to the realist and naturalist representations of madness as failed rebellion.[91] *Kaunis sielu* also risks romanticizing mental illness and suffering, a worry shared by many feminist scholars who have analyzed literary representations of women's madness and illness.[92] In *Kaunis sielu*, the restrictions are not material in a strict sense, but they are internalized and enacted as feelings of shame, guilt and self-hate, as I will discuss in the following. The novel thus maintains a tension in which the narrator labels her experiences as "mad" and connects her "madness" to being "unnatural" and "criminal" and she dies in the end, but at the same time, her affective, experimental discourse creates a space for social and aesthetic revolt.[93] This revolt is precarious and not without its problems, but it is a revolt nonetheless.

The Experiential World

As Dorrit Cohn writes, the knowledge about another person's experiences that is created in narrative fiction is a unique achievement:

> [T]he special lifelikeness of narrative fiction—as compared to dramatic and cinematic fictions—depends on what writers and readers know least in life: how another mind thinks, another body feels. In depicting the inner life, the novelist is truly a fabricator. (Cohn 1978, 5–6.)

The world that first becomes available for the readers of *Kaunis sielu* is the experiential world of the narrator: the world consisting of her fleeting perceptions, thoughts, feelings, and sensations, as well as her memories, imaginings, dreams, and hallucinations. Hämäläinen is a "true fabricator" in Cohn's sense, offering us an impression of the "inner life" of the narrator-

https://doi.org/10.21435/sflit.13

protagonist as it unfolds in her experience. Through the simultaneity of telling and action, Hämäläinen tries to cancel the distance between the narrating I and the experiencing I: to make readers feel that we have almost direct access to the narrator's experiences.

Hämäläinen also repeatedly takes the presentation of consciousness to extremes: on the one hand, because she depicts extreme experiences of distress and shattering, on the other hand, because she makes her narrator fervently move between different modes of intentionality and different affective states. The result is that readers are forced to keep track of the movements of the narrator's mind to be able to follow the "story." Let us look more closely at how the narrator's experiential world is constructed, how it is framed as "abnormal" or "mad," and how the readers are invited to engage with the narrator and to try to interpret her experiences.

The Mind in Movement

As we saw, the novel begins with the narrator's ponderings about whether she should kill her lover. In the second fragment, the narrator's thoughts move away from the man for a moment, and she starts to reflect on her current situation and how she feels that she has changed:

> 2. Not long ago I was, although not very happy, an ordinary, calm human being. I studied; I had acquaintances. Now I cannot talk with anybody. I am prevented by a startle, by nervous, small thoughts that come with it. I would like to take a hold of the chin of a serious, stiff, fattish woman and raise it lightly and, as it were, fix her expression that disgusts me.
>
> I sternly hate the evil expression on the woman's face, the discontent. Perhaps she is only nervous, but she looks mean, I think. I know very well that my touch would not alter her expression, it would not make it graceful, benevolent, gentle. On the contrary, she would become red with anger, she would start to speak in a furious, unnaturally loud voice, talk quickly, moving her head, her eyes sparkling spitefully.

> 2. Vielä ei ole pitkä aika siitä kun olin, joskaan en kovin onnellinen, mutta tavallinen rauhallinen ihminen. Opiskelin, minulla oli tuttavia. Nyt en voi kenenkään kanssa puhua. Minua estää säpsähtely, hermostuttavat pienet ajatukset, jotka tulevat siinä samassa. Haluaisin ottaa vakavaa, jäykän näköistä lihavahkoa naisihmistä leuan alta, kohottaa hänen leukaansa kevyesti ja samalla ikään kuin korjata hänen ilmettään, joka minua tympäisee.
>
> Minä vihaan ankarasti pahaa ilmettä naisen kasvoilla, tyytymättömyyttä. Kenties hän on vain hermostunut, mutta ilkeän näköinen hän on, ajattelen. Tiedän hyvin, ettei hänen ilmeensä suinkaan muuttuisi kosketuksestani sulavaksi, hyväntahtoiseksi, kepeäksi, vaan että hän päinvastoin punastuisi vihasta, alkaisi puhua kiihkeällä, luonnottoman kovalla äänellä, puhua nopeasti ja päätänsä käännellen, silmien välkkyessä ilkeästi. (KS 6.)

The narrator begins by offering a list of her various "symptoms": her nervousness and self-imposed isolation. Then she brings about an image of a "stiff fattish woman" and the self-reflective stance disappears. We get the impression that she is observing the woman, as if sketching a portrait of

https://doi.org/10.21435/sflit.13

her. They are perhaps in the same room, but we cannot know for sure. She starts to imagine how the woman would act if she actually touched her. The description grows into a horrifying scene in which the woman is speaking in "a furious, unnaturally loud voice" and "moving her head, her eyes sparkling spitefully."

The nightmarish fat woman appears to the text as if from nowhere: the complete lack of framing creates an impression that the narrator is registering her surroundings in a camera-like fashion, recording what she sees but adding things from her imagination. We are invited to follow how the woman's face turns from something perceived into something imagined. At the same time, the description reveals the narrator's deeply affective relationship with the world around her: it disturbs her and triggers both affective responses and images in her mind. Hämäläinen seems to be exploring the way a "nervous," shattering mind works: she traces the way the body reacts to the surrounding world, the way mental images sometimes just "appear" without any conscious effort—even take control of one's mind—and the way perception and imagination are intermingled. Moreover, she connects the narrator's impressions to artistic creation: the descriptions are highly aestheticized and ekphrastic, like verbal descriptions of visual art. Similar moments recur throughout the novel: the narrator often describes a scene only to soon reveal that she has imagined or hallucinated it. All this creates a sense of uncertainty about the storyworld and invites readers to constantly change their interpretations of what is happening.

As the passage continues, the narrator resumes a more reflective stance and states explicitly that she has difficulties in controlling her body, gestures and acts: "I live in constant fear of biting somebody's finger, hitting their face, kissing them passionately, or, in the middle of a silence, shouting loudly some word, some private, meaningless word."[94] She seems to be afraid that her experiences would be "leaking" into the world around her: that she would lose the conscious control of her body and bite, hit, or kiss someone, or shout something unintelligible. She struggles to prevent herself from acting in a way that would break social norms and expressing something that does not conform to the shared language. An understanding of the narrator's alienation from the shared world, a lack of control over her thoughts and actions, and an uncertainty about the accuracy of her perceptions is emerging.

The first two fragments create an overall sense that readers are "captives" inside the narrator's perspective: we are forced to follow her random, obsessive, and violent thoughts, perceptions, imaginings, and memories as they appear one after another and to keep track of them. The narrator's lack of self-knowledge and conscious control of her experiences is mirrored in the readers' lack of knowledge about the storyworld. Hämäläinen creates a narrative form in which everything comes as a "surprise" both to the narrator and to the readers, asking us to reflect on what it feels like to lose control of one's thoughts and actions. After thus revealing her current state of mind, and after some more reflections about murdering the man, the narrator moves on to discuss what could be interpreted as a possible cause for the experiences that disturb her: her "story" begins to form.

However, even when the narrator is trying to create a narrative of how

https://doi.org/10.21435/sflit.13

she changed from an "ordinary human being" to the nervous person she is now, she feels constantly disturbed by the world around her and ends up recording her shifting experiences rather than creating a linear narrative of what has happened. As she is doing this, she oscillates between an associative "stream of consciousness" and reflection of her experiences, creating a sense of immediacy and distance in turns. A tension between her experiences of distress and efforts to reflect on and narrate their causes becomes even clearer.

This becomes particularly visible in a passage (briefly discussed in Chapter 2) in which the narrator tries to recount a memory of her first meeting with her lover. She records, in the present tense, what is going on in her body, thoughts, and world around her at the moment of narration. She turns from the disturbing perception of the lamp, her clothes, chair, and table to a memory of a table leg which brings her to the first meeting:

> 6. […] Everything is muddled; I cannot arrange events in my mind. A table leg appears in my thoughts, it was varnished, shorter than the others, he sat there, at that table, when we first met. Now the table leg is the only clear image in my mind. [...] I must first explain, explain carefully the table leg before I can begin. That table leg hovers around me, in my eyes, in the empty space. I bite my hands and repeat to myself: it must be explained, I can see it clearly. Varnished and some string, shorter.

> 6. […] Kaikki on sekaisin, en voi järjestää tapahtumia mielessäni. Ajatuksissani häilähtelee pöydänjalka, se oli vernissattu, lyhyempi muita, sen pöydän ääressä hän istui, kun näimme ensi kerran. Nyt on pöydänjalka ainoa selvä kuva mielessäni. [...] Minun on ensiksi selitettävä, selitettävä tarkoin pöydänjalka ennen kuin pääsen asiaan. Tuo pöydänjalka keikkuu ympärilläni, silmissäni tyhjässä ilmassa. Pureskelen käsiäni ja toistan itsekseni: se on selitettävä, näen sen aivan selvästi. Vernissattu ja lankaa, lyhyempi. (KS 9.)

She complains that she is unable to create a coherent narrative: the table leg needs to be explained first to continue the story.[95] The leg seems to offer her a point of fixation, but its meaning stays unverbalized. Finally, the syntax breaks—"Varnished and some string, shorter"—and the whole effort to explain, even to verbalize her experience, seems to lose ground, at least for a moment.

As discussed earlier, the narrator's "external" reality becomes fused with her "internal" world. The details of the material, sensory world seem to have taken hold of the narrator's experiences, and there is both a sense of lifelikeness and an aesthetic quality: the image of the table leg hangs in the air like a still-life that is filled with affective meaning. Perception, imagination, and memory are tightly intertwined, triggering new thoughts and experiences.

The table leg scene, like many other similar passages in *Kaunis sielu*, creates an impression of a stream of consciousness. The term was adapted to literary studies initially from psychologist William James (1892/1955) to depict the modernist techniques of creating the effect of an experiencing mind.[96] The aim was not only to present thoughts as accurately as possible,

https://doi.org/10.21435/sflit.13

but also the random flow of thought, its "illogical," ungrammatical and associative dimensions. (See Cohn 1978, 84; Prince 2003, 94; Herman 2011b, 247.) This is what happens also in the table leg passage: the sequencing of events follows the order of the narrator's impressions and memories as they "appear" to her rather than any chronological order of past events, and the narrator's questions and exclamations emphasize the impression of immediacy. The passage is associative and, in the end, ungrammatical.

However, it is still far from most famous and prototypical examples of stream of consciousness in which an impression of a completely unmediated thought process is created, such as the famous associative, ungrammatical passages of autonomous monologue ("Molly's monologue") at the end of James Joyce's *Ulysses* (1922).[97] There are at least four important differences. First, unlike Molly in *Ulysses*, the narrator of *Kaunis sielu* stops to reflect on her experiences for moments ("I cannot arrange events in my mind"), and the distance between the narrating I and the experiencing I grows, thus cancelling the most associative and instant impression. Second, even though the narrator often records her experiences as they unfold, the narration also maintains the impression of a written account. Third, as we have seen, Hämäläinen's narrator addresses her thoughts to someone else (to an unnamed audience): there is an effort to narrate and to communicate, whereas Molly has no audience or communicative intent apart from herself.[98] Finally, the narrator's habit of recording her own bodily movements adds a theatrical quality to the text: "I bite my hands and repeat to myself: it must be explained, I can see it clearly." As Cohn (1978, 222) notes, these kinds of monologues in which first-person narrators verbalize their bodily movements as they occur tend to give an impression of narrators being like "gymnastics teachers vocally demonstrating an exercise."

There is thus both a sense of lifelikeness created by the affectivity of the narrator's words and a sense of artificiality that is a result of the dramatized and slightly illogical way of narrating (what unnatural narratologists would call "unnatural" or "anti-mimetic"). However, readers of the passage can easily disregard these reminders of the artistic constructedness of the fictional mind and maintain the illusion of "direct" access into the narrator's mental processes. Hämäläinen's text also reminds us that, in addition to the efforts to capture the "ungrammatical" and associative dimensions of thought, narrative techniques that create the effect of stream of consciousness often show the mind in action with the world, receiving impressions and reacting to them. In other words, the narration emphasizes the relationality of the mind: the way the experiences are brought forth in a constant interaction with the world, objects, and other people. This is also visible in the scenes that show the narrator's experiences in relation to the man and that shed more light on her anxiety and distress.

The Other Mind

As we saw at the beginning, the narrator often describes in detail her perception of the man, studying how he is surrounded by the world and its objects and imagining what he feels and thinks. But the very fact that he has experiences and exists in the world like her seems to drive her to murder:

https://doi.org/10.21435/sflit.13

> He sits in company; I can see the light of the lamp on the chairs. I must murder him, I definitely must. He visits shops, he can see these colors and people, all this movement, these clouds, the gray, lustrous clouds. He must vanish, vanish.[99]

These attempts at imagining what the man is experiencing thematize, even exaggerate, the basic problem of other minds. The narrator faces the same struggle as all human beings: she cannot actually know what the man is thinking and feeling. In real life, we only have access to our own thoughts, and we perceive the world from our own perspective. But this does not mean that we would be doomed to be separated from others. In normal circumstances, we can effortlessly understand one another based on our shared contexts and perceive something of others' experiences in their bodily expressions, gestures and movements. As phenomenologists emphasize, we share a common world: "[t]o understand other persons I do not primarily have to get into their minds; rather, I have to pay attention to the world I already share with them." (Gallagher & Zahavi 2012, 213; also 204.) In *Kaunis sielu* these very basic forms of intersubjectivity are becoming altered. This is underscored in the narrator's detached way of portraying the man: the ordinary ways of relating to and understanding another human being are disrupted, and the narrator sees the man as completely separate from herself, almost as an object. At the same time—perhaps because of the distance—the relationship is full of distress and extreme affects: "It is impossible that he lives here."[100]

At first glance, readers are likely to interpret the narrator's anxiety as a result of a failed love affair and the murder plan as her way of "freeing herself" from the man, as she herself states later (KS 36). However, the experiences are extreme even in this context and the narrator's description pushes readers to imagine the complex emotions (love, hate, wonder, disgust) that tie us to other human beings and to reflect on their meanings. As the story continues, the narrator's way of depicting the man becomes increasingly estranged. She describes the details of his body and appearance, exaggerating them, even imagining things she could not possibly perceive, for example the blood inside him:

> 3. I will kill him. It is a horrible mockery that he smiles, reaches out his hand. Blood circulates in his veins, his hair shines, I can see the top of his head. His eyes are moving, his stiff, gray-lashed eyes. I will kill him. He lives, every minute he lives. The whites of his eyes shine, he can reach out his hand. All the details in him are excruciating. It is these details that I hate in him. That his hair silently shines, punily just shines, excites me into fury. I will kill him.
>
> 3. Minä tapan hänet. On hirvittävää pilkkaa, että hän hymyilee, ojentaa kätensä. Veri kiertää hänen suonissaan, hänen hiuksensa kiiltävät, näen päänkupuran, hänen silmänsä liikkuvat, kankeat, harmahtavaripsiset silmänsä. Minä tapan hänet. Hän elää, joka minuutti hän elää. Hänen silmänsä valkuaiset kiiltävät, hän kykenee ojentamaan kätensä. Hänessä ovat kaikki yksityiskohdat kiduttavia. Näitä yksityiskohtia hänessä vihaan. Se, että hänen hiuksensa kiiltävät hiljaa, mitättömästi vain kiiltävät, kiihdyttää minut raivoon. Hänet minä tapan. (KS 7.)

https://doi.org/10.21435/sflit.13

The description grows into an aesthetic portrayal of the way the man's "stiff, gray-lashed eyes" are moving and the "whites of his eyes" and his hair are "shining." She imagines his bodily details and creates an affective image, a horrifying portrait of him. The man becomes a lump of flesh and body parts: the narrator's gaze as if dissects the man, and there is a sense of detachment that is at the same time aestheticized. The act of describing him also seems to make the man increasingly disturbing. The more vivid he is in the narrator's mind, the more rage he arouses in her.

On the other hand, once the narrator has made the decision that she will kill him, she describes a feeling of strangeness as she understands that he is, in fact, an actual living person:

> 9. It feels strange now that I have decided to kill him. He is a living creature just like me. Strange, those hands, head, everything. We were walking in a garden, a group of women and men. He walked before me and *now* I thought: he does see the wide plantains growing by this road and the small grass, that lonely crooked lantern and the rocks next to the run-down hut. He sees, just like me. They raise thoughts in him […].

> 9. Tuntuu oudolta nyt, kun olen päättänyt hänet tappaa. Hänhän on elävä olento niin kuin minäkin. Omituista, nuo kädet, pää, kaikki. Kävelimme puutarhassa, meitä oli seurue naisia ja herroja. Hän kulki edelläni ja *nyt* tuli ajatuksiini: hänhän näkee tämän tien vieressä kasvavat leveät ratamot ja pienen ruohon, tuon ainoan vinon lyhdyn ja kivet ränsistyneen majan luona. Näkee, aivan niin kuin minäkin. Ne herättävät hänessä ajatuksia […]. (KS 12, emphasis added.)

The narrator goes through amazement and wonder facing something that is obvious and normal from the perspective of the readers: that the man is alive, that he has thoughts and feelings, and he sees the same things as her. Then, yet again, in the next fragment, her feelings change: "I cannot see him eat. I am horrified and disgusted when I see him taking a bite of his sandwich. I feel nauseous and awful, as if he already were a corpse."[101] The familiar being of the other becomes unfamiliar, even abject, and the narrator's experiences are colored by her decision to kill him: it is suddenly strange for her that he is alive at all—or he is disgusting as if he were already dead.

The narrator's affective relation to the man is in constant flux, changing from horror and rage to disgust and wonder, revealing, but also exaggerating, very basic structures of intersubjectivity: the way we are affected by one another and the way we are at the same time separate and deeply tied to one another. The narrator's disgust, for example, reveals a deep connection to the man: to be disgusted means to be affected by something one has rejected (see Kristeva 1982, 4; Ahmed 2004, 89). We are often disgusted by something that has once belonged to us or to the same world as us, by something we try to push away from us (like blood, hair, scraps of food, dead things—all things that the narrator mentions). The feeling of strangeness, in contrast, comes close to wonder: suddenly the narrator sees the man as if "for the first time" (see Ahmed 2004, 179). The affective relationship to the man highlights the narrator's altered experiential world. Her relation to everything around her is filled with strong affects: everything is disturbing, everything triggers

https://doi.org/10.21435/sflit.13

extreme emotions in her. However, at the same time her world is completely solipsistic: there is no space for other people inside it.

The novel creates a movement in which the readers are on the one hand invited to attune to the narrator's experiences based on our experiential knowledge of affects and emotions—feelings of disgust, hate, and love—and on the other hand propelled to distance ourselves from her as her experiences take morally questionable forms. The detailed description of bodily sensations is one of the main ways of creating this double effect.[102] Extreme emotional states are familiar to everyone—but the narrator's experiences go beyond anything usual, as in the following fragment in which the narrator is visiting an old lady but has to leave as violent thoughts fill her mind:

> 25. I am nervous. I often go pale suddenly. Madness, horrible madness overcomes me. I have the urge, when I see a yellow face, a fat, old body, to murder, to suddenly push a knife into a neck, exactly because of the dreadfulness, to see eyes flashing, dying, rolling wildly. I imagine all the horrible details. [...] It is strange that ugliness, hideousness always arouses desire in me, a vertigo of desire. Great contradictions always make me sensual. Shaking from fear and dizzy, horrified that someone would see my thoughts, I left.

> 25. Minä olen hermostunut, usein kalpenen äkisti. Hulluus, hirvittävä hulluus valtaa minut. Minulla on halu, kun näen keltaiset kasvot, lihavan, vanhan ruumiin, murhata, äkisti työntää veitsi kaulaan, juuri kauheuden tähden, nähdäkseni silmien välähtävän, sammuvan, vääntyvän nurin. Kuvittelen kaikki kauhistuttavat yksityiskohdat. [...] Omituista on, että rumuus, inhottavuus aina herättää minussa himon, voimakkaan, pyörryttävän himon. Hyvin suuri vastakohtaisuus tekee minut aina aistilliseksi. Vapisten pelosta ja tuntien pyörrytystä, kauhistuen, että ajatukseni nähtäisiin, lähdin. (KS 28.)

It is perhaps morally challenging for a reader to identify with the narrator's thoughts. However, the detailed description of bodily experiences solicits readers' sensory imagination, and the aesthetic frame allows us to participate in these experiences. We may go through moral sentiments and ethical reflection, but we can also just enjoy the fiction and the emotions it evokes in the safe space provided by the text. In the passage, the narrator also mentions the fear of her thoughts "leaking" into the world. The final sentence contains a paranoid idea that someone might see her thoughts. The irony is that the readers actually do "see" them. Reading the novel, we literally are granted access to the narrator's fictional mind.

Hämäläinen's efforts in depicting extreme, subjective experiences and a mind torn in contradictions seem to have led her to develop these techniques and create a narrative form that is fragmentary, unsettling and affective, soliciting affective responses as well as diagnostic interpretations, but also leaving its readers puzzled, inviting us to reflect on how experiences can be narrated and the ways we encounter the minds of others. The purpose of Hämäläinen's writing seems to be to see how the mind works in extreme affective states, how experiences emerge and are shaped in interaction with the world, what can be known and what we do not know about others or even about ourselves. At the same time, she studies artistic creation: the

https://doi.org/10.21435/sflit.13

way aesthetic description can enhance experientiality while at the same time reminding of the artificiality of the fictional minds. In the following, I shift the focus slightly and turn from the portrayal of the narrator's "inner" experiential world to the way she portrays the physical environment around her and recounts the events of the murder (two things that are, however, intertwined): I discuss how the "outside" world is constructed and how the narrator's perspective colors the world around her, especially in the murder scene.

Inner and Outer Worlds

> Description is an *art* to the degree that it gives us not just the world but the inner life of the witness. (Doty 2010, 65.)

Throughout the novel, it is difficult to separate the narrator's experiential world from the (story)world she inhabits. On the one hand, everything that happens is "inside" the narrator's mind or at least colored by her affective states; on the other hand, the narrator's experiences and the "outside" world are mutually constructed. Even though the narration is often extremely solipsistic and focuses on the narrator's experiences, she does mention actual Helsinki streets, buildings, parks, and districts—III Linja, the National Theater, the Russian cemetery, Kaivopuisto, Toukola—and we can situate her in these (some are places that have remained almost unchanged since the 1920s). In her later works like *Katuojan vettä* (Gutter Water, 1935) and *Säädyllinen murhenäytelmä* (A Decent Tragedy, 1941) Hämäläinen becomes a skillful portrayer of Helsinki, and her interest in the city can already be seen in *Kaunis sielu*.

However, in *Kaunis sielu* the description of the physical environment is constantly intertwined with the presentation of the narrator's consciousness. In general, scenic description always implies some kind of perceiver: a perspective from which the world is seen (see also Doty 2010, 65). Especially in first-person and figural third-person narration the borders between presentation of "internal" consciousness and description of "external" environment often become hazy, as Cohn notes (Cohn 1978, 133; 234). In a work like *Kaunis sielu*, the two have parallel functions: the presentation of consciousness (perceptions, imaginings, memories etc.) betrays the surrounding world, and the scenic description evokes the perceiving consciousness.

I discussed earlier how the storyworld in *Kaunis sielu* is controlled by the narrator: the readers' view into the world is very narrow and we are often as if "captives" inside the narrator's perspective and experiences. Moreover, when the "outside" world is depicted, it is colored by the narrator's mental reality. Her experiential world thus supersedes any social or shared world there might be. In addition to the narrator's relationships with the man and other people, this can be seen in the way the environment takes on affective meanings. For instance, the narrator depicts how a sad mood infiltrates the city: "Sadness hovers around these factories, trams and harbors. It rests in

https://doi.org/10.21435/sflit.13

a pale, green leaf, in the black or gray air. There is something strong and sad, something formless in all of this, and it weighs on me."[103] The passage is an evocative description of the way moods, atmospheres and emotions always color our perceptions and experiences of the world.

Yet again, a few fragments later, this common, intuitively graspable experience is taken to extremes as it is given a morally questionable meaning. The narrator's affective states are projected onto the city when she has bought the gun with which she plans to kill her lover:

> 52. I have left unmentioned something important: the day he returned, I bought a gun. I carry it with me always. Even though I often feel strange when I walk with the gun in my pocket in the middle of these clayish gray bushes and worn-out fields of grass. But it is only amongst them that it feels strange, not in the tram or when I am walking on the street. There is something similar in the fervor that I feel as I am carrying the gun or thinking about it as in these plastered houses, paved streets, nervous neon lights and billboards. Same fervor and same insane restlessness.
>
> 52. Olen jättänyt mainitsematta tärkeän seikan: hänen tulopäivänään ostin aseen, se on aina mukanani. Tosin minusta tuntuu usein oudolta kuljeskella se taskussa näiden savenharmaiden pensaiden ja kuluneiden ruohikkojen keskellä. Mutta vain niiden keskellä sen pitäminen taskussa ja yleensä sen kuuluminen minulle tuntuukin oudolta, ei enää istuessani raitiovaunussa tai kulkiessani kadulla. Sen kantamisessa mukanani ja sitä ajatellessani usein heräävässä kiihkossa on samaa kuin näissä rapatuissa taloissa, kivetyissä kaduissa, hermostuneissa valoissa ja reklaameissa, samaa kiihkoa ja järjetöntä rauhattomuutta. (KS 52–53.)

Once again, we can understand the experience based on our own experiences of moods, atmospheres and our "affective scaffolding" in the world (see Colombetti & Krueger 2015). As phenomenologists note, objects like clothes, bags, books, and diaries give us support and help us to navigate the world (see Merleau-Ponty 2002, 166). But the fact that the experience is evoked through holding a gun and planning a murder likely creates a distance between the readers and narrator. We can understand how carrying a gun changes a person's affective rootedness in the world and their perception, but at the same time the experience is unsettling from a social and moral perspective. Furthermore, the narrator makes a connection between the city and her affective state while carrying the gun: the city streets, neon lights, and billboards have the "same fervor and same insane restlessness" as the weapon.

The solipsism of the narrator's world is emphasized by the fact that the narrative consists almost solely of the narrator's own thoughts, emotions, reflections, and perceptions of the environment. No voices or perspectives of any other characters are allowed to interrupt the incessant reports and reflections of the narrator. She recounts having occasional conversations with other people (her lover explaining things to her, "Miss A.," "sculptor T.," "Master S.," a doctor at the hospital, a landlady, a deaconess, and finally a "prostitute" who helps her when she is ill), but their words are almost never cited, not even paraphrased.[104] There is no intersubjective corroboration—such as other characters seeing the same things as her—that would help

https://doi.org/10.21435/sflit.13

readers decide whether the narrator is "correct" in her perceptions or whether she is imagining or hallucinating even more than she realizes or tells us. However, I would argue that this kind of unreliability does not make readers distance themselves from the narrator. Rather, the uncertainty binds us together: we are both in the same situation, trying to make sense of what is happening, what is real, and what is not.[105] As the narrator is searching for meanings for her experiences and actions, she gives different interpretations for the things she reports—simultaneously hinting at different possible courses of events. Let us now look at the way she narrates the climactic events.

Realism and Horror: The Murder Scene

The murder is described for the first time in Chapter IV in the middle of the novel. The events are narrated in the past tense, creating an impression that they are reported from the hospital where the narrator continues her story in the following chapter. However, the description of the environment is once again detailed and evocative, creating a sense of presence. The narrator reports the events from the perspective of the experiencing I and there is very little self-reflection:

> 53. The road was a lightly clayey, and the alder grove was bluish. We were at the Russian cemetery. The wind blew white mugworts on my face, I could see the frail, flickering shadow of a stalk of grass on his cheek. The rain pattered against our naked skin, and a horrible storm raged above our heads in the trees. Suddenly I remembered with horror that there was a decaying corpse under us, an eyeless, cheekless dead body that could not defend itself against our violation. Perhaps a corpse of a small beloved child, or of a pure youth, or of an elderly person. I moved, got up. He looked astonished and a little bit scornful. I raised the gun and fired.

> 53. Tie oli hiukan savista, lepikkö sinersi. Olimme venäläisellä hautausmaalla. Tuuli pieksi valkeata marunaa kasvoilleni, hänen poskellaan näkyi siro, häilyvä heinän varjo. Sade rapisi alastomalle iholle, päidemme päällä kiisi puissa hirveä myrsky. Äkkiä muistin kauhistuen, että allamme makasi mätänevä ruumis, silmätön, posketon vainaja, joka ei voinut puolustautua häpäisyämme vastaan. Ehkä pienen, rakkaan lapsen ruumis, puhtaan nuoren ihmisen tai vanhuksen. Liikahdin, nousin ylös. Hän näytti hämmästyneeltä ja hiukan ivalliselta. Ojensin aseen ja laukaisin. (KS 54.)

In the description of the cemetery, realist and horror elements are curiously combined: the narrator carefully depicts her perceptions and sensations, focusing on the mugworts, the shadow of a stalk of grass on the man's cheek and the drops of rain on their bodies—while at the same time imagining dead bodies in the graves under them and seeing a storm "raging" in the sky. Readers are invited to oscillate between a realist (psychological) reading and reading of the text as a horror story, maintaining both a mimetic and an aesthetic frame of interpretation simultaneously.

The narrator's feelings of solipsism and estrangement from the shared world then culminate in the murder scene. After firing the gun, she recounts: "I felt that I was the only one who heard the sound [of the gun] and that

https://doi.org/10.21435/sflit.13

no one else could have heard it even if they had stood next to me."[106] There is a feeling of absolute loneliness: as if the narrator was the only person in the world. The experience can be read psychologically: the narrator is so detached from the social world that she cannot even imagine that others would hear the same things as her. However, the experience could also be understood as a hint about the fictional nature of the story: the solipsism of the narrator's world also means that the murder might actually be a product of her imagination or hallucination—an interpretation to which I return shortly.

When the man is dead, the narrator recounts how she stayed at the cemetery, speaking to him as if he were still alive and not understanding what had happened. She describes how she felt blood on her hand but believed that it was dew and fell asleep next to the man. When she wakes up, she appears to have forgotten the murder and does not at first seem to notice the dead man at her side. The bloody hand and the gun serve for her as proof that she has committed the murder. She recounts how she was first filled with pity and love for the man and how she covered the man's corpse with her scarf and jacket. Then she describes a feeling of estrangement and indifference and finally even anger, offering an image of the man in heaven:

> 54. […] Slowly he started to feel strange to me. I did not feel anything special for him anymore. He was in different hands and I even felt hostility to him thinking that he was now there, sleeping beautifully in the sun […]. And I am condemned in everyone's eyes and everyone thinks and talks about me harshly.
>
> 54 […] Vähitellen hän alkoi tuntua minusta vieraalta. En tuntenut enää häntä kohtaan mitään erikoisesti, hän kuului toisiin käsiin ja tunsin vihamielisyyttäkin häntä kohtaan ajatellessani, että siellä hän nyt nukkuu kauniisti auringon säteessä […]. Minä sen sijaan olen kaikkien silmissä tuomittu ja kaikki ajattelevat ja puhuvat minusta ankarasti. (KS 57.)

Once again, she reports a chain of contradicting emotions. The most prevailing feeling in the end is that she is condemned by other people (this is something that the narrator repeats several times elsewhere[107]). The narrator thus seems to accept the moral codes of society: her experience is shaped by social norms, and the world seems to return to its regular "place" for a moment.

In the following fragment, she reports how she went to a hospital near the cemetery and turned herself in to a doctor: "I told him my thing, he looked at me as if he thought that I was delusional. I showed him my bloody hand and repeated the same again."[108] The blood functions again as proof, but it remains unclear whether the doctor believes her or not: once again, there is only the narrator's report of the conversation and her speculation about the meaning of the doctor's gaze. The description of her bodily experience and the environment is again evocative, creating a sense of presence: "I spoke slowly, monotonously and with strange halts, my eyes felt weirdly stiff and immobile, the whole time I was staring at the same spot. I remember well the spot on the wall, a tile was very blackened, it was as if my eyes were hanging on it."[109] She describes a strangeness in her speech and a feeling of

https://doi.org/10.21435/sflit.13

heaviness and stiffness in her perception. The narration lacks congruence, emphasizing the sense of strangeness. She then says that she is unable to remember the rest of the events: "At this point there is a blank space in my thoughts. I cannot remember any events, as if I had not lived at all during that time."[110] The chapter ends, and the resulting break in the text emphasizes the narrator's loss of memory.

In the following chapter, the story continues from the hospital. The narrator reports that: "I have been placed under surveillance, there is uncertainty about my state of mind."[111] She returns to the diary-like form, suggesting that the story is written down as it evolves: "My illness feels repulsive to me, I cannot look at my pallid, thin hands. I draw my sleeves until my fingertips to hide them, although it is difficult to write. […] All right, I think I must stop now. They are coming with their dosage."[112] Ultimately, we do not get much information about what happens during her stay in the hospital (which apparently lasts from fall to the following spring). The narrator focuses on her experiences, and fragments 56 to 75 consist of a collection of memories, hallucinations, and fantasies. She continues to reflect on how her perception of the man changed after the murder and how he turned from someone who needed to be destroyed into someone who had a life of his own:

> 63. […] I forgot that he too saw the swaying grass, the blue dusk between them, the plantains on the ground that was filled with broken pieces of tile. I forgot that he too saw the round, convex leaves […]. I did not think that he too thought about the air, about the birch by the road, about the pile of board, about the gray sky. I only saw him as a creature that needed to be destroyed; I did not think that he had a thin coat and a pocket that was patched with a thread that was too light-colored; that he had ink in his fingers after writing... I did not think. […] He was not just a disturbing thing that had to be destroyed. His arms, his head became alive, dear to me the moment he died. […] I remember a pool of water by the gravestone and the blood that had bled on the sand and the grass.

> 63 […] Unohdin, että hänkin näki huojuvat heinät, sinisen hämyn niitten välissä, ratamot tiilinsirpaleita täynnä olevalla maalla. Unohdin, että hänkin näki pyöreät, kupertuneet lehdet […]. En ajatellut, että hänkin ajatteli ilmaa, koivua tien vieressä, lautatarhaa, harmaata taivasta. Minä näin hänet vain olentona, joka piti hävittää, en ajatellut, että hänellä on ohut takki, jonka tasku on parsittu liian vaalealla langalla, että hänellä oli mustetta sormissaan kirjoittelun jäljiltä… En ajatellut. […] Hän ei ollut vain hävitettävä seikka, joka häiritsi. Hänen käsivartensa, päänsä tulivat minulle eläviksi, kalliiksi sillä hetkellä, kun hän kuoli. […] Muistan vesilammikon hautakiven luona ja hiedalle ja nurmeen vuotaneen veren. (KS 65–66.)

She realizes again (as she had after the decision to kill him) that the man, too, was a living, thinking creature who had an experiential world of his own. Details that earlier made him disgusting or strange now make him familiar and human. When the man is gone, the hate, violent urges, and desires disappear, and the shared reality and its norms seem to return to their regular places. The murder loses its affective meaning, and the social and ethical meanings take control of the narrator's mind. The desired result

https://doi.org/10.21435/sflit.13

is not achieved: "Why did I murder him and not myself? […] Everything has been pointless."[113]

At the end of the hospital chapter, the narrator tells us that she has wanted to hurt herself and that she is experiencing rage attacks, but she is not sure whether she has faked them: she has started to "decorate" her seizures with "armies of mice" and talk about "small hats" and "devils" (both have appeared in her thoughts earlier), and ultimately reveals that she has been released because of this. In the end, she is herself confused whether she is in fact "bad" or "mad": "Did I have pangs of conscience because of these proceedings? No. I have a low and criminal character, and perhaps it is even true that I am a spiritually ill person."[114]

The story about the murder reveals once again both the narrator's solipsism and the way her emotions and affects are constructed in interaction with the world: her solipsism and affective states color the world, but they are also shaped by it.

Aesthetic, Imaginary, and Hallucinatory Worlds

One possible way to understand the narrator's curious release from the hospital is to interpret that she is actually released not because she is considered "mad," but because the murder never happens: because she either imagines or hallucinates it. The interpretation is supported by the surreal, grotesque, and horror elements of the murder scene. For example, meeting the lover at a cemetery during a heavy storm and imagining the corpses in the graves. It also gets support from the narrator's hint about the doctor's disbelief when she goes to the hospital: perhaps she is admitted because of the pneumonia she says she has caught rather than her supposed crime. The whole story about the murder has strong links to romantic horror stories, reminding us of the narrator's interest in fiction and imagining (in fact, later she connects the murder plans to the "trashy literature" she says her lover liked to read).

As we have seen, the narrator constantly dramatizes events and modifies and "decorates" the world in her imagination. While hospitalized, she even comes to the conclusion that the reason why she committed the murder is, in addition to the pride and disgust she felt, just lack of respect and "frivolous artistry":

> 71. […] I am not actually evil or malevolent, I just have no ability to respect anything, and now I know why I committed the murder: out of artistry, out of the beauty of gloom and melancholy. To make myself beautiful with features I don't have: courage, determination, and blazing, excited virtuousness. I did it because of pride and disgust, but also because of frivolous artistry.

> 71. […] Minä en varsinaisesti ole paha enkä ilkeämielinen, minä en vain osaa mitään kunnioittaa, ja nyt tiedän miksi murhankin tein: taiteellisuudesta, synkkyyden ja murheellisuuden kauneudesta, kaunistaakseni itseäni ominaisuuksilla, joita minulla ei ole: rohkeudella, päättäväisyydellä, leimuavalla, innokkaalla hyveellisyydellä. Ylpeydestä ja inhosta mutta myös kevytmielisestä taiteellisuudesta sen tein. (KS 76.)

https://doi.org/10.21435/sflit.13

She has already called the murder "blazing," "bold," and a "decisive, striking act" (KS 21; 35–36; 65), and here she describes it with other words signaling both efforts at control and aestheticism. In the end, the murder seems to be an act of melancholic "beauty" and "artistry"—connecting the narrator to the dilettantes and aestheticists of decadent literature on the one hand, and on the other, to the Dostoyevskian underground man and the tradition of abject heroes (in this, she resembles the narrator of *Tohtori Finckelman*). The hint about artistry could be taken even one step further: to read the whole murder story as an exercise in aesthetic imagination and as an effort to gain control and agency through art and storytelling.

The solipsistic, affective world of the narrator is very much a world of aesthetics and imagination. The narrator is an artist living in her own world, together with the devils that she starts to imagine early on. It is even possible to read her self-declared "madness" as an act of artistic performance, as the narrator herself suggests in the rage scene which, she says, leads to her release from the hospital. Toward the end, she also starts to position herself in the place of God as a creator. Like at the beginning with the fat woman and in the hospital with the mice and the little hats, she starts to enhance her perceptions and add things to the world she perceives. She sees a vanload of furniture on the street and focuses her attention on a table that is on top of the load. She starts to imagine the table in a room, with a flower on it, and decides to add more flowers:

> 85. […] I also imagine a few old fuchsias on the table. In my mind I stretch the narrow elliptical leaves, they become long, unnaturally long and hanging, so that they fall from the windowsill and I give them a bright blue color. Now the whole plant resembles a tussock of hay, delicate, sensitive and emotional, somewhere in a field. The leaves are wet, disgustingly wet, they are accumulated on top of each other […]. I say to God: Yes, You have created the lilac leaves, the stones at the shore and the crooked branches. You have created the movement of the branches. The colors. Even the blue. I give You full recognition for them, but You have not created this tussock, not one single straw of hay in it. It is mine and I take it with me anywhere, I plant it above the gate or on my desk or keep it in my drawer. You have not created it.
>
> 85. […] Kuvittelen pöydälle myös muutaman vanhan verenpisaran. Venytän ajatuksissani suikeat lehdet pitkiksi, luonnottoman pitkiksi ja riippuviksi, kunnes ne tippuvat ikkunalaudalta alas ja annan niille räikeän sinisen värin. Koko kasvi muistuttaa nyt heinämätästä, hienoheinäistä, herkkää ja tuntehikasta, jossakin pellolla. Ruohon lehdet ovat märkiä, iljettävän märkiä, ne ovat kasautuneet päällekkäin [...]. Sanon Jumalalle: Niin, sireenin lehdet Sinä olet luonut, merenrannan kivet ja koukkuiset oksat. Oksien liikkeet sinä olet luonut. Värit. Sinisen myöskin. Annan Sinulle niistä täyden tunnustuksen, mutta tätä mätästä et ole luonut, et yhtään ainoata heinänkarvaa siihen, se on minun ja vien sen kainalossani mihin hyvänsä, istutan portin päälle, tai pöydälleni tai pidän laatikossa. Sinä et ole sitä luonut. (KS 99–100.)

https://doi.org/10.21435/sflit.13

As an artist she has enormous power and freedom: she is as powerful as God whom she defies. In her imagination, she is an omnipotent creator of affective worlds and images, transgressing the constraints of her position.

In the end, it becomes clear that more important than what "actually happens" in the story is the process in which the narrator creates imaginary and/or hallucinatory worlds and scenes and invites her readers to go through them together with her. As we have seen, the borders between the narrator's world and the actual world she inhabits are hazy, and the readers' task is to follow the narrator's perceptions, fantasies, dreams, and the imaginary worlds she creates. Toward the end of the novel, the story becomes increasingly detached from the logics and rules of reality, increasingly surreal or hallucinatory: the narrator is wandering around Helsinki severely ill, she goes through aesthetic experiences and experiences of bodily decay, tries to make her peace with God, and finally even seems to narrate her own death. Despite her moments of omnipotence as a creator of flowers and tussocks of hay, she experiences intense suffering. There is a constant tension between the narrator's freedom as an artist/creator and the way her experiences, actions, and even imaginings are shaped and controlled without her volition and cause her pain.

Ultimately the novel directs our attention to the ways the social, intersubjective world—the social and religious norms, scripts, and narratives—and the restrictions and possibilities afforded by the world shape both the narrator's experiences and her efforts in artistic creation. In addition to the narrator's relationship to the world and other people, *Kaunis sielu* invites its readers to ask questions about creating art and the possibilities underlying it: Who can be an artist? Who gets a voice and what can be represented? We could even interpret the narrator as a female artist who makes art by killing (or imagining or hallucinating killing) her male lover ("the beauty of gloom and melancholy"; "frivolous artistry"). I return to the narrator's artistic and social transgressions (as well as the transgression Hämäläinen enacts by writing a novel like *Kaunis sielu*) at the end of the chapter, but before that, let us look more closely at the affective patterns the narrator's imagination and hallucinations make: the thoughts and images that both distress her and bring her pleasure, and the way her experiences are shaped by social and cultural norms and narratives.

Affective Patterns and Shaping Norms

As we have seen, the reason why the narrator needs to tell her story is that she cannot understand herself: she recognizes that she has experiences that she cannot explain, control or sometimes even verbalize, and she labels these as "mad." Perhaps most interesting, and most difficult to grasp, in *Kaunis sielu* is the way the narrator evokes different affects and emotions one after another, constantly offering new interpretations for her experiences and for the murder and rejecting old ones. In different fragments, the narrator gives divergent reasons for the murder: "disgust"; "hurt pride" (KS 14; 48; 109); "lust"; "shame"; "contempt"; "hate" (KS 48); "pride, disgust and love";

https://doi.org/10.21435/sflit.13

"anxiety and confusion" (KS 59–60); "artistry" (KS 76); "sorrow" (because the man allowed other people to look down on her) (KS 109); "passion," "contradictions," "sensitivity and desire for revolt," "hate", and finally, "gloominess" (KS 111–112).

The emotions create affective patterns that show the way the narrator is attuned to and sensitized by the world: on the one hand, she goes through pleasurable fantasies and shapes the world in her imagination; on the other hand, her experiences are deeply affected and shaped by the social world, other people and socio-cultural norms and narratives. The narrator can be seen as entangled in "narrative webs" (see Meretoja 2018, 100) which unconsciously affect the way she perceives herself and narrates her experiences.[115] Her changing affects and emotions reveal the pain and suffering she experiences when she cannot fit into societal norms. In the following, I first look at the different associations and patterns the narrator's mind creates, then I turn to the topics of queer shame and pleasure, and to the fragmentary story she ultimately constructs about the murder and its causes.

Unconscious Associations and Affective Engagements

> The unconscious cannot be seen directly or even indirectly. The way to catch it is slant, by noticing how consciousness makes patterns and [trying] to figure out what motivates those patterns. (Vermeule 2015, 471.)

In addition to the emotions and affective states the narrator names and reflects on, there are ineffable experiences that are revealed rather in the movements of the narrator's mind than in what she explicitly says or writes. As Vermeule notes, the unconscious cannot be seen directly or even indirectly, nor can it be quoted or verbalized (see also Cohn 1978, 88). It can only be hinted at by a narrator who has knowledge that a character does not, or interpreted by readers from a character's associative thoughts, inner monologues and speech.[116] In *Kaunis sielu*, there is no knowledgeable or "omniscient" narrator who would have the power to reveal the protagonist's unconscious to us; the narrator has as little knowledge about herself as the readers. All we have are the patterns the narrator's consciousness makes while she tries to arrange her story: the affective engagement between the self and the world, and the associations that show the narrator both shaping the world and being shaped by it.

As we have seen, much of the narrator's experiential world is controlled by thoughts and emotions that seem to just "appear" without any conscious effort and even without the narrator's control. For example, in the first chapter the narrator highlights the movement her mind makes and reflects on the thoughts that emerge:

> 14. […] There are trivial, obscene and strange thoughts flickering in my mind. I suddenly remember ears, red, thick ear lobes. They whirl in my mind. Ears have always aroused me sensually, especially if they are red, soft, big. Firm lobes that are detached from the head make me sensitive, light, glad. They make me spiritual. Tolstoy and France have compared these kinds of ears to butterfly wings.

https://doi.org/10.21435/sflit.13

> 14. […] Mielessäni häilähtelee joutavanpäiväisiä, rivoja ja omituisia ajatuksia. Mieleeni muistuvat äkkiä korvat, punaiset, paksut korvalehdet. Ne kieppuvat mielessäni. Korvat ovat minua aina aistillisesti kiihottaneet, varsinkin jos ovat punaiset, pehmeät, suuret. Irrallaan päästä olevat, kovat korvalehdet tekevät minut herkäksi, lennokkaaksi, iloiseksi. Ne henkevöittävät. Tolstoi ja France ovat sellaisia korvia verranneet perhossiipiin. (KS 15–16.)

She reports the images that appear in her consciousness ("ears, red, thick ear lobes") and recounts the feelings and associations they raise in her. The images are also offered for the readers to interpret and reflect on: to construct a narrative out of the movements of the mind, as discussed. The narrator does not herself know what these thoughts "mean" in terms of words and symbols, but she does recognize their affective meaning and what they do to her. No explanations are given: we are as puzzled and amazed facing the narrator's stream of thought as she is.

Right after telling her readers about the ear lobes, she mentions how she suddenly starts to imagine a dead child and then seems to "wake up" from her thoughts:

> 14. […] All of this flickers in my mind. Then comes a completely insane thought about a dead child, as if the child had been mine and then died. […]
>
> I notice with a start how weird it is that I think like this, it is as if I was only half conscious, as if I was dreaming, thinking about my own thoughts at the same time.
>
> Do you understand? (KS 16.)

> 14. […] Tämä kaikki välähtelee nyt mielessäni. Sitten tulee aivan järjetön ajatus kuolleesta lapsesta, niin kuin lapsi olisi ollut minun ja sitten kuollut. […]
>
> Huomaan säpsähtäen miten omituista on, että näin ajattelen, olen kuin vain puoliksi tajuissani, ikään kuin näkisin unta ajatellen omia ajatuksiani samalla.
>
> Käsitättekö? (KS 16.)

As the fragment continues, so does the movement from one mental image to another, and once again she returns to the man sitting at the table:

> 14. […] I want to take all this away from him. Good God, that is how it is. No lamp can light up his face, he cannot sit at any table. Suddenly I remember how once, when I was a child, I went for a visit. I remember clearly the big burs growing by the road. There was a big bush of them, the leaves were so white on one side. Mother had an infant then and she was nursing it.

> 14. […] Tahdon häneltä ottaa pois tämän kaiken. Hyvä Jumala, niinhän se on. Mikään lamppu ei saa valaista hänen kasvojansa, hän ei saa istua minkään pöydän ääressä. Äkkiä muistan, kuinka kerran lapsena menin vieraisille. Muistan tarkoin maantien vieressä kasvavat suuret takiaiset. Niitä oli suuri pensas, lehdet olivat toiselta puolen aivan valkeita. Äidillä oli silloin rintalapsi ja hän syötti sitä. (KS 17.)

The image of the man suddenly triggers a childhood memory: an association is created between her hate for her lover and a childhood event. Readers are

https://doi.org/10.21435/sflit.13

not offered any clear clues as to how to interpret the thoughts, we are just urged to try to understand.

Exploring the associative patterns of thought, Hämäläinen develops a technique that is similar to the way a psychoanalyst interprets repressed experiences from a patient's associative speech: the narration invites us to interpret the affective images and associations as expressions of the narrator's "unconscious" but leaves their meaning open. She likely created the technique instinctively, not knowing very much about Freudian theories of the unconscious but rather focusing on the insight that there are experiences that cannot be put into words: that escape meaning and defy explanation, and that guide subjects without them consciously knowing it. However, to return to a point I have been making throughout this chapter, like all experience, the unconscious in *Kaunis sielu* is not portrayed as something that is located "inside" the narrator's mind. Rather, the unconscious processes are brought forth in the narrator's relationship with the world and other people, in the thoughts and images they raise in her, as well as in her bodily reactions.[117] They are manifested in the narrator's incapability to control her thoughts, emotions, and bodily reactions. By transposing into words the images in her mind, the associations the mind makes, her bodily experiences, and affective responses to the world, the narration brings forth something that is beyond verbalization.

The affective patterns the narrator creates—attaching herself to the world with feelings of love, hate, disgust and pleasure—are also intended to solicit readers' bodily experiences and sensory imagination. We are invited to follow her thoughts, emotions, reflections, and interaction with the world. The intersubjective experiences discussed throughout this chapter have mostly been negative and unsettling. However, there are also many instances in which the narrator goes through feelings of compassion and being in harmony with the world. These moments of togetherness and belonging are hardly ever connected to other people, but rather to nature or animals and objects.[118] The narrator encounters a wild dog, malnourished pigs, a basket, and an enamel lid which raise experiences of affection in her: "I have sought refuge in animals. […] They feel close to me, I love them, I show kindness to them without hesitation."; "That blue enamel lid—a piece is missing […]. I feel tenderness for it."[119] The narrator's sympathy for animals and objects while feeling alienated from the social world, being an outsider, are also ways to invite empathic responses in readers and convey the affective meaning of the narrator's experiences. A strong contrast is developed between the world of plants, animals, and objects and the social, human world:

> 22. […] I love birds nowadays, they are cheerful and devout. All rooms, the tram, the crowd arouse a feeling of horror in me. I must escape.
>
> I love dogs, I often kiss the icy tree bark and when I am paralyzed with fear and I still see a round branch of a pine tree that looks round because of the posture of the bent needles, I feel healthy, sane and peaceful. The needles are very blue, they shine, and they are clean.

> 22. […] Lintuja rakastan nykyään, ne ovat iloisia ja hurskaita. Kaikki huoneet, raitiovaunu, tungos herättävät minussa kauhun. Minun on paettava.

https://doi.org/10.21435/sflit.13

> Koiria rakastan, jäähileistä puunkuorta suutelen usein ja kun kauhusta hervottomana vielä näen männyn pyöreän oksan, neulasten kaarevan asennon vuoksi pyöreältä näyttävän, tunnen terveyttä, järkevyyttä ja rauhaa. Neulasten värissä on sinistä runsas annos, ne kiiltävät ja ovat puhtaita. (KS 24.)

The rooms, trams and crowds seem to (unconsciously) remind the narrator of the world from which she is estranged, and at the same time she goes through experiences of aesthetic pleasure engaging with nature. When she feels alienated from the social world, she often takes refuge in nature, in her hallucinations, dreams, and imagination where she can go through thoughts and emotions that are condemned or repressed in the human world.

This becomes most visible in her fantasies about the devils.[120] They first appear in Fragment 22, just before the description of the love for birds and dogs. The narrator introduces the creatures, telling that one of them is "sad, thin, and it has wide bat legs," a second has a "rosy face," and a third has "the dull face of a peasant."[121] She says that she knows it is "madness," but she "has to think about them."[122] In Fragment 23, she emphasizes that she knows that the devils are imaginary but she feels painful pleasure imagining them:

> 23. My weird pastime still is that I see devils in my thoughts. I don't see them with my bodily eyes; I just have a curious desire to imagine them. I feel that it is madness that I think about them, but yet I do. It has become entertainment for me; I can't stop it, and still I feel that it somehow splinters my brain. I feel a strange pain in my head, but at the same time my mind is filled with great, impassionate joy. The thoughts about murder disappear when I think about devils, although they are somehow related. I tremble, I become sweaty; everything feels infinitely painful. […]
>
> I have decorated my room with these devils, two of them are sitting side by side like two owls in my bookshelf; they are still and sit there for a long time. The lumpy, hairy bodies of the devils and their evil nature has always aroused an immense desire in me to couple with a devil, or some other creature like it, in a filthy way, in a deliberately filthy and pleasurable way. […]
>
> I know all the time that they do not exist; I don't see them, I am healthy in that sense, but they appear before my eyes; they gain features that I don't invent, but slowly I think about them as if they truly existed.

> 23. Omituisena ajanvietteenäni on yhä edelleen ajatuksissani nähdä piruja. En näe niitä ruumiillisin silmin, minulla on vain erikoinen halu niitä kuvitella. Tunnen hulluudeksi, että niitä ajattelen, mutta kuitenkin yhä edelleenkin vain ajattelen. Se on tullut minulle ajanvietteeksi, en siitä pääse ja kuitenkin tunnen, että ne ikään kuin lohkovat aivojani. Tunnen kummallista kipua päässäni, mutta samalla täyttää mieleni suuri, kiihkoisa ilo. Murha-ajatukset pakenevat piruja ajatellessani, vaikka ovatkin niille kuitenkin jollain tavalla sukua. Minä vapisen, hiostun, tunnen rajattoman tuskalliseksi kaiken. […]
>
> Olen koristanut huoneeni näillä piruilla, pari niistä istuu rinnakkain kuin kaksi pöllöä kirjahyllyssäni, liikahtamatta ne istuvat siellä pitkät ajat. Pirujen kyhmyräinen, karvainen ruumis, niiden rumuus ja pahuus on aina herättänyt minussa tavattoman himon yhtyä piruun tai sen kaltaiseen olentoon, saastaisesti, tahallisen saastaisesti ja nautinnollisesti. […]

https://doi.org/10.21435/sflit.13

> Tiedän koko ajan, ettei niitä ole, en niitä näe, olen vielä siinä mielessä terve, ne tulevat silmieni eteen, ne saavat ominaisuuksia, joita en laisinkaan keksi, mutta vähitellen ajattelen niitä niin kuin ne todella olisivat olemassa. (KS 24–25.)

Imagining the little creatures sitting in her room, the narrator constructs a detailed fantasy of having intercourse with a devil—a fantasy that seems intended to shock her readers. Soon after this, she starts to hint at another desire that is even more shocking (at least to herself): a desire for women. One meaning for her affective experiences and the patterns they make is beginning to emerge.

Queer Shame and Pleasure

> 31. […] But even if my act was only caused by illness, I don't want to leave it undone because it still is blazing, bold. It means that I am set free from the past. I am set free from the past, not because he ceases to exist (he cannot move, think—nothing happens to him anymore) but because I will perform a condemnable, yet decisive, striking act. I will raise myself from this depression that is caused by my indecisiveness and the fact that I have not been able to act until now. I will also become free from disgust that I cannot bear, the disgust that overcomes me when I see his wife talking, dressing, carrying the child. Every moment I feel that we are attached to one another in a disgusting way. It is as if I saw her white thighs. And the most unnatural thing, which raises a sweat on my forehead and dizzies me, is that I feel desire for her white thighs.
>
> This is my most horrible, most secret suffering. We are all horrifying, if we truly see ourselves.

> 31 […] Mutta senkin uhalla, että tekoni johtuisi vain sairaudesta en halua sitä jättää tekemättä, sillä se on sittenkin leimuava, rohkea, minulle se merkitsee sitä, että vapaudun entisestä. Vapaudun entisestä, en sen kautta että hän lakkaa olemasta: liikkumasta, ajattelemasta, ettei hänelle enää mitään tapahdu, vaan siten, että teen, vaikkakin tuomittavan, niin kuitenkin päättävän, repäisevän teon ja sillä kohoudun tästä masentuneisuudesta, johon on vienyt päättämättömyyteni ja se, etten ole tekoa jaksanut suorittaa tähän päivään mennessä. Vapaudun sitten myöskin inhosta, jota en kestä, inhosta, joka valtaa minut, kun näen hänen vaimonsa puhuvan, pukeutuvan, kuljettelevan lasta. Joka hetki tunnen, että olemme inhottavalla tavalla toisiimme liittyneet. On niin kuin näkisin hänen valkeat reitensä. Ja luonnottominta ja sellaista, että se nostaa hien ohimolleni kosteana ja pyörryttävänä on, että minä tunnen himoa hänen valkoisiin reisiinsä.
>
> Tämä on minun hirvittävin, salaisin kärsimykseni. Kauhistuttavia me olemme kaikki, jos oikein näemme itsemme. (KS 35–36.)

As discussed, the narrator's reason for telling her story is to find meaning for her state of distress and for her murderous thoughts. Even before the description of the murder, the narrator offers several different interpretations for her experiences and the act of violence she plans. In the long reflection quoted above, she states that she needs to commit the murder because she must set herself free. Even if it were caused by an illness, the murder would be a "decisive, striking act" that would raise her from the "depression caused

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by indecisiveness." She also says that she wants to free herself from the disgust she feels when watching the man with his wife, and after stating this, she reveals—as an afterthought—that the thighs of the wife arouse desire in her, revealing the source of her extreme distress. It becomes clear that in the background of her murderous thoughts and disgust at the man, is a mesh of complex, conflicting affects and emotions.

Once the desire for women has been revealed, it is aligned with the devils. Two different kinds of forbidden desires are brought together:

> 34. My devils have become sensuous, I notice frivolity and restlessness in them. There has been progress in a wrong, unnatural direction. Today I met small Miss L. [...] I watched her and suddenly I thought that if I kissed that hair, those hands and that slender, sad tiny mouth and face, I would feel pleasure, tenderness, joy and lust that I have never felt for example when kissing him. [...] I have felt intoxication, shining joy, enjoyable sensuality, vibrations and passionate, joyous desires only when looking at naked female bodies in paintings [...]. I shall never do anything, I am appalled by the mere thought of it, but I know that I will always be eating dry bread while the others take delight in juicy, bright fruits. I have been wrongly robbed of this joyful, wonderful drink. [...] I am wrongly condemned. Is it me who has to walk these gray, matter-of-fact regions?
>
> 34. Piruni ovat tulleet aistillisiksi, huomaan niissä kevytmielisyyttä ja rauhattomuutta. Minussa on tapahtunut kehitys väärään, luonnottomaan suuntaan. Tänään tapasin pienen neiti L:n [...]. Katselin häntä ja ajattelin äkkiä, että tuota tukkaa, noita käsiä ja siroa ja surumielistä pikku suuta ja kasvoja suudellessani tuntisin hekumaa, hellyyttä, riemua ja kiihkoa, jota en koskaan ole tuntenut esimerkiksi häntä suudellessani. [...] Humaltumusta, hehkuvaa iloa ja nautinnokasta aistillisuutta, värähdyksiä, kiihkeitä ja riemukkaita haluja olen tuntenut vain katsellessani maalauksien alastomia naisruumiita [...]. En koskaan ole mitään tekevä, minua pöyristyttää ajatuskin, mutta minä tiedän, että tulen aina syömään kuivaa leipää, kun toiset nauttivat meheviä, kirkkaita hedelmiä. Minulta on väärin viety pois riemukas, ihana juoma. Huuleni ovat kuivat. Tunnen katkeruutta. Minä olen ilman omaa syytäni kadottanut rehevät aurinkoiset maisemat. Olen tuomittu väärin. Minunko on kuljettava asiallisia, harmaita tienoita? (KS 38–39.)

The narrator describes her desire for "Miss L." as "unnatural." However, she feels that she has been wrongly condemned and denied pleasure. As Sara Ahmed (2004, 107) notes, there is shame involved in sexuality that is norm-breaking. Society strictly controls who and what kind of bodies we can love and desire, and shame is a result of a "failure" in following social norms and narratives—for example the norm of heterosexual love. Desiring something that one should reject has an enormous psychological and social toll: it can result in experiences of shame, self-hate, disgust, and melancholy (ibid., 197; 146). As the narrator continues: "This inclination toward women, does it truly exist, or have I imagined it? I don't know. It horrified and disgusted me, raised and infinite sorrow in me. So, I went to meet Master S. You must understand?"[123] Her solution is to go and see a man she has met while the lover is away in order to get rid of her "unnatural" feelings. However, she cannot go through with the plan and thus "fails" in her attempts to follow the

https://doi.org/10.21435/sflit.13

heterosexual norm. This is extremely rebellious, but also a source of suffering and pain.

As we have seen, the narrator constantly labels her experiences as "mad" and says that they arouse feelings of horror and disgust in her. However, the meanings of words like "natural" and "unnatural" are also renegotiated: the narrator finds pleasure in things that are marked as "shameful," "disgusting," "filthy" or "wrong"; there is enjoyment in the narrator's fantasies and hallucinations which are labeled pathological in the eyes of society. In her talk about women and devils, the narrator shows that desire can be directed at something that is rejected and repressed in society: there is attraction and pleasure in the experiences of disgust and repulsion. This is also tied to the motif of "immorality": the narrator identifies with devils and other "bad" characters and describes how this identification brings her pleasure: "The devils I can easily switch to angels. But, I must confess, I don't like their company very much."[124]

The way the meanings of what is "natural" or "unnatural" change becomes especially apparent in the passage where she is most explicit about her desire for women—and the only description of homosexual desire which is not a fantasy or a dream but framed as a memory:

> 68. I recall one event from when I was fifteen years old. Or not actually an event, more like a mood. We were collecting plants with a school friend and we stopped at a meadow. It was luxuriant and green, there were thick tussocks of hay and reeds and willows growing in the trench, gray, leafy willows. At that moment, a sudden sensation of thrill and kindness came over me. I thought about the birds in the forests, on the branches, the bright, gray feathers and the smell of sweat and down on a small body, the bellflowers and wild turnips that were swaying cheerfully, erratically and fast in the wind, about the vibrant, nearly red air. My friend felt unspeakably dear to me. I tried to remember if I had done anything wrong to her so that I could now correct it. When I remembered that there was nothing, I kissed her with fondness, with joy and freshness. But the next day she avoided me, she avoided me until we left school. She didn't respond when I spoke and avoided looking me in the eyes. She strangely avoided my touch, avoided giving me her hand... She thought that there was something shameful in my kiss, although there was nothing but the delight of the green meadow and the fact that I had not done anything wrong to her.

> 68. Muistelen erästä tapahtumaa viidenneltätoista ikävuodeltani, tai oikeastaan en mitään tapahtumaa, vaan erästä tunnelmaa. Olimme erään koulutoverini kanssa kasveja keräämässä. Pysähdyimme eräälle niitylle. Se oli rehevän viheriä, heinää oli paksulti aivan kuin mättäittäin, ojissa kasvoi kaislaa ja pajuja, harmahtavia, lehteviä pajuja. Silloin minut valtasi äkillinen ihastuksen ja hyvyyden tunne. Ajattelin lintuja metsissä, oksilla, niiden kirkkaita, harmaita sulkia ja pienen ruumiin untuvan ja hien hajua, kellokukkia ja peltokaalia, jotka heilahtelivat iloisesti, nopeasti ja säännöttömästi tuulessa, värähteleväistä, ikään kuin punertavaa ilmaa. Toverini tuntui minusta sanomattoman rakkaalta, koetin muistella olinko tehnyt hänelle mitään vääryyttä voidakseni sen nyt heti korjata. Kun muistin, ettei mitään sellaista ollut, suutelin häntä ihastuneena, riemukkaasti ja raikkaasti. Mutta seuraavana päivänä hän karttoi minua, karttoi aina siihen asti, kunnes erosimme koulusta. Hän ei vastannut puheisiini eikä katsonut mielellään silmiini.

https://doi.org/10.21435/sflit.13

> Karttoi oudosti kosketusta, antamasta kättä… Hän ajatteli suudelmassani olleen jotain häpeällistä eikä siinä kuitenkaan ollut muuta kuin ihastusta niityn vihreydestä ja siitä, etten ollut hänelle mitään vääryyttä tehnyt. (KS 71.)

The desire is portrayed here as perfectly "natural," akin to aesthetic pleasure and feelings of being in harmony with the world and with other people (see also Stang 2015, 234). The narrator brings forth feelings of shame as she did earlier, but this time she herself knows that there is nothing to be ashamed of. In the end, love and sensuality are tied to feelings of pleasure that arise from nature—something that is also typical in Hämäläinen's poetry (see Kähkönen 2002). The "beautiful soul" of *Kaunis sielu* gets a meaning of enchantment of nature, beauty and goodness, and ultimately these are linked to same-sex desire.

Since the narrator cannot enact her experiences in real life (the psychic toll would be too high), she turns to her imagination—looking at paintings, fantasizing—and goes through experiences of pleasure and joy, which are partly disturbing, yet exhilarating:

> 69. Even though I lie here waiting for death, my sensuality will not leave me. Although I think that I have gotten rid of my love for women. I am disturbed by different kinds of images. Or they don't actually disturb me. I feel pleasure, idiotic pleasure while watching my images.
>
> There is a goat walking in very mild weather up the slope of a mountain. Small broad-leaved thistles spread their rosettes to the holes in the rocks, some sand is falling down in places. The goat has a long, shiny, fair hair, it turns its head every now and then. Every now and then it turns its head, it has a feminine, compassionate, sort of worried and stupid face. Its eyes are gentle and fair, the neck stretches, long, there is something immobile and obedient.
>
> My eyes shining, I look at the goat, I would like to give it female breasts, covered by long, blond hair.
>
> My God, My God, what lewdness is tearing at my brains still; a pleasurable, inventive, unnatural lewdness.

> 69. Vaikka tässä odottelen kuolemaa, ei aistillisuuteni minua jätä. Rakkaudestani naisiin tunnen tosin päässeeni. Minua vaivaavat erilaiset mielikuvat; eivät oikeastaan vaivaa, minä tunnen mielihyvää, idioottimaista mielihyvää kuviani katsellessani.
>
> Hyvin lauhassa ilmassa astuskelee vuohi ylös vuoren rinnettä. Pienet leveälehtiset ohdakkeet levittävät ruusukkeensa kallion koloihin, paikoin valuu alas soraa. Vuohella on pitkä, kiiltävä, vaalea karva, se kääntää päätänsä vähän väliä. Vähän väliä se kääntää päätänsä, sillä on naisellinen, laupias, ikään kuin huolestunut ja tyhmä naama. Sen silmät ovat miedot ja vaaleat, kaula venyvä, pitkä, siinä on jotain liikkumatonta ja tottelevaista.
>
> Silmät kiiluen katselen vuohta, minä sovittaisin sille mielelläni naisen rinnat, pitkien vaaleitten karvojen peittämät.
>
> Herra Jumala, Herra Jumala, mikä riettaus repii yhä aivojani, nautinnokas, kekseliäs, luonnoton riettaus. (KS 72.)

There is immense pleasure in imagining, in the desire, and in the image of a goat-woman that is at the same time grotesque and enjoyable.[125] Again,

https://doi.org/10.21435/sflit.13

however, we can notice the ambivalence: the narrator first denies the "love for women" but immediately starts to imagine breasts. Something that is marked disgusting is once again also pleasurable, just like the devils, as she notes moments later: "In church art the devils are naked, like animals, because devils are indecent, disgusting, filthy. But what if they arouse sensuality, fierce passion in a person, as in me?"[126]

In these passages, the narrator is even more defiant than before: she explicitly says that the devils raise sensuality and passion in her. As Ahmed notes, expressing pleasures that are marked as wrong, as illegitimate or immoral can function as a form of political resistance. Pleasure allows bodies to take up more space, and making the pleasure public can function as a declaration: "We are here!" (Ahmed 2004, 164). According to heterosexual norms, only certain kinds of bodies have the "right" for pleasure. However, in reality, pleasure is not a "reward" for a "natural" (for example reproductive) sexual activity. As the narrator of *Kaunis sielu* shows, although experiences of pleasure are often controlled and shaped by society and its norms, they are also utterly subjective: the individual experience of sexuality and pleasure does not follow any norms or scripts. Representing different kinds of pleasures has political power and significance: portraying norm-breaking pleasures and enjoyment can invade or open new spaces (see also Ahmed 2004, 165).

In her interviews and memoir, Hämäläinen repeatedly claimed that she wrote the passages about sexuality "instinctively," not knowing that homosexuality even exists—although the descriptions are so explicit that it is difficult to believe her claim (see also Stang 2015, 227). As we saw in Chapter 2, the representations of same-sex desire, although they are framed as "illness" in the novel, were apparently received with shock at the time of writing. However, from the perspective of a twenty-first-century reader, it is easy to connect the labeling of the pleasures and desires as an "illness" to the repressive social norms of the time. The experiences of shame, self-hate and alienation from the world that are caused by the oppressive norms, as well as the desires and pleasures that the narrator goes through, are more likely to be understood and empathized with today than they were when Hämäläinen wrote the novel and offered it for publication. It has become possible to see the novel as a revolt against oppressive cultural norms.

Conflicting Narratives

In the final chapter, the narrator returns to the story that was fragmentarily started at the beginning of the novel, about getting to know the man and starting the affair with him. She tries once more to organize the different reasons why she wanted to kill him, and here she gives the most coherent account of the events that led to the murder. However, it becomes once again clear that her experiences defy a coherent narrative form. She recounts meeting the man and mentions that although she had no knowledge of her "love for women" at the time, "a strange lack of joy, lack of passion came over me immediately when we embraced. It felt as if all the joyous sensuality had in that moment gone dim, poor."[127] She thus offers a retelling of her earlier story, more self-consciously than in the first chapter, now aware of

https://doi.org/10.21435/sflit.13

and open about her sexual desire for women and explicitly renouncing her affair with the man: "This man did not satisfy me intellectually, I think. He was insignificant, unimportant, his thoughts were trivial. I knew all this from the start."[128] She also mentions her efforts to fall in love with the other man ("Master S.") and says that it was then that she finally understood her sexual desire: "Then I for the first time notice my inclination toward women, and this is why I almost offer myself to the man, but suddenly, inexplicably, I cannot do it."[129] What was in the first account only hinted at is now made explicit.

In addition to the reflections about her sexuality, she provides some completely new information, which is, however, in contradiction with her statements about the lover's "insignificance." She tells us that the man behaved "coldly and politely, even indifferently" to her when they met in public and says that this made her feel insulted and humiliated: "That was when for the first time I thought about revenge—filled with pride and furious with rage—and I felt myself reduced."[130] After describing these quite understandable reactions to an experience of being dismissed, she goes on to recount how the man started to disgust her and became repulsive in her eyes: he drank alcohol and read "trashy literature" about "murders and crimes" (KS 116). One of the stories the man read was about a murderer who kills women, and the narrator recounts how she started to think that perhaps the man had also planned to kill her: "To get rid of a body that had become dear to him, to murder because of fervent jealousy and also to be released of the passion. […] Actually, he had very similar thoughts as I did."[131] For several pages she tries to offer evidence for the idea that the man had the same plans as her, speculating once again about the man's thoughts and experiences, convincing herself that he felt the same as her and obscuring the borders between herself and the man.

Finally, she returns to the moment of the murder: she describes the man as "vulgar" and "repulsive," he is "controlled by lust" (KS 119–120). She repeats her story of killing him in a bout of shame and disgust, and ends her reiteration:

> 93. […] My long explanation disgusts me. Let everything be a mosaic, patterns, futile squares and circles. Does it concern me? I will die soon, take everything with me, and make a pile out of these gaudy colors and unfit pieces. See, I could not arrange them, I say. Pile of bricks.
>
> 93. […] Pitkä selvittelyni inhottaa minua. Olkoon kaikki mosaiikkia, kuvioita, turhanaikaisia neliöitä ja ympyröitä. Kuuluuko se minulle? Kohta kuolen, vien kaiken mennessäni, ladon pinon räikeävärisistä ja sopimattomista osasista. Katsos, en näitä osannut järjestää, puhun. Palikkapino. (KS 120–121.)

This second account of the murder and its reasons is more coherent than the first one: it is narrated in retrospect as one single narrative, not piece by piece as before. The process of trying to tell the story and the narrator's reflections seem to have offered her new self-understanding and new ways to connect the pieces of the past. However, this recount also ends with a description of

https://doi.org/10.21435/sflit.13

the failure to find any exact meaning for the murder and her experiences. Even the narrator's "final" interpretation of the events is in the end just as conflicted as any other, and she states this explicitly:

> 105. […] The reason, the ultimate reason, was perhaps the mosaic, blue and gray pieces, the heterogeneity of the mind, the scatteredness and numbness. On the one hand sensitivity, on the other hand numbness. Contradictions.
>
> I have never felt anything seriously, truly, everything has been vague to me, and I have embellished everything. Also, the gloom and the fury.
>
> I have felt pity and being sorry, but in general there has been no love or goodness in me. God has made a mistake in me, an unnatural thing.

> 105. […] Syy, perussyy, oli kenties mosaiikki, siniharmaat palikat, mielen kirjavuus, mielen hajanaisuus ja tunnottomuus. Toisaalta herkkyys, toisaalta tunnottomuus. Ristiriitaisuutta.
>
> En ole koskaan tuntenut vakavasti, totuudenmukaisesti, kaikki on ollut minulle epämääräistä ja kaikkea olen kaunistellut. Myöskin synkkyyttä ja raivokkuutta.
>
> Sääliä ja surkuttelua olen tuntenut, mutta yleisesti ottaen, rakkautta ja hyvyyttä ei minussa ole ollut. Minussa on Jumala tehnyt virheen, luonnottomuuden. (KS 141.)

In the end, readers are offered multiple different "explanations" for the narrator's experiences. There is the simple narrative of being rejected by one's lover and the shame of being "deplored" and "condemned" by others: "Because of hate and pride, but also because of great, hopeless sorrow I murdered him. Because I was hopelessly sad that he allowed people to turn up their noses."[132] Then there is the narrative about the murder as a kind of self-defense against the man's murderous plans. But most importantly, the efforts to recount the story about the relationship with the man reveal another kind of narrative, about forbidden and suppressed desires. There is suffering in the fragmentariness and inability to "arrange" one's story, but the narrator also creates a praise of the fragmentary, messy and contradictory which reveals experiences that are concealed by normative narratives and scripts.

The end of the novel is even more fragmentary than before and filled with different kinds of aesthetic experiences and feelings of guilt, shame, pleasure, and wonder. The narrator wanders around Helsinki. She tells us that she wants to see the places she loves for the last time (a tree, a harbor, the park) and bargains with God to give her a few more days. The written diary form is now left completely behind, and both the story and the narration start to break with the logic of reality. The narrator recounts things at the same time as she walks (and crawls) around Helsinki. Her health is deteriorating, she has a fever, and her body is giving up, but not in any regular way. She recounts that her breath is "coming out of her ears," her hands are "two horrible, sticking bones" (KS 132), it is difficult for her to move, and yet she is amazed at her bodily decay:

> 102. […] I cannot get up, I cannot. I roll myself into the pit by the street, my body fits there perfectly, but I have to move on. I try to get up. It is impossible. I start

https://doi.org/10.21435/sflit.13

to crawl. The hands become hot, a nasty, blue shining bone is exposed from the knees, there is blood coming in drips. I am amazed that there is still some left. I look at it with wonder.

102. […] En jaksa nousta, en jaksa. Vieritän itseni katuvieren syvennykseen, ruumiini sopii siihen hyvin, mutta minun on lähdettävä jälleen. Koetan nousta. Mahdotonta. Alan ryömiä. Kädet alkavat kuumottaa, polvista paljastuu ilkeästi sinervä, kiiltävä luu, verta tulee tihkumalla. Ihmettelen, että minussa sitäkin vielä on. Katselen sitä ihastuneena. (KS 136.)

She ultimately reaches home, loses consciousness and when she wakes up, she continues to imagine (or hallucinate) moving around Helsinki. The bodily experiences are even more exaggerated: "I clench my teeth, the veins in my neck are throbbing, the heart is compressing, I feel how the veins are bulging, they are drained, there is no more blood left in me. How could there be, I have thrown up puddles of it in the bucket."[133] The borders between hallucination and reality become completely hazy and the narration constructs a hallucinatory world that is divorced from the actual world.[134] Readers are invited to join the narrator in imagining her fantastic, hallucinatory thoughts and her degenerating body. Rather than interpretation, the narration invites affective responses. Finally, however, the narrator asks her readers to "arrange her pieces" (KS 142). She addresses us for the last time, creates her final imaginings (a red flower and a crawling bug) and then turns to God: "Loss of consciousness. Mistake. Blue, yellow triangles. The night is here. Dark. No, not yet. Your final ruthlessness."[135] On the final page, she imagines the face of Christ, which first comes in the form of an animal, bringing with it a smell of birches and a sensation of beauty and tranquility.

The novel ends with an affective image that brings together the iconography of altar paintings ("the face of Christ," "a cloak"), experiences of disgust ("pallid," "filthy") and a sense of pleasure deriving from Christ covering her with his cloak and smelling the clean air and the birch leaves: "You look at us with your glorious, pallid face, you throw your cloak on our naked, filthy limbs. Blue birch leaves and clean, wonderful air close to your head."[136]

However, although the final paragraph evokes religious images and images of natural beauty, it is not without contradictions and fissures: there are negative adjectives, and the imagery is once again exaggerated and artistic, breaking away from mimetic description. The Christ is as if stepping down from a painting, his face "pallid" like in an altar painting, covering the "filthy" limbs of the narrator (and other humans) with his cloak. With him comes the image of the blue birch leaves and the brush of "clean, wonderful air." The aesthetic and affective are yet again intertwined. However, from today's perspective, the ending of *Kaunis sielu* is also interesting and strange considering the composition of the whole text: the religious imagery contradicts everything that is said before and it appears that it is forced on the text. There seems to have been a demand for a narrative closure in which the rebellious, norm-breaking female character makes her peace with God and then dies. *Kaunis sielu* challenges many normative and oppressive

https://doi.org/10.21435/sflit.13

narratives through its fragmentariness, affectivity and representations of forbidden desires but ultimately also conforms to them.

Affective, Aesthetic, and Political Transgressions

> [F]orms are everywhere structuring and patterning experience […]. (Levine 2015, 16.)

As we have seen, the experiences of unsettlement, distress and suffering the narrator goes through are all filled with affective and aesthetic meaning. Her experiential world is not meaningless or unintelligible, although she insists that she cannot make sense of herself and labels her experiences and actions as "mad," "unnatural" and "condemnable." The experiences can be understood in the context of the possibilities the world affords and the social restrictions and norms that cause her suffering, as well as in the context of imagination, art, and aesthetics. I have also sought to show that the experiences are not just distressing or negative: there are also moments of joy and pleasure, albeit brief and imaginary or hallucinatory. Moreover, although the narrator's experiential world is in many ways solipsistic and closed, her experiences are also intersubjective and interaffective: the mind constructed in *Kaunis sielu* is relational, affected by and affecting the world and other people. Even though the borders between the self and the world are hazy and the narrator feels that she is losing control of herself, she maintains her narrative agency in her act of storytelling. To conclude this chapter, let us look more closely at the transgressions that *Kaunis sielu* creates.

Throughout the novel, a tension is created between the idea of the aesthetic and harmonious "beautiful soul" and the narrator's violent thoughts, obsessions, and fantasies.[137] As an early twentieth century text, *Kaunis sielu* enacts the understanding of the subject as internally conflicted. It moves away from the idea of a "beautiful soul," toward a (psychoanalytical) understanding of the subject as controlled by the unconscious and the restrictions and prohibitions imposed by society and its norms. In this context, the narrator's experiences of shattering and distress (which she calls "madness") can be seen both as a symptom of an oppressive social system and as a form of rebellion against it. "The madness" of the narrator is caused by oppressive norms and the narrator's failures to conform to them, and yet, at the same time, it is an attack against these norms, manifested in the affective discourse of the narrator, and in her dreams and fantasies which go against the norms and moral codes. "All the laws are incomprehensible to me,"[138] she claims at the end of her story.

The transgression of oppressive social norms and cultural narratives is thematized in several ways in *Kaunis sielu*. It appears in the theme of adultery and in the narrator's dismissal of marriage. Adultery became a common motif in Finnish literature in the late nineteenth century, following international trends, and especially 1930s literature is filled with female protagonists breaking their marriage vows.[139] The popularity of the theme is often linked to the growing need to discuss female sexuality and the social

https://doi.org/10.21435/sflit.13

efforts to control and repress it (see Juutila 1999, 370). In *Kaunis sielu*, the narrator offers a view of marriage that is to some extent radical even today (see also Stang 2015, 238): "I did not shun the adultery in any way. [...] I think that a human being can never be tied to another in such a way that the other person could stop her [from doing something], or that an emotion for another—pity, respect—could ever, except in some rare cases, be an obstacle if she wanted to fulfill a powerful passion."[140] She rejects the Christian and conservative norms behind the idea of marriage as a sacred bond.

The transgression is then made concrete through the murder she commits or imagines/hallucinates: she violates the moral norms of society in an extreme way, and the murder can be read as an attack against the whole society. As she claims: "a desire for revolt arose in me."[141] However, the motif of a female murderer or a femme fatale who kills her husband or lover to break away from a repressive relationship was not in any way new or radical in Finnish literature at the time: for example, author and women's rights activist Minna Canth repeatedly used it in her works in the late nineteenth century. Ultimately the strongest expression of social transgression in *Kaunis sielu* is the representation of homosexual desire, which was at the time viewed as a pathological condition.[142] The narrator, too, pathologizes herself, but nonetheless constantly returns to express her desires, and is even defiant. She claims that the man was "insignificant," both bodily and intellectually, and turns to her fantasies about women, devils, and nature to find both sexual and aesthetic pleasure.

Kaunis sielu is an ambivalent work at its core. It makes questionable the "beauty" and "harmony" of the "beautiful soul" and repeatedly labels the narrator's experiences as "madness," connecting "madness" to "immorality" and "unnaturality": to the murder, to the narrator's "low" and "criminal" nature and to her "appalling" desires, risking the creation of problematic metaphors for mental illness. The transgressions the narrator enacts are met with efforts to repress and stigmatize. The narrator does this herself, embodying the social norms and narratives that restrict her, constructing a kind of double consciousness in which she is looking at herself through the eyes of the heteronormative and patriarchal society, judging herself.[143] This leads to enormous suffering: to experiences of shattering, pain, and distress. In the end, the narrator dies, following a narrative form that is common from many other stories about women who dare to rebel against sexual norms.

The political and aesthetic meaning of the representation of affects, emotions, and desires in *Kaunis sielu* cannot, however, be reduced to the closed ending. Efforts to portray illness and shattering also make possible the representation of non-normative desires and queer affects. Despite the conventional ending and the stigmatization of the narrator's experiences, *Kaunis sielu* manages to give voice to ambivalence, heterogeneity, and multiplicity of desires. The novel celebrates the fragmentary and ambiguous narrative form instead of a linear, closed one. Hämäläinen's experimental narration searches for ways to represent bodily sensations, affects, and emotions, and the representation also reveals how social norms and structures shape the self. Furthermore, in addition to pain and distress, the narration enacts feelings of pleasure and wonder. The representation

https://doi.org/10.21435/sflit.13

of affects, emotions, and desires transgresses oppressive social norms, and challenges normative ways of understanding subjectivity and the subject's relationship to the world and others. It creates opportunities for new meanings and new ways of being.

https://doi.org/10.21435/sflit.13

4. A Divided Mind: Jorma Korpela's *Tohtori Finckelman* (Doctor Finckelman)

Everything is so sad. It is as if joy had died.

Well, after all that—it's a miracle that I am still alive!

And yet, I am glad—well, sort of. And at the same time sad, very sad. Sad because my thoughts are chasing the past unrelentingly like wild dogs. Glad, because I am alive and holding a pen in my hands again. Am I holding a pen? I ask myself quietly. Is it really me? Am I the person hanging at the end of the pen? I ask. It is me, it is me, I reply to myself pleased and try to be a carefree man.

But no, no, no… They are singing a hymn by the grave of joy, I can hear it well.[144]

On niin surullista kaikki. On kuin ilo olisi kuollut.

No kaiken sen jälkeen – ihme että elän!

Ja kuitenkin olen iloinen – niin, tavallaan. Ja samalla surullinen, hyvin surullinen. Surullinen siksi, että ajatusteni ajokoirat laukkaavat itsepintaisesti menneen jäljillä, iloinen, että elän ja pitelen kynää kädessäni taas. Pitelenkö kynää kädessäni, sopottelen hiljaa itsekseni. Olenko se todellakin minä, joka näin riipun kynänvarressa kiinni? kysyn. Minä, minähän se olen, vastaan tyytyväisenä ja yritän olla huoleton mies.

Mutta ei, ei, ei… Ilon haudalla veisataan, minä kuulen sen kyllä. (TF 3.)

In the preface to Jorma Korpela's *Tohtori Finckelman* (Doctor Finckelman, 1952), the narrator-protagonist is getting ready to write down the story of his life. As the readers learn later, he has suffered a severe mental breakdown. Now he reports his shifting emotions and moods and creates suspense: "after all that—it's a miracle that I am still alive!" His story, however, is full of contradictions right from the start: there is a structure of yes-and-no—or of proposition-negation, as Sari Salin (2002, 42) has aptly named the technique—in which the narrator first makes a statement and then immediately casts a doubt on it: "Everything is so sad […] And yet, I am glad—well, sort of"; "I am alive and holding a pen […] Am I holding a pen?"; "Is it really me? […] It is me, it is me."

The reading experience of *Tohtori Finckelman* is also affected by this yes-and-no structure: we are taken up and down, drawn close and pushed back. There are at least two ways the structure might affect the readers' understanding of the narrator-protagonist. We could start to follow his

https://doi.org/10.21435/sflit.13

changing moods and patterns of thought: to empathize with the sadness and joy he writes about and with the uncertainty about his actions (is he holding a pen?) and even about his existence (is it really him?). Or, we might begin to doubt his sincerity, grasp the ironic tone of the text and even start to read it as a mockery of an affective, experiential discourse and ultimately as a parody of how to begin a memoir—as a kind of a mock-memoir. In what follows, I propose that the text invites its readers to do both: to feel with the narrator and to distance themselves from him. More precisely, this chapter focuses on the oscillations between psychological lifelikeness and metafictional play, affectivity and artificiality, and empathy and estrangement that characterize the narrative strategies employed in the text, as well as the reading experience resulting from these strategies.[145]

The narrative back-and-forth-movement that is constructed in the preface is closely connected with the main themes of the novel—alienation from the shared world, dividedness or plurality of selfhood, guilt, and reconciliation—and it foreshadows everything that will be told later. When we read the text further, we learn that the narrator-protagonist is a divided figure in several respects. On one level, he is literally divided into two people: we learn that the title, *Tohtori Finckelman*, refers to an imaginary, evil doctor who abuses and murders people. The character of "Dr. Finckelman" is invented by the narrator-protagonist himself as a young man together with Riitu, an old man who tells the protagonist half-real, half-fictional stories about thieves and murderers. Later, working as a psychiatrist, the protagonist constantly returns to Riitu's stories, supplements them and starts to identify with the imaginary doctor who is, as the readers will notice, also a highly intertextual character referring to a long history of "mad" scientists (see also Salin 2002, 99–100). As the story goes on, the protagonist gradually loses his own identity and "becomes" Dr. Finckelman—hence the doubts in the preface whether he "really is himself."[146]

On a more symbolic level, the narrator enacts the basic tragedy of a speaking, social subject: when we try to put into words the stories of our lives, we are forced to look at ourselves from the outside. A gap appears between the experiences and the words describing them. This dividedness also characterizes the narrative situation of the novel. As the narrator—the person "hanging at the end of the pen"—recounts the story of his life, a distance emerges between his present and past self, as in every autobiography and in all self-narration (see Cohn 1978, 143; Phelan 2005). This existential dividedness is often a source of suffering (how can one put one's feelings into words?), but it also enables a reflective relationship with oneself: a capacity for self-awareness and ironic distance to oneself. The narrative structure of *Tohtori Finckelman*, in other words, reflects the condition of any human being who tries to tell their story, who looks at themself from the outside, and who is thus split in two.

The dividedness at the core of the novel means that readers have several interpretative paths through the narrator-protagonist's mind and the story he tells.[147] On the one hand, we can read him psychologically: we can diagnose him as a schizoid or dissociated personality who suffers from a severe mental illness and whose delusions, hallucinations, or dissociations

https://doi.org/10.21435/sflit.13

are developed around the fictional character of Dr. Finckelman.[148] We can thus naturalize the "strange" in the novel as a form of psychiatric disorder. On the other hand, we can read the narrator-protagonist as a metafictional character through which the author, Korpela, explores the borders of fiction and reality, imagination, hallucination, and perception, as well as fictional and actual minds. The novel thus brings together a sense of psychological lifelikeness *and* an understanding of the constructedness of fictional minds: it creates a cognitively and affectively evocative portrayal of experiences of distress and suffering, and ultimately of loss of borders between reality and imagination, but it also continuously casts doubt on the human-likeness of the narrator-protagonist by suggesting (and reminding the readers) that he is actually a fictional character, an artificial being.

In what follows, I suggest that although these interpretative paths ("psychological" and "metafictional," "human" and "non-human," "affective" and "artificial") are at first sight mutually exclusive, Korpela invites readers to constantly oscillate between them. The sense of lifelikeness that is evoked in the text is tightly intertwined with the artistic and intertextual elements and the metafictional schemes. As Patricia Waugh (1984, 104) writes in her study on metafiction: "Metafictional novels allow the reader not only to observe the textual and linguistic construction of literary fiction, but also to enjoy and engage with the world within the fiction."

However, what makes the reader position offered by *Tohtori Finckelman* more complicated is that the story the narrator tells is constructed around a crime. Close to the end of the novel, one of the narrator-protagonist's patients, Reseda, is raped. There are good reasons to suspect that he is the rapist, but he is acquitted of the charges: he paints the testimony of the victim as a "fantasy" and another man, a former soldier and an alcoholic poet called Saleva, is convicted and locked inside the mental hospital of which the protagonist is in charge. In the end, the text leaves a lot of questions hanging in the air: Is the protagonist guilty or not? Is he lying, or is he suffering from hallucinations or dissociation? Where are the borders between the protagonist and the other characters? Who or *what*, in fact, is Dr. Finckelman?[149]

Readers are invited to act as detectives (or as psychiatrists) whose task is to figure out the "truth" about the narrator-protagonist's mind and his identity. At the same time, the text also obstructs this psychologizing interpretive path and reminds readers of the fictionality of the minds constructed in the novel. In the end, neither the psychological nor the metafictional modes of reading seem sufficient for an ethically sustainable interpretation of the novel (see also Salin 2002, 220). In the psychological reading, the risk is that the crime is ignored ("the protagonist is suffering from mental illness"; "even if he is guilty, he is not responsible for the act"). The metafictional reading, in turn, makes the narrative a kind of a game or a play, and the questions about ethics and justice become irrelevant ("the protagonist is an artificial creature"; "the novel is an intertextual play").

In both readings, the violence of the crime is hidden from view, just as it is hidden in the text itself: the victim's story is never heard and we only have the narrator's perspective. In addition to the importance of acknowledging the

https://doi.org/10.21435/sflit.13

violence at the core of the story, these themes point to the general problems of reading and interpreting other minds: the novel warns of the power relations and the potential violence in reading, labeling, and categorizing others. An ambiguous, empathy-inviting and distance-triggering text like *Tohtori Finckelman* offers a possibility to discuss the unreliability, ambiguity, and undecidability that are typical in modernist literature from an experiential perspective, while also emphasizing the need for politically and ethically oriented modes of reading.

On the Borders of Fiction and Reality

> And so I begin. I will write down the story of my life and I will do so as a warning to others, as an honest man does. I shall tell you my story without embellishing anything: exactly as everything happened in reality. In fact, if I know myself, I shall tell many things even more accurately than what is real, just to show you how honest I am.
> […]
> But the words are hollow and flat, they lack the breath of life. And I don't know how I could light up the words that have died out. I wish I could, I wish I could… I wish I could cut a piece of my flesh into every word! My story begins.
>
> Ja niin minä alan, kirjoitan elämäni tarinan, teen sen varoitukseksi muille kuten rehellinen mies tekee. Tulen kertomaan kaiken kaunistelematta, tarkalleen niin kuin todellisuudessa tapahtunut on, kerronpa jos itseni tunnen monet seikat todellisuutta tarkemminkin vain osoittaakseni, miten rehellinen olen.
> […]
> Mutta sanat ovat onttoja ja väljähtyneitä, niiltä puuttuu elämän henkäys; enkä tiedä, miten voisin puhaltaa sammuneet sanat liekkiin. Kunpa voisin, kunpa voisin… Kunpa voisin jokaiseen sanaan leikata palan lihaani! Kertomukseni alkaa. (TF 3–4.)

The preface sets up the narrative situation and creates a frame for the whole novel, and already the opening pages raise suspicions about the narrator's reliability. The narrator's promise to depict events truthfully—"exactly as everything happened in reality"—becomes ironic because of his hyperbolic claim to recount the events "even more accurately than what is real"; "just to show you how honest I am." As Salin (1996, vii; 2002, 39–40) has pointed out, the constant contradictions, slips of the tongue, and ultimately the narrator-protagonist's hallucinations (or dissociative experiences) guide readers to perceive him as an unreliable figure. However, a recurrent strategy in the narrator's discourse is that right after saying something that forces the readers to doubt his words and to distance themselves from him, he says something else that again draws us close. This happens also in the above-quoted passage: soon after the narrator has "declared his unreliability" (Salin 1996, vii), the register changes: he brings up the "flatness" of his words and the lack of life that haunts them. He enacts the ever-present gap between words and experiences and reveals how it causes him suffering. His omnipotence as a narrator is constantly shadowed by the impotence of his words, and we are invited to empathize with his distress.

https://doi.org/10.21435/sflit.13

After the preface, the readers are thus left with two contradictory ways of evaluating the narrator's story. On the one hand, we have learned that his words are not to be trusted; we know to suspect that he will modify the things he recounts to make the story "even more accurate than reality." On the other hand, we see the narrator suffering from the gap between words and experiences. He is struggling to share his experience of breakdown and recovery as honestly as he can, but the words cannot convey what he feels. His metaphor of cutting his flesh into his words is grotesque and exaggerated, but at the same time full of affective meaning.[150] We know to expect that the narrator will be unreliable, that he will embellish and alter the reality, but at the same time he vividly verbalizes experiences that are relatable to all speaking, social beings.[151]

After thus framing his task, the narrator begins his story from when he was sixteen years old and his father had just died. The events are told mostly from the point of view of the experiencing I (the narrator as a young man). He recounts that his mother had passed away earlier and he has now inherited the family's farm house. "I will fix my farm,"[152] he depicts his young self boasting—and tells us especially about his friendship with an old man called Riitu, who is "considered to be insane"[153] and who (as is revealed to us by the narrator's farmhand Oskari at the end of the novel) has killed two people, a woman and a man. We are also introduced to Oskari, whom the narrator describes as his loyal servant and a simple, honest man. Furthermore, we get to know two vagabonds who appear at the farm one after another and, as we can guess from their actions, try to profit from the young man's situation. Simpanen is an ex-convict who excels in distilling illegal liquor and Hoikkanen is introduced as a "gentleman" whom readers can recognize as a con artist. The first part is entitled "the Heritage"—referring to the inherited estate, but perhaps even more importantly to the stories Riitu tells and which start to affect the protagonist, ultimately creating a separate imaginary-hallucinatory world inside the storyworld (see also Havu 1952/1996, 356; Holappa 1952/1996, 358; Sarajas 1953/1980, 71; Salin 2002, 87; 209).

Inside a Story

To trace how the borders between what is real and what is not start to get confused, let us look at a key event in Part One: the invention of Dr. Finckelman in Chapter 4. Here the narrator recounts how Riitu told him a story about his old friend, "Emppu Lerkkanen," who was "a good man, [he] killed many men…."[154] Riitu's talk reveals similar signs of unreliability to the narrator's. He has a very strange notion of what it means to be "good" or "honest," he constantly contradicts what he has just said, there are big gaps in his stories, and it is difficult to pinpoint where the borders of reality and fiction are in them:

> Emppu was an honest man, *he sure was, honest*, I mean there sure ain't been a more honest man born in Finland. *He did not steal*, believe me! *And when he stole*, he stole from the rich, and he stole a lot, he didn't play with pennies. And he took his sentence so fairly, no complaints, took it until the end. *He did not escape*; the guards didn't need to worry about that. *And when we maybe once or twice tried, the police caught us,* those devils… He was a fair man, Lerkkanen!

https://doi.org/10.21435/sflit.13

> Emppu oli rehellinen mies, *oli se, nimittäin rehellinen*, sen rehellisempää ei ole Suomessa syntynytkään. *Ei se varastanut*, usko pois! *Ja milloin varasti*, niin varasti rikkailta ja heti paljon, se poika ei napilla pelannut. Mutta reilusti se kärsi tuomionsakin, valittamatta loppuun asti. *Ei se karannut*, siitä asiasta saivat olla vartijat huoletta. *Ja minkä pari kertaa yritettiin, niin poliisit pirut saivat meidät kiinni*… Reilu mies oli Lerkkanen! (TF 19, emphasis mine.)

In Riitu's mind, categories like "honest" and "good" are turned upside down. We can also notice how the story about Lerkkanen gradually turns into a story about "us," and it becomes clear that Riitu, too, has been involved in the robberies and has actually been in prison with Lerkkanen.

As the story evolves, it becomes increasingly uncertain what Riitu's role in it is, how much of what he tells the protagonist is about "his friend" and how much about himself. The young protagonist guides and supports Riitu with his questions and comments:

> – How about the market? How did it go there?
> – It went well! Everybody praised Lerkkanen and said you don't see a man like that often. And they sure weren't just talking, Emppu was drunk as a skunk, he sang humorous songs at the market place and at the hotel and wherever he went, got everybody drunk, the whole crowd. And if he met a woman, he grabbed her and went on his way. And those who wouldn't go voluntarily, he took by force. Yep, that was life!
> – It sure was!
>
> – Entäs markkinat? Mitenkäs siellä kävi?
> – Hyvin kävi! Kaikki ylistivät Lerkkasta ja puhuivat, että sellaista miestä on harvoin nähty. Eivätkä turhaan puhuneetkaan, kovasti oli Emppu juovuksissa koko ajan, laulaa rillutteli huumorilauluja torilla ja hotellissa ja missä kulkikin, kaikki juotti, koko markkinaväen, ja missä naisen tapasi, heti koppasi kainaloonsa ja vei mennessään. Ja kuka ei suosiolla lähtenyt, sen vei väkisin. Joo, oli se elämää se!
> – No oli! (TF 19–20.)

Even though he considers Riitu insane and understands that Riitu's stories are at least partly fictional, he actively participates in the storytelling and encourages the older man.

Next in the story Lerkkanen is stabbed and Riitu recounts how he took his friend to a doctor, explaining to the protagonist:

> – […] And there was quite a stitching, you should have seen! But sure the doctor was good as well. Yeah, he was good, he was the best there has been… Let me think, what was his name?
> – Was it Finckelman? I asked without hesitation and offered a good name for Riitu to use. I don't know how it occurred to me, I just thought it was a fitting name for a doctor.
> – Vinkkelsman? Could it have been… […] That's it! Vinkkelsman, that was it.
>
> – […] Ja siinä sitä olikin ompelemista, olisitpas nähnyt! Mutta kyllä piti oleman hyvä lääkärikin. Oli, oli se hyvä, paras se oli mitä on ollut… Annappas olla, mikäs se nimi olikaan?

https://doi.org/10.21435/sflit.13

– Oliko se Finckelman? Kysyin siekailematta ja tarjosin Riitun käytettäväksi hyvää nimeä. En tiedä, mistä se juolahti mieleeni, mielestäni se oli vain sopiva nimi lääkärille.
– Vinkkelsman? Olisikohan tuo ollut… […] Justiin! Vinkkelsman, se se oli. (TF 20.)

The protagonist offers the name "Dr. Finckelman" to Riitu who does not first remember what the doctor was called, but after some reflection accepts the name and adopts the character into his story as someone whom he knows well: "Vinkkelsman."[155] The question then is: do Riitu's stories have an aesthetic frame inside the storyworld? He recounts the stories as if they had actually happened, yet both the protagonist and the readers are aware that their degree of fictionality is high. Even with this awareness, the protagonist gradually becomes unsure about the status of Dr. Finckelman. The narrator recounts how he reflected on his conversation with Riitu on his way home:

Then I remembered Finckelman, a doctor, and who knows what newcomer in Riitu's brain.
I laughed even more. After all, this "Finckelman" was my own invention. *It was certain that that man did not exist. But there might have been some man*, it occurred to me, something that has been a little like Finckelman. *It might as well have been, it might.* There are so many kinds of people in the world…

Sitten tuli mieleeni Finckelman, lääkäri ja mikä liekään uusi tulokas Riitun aivoissa.
Naureskelin vielä enemmän, sehän oli minun keksintöäni, koko "Finckelman," *sellaista miestä ei ainakaan siis ollut olemassa. Mutta on se jokin mies voinut ollakin*, tuli sitten taas mieleeni, jokin joka on ollut vähän kuin Finckelman. *On se voinut olla, hyvinkin*, meitä ihmisiä kun on niin monenlaisia… (TF 23, emphasis mine.)

The young protagonist taps into one of the basic features of fictionality: the idea of "what if," that something *could be* or *might have been* (see Iser 1978, 231–232; Nielsen, Phelan & Walsh 2015; Zetterberg Gjerlevsen 2016). He creates a world of possibility, a world of "what if" inside his own world. But whereas usually people are able to navigate the borders of fiction and reality (we for example usually know when we have imagined something), these borders are becoming quite hazy in the protagonist's mind: "did not exist" quickly turns into "there might have been" and "might as well have been." The fictional is infiltrating the actual in the storyworld. Ultimately Riitu's story about Lerkkanen and Dr. Finckelman who, as we will learn, kills his patients by poisoning them, forms a *mise-en-abyme* structure that becomes important for the whole novel (see also Salin 2002, 214).

Later, in Chapter 11, the story becomes more and more vivid and the borders between what is real and what is not become even more porous. The narrator recounts how he found Riitu in his cottage (which is revealingly divided into two parts[156]) in a confused state. Riitu explains to the young man that Lerkkanen has returned and that he is lurking behind the window. Riitu behaves in a way that most people would likely regard as paranoid or

https://doi.org/10.21435/sflit.13

even psychotic, and the young protagonist, too, is alarmed. What follows is a curious mixture of denials and confirmations. The events continue to be narrated from the perspective of the young man and he first denies that he was at all afraid: he knows that this is all just imagination and that Lerkkanen cannot actually be there. However, the narrator's description of his bodily reaction reveals an experience of paralyzed fear: "I was not at all afraid… my feet were strangely powerless."[157] The denial is then repeated, but this time the protagonist admits that he did have doubts, and finally that he was actually panicking: "I was definitely not afraid, no, but I couldn't help thinking that who knows about these lunatics, and with an ax. And how about Lerkkanen in the window? What if there are mysterious things… I prayed to God in a panic […]."[158] The denials and confirmations give an impression of two voices in conflict with one another, communicated by the narrator to the readers: one part of the protagonist is trying to deny that he was afraid and keeps up an appearance; the other part, which ultimately wins, admits the fear.

The scene itself offers several paths for interpretation: Riitu can be read as a mad character, or he could be read as having some kind of "mystical" knowledge or connections to mysterious, horrible things. In fact, Riitu has been talking about "a secret" and a "mountain," which he wants to buy from the protagonist, and at the end of Part One, it turns out that there is a secret source of ore in the ground under the closed part of his cottage. The young protagonist's fear can also be interpreted in different ways: either he is afraid of Riitu's perceived madness and him running around with the ax, or he is scared that Lerkkanen is really there and horrible things are happening—which ultimately forces him to turn to God for help. Finally, the readers' reactions to the scene are also likely to be twofold: the protagonist's fear invites sympathy, and while his efforts to hide it distance us from him, we might also feel a connection to the narrator who seems to try to convey his past experience honestly. The narrative voice is doubled, or even tripled: the young protagonist first denies that he was afraid and ultimately admits it, while the narrator performs the task of communicating both his past fear and his past efforts to hide it.

Later in the same chapter, Riitu slips a woman's name to the protagonist, "Ellinora," and more fearful thoughts and suspicions arise in his mind. He starts to suspect that there is something badly wrong with Riitu:

> Who knows where he has come from, I thought, who knows what he has done… And strange things, horrible things flickered in my mind. I am suspecting something here, I thought. I am quite the man for suspecting…
>
> At the same time, I felt that Riitu was an incredibly pitiful human being. But on the other hand, it is his own business, if he has sinned.
>
> Mikä sen tietää mistä se on tullut, ajattelin, kukaties on tehnyt vaikka mitä… Ja mielessäni välähti outoja asioita, vallan hirveitä. Minä aavistan tässä jotakin, ajattelin. Olenpa aika poika aavistamaan…
>
> Samalla minusta tuntui, että Riitu oli hyvin säälittävä ihminen. Mutta toisaalta oli asia niinkin, että omapa on asiansa, mitäs on syntiä tehnyt. (TF 78.)

https://doi.org/10.21435/sflit.13

The novel is pervaded with events that can be read in two ways, and the narrator-protagonist himself constantly offers multiple possible interpretations for everything that happens. He raises doubts and makes vague hints about something "horrible" and "suspicious," while at the same time trying to convince someone (perhaps himself, or his narratees) that he did not believe in anything evil or mysterious, or even care. We can again notice the structure of proposition-negation: the narrator first reveals that he pitied Riitu, but his attitude immediately changes into indifference.

When reading *Tohtori Finckelman* multiple times, more and more of these instances of double (or even triple) meaning come to the surface. Korpela has designed a complex narrative structure which continuously offers new layers for a careful reader, opening different possible interpretations of the characters' experiences and the events. Ultimately, the text resembles the famous duck-rabbit illusion: an ambiguous image that can be either seen as either animal.[159] The novel offers evidence for psychological and mystical interpretations, but constantly challenges both: the psychological interpretation is countered with the metafictional and mystical elements, and vice versa.

The Storyteller's Power

When reading the first part of the novel, we learn how the protagonist spends time inside his own vivid imagination. He often feels lonely and like an outsider, and in these moments, he starts to think about writing a book, something that other people would read. After all, he now has a lot of material:

> Sometimes the idea came to my mind that I could perhaps write a novel. […] I did have more than plenty of material; that was not a problem. But I did not write, I had enough money anyway.
>
> It would have been funny, though, if there were also one novel written by me. People would read it dumbfounded, I figured.
>
> Joskus tuli mieleeni, että voisinhan kirjoittaa romaanin. […] olihan minulla aineksia riittämiin; niistä ei ollut puutetta. Mutta minä en muuten kirjoittanut, rahaa kun oli ilmankin.
>
> Olisi se kuitenkin ollut huvittavaa, jos olisi yksi minunkin kirjoittamani romaani. Sitä monet lukisivat ihmeissään, tuumailin. (TF 31.)

However, by the logic of proposition-negation, the young protagonist instantly denies the idea and reduces it into a question of needing the money (an ironic statement, knowing the reality of the profession). All the time, it is evident that he is very interested in becoming a writer. One reason—as readers can infer from the way the passage continues—is that he wants to get the attention of a certain police chief's daughter. He walks in the forest and creates imaginary conversations with the girl: "Did you not guess at all? I would ask her, and she would be amazed. I had no idea, she would reply filled with awe. It is too late now, I would say mysteriously and then I would turn to go—to create a new novel…"[160] It becomes clear that he

https://doi.org/10.21435/sflit.13

wants to impress the girl—only to reject her. In his mind, there is a whole imaginary world in which he is a famous writer and admired by the police chief's daughter. Imagination and stories allow him to reinvent himself and especially being a novelist would offer him certain powers: at this point, a power to control his own image, but, as we will learn later, also a more sinister power to control other people.[161]

Also other forms of narratives and storytelling are introduced in Part One and become important as the story progresses. The stories which the other men of the novel tell about women reveal a highly misogynous worldview. For example, Simpanen and Riitu often talk about women as "whores"—and we can recall Riitu's story about Emppu Lerkkanen "grabbing" women. In a conversation about the police chief's daughter, Riitu suggests to the young protagonist that "if Vinkselman had been there" he could have "taken all the girls."[162] This talk seems to offer the men power to subject women: in their imagination, women do what the men want. However, the men's behavior is repeatedly questioned in the novel: the conversations between the men—which often occur while doing "men's work" in the hayfield—can be read as a parody of discourses in which women are seen as property of men and categorized as sluts and whores (or virgins and saints, as we will soon see; see also Salin 1996, xi; 2002, 191).

When reading Part One further, it becomes clear that many of the events revolve around the young protagonist's love affairs: he first falls in love with his maid Marke (I return to her later), then with the police chief's daughter and finally with a mysterious actress whom he sees performing as Joan of Arc, "the Holy Virgin," in a church play. Although the young protagonist actively participates in the men's talk about "whores" in the hayfield, he often escapes into the forest and imagines romantic encounters. He even has his "own stone" on which he sits and thinks about a "lonely flower"—or in fact, about the police chief's daughter, as the following passage reveals:

> Such was my stone, my own stone. *I often returned to sit on it* and sitting there my heart beautifully pined away. Next to the stone there was a lonely flower, and I always watched it and asked myself if I was a friend of the flowers, if they felt that I was their brother. And the flower replied yes, nodding its head in the wind, it too was longing for a different life, one that is told about in novels.
>
> *I sit* on my stone, I caress its surface, I am so alone. I wish that a miracle would happen, and the police chief's daughter would also come. I would show her my stone, I would say: Here sure is a good stone. Please, sit down…
>
> Sellainen oli kiveni, minun oma kiveni. *Palasin sille usein* istumaan, koska sillä istuessa sydän viehättävästi riutui. Sen vieressä kasvoi yksinäinen rantakukka, sitä minä aina katselin ja kyselin itseltäni, olenko kukkien ystävä, tunsivatko ne minut veljekseen. Ja kukka vastasi myöntävästi heilutellen tuulessa päätään, toisenlaista elämää kaipasi sekin, sellaista, josta romaaneissa kerrotaan.
>
> *Istun kivelläni*, silitän sen pintaa, olen hyvin yksin. Toivon että ihme tapahtuisi ja nimismiehen tytär tulisi myös. Näyttäisin hänelle kiveni, sanoisin: Tässä on sitten hyvä kivi. Istukaa, olkaa hyvä… (TF 82–83, emphasis added.)

https://doi.org/10.21435/sflit.13

At first, the protagonist talks to the "flower" who, in his mind, longs for a different life "in the novels." In the second paragraph, the tense suddenly changes into the historical present ("I often returned to sit on it" vs. "I sit on my stone"): the narrator disappears completely to the background and we learn how the protagonist actually longs for the police chief's daughter and talks to her in his imagination. Unfortunately, despite his fantasies and dreams of a "miracle," she never comes to accompany him. The young man's fantasies are comical in all their lyrical pompousness and in the way he is obviously projecting his emotions into his environment, but we may also sympathize: he is lonely, longing for a connection to another human being. He dreams of a life that is depicted in novels and imagines flowers as his friends who understand him. Most importantly, he dreams of the police chief's daughter.

Toward the end of Part One, things start to go awry. The young protagonist goes to meet the police chief, runs into the daughter but gets confused in his words and feels that he is ridiculed first by her and then by her father He ends up lying that Hoikkanen (the other vagabond staying at his farm) has stolen money from him. Making things up appears to be a way to control the situation, and he spins the lie until he himself believes in it: "perhaps he had stolen, he might as well have."[163] Just like when Dr. Finckelman was invented, gradually something that is clearly invented becomes something that *could have been*, and the borders between real and imaginary become hazy in the protagonist's mind. At the same time, he feels humiliated and alienated from others and from the social world: "I returned home with a heavy heart. I felt that this parish and environment do not suit me. Nobody understands me here."[164]

After the failure and the embarrassment with the police chief and the daughter, we can notice that he moves his love interest to a new object, the actress who plays Joan of Arc. After the performance, there is a dance at the church, and the protagonist enacts a romantic scene in which he and the actress dance together: "[…] I asked her again to dance. And even after that, I danced with her the whole evening."[165] It is however uncertain whether any of this actually happens or whether the protagonist imagines the scene: the narrator recounts the event from the perspective of the young man and although the dance seems highly unlikely (based on everything we know so far), it is portrayed as true. When it is time for the actress to leave for the city, the young man is forced to come down to earth. The narrator recounts his poetic lamentations:

> So, she was gone, my Holy Virgin, only gray life and great emptiness remained, my soul was a deserted house, and the wind blew the hymn of the passion week in the pines. And I felt that my heart was now only a mechanical organ, part of my entrails, and its only purpose was to keep me alive. Nothing more! It did not have any grand purpose anymore, I felt it now, not after the Holy Virgin had gone and taken away the meaning of my life.

> Niin hän oli mennyt, minun Pyhä Neitsyeni, jäljelle jäi vain harmaa elämä ja suuri tyhjyys, sieluni oli autio talo ja tuuli veisasi männikössä kärsimysviikon virttä. Ja minusta tuntui, että sydämeni oli nyt vain pelkkä konemainen elin, osa

https://doi.org/10.21435/sflit.13

> sisälmyksiäni, jonka vähäisenä tehtävänä oli pitää henkeä yllä. Ei muuta! Mitään suurta tarkoitusta sillä ei enää ollut, sen tunsin nyt, ei sen jälkeen kun Pyhä neitsyt oli lähtenyt ja vienyt mennessään minun elämäni tarkoituksen. (TF 91.)

On the one hand, the protagonist's loneliness and efforts to communicate are likely to invite compassion in readers, and we are also predisposed to the protagonist's melancholic thoughts for long periods of time which may increase empathic responses (see Booth 1983, 378; Keen 2013, #9). Furthermore, the narrator seems to be conveying here his past experiences reliably, in all their melancholy and pining, inviting his readers closer. On the other hand, the protagonist appears as a pitiful character in all his pompousness, clichés, and insecurities.

So, at the end of Part One, the protagonist has lost "the meaning of his life" and his heart is only a "mechanical organ." He starts to dream about living in the city, and finally, because of his problems with the police chief, Oskari suggests that it would be best if he moved there to study. He does so, leaving Oskari to take care of the farm and the financial issues to his uncle who is his guardian (and who is often discussed but whom readers never encounter, and who suddenly dies at the beginning of Part Two). The protagonist believes that university life will suit him but as we soon learn, it does not offer him any relief: "I had always thought: wait, once you get to university, your life will change… But how strange, it never changed; it still carried the stigma of half-heartedness, my life I mean."[166]A pattern is emerging: real life is not enough, and one has to resort to novels, fiction, and imagination in order to "truly live."

Narrating a Life

Part One, "The Heritage," ends when the protagonist's hopes about the police chief's daughter are crushed, the mysterious actress ("Joan of Arc," "the Holy Virgin") has disappeared, and he feels like an outsider and that his life is "half-hearted"—even after he has moved to the city and become a medical student. One meaning for the title "Heritage" comes from the last conversation he has with Riitu. First Riitu warns him of becoming a "Finckelman": "Who knows, what if you become a big man … worthy of Hinkselmann … If you become that sort … oh horror …"[167] But moments later, as can be anticipated, Riitu completely changes his tone and promises that in exchange for "the mountain" (the land under the closed part of his cottage), the protagonist will get "the name and the reputation of Vinskelmann," "a sort of heritage."[168]

The second part of the novel begins some years later, leaving a gap in the protagonist's whereabouts in between. The two final pages of Part One only reveal in a short summary that during the protagonist's studies, Riitu dies and the protagonist and Oskari find ore in the ground under the closed part of the cottage. Despite the discovery, the protagonist ends up in financial trouble and is forced to give up his farm, which the uncle buys at a very low price.

Part One foreshadows everything that will happen later. It introduces the protagonist's experience that full life is lived in novels (or in imagination) and his partly-denied dream that he himself would write a novel. It depicts his

https://doi.org/10.21435/sflit.13

first experiences of "half-heartedness" and alienation, and most importantly, it shows the invention of Dr. Finckelman and the gradual breakdown of borders between fiction and reality. We also hear about the stories that the young protagonist learns from the men at the farm and which we later can understand as shaping his worldview. Furthermore, the plot of the story follows different story models and generic frames:

1) A picaresque in which an orphaned young man goes through adventures with other men.
2) A realist *Bildungsroman*: a young boy is becoming a man and leaves his home in the countryside to become educated in the city.
3) A fairytale (with reversed gender roles and perspective): a young man dances with a mysterious girl who then disappears into the night.
4) A horror story (with elements from children's tales and gothic novels): a young man encounters a mysterious old witch (Riitu)[169] in a strange cottage, an evil mad scientist (Dr. Finckelman) is killing people, and dead people are rising from their graves.

One could say that it is no wonder that the protagonist is suffering from "half-heartedness"—after all, he is very much a fictional, literary character. Part One thus prepares a situation in which readers should be highly aware that the narrator-protagonist is viewing his life in terms of fiction.

It is worth emphasizing how complex the communicative structure of Part One is: the more or less unreliable narrator leaves gaps in the story, he enhances his story so that it is "more accurate than reality," and he often leaves his readers uncertain whether the things he tells are imagined or happening in the storyworld. This is a storytelling style that he seems to have "inherited" from Riitu (see also Salin 2002, 61). It is also clear that the details we learn are a result of a careful composition: motifs and themes get repeated and gain new meanings in Part Two. It is however difficult to determine whether it is the narrator who composes his life in this way—or the implied author communicating to readers, creating connections and warning us of the narrator's unreliability. What adds to the ambiguity of the text is that although the narrator clearly colors and modifies his account, the perspective in Part One is nonetheless mostly that of the young protagonist: the narrator sometimes evaluates the events and sometimes his voice and perspective become visible, but most often he remains completely invisible, making readers feel that the voice we hear and the perspective from which the events are seen belong to the young man.

In Part Two, the fictional elements and aesthetic composition of the text become more visible: the narrator can be distinguished from his past self more easily and he also starts to reflect on the construction of his text: "This chapter must definitely be read"; "My novel begins."[170] He also plays with techniques of consciousness presentation, sometimes infiltrating the minds of his characters and revealing what "everybody thought" or telling that "this is what an outsider felt."[171] Readers are thus reminded at regular intervals that the narrator is telling a story: that he has the power to control what he narrates and that he is even in charge of the minds of the other characters

https://doi.org/10.21435/sflit.13

(as a narrator but also as a psychiatrist). However, at the same time the protagonist and other characters "can be imagined in flesh and blood," as many readers of *Tohtori Finckelman* have described.[172]

Psychological and Metafictional Readings

> Father was dead, mother was dead. And sisters and brothers—they had never existed. *So dark, so dark*, I talked in a low voice and let also *my flower* understand that this land is a *land of sorrow*. *Not that I felt sad*. Why would I feel sad!
>
> Isä oli kuollut, äiti oli kuollut. Ja sisaret ja veljet—ei ollut heitä ollutkaan. *Synkkää on, synkkää on*, puhelin puoliääneen ja annoin *kukkanikin* ymmärtää, että *murheen maa* on tämä maa. *Ei niin, että olisin surrut*. Mitäpä minä suremaan! (TF 12, emphasis mine.)

As we have seen, the narrator-protagonist of *Tohtori Finckelman* is revealed to be a divided character already in the preface of the novel. As a 16-year-old boy, his dividedness manifests itself in the form of melancholy thoughts about life, the future, the death of his parents, and siblings (who actually never existed)—which are then often instantly denied, as in the passage above: "Why would I feel sad!" Even though the perspective and discourse are controlled by the young protagonist, the style of thinking is familiar from the narrator's preface: the young man is contradicting himself all the time, his moods are changing, and he is shifting his points of view, changing registers from dramatic outbursts to denials and hyperbolic claims.

Looking closely, Part One is filled with subtle hints which are likely to gain meaning only on a second reading, in the light of what is to come. The protagonist feels that he is an outsider and goes through feelings of deep loneliness and alienation from the social world. We see him imagining what others might think of him and evaluating whether he fits the social norms—and rebelling against the idea that he does not. It is easy to read the story as a portrayal of a young man's life and psychology: he has romantic troubles and social insecurities, though he hides these with his ironic statements and constant bragging and denials. Like the narrator of Hämäläinen's *Kaunis sielu*, he often takes refuge in his imagination and fantasies when the social world causes him anguish. However, whereas the narrator of *Kaunis sielu* enacts a revolt against normative scripts and cultural narratives of sexuality and gender, Korpela's protagonist seems to be desperately trying to fit into his position as a young man and a farm owner.

However, when read in the light of Part Two, the protagonist's early experiences may be given also a more specific meaning: an image of what psychiatrists have described as a "schizoid personality" is emerging. As Louis Sass (1994, 80) notes, following German psychiatrist Ernst Kretschmer (1888–1964), people suffering from schizoid personality are "people full of antithesis." It is a personality that is split in two ways, first in relation to external reality and secondly in relation to the self: there is a feeling of estrangement or detachment from society, other people, and a feeling

https://doi.org/10.21435/sflit.13

of alienation from oneself. Furthermore, schizoid personality involves a proneness to excessive daydreaming and taking refuge in the non-human world, and, finally, a risk of psychosis. (See Sass 1994, 76–77; also DSM-5, 652–653.) From this perspective, the young man's experiences of melancholy and alienation, his refuge in the forest and inside his imagination, as well as his thoughts about flowers as his only friends, can be read as the first signs of a severe mental illness. Readers are thus gradually invited towards a psychological, even pathological interpretive frame.

However, as I suggested, there is a deep irony in the protagonist's dreams of living a "fuller life" in novels: he is a fictional character. This metafictional level is quite well hidden in Part One, and I would argue that it is not until readers finish Part Two that also the earliest hints of fictionality become meaningful: the later chapters gradually invite readers to oscillate between psychological and metafictional frames of reading. Next, let us look at the main events and central motifs at the beginning of Part Two, in which the protagonist has become a psychiatrist working in a mental hospital.

Feelings of Alienation and Artificiality

Part Two of the novel is entitled "The Becoming of Flesh of Dr. Finckelman." Some readers have described Part One as the "realist" and Part Two as the "sur-realist" level of the text (Sarajas 1953/1980, 61; 70; also Envall 1988, 111). In this reading, the world and events portrayed in Part One would be actual, whereas Part Two would depict the narrator-protagonist's imaginary-hallucinatory world, "Dr. Finckelman's world."[173] However, as we have seen, the borders between fiction and reality have blurred already in Part One. In Part Two the haziness is just more visible.

The protagonist now has an "esteemed" profession—the narrator begins the second part by emphasizing this. He is a doctor, a "nerve doctor," working in a hospital and looking for a cure for madness—and we also learn that he has accumulated a good amount of wealth "with the aid of his profession."[174] But it soon becomes clear that he is unable to create meaningful connections to himself or his patients. The first chapter of Part Two (Chapter 16) returns to thoughts that are familiar from the end of Part One. There is an even stronger separation between the protagonist and other people who (he believes) have better lives than he does:

> I did know that there were people who lived full lives, much better lives than I, people whose lives were like jolly novels and who were able to say on their death beds: I have lived! But where were they? I should have gotten to know them. Then I could ask them… For my life never, not even by chance, reached the point where real life begins, my life was always haunted by the stigma of half-heartedness.

> Tiesin kyllä, että oli olemassa ihmisiä, jotka elivät täyteliästä elämää, paljon parempaa kuin minä, ihmisiä joiden elämä oli kuin hauska romaani ja jotka saattoivat kuollessaan sanoa: Olen elänyt! Mutta missä he olivat? Olisi pitänyt päästä heidän tuttavuuteensa. Voisihan heiltä sitten kysäistä… Sillä minun elämäni ei vain ollut vahingossakaan sattunut sille kohdalle, josta oikea elämä alkaa, minun elämääni vaivasi jatkuvasti puolinaisuuden leima. (TF 111.)

https://doi.org/10.21435/sflit.13

The "full life" is (ironically) something that people have in novels, and the protagonist is longing to find people who live such lives. He also returns to the thoughts about Dr. Finckelman:

> But everything becomes old, everything becomes stale. Even flowers, patients, friends, everything. My soul is filled with wistful anxiety and I say like this: Well, well, Dr. Finckelman… I don't say more because that was enough, those words contained a lot. The past life rushed into my mind, everything in it, thrown in front of me with one punch, all my youth. I watched it as if from a mirror. There were Oskari and Riitu and the police chief's beautiful daughter, there were Lerkkanen and Finckelman and all the rest, they came to me and offered me their hand.
>
> Mutta kaikki käy vanhaksi, kaikki väljähtyy. Kukkasetkin, potilaat, ystävät, kaikki. Sieluni on taas täynnä haikeaa ahdistusta ja minä sanon näin: Jaa, jaa, tohtori Finckelman… En sano enempää, sillä tuo riitti, noihin sanoihin sisältyi paljon. Mieleeni syöksähti eletty elämä ja kaikki mitä siihen kuului, paiskautui eteeni yhdellä heitolla koko nuoruus, minä katselin sitä kuin peilistä vain. Siinä oli Oskari ja Riitu ja nimismiehen kaunis tytär, oli Lerkkanen ja Finckelman ja kaikki muut, he tulivat luokseni ja tarjosivat minulle kättä. (TF 112.)

So, the protagonist is an adult, but nothing has worked out the way he dreamed. He is looking back to his youth "as if in a mirror," and there are familiar people, Oskari, Riitu, and the police chief's daughter, but also his imaginary friends, "Lerkkanen and Finckelman and all the rest" who appear to him as if they were alive.

A few pages later, the real and the unreal begin to blend also on the level of the storyworld, not just in the protagonist's "mirror-like" memories. Riitu has been dead for several years and the protagonist's uncle and former guardian has also died. The protagonist and Oskari are visiting Riitu's grave after the uncle's funeral when suddenly the graves seem to open:

> We stayed there [at Riitu's grave] when everyone else had left.
>
> It was quiet.
>
> And suddenly I felt as if the graves were opened and the dead were rising from under the ground. And they all wore this and that, mostly naked, and the flesh had fallen off them. And they made a long procession, these shadows of the dead, and it crawled forward, I don't know where. And when I watched more carefully, I was able to separate human features on their skeleton faces, familiar and strange. And I *see* Lerkkanen, alive, he is right at the front, and a knife is stabbed in his heart, blood is splashing everywhere. I am horrified for Lerkkanen. But when I lay my eyes on others, I notice that every one of them has scars and deep cut wounds around their body. "Who struck those?" I stammer in panic. "You will see!" old Riitu replies mysteriously and as if in passing as he drags along with the others. And they turn their heads as if in a march-past and they look at me with their deep eye sockets…
>
> And Dr. Finckelman's gaze is chilling and horrible…
>
> – So you will give me the field if you win in court? asked Oskari, bringing me back to the world of the real people.

https://doi.org/10.21435/sflit.13

> Me jäimme vielä sinne [Riitun haudalle], kun muut olivat lähteneet.
> Vallitsi hiljaisuus.
> Ja äkkiä minusta tuntui kuin haudat olisivat auenneet ja vainajat nousseet maan alta sen kamaralle. Ja he olivat mikä missäkin asussa, etupäässä alasti, ja lihat olivat karisseet heidän ympäriltään. Ja he muodostivat pitkän kulkueen, nämä vainajien varjot, ja se laahusti eteenpäin, en tiedä mihin. Ja kun katsoin tarkemmin, saatoin erottaa heidän luurankokasvoillaan ihmisen piirteitä, tuttujen ja tuntemattomien. Ja minä *näen* Lerkkasen ilmielävänä, hän on aivan kärkipäässä ja puukko on isketty hänen sydämeensä, veri roiskuu kaikkialle. Kauhistun Lerkkasen puolesta. Mutta kun luon silmäni muihin, huomaan heillä kaikilla arpia ja syviä viiltohaavoja ympäri ruumista. "Kenen ne ovat iskemiä?" hädissäni änkytän. "Sittenpähän näet!" vanha Riitu vastaa arvoituksellisesti ja kuin ohimennen laahustaessaan toisten mukana. Ja he kääntävät päänsä kuin ohimarssissa ja katsovat minua syvin silmäkuopin…
> Ja tohtori Finckelmanin katse on hyytävän karmea…
> – No sinä annat sitten sen pellon jos voitat käräjillä? kysyi Oskari palauttaen minut jälleen oikeitten ihmisten maailmaan. (TF 115, emphasis added.)

For a moment, the protagonist enters another world. On one level, it is the world of his (and Riitu's) imagination. It takes control of the protagonist's experiential world, and because the perspective is tightly in the experiencing I (even the tense changes to historical present in the middle of the paragraph), readers, too, are drawn inside it. It is a horrible world: the bodies of the people are slit; they have hollow eyes and Dr. Finckelman is there staring with a horrible look. On another level, the scene could be read as an allegory of the Second World War, which the novel doesn't otherwise mention: the dead appear as wounded, fallen soldiers and Dr. Finckelman could be seen as representing the war.[175] Oskari's comment returns the protagonist to the "world of the real people": he wants to know if the protagonist will give him a field if he wins a legal battle about the uncle's will and inherits his estate (including his own former farm, which he had been forced to sell to his uncle). The paragraph-long move to the "other world" gives readers a hint of what is to come—and it offers a possible interpretation for the title of Part Two: "The Becoming of Flesh of Dr. Finckelman."

In the following chapters (17 and 18), the protagonist's life of "half-heartedness" continues. The narrator tells the readers about his feelings of anxiety and disillusionment, and introduces his new acquaintances: writer Raiski, who is first described as a patient but soon as the protagonist's "only friend"; businessman Mellonen, who is very interested in the ore business; and judge Niilas, a ladies' man who helps the protagonist with legal problems and in return wants help in distracting his wife Irma from his extramarital affairs. We also get to know about Saleva, an alcoholic former soldier who begs and ultimately tries to blackmail alcohol prescriptions from the protagonist (and who will later be accused of the rape), and Master Pomila (also called "Reverend Pomilov"), a virtuous tax man. In addition to these characters, in Chapter 18, which according to the narrator "must definitely be read,"[176] we are introduced to Miss Lilian, Lili, who will become the center around which practically everything that happens in the rest of the novel revolves. "My novel begins,"[177] proclaims the narrator; Part One has only been a prelude.

https://doi.org/10.21435/sflit.13

At the very beginning of this "important" Chapter 18, we also learn a new manifestation of the protagonist's feeling of half-heartedness: "Days went by. I walked around the hospital. I saw patients. 'Next!' I was like a machine. […] For I was only a machine, and half-ready at that."[178] This feeling of being a non-human is at first connected particularly to psychiatry: psychiatrists are depicted as mere machines, they seem to have all the knowledge in the world but are unable to use it to help anyone. But, it seems, in this chapter everything is about to change. There is an immediate connection between the protagonist and Lili when they meet, and their experiences of anxiety and alienation turn out to be very similar.

Lili (who is a dancer, perhaps also an actor) comes to the protagonist's reception and tells him that she feels that her whole life is only an act:

> Everyone acts, I too, even now, although I try to be myself as much as possible to give you a true description of the nature of my illness. In the park on my way here I thought that I should speak as if I did not speak at all. That is to say: to speak in the same way when I don't speak at all, when I just let my thoughts and impressions speak, when I am alone, objectively…
>
> Kaikki näyttelevät, minä näyttelen myös, nytkin, vaikka koetan olla oma itseni siinä määrin kuin se suinkin on mahdollista antaakseni teille oikean kuvan sairauteni laadusta. Ajattelin silloin tullessani puistikossa, että täytyy puhua niin kuin ei itse puhuisikaan, siis puhua sillä tavalla kuin miten minä puhun silloin kun en ollenkaan puhu, vaan annan ajatusteni ja mielikuvieni puhua, yksin ollessani, objektiivisesti… (TF 124.)

A connection can be seen between Lili's description of her sense of alienation from the world and the characteristics of a schizoid personality. As Sass notes, people suffering from schizoid personality often feel a strong "as-if quality" in life: they feel that they are only playing a role, acting. (Sass 1994, 77.) Lili also says that she often feels that she is only dreaming, describing what could be characterized as an experience of derealization: "Everything sort of disappears around me, I look at it and I say that this is like a dream. Is this a dream, I ask myself then. I am so ridiculous, don't be offended. It's not a dream, I know. But it's very hard, I am often completely hopeless."[179] After this, sympathetic readers' hopes are up: Lili could understand what the protagonist is going through and she might be the one he has been looking for. They are "fellow-travelers," "bonded by fate," as some readers have described (see Sarajas 1953/1980, 72; Vainio 1975, 66): there seems to be almost like a telepathic connection between the two (Salin 2002, 89).

In addition to revealing Lili's and the protagonist's mutual feelings of alienation and acting, the scene brings up questions about the problems of speech and communication and the desire to convey one's experiences to another. Just like the narrator in the preface, Lili puts into words a dream of a language that would capture one's thoughts and impressions and be something more, deeper than speech. Also, a possibility manifests itself, though we never get confirmation for this. Lili could be the actress from Part One—and it is later hinted that at least the protagonist starts to imagine that she is.[180]

https://doi.org/10.21435/sflit.13

However, the protagonist keeps his distance from Lili. He explains to her: "one just has to adjust. That way you'll get some certainty to your life, content. Because there is certainty, yes, one just has to get there. I spoke like a priest. But after she had gone it came to my mind whether I myself had any 'certainty', whether there were some improvements to be made also in my own life."[181] The protagonist hides behind his role of a psychiatrist.[182] But when Lili has left, the narrator admits that he did have doubts—only to deny them immediately as usual, adding: "I was a doctor, I had to think about my patients, not myself."[183] Later the narrator claims in his incongruous way that "I forgot about her. Only sometimes she came to my mind."[184] Then he becomes even more melancholy and alienated than before. In addition, a concrete problem emerges: it turns out that the protagonist has to compete with his friends for Lili's attention. Judge Niilas is in love with Lili and it is rumored that she is his new mistress; and writer Raiski starts to imagine that he is Lili's long-lost father (or more precisely, the protagonist plants this idea in Raiski's mind to amuse himself). As many readers have suggested, Lili remains an inexplicable, unreadable character; a blank canvas on which the men of the novel seem to project themselves (see Koskimies 1952/1996, 364; Salin 2002, 158).

The following chapters continue with more ponderings about the artificiality of the protagonist's life. Soon (at the beginning of Chapter 21), his thoughts about being a machine reach new "heights":

> And so I placed myself above everything that existed. Above all being.
>
> I lived as if I did not exist.
>
> Because why would one live through something that isn't worth living! It is best just to appear to be being, just to seem something, give the others an impression as if there was some person, a human being, walking in my pants. This is what I thought and laughed at my patients, nurses, acquaintances, everybody who I managed to deceive in such a cunning way. They were actually under the illusion that it was me, a doctor, a psychiatrist. They did not guess that it was a completely different man: only a machine!
>
> Siis asetuin yläpuolelle kaiken mitä yleensä oli. Olevaisen yläpuolelle.
>
> Elin kuin minua ei olisi ollutkaan.
>
> Sillä mitäpä elää sellaista, mikä ei ole elämisen arvoista! Siis paras vain olla olevinaan, vain näyttää joltakin, antaa toisille se vaikutelma kuin kulkisi minunkin housuissani joku henkilö, ihminen. Tuolla tavalla ajattelin ja naureskelin potilaita, hoitajia, tuttaviani, kaikkia, joita minun onnistui niin ovelasti harhauttaa. He olivat todella siinä uskossa, että minä olin minä, eräs lääkäri, psykiatri, eivät arvanneet, että se oli kokonaan toinen mies: vain kone! (TF 152–153.)

On one level, the feeling of being a machine is a form of distance from oneself (from being alive and suffering), but on another level, it also becomes a sign of separation from the social world. The narrator confesses to the readers that he was deceiving everyone around him.

After this, we see how the protagonist summons "his friends" from the past: "But there were moments when even I existed and was alive. 'Come

https://doi.org/10.21435/sflit.13

on in,' I might then say half-aloud, as if to myself. And they came, living creatures, and there was something consoling in the fact that they came."[185] In his imagination, he talks to Lerkkanen, who promises to provide him women. They have a party in which naked girls dance and "go from one lap to another,"[186] except one girl, we are told, Ellinora (whose name was once briefly mentioned by Riitu), who "goes to Dr. Finckelman." In the morning she is dead: someone has stabbed her and "nobody remembers anything."[187]

At this point, the imaginary orgy ends and there is a change of register:

> I moved quickly to a strange land. I don't know how, me and all of my friends. And it was not such a strange land after all. It was more familiar than this old one, and still quite strange. […] And it was as if there was a curtain above everything, one that nobody however saw. --- Everything *is* clean, clear contours, people slide beside me silently, soft as cats, they don't even notice me, but they look at me for a long time… They are dead, like dream creatures, and still they are more alive than any one of those who I knew before.
>
> Minä siirryin äkkiä outoon maahan, en tiedä miten, minä ja minun ystäväni kaikki. Eikä se ollut niin outo maa, oli tutumpi kuin tämä entinen, ja kuitenkin sangen outo. Niin se vain kävi. Oli kummallinen tie, joka vei kauas, ja vihdoin oli edessä se ihmeellinen maa, jossa olin—tuntui—ennenkin ollut… [...] Ja kuin verho oli kaiken yllä, jota kuitenkaan ei nähnyt kukaan. --- *On* puhdasta, ääriviivat selvät, ihmiset liukuvat ohitseni kuulumattomasti, pehmeät kuin kissat, eivät minua huomaakaan, mutta katsovat minua pitkään… He ovat kuolleita, kuin uniolentoja, ja kuitenkin elävämpiä kuin kukaan niistä, jotka ennestään tunsin. (TF 153–154, emphasis added.)

The other, strange land is no longer a frightening place, but a place where his friends are. Even though the people are dead, "like dream creatures," they feel more alive than actual people. The protagonist feels at home: "I wander around the gravestones, here and there. It is so wonderfully peaceful over here, like being among my own people, I hear myself saying quietly. Then I return. I avoid people like plague, I stay far away from them, they are like shadow creatures in this world of reality."[188] After returning to the real world, the narrator suddenly reveals that he was making "trips" like this constantly. We also find out that he is now making plans to start excavations at the farm (which he owns again after winning his legal battle with Niilas's help), as the ore in the ground under Riitu's former cottage might be considerable.[189]

The text offers several paths for interpretation. The most sympathetic one would be that the protagonist is disillusioned with his work and extremely disappointed in his life, and he is suffering from psychiatric disability. He has a traumatic past: both of his parents have died, and the beginning of the story is shadowed by the loss, which he nonetheless is unable to really feel or mourn.[190] For him as an adult, one could think, all this is starting to take its toll. As Toini Havu writes in her review: "He himself knows that his life has started to go awry at the very beginning, that he is unable to feel the fullness of life."[191] As discussed, many of the protagonist's experiences and mannerisms—the feelings of alienation, being a machine, and acting as well as his constant antitheses, proposition-negations, denials and ironies—

https://doi.org/10.21435/sflit.13

can be linked to schizoid personality. Furthermore, the strange moves or trips to the "other land" as well as the experiences of seeing the past "as if in a mirror" could be read as symptoms of dissociative disorder caused by trauma (see DSM 5, 292) or from "multiple personalities" (in 1950s terms) as many readers have argued (e.g., Vainio 1971/1979, 35–36): the reality around him is fragile and he often seems to be losing himself and his sense of time and place. Another thing which invites compassion for the protagonist is that he and Lili seem to suffer from the same condition, although he is unable to admit this to himself or to Lili, and rather hides behind his profession as a psychiatrist.

Another interpretation would be mystical. There is something devilish going on: people die unexpectedly while the protagonist is becoming more and more wealthy. Following Riitu before him, he has made a deal with the devil, a Faustian pact, as Salin (2002, 99–104) suggests. There is also the mystery of Lili's uncanny resemblance with the actress of Joan of Arc, the "Holy Virgin." Especially the protagonist's relationship to the other characters invites readers to oscillate between psychological, metafictional, and intertextual readings. Let us now look more closely at these intertextual and metafictional interpretive paths.

Doubles and Mirrors

As many readers of *Tohtori Finckelman* have remarked, all the other characters in the novel seem to be the narrator-protagonist's doubles or mirrors in one way or another.[192] Starting from the first encounter with Miss Lilian, readers are likely to realize that the borders between the protagonist and the other characters are extremely hazy. Particularly Lili appears to mirror his thoughts: what Lili says that she is experiencing is often even too close to what we have inferred about the protagonist's own experiences. Before meeting Lili, there are also some other hints of the same phenomenon. The narrator for example occasionally mentions the chief physician of the hospital, who likewise says things that could be straight from the protagonist's mouth: "So hard, so hard! People disgusting, life like a viscous stream. And I was just like the others, I finally noticed."[193]

In Chapter 25, the protagonist and his friends spend a drunken evening at businessman Mellonen's club. During the party each character gives their ideas of what life is, and it seems that they are repeating or commenting different scenarios the protagonist has been contemplating. For example, writer Raiski offers a magnificent tautology of what life is and comes to the comical conclusion that, opposed to what the protagonist has been pondering since he was young, *life* is better than poetry: "Poetry is rubbish! Only living life itself is worth living."[194] Later in the evening, Master Pomila gives a drunken speech about life as a "hellish game," about people as shadow creatures, and about the relationship between the self and the other. No one helps another but then: "a miracle happens: someone reaches out their hand."[195] He ends his speech by saying how glad he is that he has met Miss Lilian—seemingly echoing the protagonist's hidden thoughts. Gradually it starts to look as if all the other characters were manifestations of the protagonist's different sides: Mellonen focuses on becoming more and more

https://doi.org/10.21435/sflit.13

rich, Niilas is occupied with Lili and with fixing the laws so that they benefit himself, Raiski is trying to write a novel, Saleva wants to become a poet, and Pomila and Lili are searching for love and for a connection to another human being.

There are multiple possible ways to interpret the meaning of this haziness, mirroring, and projections between the protagonist and the other characters, and different readers have proposed different kinds of readings. An extreme psychological interpretation would be that the narrator hallucinates or imagines all the other characters in the novel: they do not "exist" in the storyworld at all but only in the narrator's projections, imagination, or hallucinations. For instance, Matti Vainio reads all the other characters as "part identities" of the protagonist's dissociated personality:

> In fact, the whole novel is a continuous monologue of the protagonist. There are hardly any other actual characters. It seems that almost all the other characters are in one way or another embodiments or variations of the parts and features of the narrator-protagonist's personality. It may seem that Finckelman, who has multiple personalities, can discuss with Lieutenant Saleva or writer Raiski or businessman Mellonen or with drunk Simpanen, but when we are moving on the higher level of the novel, it is reasonable to assume that he is actually having conversations with his own part identities or with his night-time Finckelman identity […].[196]

The interpretation is plausible but also very generalizing, as it reduces the characters and events of the "realist" level to the "sur-realist" level: everything in the novel happens inside the narrator-protagonist's shattering mind.[197] Vainio's interpretation beautifully illuminates one important aspect of the novel, but to appreciate the complexity of the text, other interpretations are also needed.

Another psychologically motivated interpretation could be that the other characters "exist" in the storyworld and to some extent independently of the narrator-protagonist's mind but they are colored by his perception, thoughts, emotions, and imagination (either consciously or unconsciously). In this view, he projects his own experiences on others perhaps even without realizing it, portrays others from his own perspective, and maybe sometimes also deliberately shapes and alters the others as he wishes, modifying his conversations with them to show himself in a better light (see also Salin 2002, 51–53; 181). The uncertainty about the borders between the protagonist and the other characters and the way the narrator imagines and narrates his friends raise questions about the power inherent in narrating—a theme that becomes central especially when we come to the rape scene and its aftermath.

In a metafictional reading, all the minds of the novel are the same: they are invented by the narrator who is writing his novel, just like he invites Dr. Finckelman inside the story—an interpretation that comes very close to the extreme psychological reading. Such a reading is supported by the many metafictional elements of the text, the hints about writing and composing a novel, and the many allusions and references to other works. It is also true in a very general sense: the characters are all created by Jorma Korpela and brought to life in the imagination of each individual reader. The metafictional

https://doi.org/10.21435/sflit.13

reading also reminds us that although the protagonist can easily be read through psychological frames, different approaches are needed and in fact used by readers.

Close to the metafictional reading (or a subtype of it) is the reading of the narrator-protagonist as an intertextual figure who is constructed through references and allusions to other fictional characters. Salin (2002, 96) has called this "intertextual selfhood." As she writes: "Selfhood, like the novel, is spun out of yarns that are stolen from other novels."[198] This is exactly what happens in *Tohtori Finckelman*. When read in the intertextual framework, it becomes clear that Korpela's characters are borrowed from other texts: picaresque novels, nineteenth-century horror fiction, Dostoyevsky's works, and existentialist novels. The intertextual reading emphasizes the constructedness of the characters and their minds, but, somewhat paradoxically, offers also psychological "depth" to the characters through the histories they share with other fictional characters. For instance, although we do not learn much about Lili, we know a lot about her through her connections to Dostoyevsky's characters (see also Salin 2002, 188–189).

In fact, several researchers have explored the different intertextual references created in *Tohtori Finckelman*, especially the connections between Korpela's and Dostoyevsky's novels, and paid attention to the way Korpela brings the Dostoyevskian theme of doubles inside the storyworld he constructs and even inside individual characters. For example, Annamari Sarajas (1953/1980, 59–61) suggests that Korpela stages a struggle between the two Karamazov brothers, Ivan and Alyosha (*Brothers Karamazov* 1880), inside the narrator-protagonist's mind: he is a character who is internally divided into cruel rationality and loving compassion. The relationship between the narrator-protagonist and Lili, in turn, can be read as a reinterpretation of Liza and the narrator of *Tales from the Underground* (1864): both novels share the narrator's unreliability, problems of communication, and the way the protagonist clearly loves the woman but pushes her away. Sari Salin (2002, 189–190) sees parallels also between Lili and Sonja (*Crime and Punishment*, 1866) and especially between Lili and Nastasya Filippovna (*The Idiot*, 1869) (see also Vainio 1975, 48; Karhu 1977, 118). "The apostle of love" of *Tohtori Finckelman*, Master Pomila/Reverend Pomilov, in turn, is often seen as Father Zosima from *Brothers Karamazov* or as Prince Myshkin from *The Idiot*. (See Sarajas 1953/1980, 57; Vainio 1975, 89; Karhu 1977, 118; Envall 1988, 114; Salin 2002, 255).

Furthermore, the themes of the self and the other, the protagonist's alienation and solipsism, and the motif of the "other world" connect *Tohtori Finckelman* directly to Dostoyevsky's "Menippean" short story "The Dream of a Ridiculous Man" (1877) in which the narrator goes through extreme experiences of solipsism (see also Salin 2002, 138–140):

> I may almost say that the world now seemed created for me alone: if I shot myself the world would cease to be at least for me. I say nothing of its being likely that nothing will exist for anyone when I am gone, and that as soon as my consciousness is extinguished the whole world will vanish too and become void like a phantom, as a mere appurtenance of my consciousness, for possibly all this world and all these people are only me myself. (Dostoyevsky 2012, 231.)

https://doi.org/10.21435/sflit.13

Dostoyevsky's narrator dreams of killing himself, but at the same time suspects that if he died, perhaps all the other people in the world would disappear too. In a way, the connection between the Ridiculous Man and the narrator-protagonist of *Tohtori Finckelman* brings together the different interpretive frames: psychological and metafictional. Both texts rely heavily on the previous literary tradition, while at the same time revealing something psychologically insightful about experiences of extreme solipsism and alienation.[199]

The *Übermensch*

Out of all the cultural, literary, and philosophical references of *Tohtori Finckelman*, especially important are the connections to Dostoyevsky and Nietzsche. Chapter 26, after the party at Mellonen's club, depicts the most significant, and the most devastating encounter between Lili and the protagonist. The narrator calls it the "fatal chapter": in it, everything goes wrong and any kind of meaningful connection between Lili and the protagonist proves to be impossible. She has invited the protagonist to meet her at her home, and before the meeting he is filled with conflicted emotions: he walks in the forest, his moods are changing, his feet feel heavy like they often do in such instances, and there is a strange atmosphere. He calls Lili "a whore" in his mind and laments that "You should remain a saint…"[200] He seems to be feeling anxiety because of the emotions she raises in him and finally decides that he will not go to the meeting at all. This decision is of course negated immediately and on his way to Lili's home an overwhelming feeling of warmth and joy overcomes him: "My eyes, radiate joy…"[201]

At Lili's place, the dynamics of their conversation is strange from the start. Both act distant and indifferent and neither say what they feel or even why they are meeting. Finally, the protagonist blurts out that he is "Finckelman" and there to "discuss" Lili's "illness" and that he is "Lili's helper." Lili becomes furious:

> – Do you think that I need your help! She threw [the words] in my face in a way that would have shocked any man. Except me. Because I did not exist really, there was another man, a robot, a machine, that was able to speak whatever came to his mind, but in a consistent manner, which indeed is strange.
>
> – Luuletteko että olen apuanne vaivainen! Hän sinkautti vasten kasvojani niin että siinä olisi hätkähtänyt mies kuin mies. Paitsi minä. Sillä minua ei siinä oikeastaan ollutkaan, oli toinen mies, robotti, kone, joka saattoi puhua aivan mitä sattuu, mutta kuitenkin johdonmukaisesti, merkillistä kyllä. (TF 253.)

We get an image of the protagonist who has become a machine, a robot. The narrator is hinting that he is not himself (he seems to be somehow possessed: speaking "whatever came to his mind"). Lili continues her attack: "I despise people who try to help, she continued, I don't need your pity."[202] When Lili ends her monologue, it is the protagonist's turn: whatever Lili has said, he now says the opposite.

He gives an elaborate speech about looking from a position that is so high above the ground that nothing matters anymore:

https://doi.org/10.21435/sflit.13

> – You are completely mistaken. It is not a question of pity […] you must rise high above enough and look from there, see things in their right proportions, in the ultimately right. How do you see then? Everything looks very small, nothing is worth pitying anymore. There is no more suffering, no more hate or love, because you won't see it anymore. You will continue your way with a cheerful mind…
>
> – Te erehdytte täydellisesti. Ei ole kyse säälistä […] teidän on noustava kyllin korkealle ja katseltava sieltä, nähtävä asiat oikeissa mittasuhteissaan, lopullisesti oikeissa. Miten siis näette? Kaikki näyttää hyvin pieneltä silloin, mikään ei ole säälin arvoista enää. Ei ole enää kärsimystä, ei vihaa eikä rakkautta, koska te ette sitä enää näe. Te jatkatte matkaa iloisin mielin… (TF 255–256.)

We learn the moral code the protagonist is adopting. Again, there are several directions for interpretation. The speech can be read as a manifestation of the cold philosophy the protagonist has actually developed, or it can be read as an act in which the protagonist takes up the "mask" of Dr. Finckelman to hide his true feelings, or we can even interpret that the protagonist is somehow in the "possession" of Dr. Finckelman.[203] The narrator once again suggests that the words are not actually his; that they just came from somewhere: "Some unknown force put the words in my mouth and I let them out, this is the only way I can explain it."[204] This is true: the words come from Nietzsche, and Korpela makes the protagonist say them.[205] However, the protagonist's ideas about ethics are met with shock by Lili:

> – Are you insane? She asked.
> – I am. However you want. Don't you understand? I am Finckelman…
> – That is exactly what you are.
>
> – Oletteko te hullu, hän kysyi.
> – Olen, miten vain haluatte. Ettekö ymmärrä? Olen Finckelman…
> – Se te juuri olette. (TF 257.)

From Lili's perspective, it is "insane" and immoral, to think that the solution would be to distance oneself from others, to put oneself above everyone else.

A few chapters later Lili tries once more to find a connection to the protagonist. In this meeting, Lili is open about her own emotions: she tells him that she feels closeness to him and that when they met, she felt that she could have even been "naked without being ashamed."[206] To this the protagonist replies: "Naked, you said. Good! It's just that there is so much available these days…"[207] Once again, there are at least two directions for interpretation. On the one hand, the protagonist's cold, misogynous words are meant to hide his feelings. On the other hand, their relationship repeats the communication problems between the Underground Man and Liza in Dostoyevsky's novel. After the protagonist has this way rejected Lili, she marries Niilas. The last conversation between Lili and the protagonist (before the epilogue in which Lili returns) is at the wedding in which the protagonist is the witness. Lili is wearing black, not smiling, her "eyes are hollow" and she only replies shortly to the protagonist's congratulations: "Thank you for everything, doctor Finckelman."[208] The same night, we learn later, she shoots Niilas and goes insane.

https://doi.org/10.21435/sflit.13

Ultimately the narrator-protagonist's "symptoms" discussed throughout this chapter can also be read through the intertexts rather than the psychological or pathological frames of reading: the protagonist is an "abject hero," an "outsider," as readers of Korpela noted early (Kare 1952/1996, 362; Vainio 1975, 102–105; 173). He suffers like Dostoyevsky's Underground Man or Camus' Meursault do: from self-hate, loathing, and contempt, and from being an outsider, not fitting inside social norms, not being able to behave as one is expected to (see Bernstein 1992, 89–90; Wilson 1958; Salin 2002, 143; 163).[209] Moreover, as Salin (2002, 18–19) points out, the crisis the protagonist goes through has strong connections to Menippean satire: his experiences of loss of time, loss of consciousness, and loss of memory are not just psychological symptoms (of, for example, dissociation), but also some of the core features of the Menippean, carnivalesque genre. In other words, the protagonist's "symptoms" have a highly literary background: they are just as fictional as they are psychological and lifelike.

Ironically, as the narrator-protagonist proves to be an intertextual, fictional character, he also suffers from his experience of artificiality and identifies himself with an invented figure, Dr. Finckelman. Furthermore, he brings to the fore the constructedness of fictional minds and reminds how actual people fictionalize and narrativize themselves. Salin notes that in the early critiques of *Tohtori Finckelman* the intertextual construction of Korpela's characters was often missed, and as a result Korpela was accused of making his characters flat or unrealistic (Salin 2002, 64). Yet, some readers also emphasized the lifelikeness of the characters, as we have seen. Ultimately the text invites a reading that maintains both perspectives: the characters are simultaneously "imagined in flesh and blood," as Holappa (1952/1996, 359) wrote, and artificial, intertextual constructions.

The Unreliable Doctor

> At night I wake up. I startle.
> What have I done, I say at once to the darkness that surrounds me. What have I said to her [Lili]? I ask. Was I in my right mind? I was not going to speak like that, I was supposed to speak in another way. In completely another…
>
> Yöllä herään. Hätkähdän.
> Mitäs minä olenkaan tehnyt, sanon jo samassa pimeydelle, joka minua ympäröi. Mitäs minä hänelle [Lilille] puhuin? Kyselen. Olinkohan minä järjissäni! Eihän minun niin pitänyt puhua, toisella tavallahan piti. Kokonaan toisella tavalla… (TF 289.)

As discussed, the protagonist's thoughts about the artificiality and machine-like quality of his life, as well as the way he denies his feelings and takes up the "mask" of Dr. Finckelman, are unsettling from a psychological perspective. At the same time, the narrator is likely to invite compassion in readers when he reveals to us the sides of himself that he hides from the other characters and even from himself.[210] After both of his disastrous encounters with Lili (the fatal chapter and the last encounter before the wedding), he deeply regrets

https://doi.org/10.21435/sflit.13

his words, asks Lili for forgiveness in his mind, and hopes that she will be alright. He also makes direct confessions to his readers, for example when reporting one of his discussions with businessman Mellonen: "I have never acted, I said although I had. My whole life."[211] An image of deep suffering and disconnection both from oneself and from others has emerged. The feelings of acting and estrangement are not so uncommon—anyone has these experiences—but if we interpret that the protagonist suffers from schizoid personality or dissociation, he is in danger of developing a full-blown psychosis.

As the story evolves, the protagonist comes to a situation where the borders between the actual world and his imaginary-hallucinatory world collapse, and the latter takes over—something that Sass (1994, 300) has called the "World Catastrophe" (the self and the world become indistinguishable, the self is distorted, and the world is mutating or evaporating) and readers of *Tohtori Finckelman* have called the "sur-realist" level of the text (Sarajas 1953/1980, 61; Vainio 1975, 192–196). The protagonist is split between the "miserable man" of the subtitle who "carries the burden of whole humanity on his shoulders"[212] and the cruel Dr. Finckelman who is free from all moral constraints and responsibility for others and who lacks humanity. This is what led for example Annamari Sarajas (1953/1980, 70) to write that the storyworld is depicted "from the perspective of a non-human,"[213] suggesting that the narrator, at the moment of writing, *is* Dr. Finckelman.

However, the narrative situation is again more complex: at the time of writing his story, it seems that the narrator is recovering from the breakdown that is caused by him "becoming" Dr. Finckelman. From a metafictional point of view, the novel can be read as an exploration of the borders between the real and the imaginary, and life and fiction. Like the psychological, the metafictional and intertextual elements can also invite empathy, because they remind us of the fictionality of the text and create a safe space (see also Keen 2007, 98). But when we come to the crime at the heart of the novel, the rape of his patient Reseda, we are compelled to take a moral stance and start making decisions about how to interpret the narrator and the story he recounts (see also Salin 2002, 220).

I discuss the rape scene and the world of imagination/hallucination (the "real world," as the narrator starts to call it) in the next section. Before that, let us take a closer look at the narrator's unreliability and the distance and estrangement the protagonist's behavior is likely to invite in readers. As I have argued, reading the protagonist as a distressed character who is going through a mental breakdown is likely to call for empathetic reflection in readers.[214] This would be a result of what Phelan (2007, 223–224) has called "bonding unreliability": if we read the narrator as unreliable because he is suffering from mental distress, trauma, and loss of connection to other people, such unreliability reduces the distance between the narrator and the readers. The narrator's ironies, self-contradictions and overstatements—even bragging—can also invite an empathetic reading as they constantly reveal what they are supposed to hide and thus diminish the distance between the narrator and the readers. Furthermore, because of the aesthetic frame (because we know that the story is fiction), readers are likely to accept the protagonist's moral transgressions (for example his malicious talk to Lili) more easily than

https://doi.org/10.21435/sflit.13

they would in real life. However, the hints that the narrator is purposely unreliable, and trying to hide his immoral actions, especially the fact that he has raped someone, are likely to make readers distance themselves from him. This is what Phelan (2007, 223–224) has called "distancing unreliability": unreliable narration that underlines or increases the distance between the narrator and the readers.

The constant oscillation between bonding and distancing unreliability, as well as the uncertainty regarding whether the narrator-protagonist is "fallible" or "untrustworthy" in Greta Olson's (2003, 96) terms—whether he is unreliable because of his circumstances or his dispositions—creates a serious problem for the readers. As we saw in the analysis of *Kaunis sielu*, when a first-person narrator's hallucinatory, psychotic, or imaginary experiential world takes over the storyworld, questions about the narrator's reliability become difficult: hallucinations and delusions make these questions futile, because in such a state—where the signposts of the storyworld disappear—it becomes impossible to distinguish between what is "true" or "false," what actually happens in the storyworld and what is invented or hallucinated by the narrator. In such cases it is impossible to decide whether the narrator-protagonist is guilty of the crimes they narrate. However, in *Tohtori Finckelman*, even before the protagonist's delusional or psychotic episodes and "becoming of flesh of Dr. Finckelman," there are instances in which the narrator can be interpreted as intentionally unreliable: not just fallible because he is on the verge of psychosis or dissociation, but untrustworthy and deliberately deceiving his readers. In such instances, the implied author can be said to be communicating to readers as if "behind the narrator's back" and encouraging us to distance ourselves from the narrator (see also Booth 1983; Phelan 2005). Let us examine some of such warnings.

Underreporting or Misinterpreting?

The way the narrator's relationship with women is portrayed has important consequences for reading and interpreting the novel and its main events, especially the rape scene. The narrator is most often contradictory, shady and shifty in regard to women, and when read closely, he appears to be a highly misogynous character. As we have seen, women are depicted as a source of meaning in the narrator-protagonist's life, but as he fails in his efforts to communicate and create relationships with women, he also starts to despise them. However, there is an element of misogyny all along in the way the protagonist participates in the talk of the men close to him. As Salin (2002, 191) has pointed out, only two types of women seem to fit inside the protagonist's worldview: saints and prostitutes. Apart from this dualist role, women are "others" that have no characteristics of their own and that seem to be mainly mirrors on which the protagonist reflects himself.

Phelan's (2005; 2007) distinctions between different types of unreliability are helpful when analyzing the narrator of *Tohtori Finckelman*. He has distinguished between 1) "mis- or under*reporting*," which involves the ways a narrator represents facts and events; 2) "mis- or under*interpreting*" (or "mis- or underreading") which concerns a narrator's understanding and perception of facts and events; and 3) "mis- or under*evaluating*" (or

https://doi.org/10.21435/sflit.13

"mis- or underregarding") which concerns the values of a narrator. For example, a narrator misreports when they portray facts and events falsely and underreporting when they tell too little or leave things out of their story. When mis- or underinterpreting, in turn, a narrator interprets or understands the things they narrate falsely or not well enough (this often happens when they are young or incapacitated at the time of events). Finally, a narrator mis- or underevaluates when their values are inconsistent with what is generally held as ethical or unethical (Riitu's storytelling is a good example of this). An important question concerning the misogyny and the rape in *Tohtori Finckelman* is: is the narrator mis- and underinterpreting some of the events because he was young, naïve, or mentally distressed when they happened, or is he mis- or underrepresenting them on purpose, to deceive his audience?

The way we interpret the narrator-protagonist and the events he narrates is largely dependent on these distinctions—and this is also one of the reasons why readers of *Tohtori Finckelman* may interpret the events of the novel very differently, and why our evaluation of the narrator may also easily change from one reading to another. *Tohtori Finckelman* thus highlights Ansgar Nünning's (1997; 1999; 2008) and Vera Nünning's (2004) insights on unreliability: it very much depends on readers' interpretive choices and values.[215] The earliest readers of *Tohtori Finckelman* emphasized the nihilism and coldness of the narrator-protagonist's worldview and the problems in his morals (the way he is often misevaluating, in Phelan's terms) (e.g., Havu 1952/1996; Kare 1952/1996; Koskimies 1952/1996; on the protagonist's nihilism, see Salin 2002, 113–116). Yet, the misogynous elements of the novel started to become visible almost half a century later (see Salin 1996; 2002). This does not, however, mean that Korpela constructed the narrator-protagonist's views of women by accident. I would argue that the misogyny in *Tohtori Finckelman* is a carefully composed authorial strategy, and its purpose is to criticize what today are understood as toxic forms of masculinity. It is tightly connected with Korpela's criticism of violence and the abuse of different forms of institutional and structural power.[216]

At first glance, many of the protagonist's encounters with women seem like depictions of common failures in romantic relations and clumsy attempts to cover them. For example, when he has fallen in love (as the readers can infer) with the maid of the farm, Marke, and notices that she goes to sleep in the granary, the narrator, adapting to his younger self's position as he often does, rushes to state that "I paid absolutely no attention to the whole thing…"[217] The narrator takes the perspective of the experiencing I, and the hyperbolic denial suggests that he is consciously underreporting his past thoughts: trying to hide how interested he was in Marke (although he does not do a very good job at this). There are also discrepancies between what the narrator says and what has likely happened. He continues about Marke a bit later: "That night I went to Marke's granary. She had asked me with her eyes in the evening, you see."[218] On a quick reading, this early statement seems quite innocent and might be missed by a hasty reader: perhaps the young protagonist really believed that Marke invited him "with her eyes," thus misinterpreting the situation—or we might even trust his interpretation and think that Marke actually did "invite" him "with her eyes." But when read

https://doi.org/10.21435/sflit.13

in the light of the whole novel, the short remark gains more significance: it could be read as the narrator's attempt at hiding his own role, and the comment addressed to the readers ("you see") could be read as an attempt to make us agree with him. Is the narrator trying to get away from his actions by relying on a discourse that portrays women as seductresses? What is the relationship between the experiencing I (the young protagonist) and the narrator in such passages?

As we have already seen, the misogynous discourse about women is used not only by the narrator-protagonist but also by the other men he spends time with as a young man. A few chapters later Simpanen (the other vagabond) makes a very similar comment about Marke: "And that girl is very generous in that thing, I have noticed." He then continues with an "educational" remark about women in general: "One can see it from the eyes and from the way a girl walks."[219] It is noteworthy that Simpanen's misogynous comments are presented *after* the protagonist has (assumedly) had sex with Marke. Because of the careful composition of the novel, there is reason to think that they are meant to be interrelated. This raises several questions: Does the protagonist "learn" the way to talk about women from Simpanen, and then use this discourse in his narration years later? Or does the narrator purposely add Simpanen's misogynous talk to the story to justify his own actions? The connections between the characters' ways of speaking also support the interpretation that all of them are different "sides" of the protagonist (this interpretation can have a psychological meaning, "dissociated personality," or a metafictional one, other characters as the protagonist's "doubles," as discussed). One thing is certain: the implied author is giving us hints that the men's claims about women are problematic and should be regarded with suspicion.

After the narrator has implied that he had sex with Marke, he tells us that she left the farm with Hoikkanen and we are shown how the protagonist directs his attention (again) to the police chief's daughter. He encounters her at the church dance but does not dare to speak to her. Later, he makes elaborate plans about what he would say if they met:

> However, let me say, in my humble opinion, that life is not just a dance, unfortunately, excuse me. It is not, for life, real life, is something completely different. It is a heavy burden and a battle. It is contemplation and deep thoughts. It is loneliness and longing, a walk in the courts of death. Life is death…
>
> Mutta sallikaa minun kuitenkin lausua omana vaatimattomana mielipiteenäni, että elämä ei ole pelkkää tanssimista, valitettavasti, anteeksi vaan. Ei ole, sillä elämä, tosi elämä on aivan muuta. Se on raskasta kuormaa ja taistelua. Se on mietiskelyä, syviä ajatuksia. Se on yksinäisyyttä ja kaipuuta, käyskentelyä kuoleman esikartanoissa. Elämä on kuolemaa… (TF 85.)

The speech is at once comical in all of its pompousness and clichéd metaphors ("life is not a dance") but also reveals the protagonist's melancholy thoughts ("loneliness and longing"; "life is death…"). However, he never gets to give his speech to the daughter: an even clearer misinterpretation, or rather an overinterpretation of the events than with Marke happens when the young man runs into the girl and finally tries to have a conversation with her. He

https://doi.org/10.21435/sflit.13

meets her by the road, is unable to form complete sentences, forgets his plans, and completely loses his composure, which results in bitter thoughts: "She was smiling. It was a devilish smile, I could see."[220] The interpretation appears almost paranoid: there is no reason to think that the girl's smile is "devilish" (he repeats this several times), or that she would be mocking the protagonist—in fact she does not get a chance to say anything, because the young man rushes away ashamed. In particular, his following reaction is out of proportion in relation to the situation at hand: "You Satan's bitch! I said. God damn it! A whore is a whore…"[221]

At this point, readers may still discard the insults or explain them away: the young man interprets the girl's smile as a mockery and is trying to alleviate his own embarrassment. But in light of the rest of the novel one could read this as a first instance in which the protagonist has fully adopted a misogynous attitude toward women. One could, of course, claim that the words are not his own but borrowed from Simpanen and Riitu, who has earlier explicitly called the police chief's daughter a "whore" (TF 27). The protagonist seems to be echoing Riitu's words, but at the same time the reaction reveals his thoughts. In passages like this, Korpela moves carefully between the psychology of an insecure young man and misogynous thinking. There are again two directions for interpretation: one in which the young protagonist's behavior is understood, to some extent, as a young man's angry and embarrassed response, and another in which his actions are seen as early instances of abusive behavior—and it is left for the reader to choose between these interpretive paths.

Another incident in Part One sheds further light on the protagonist's way of thinking and gains more significance later. Marke has now left the farm, and when she returns with Hoikkanen and a man called Jammu, the protagonist seems to yet again misinterpret what happens—and again the narrator stays firmly in the background:

> They [Marke and Jammu] were looking around, at the sauna, inside the stables and the cow house. And especially the granary where Marke had lived, they looked for a long time and thoroughly, they even locked the door. And when they came out, Marke blossomed even more than usually.
>
> He [Marke ja Jammu] katselivat yhtä ja toista paikkaa, saunaa ja tallia ja navettaa. Ja varsinkin sitä aittaa, missä Marke oli meillä asunut, he tarkastelivat pitkään ja perusteellisesti, panivatpa ovenkin säppiin. Tullessaan ulos Marke oli entistä kukoistavampi. (TF 95.)

The event is described once again from the perspective of the experiencing I (the young protagonist), and the readers are guided to believe that he is naïve and misinterprets the situation. But there is also an impression of intentionality: the ironic tone suggests that the narrator does understand what happens and actually only pretends when he is reporting it with exaggerated naiveté. There is a curious mixture of more or less conscious underreporting (on the narrator's part) and more or less unconscious misinterpretation (on the protagonist's part) which once again leads the readers toward two different interpretive paths. This structure in which the

https://doi.org/10.21435/sflit.13

experiencing I appears to be misinterpreting what is happening and the narrator stays seemingly invisible but is responsible for the irony (and is clearly underreporting) is common throughout the whole novel.

Part Two begins, as discussed, with the protagonist's complaints about the "half-heartedness" of his life. He does not make it explicit, but he seems to be looking for love and is lonely and disappointed in his life (we may recall the protagonist's musings about the actress or "Holy Virgin" who took away "the meaning of his life"). In the chapter where he meets Miss Lilian for the first time, the narrator does hint that something important is about to happen, as we can recall: "This chapter must definitely be read."[222] But when it comes to describing the encounter with Lili, he, as usual, negates his thoughts and emotions right after expressing them (see also Salin 2002, 155): "You can't judge a book by its cover… That is what I thought when I first saw her. Mistake! She was beautiful also from the inside, as I realized later. And besides: she was not actually beautiful at all, although not ugly either… "[223]

The depiction of Lili's beauty is instantly negated by the logic of proposition-negation. The same passage is also a demonstration of what Salin (2002, 15) describes as the anti-realistic tendencies of the novel: there is hardly any description, of either places or characters. The readers get very little information about Lili—of what she looks like, who she is, what her history is—only about the narrator's reflections. Right after telling us about the encounter with Lili the narrator also admits, and instantly denies, the effect she has on him: "All right. Enough about her. I forgot about her. Only sometimes did she come to my mind. How is Miss Lilian doing, I thought. […] But that's what I thought about many patients of mine. For a person thinks this and that. And in time, the thoughts pass."[224] There is an invitation to a romantic, psychological interpretation, with compassion for the protagonist: he has failed so many times in his love affairs that he cannot allow himself to hope for anything. Especially the last sentence, "in time, the thoughts pass," can be read as melancholic: it reveals that he does have deeper feelings. There is a constant discrepancy between what the protagonist says and feels, and: even though the narrator does not admit it directly, the whole novel, after first meeting Miss Lilian, is about her—as he hints in Chapter 17: "My novel begins..."[225] (See also Salin 2002, 62.)

The narrator could be interpreted as hiding things not just from his audience, but also from himself: his use of irony and constant denials and negations could be read through a psychoanalytical frame as effects of repression, as moments in which his unconscious thoughts and hopes are revealed in the writing process without his knowledge. This invites readers to sympathize with the protagonist to some extent: especially after reading about the first encounters with Lili it might be tempting to interpret him as a person who is out of touch with his own emotions and experiences and suffering from an inability to connect with other people. He is looking for love, but always fails and resorts to compensatory behaviors: denying his emotions, bragging, and accusing others.

https://doi.org/10.21435/sflit.13

Strange Hints

As the story continues, readers encounter an increasing number of situations that show the protagonist in a misogynous light, and the suspicions against him also mount regarding the rape. To make a judgment about the most critical events, the reader would need to decide whether the protagonist is suffering from a schizoid or dissociated personality and is unable to recount the events accurately or whether he develops into a misogynous rapist who is deceiving his audience on purpose. So what kind of a *Bildungsroman* is *Tohtori Finckelman*? What does he become? Some answers to this can be found in the narrator's slips of the tongue and the strange hints he makes.

Let us now turn to the events just before and after the rape in Part Two. If we read the text carefully, we can see that there are some things that the narrator has left out of his story and these are revealed by other characters. For example, Raiski suddenly questions the protagonist about a woman he apparently has an affair with:

> – Listen, why didn't you bring the woman with you?
> – Who?
> – The nurse.
> – Well, I didn't happen to bring her, I sneered; he was talking about a nurse who sometimes visited me.
>
> – Kuule, miksi et sinä tuonut naista mukanasi?
> – Ketä?
> – Sitä hoitajatarta.
> – En sattunut tuomaan, hymähdin; hän tarkoitti erästä hoitajatarta, joka joskus kävi luonani. (TF 171.)

The readers find out "by chance"—through another character—that the protagonist actually has some kind of a relationship with a nurse from the hospital. This is an important nugget of information because it proves part of the accusations the protagonist faces later from Saleva about sleeping with nurses and patients. The whole passage is also a kind of slip of the tongue: it would be more beneficial for the narrator to leave his readers completely unaware of the nurse, although it is not possible to infer anything else from this affair because we never hear more about it.[226]

A similar, even more revealing, incident occurs when the narrator recounts how he and his friends encountered Marke in the city, and Marke gets to speak for the second time in the whole novel (the first is in Part One where the protagonist accuses Marke of stealing from him and she gets angry, as she is here):

> – Damn it, you're saying you don't remember me! Marke started to drawl with her cold harlot voice. She was drunk.
> – Here he is, the man, the so-called doctor, who first made me a whore.
>
> – Ja perkele, etkö muka muista! Marke alkoi lasketella kolealla portonäänellä. Hän oli humalassa.
> – Tässä se nyt on se mies, se tohtori muka, joka minusta ensimmäisenä huoran teki. (TF 233.)

https://doi.org/10.21435/sflit.13

Marke's words paint the previous events in a new light. But again, her "outburst" (as the narrator makes it look) could be interpreted in several possible ways and explained away: the narrator portrays her as drunk, she could be overreacting because the protagonist does not recognize her at first, or she could be angry at the protagonist because of something else that has happened in the past. A very susceptible sympathetic reader might even think that perhaps she has been in love with the protagonist all along, consensual in their relationship, hurt, and chosen to leave with Hoikkanen and Jammu only because the protagonist rejects her for the police chief's daughter. Readers are left to choose a side: Marke's or the protagonist's. The problem is—as usual—that everything we know about Marke is filtered through and controlled by the narrator. For example, insulting her "harlot voice" is the narrator's way to influence the readers' image of her. On the other hand, an intertextual interpretation would support Marke's point of view. Her fate is aligned with Nastasya Filoppovna's (Dostoyevsky's *The Idiot*, 1868) who is abused by Totsky as a young woman and who later accuses him, much like Marke does in the passage.[227]

As aggravating as the protagonist's encounters with women are, especially when presented out of their larger context as I have done above, we hardly ever encounter him *doing* anything unethical or criminal: we do not see him abusing or even mistreating Marke, there are only vague hints that raise suspicions. Annamari Sarajas has suggested that the protagonist often manipulates the people around him rather than acting himself (like Ivan in *Brothers Karamazov*): "the devilish threads of his thoughts—not his actions—tie all the people around him to the same condemnation."[228] Even though there is no conclusive "evidence," a clear picture of how the protagonist sees women emerges from these events, short comments and hints: for him they are whores (or thieves) if they do not subject to men's will. This picture is shared by all the men in the novel, and, one could argue, the protagonist learns it from Riitu, Simpanen, and Hoikkanen. Yet it is also his own: it is something he becomes, or is, since the others are his doubles (in a metafictional reading), or projections (in a psychological reading). Furthermore, there are some events the readers can become sure of during the course of the story. Two incidents in Part Two are also noteworthy when assessing the role of the protagonist in the rape.

In the first incident, readers are led to understand that the protagonist slips sleeping pills into Raiski's drink when they spend an evening with Lili. The narrator mentions, as if in passing, that "[a]fter some time, Raiski fell asleep. His wine glass happened to contain quite an amount of sleeping pills."[229] His actions can perhaps be justified because he has been desperate to spend time alone with Lili, and readers might have some compassion for him because of this. But since readers at this point already know about Dr. Finckelman and his habit of using poison, it is hard to dismiss the greater significance of the event, although no harm is done in the end. No matter how understandable the protagonist's motives might be, it is clear that he breaks the ethical codes of his profession and the narrator is thus misevaluating the event. This disregard of ethics and the use of drugs to take Raiski out of the picture connects the narrator-protagonist directly to Dr. Finckelman.

https://doi.org/10.21435/sflit.13

An even more problematic incident involves the protagonist's relationship with judge Niilas' wife, Irma. When the narrator introduces Niilas for the first time to his readers, he hints that Niilas wanted him to start an affair with Irma so that Niilas himself could spend time with a new mistress (who turns out to be Lili). Later, the protagonist agrees to admit Irma in the psychiatric hospital so that Niilas could get a divorce. As usual, we only have the narrator's word on the matter, but he says that he was only fulfilling Niilas's request. Readers who are familiar with the history of psychiatry and the power imbalance between (male) doctors and (female) patients likely find this suspicious. It is easy to come to the conclusion that something is wrong: Korpela creates a clear reference to the literary tradition of men who lock their wives inside mental institutions to be able to start new lives with new spouses. However, this shows Niilas in a worse light; the narrator-protagonist is only an accomplice.[230]

When the police and the "whole city" have started to suspect the protagonist of the rape, he tries to find comfort from Irma, who, he believes, also thinks that he is guilty. It is now revealed that the protagonist is playing the roles of a "lover" and doctor at the same time:

> – But Irma! Irma dear! You have not understood me… You are mistaken… You have not realized that I am ready for anything for you… Irma darling! I said, and added some even more foolish things, and at the same time I thought: Well, well, all right! There's another one who has such a strong conviction about my guilt. Well, go ahead; conviction has saved many deep-water souls. "Dear Irma…"
> It worked. In the end she was very satisfied with me.
> It is good to test some new methods of treatment—if it even was a new one, I laughed in my mind as I walked home from Irma's place. Well, whatever, I added. Irma has a body like one should. And in this doctor's business, who cares about the soul.
>
> – Mutta Irma! Irma rakas! Et ole minua ymmärtänyt… Olet ymmärtänyt minut aivan väärin. Et ole aavistanut, että sinun takiasi olen valmis kaikkeen… Irma kultaseni! sanoin, ja yhtä ja toista vieläkin hullumpaa, samalla kun ajattelin: Jaa, jaa, vai niin! Siis taas yksi, joka uskoo vuoren varmasti minun syyllisyyteeni. Noh, usko pois, uskon kautta on pelastunut moni syvänveden sielu. "Rakas Irma…"
> Se tepsi. Hän oli lopulta minuun hyvin tyytyväinen.
> Onhan hyvä kokeilla uusia hoitomenetelmiä, – mikäli se nyt oli vallan uusikaan, naurahdin itsekseni astellessani yön pimeydessä Irman luota omaan asuntooni. No mikäs siinä, lisäsin, ruumis on Irmalla niin kuin ollakin pitää. Ja sielusta ei ole niin väliäkään näissä lääkärinpuuhissa. (TF 270.)

Again, the narrator leaves out what happens, but despite the gap in the narration (marked with dots in the text), it is clear from the hints. What is perhaps most aggravating is the fact that although there is a frame of a love affair (the narrator portrays Irma as being in love with him and the affair is supported by Niilas), the protagonist acts in his role of a psychiatrist. The perspective is again that of the experiencing I, and he refers to the abuse of his patient as a treatment method. The readers can now be sure that the protagonist has slept with (and abused) at least one of his patients. "Doctor's business" is also a direct reference to Dr. Finckelman (see also Salin 2002,

https://doi.org/10.21435/sflit.13

112–113): by now the protagonist has started to identify with the imaginary figure. He has acted as "Finckelman" in front of other people when drunk, and even fantasized about strangling Lili. He has also introduced himself as "Dr. Finckelman" at the crime scene of the rape. As many readers have suggested, the protagonist has become Dr. Finckelman, an evil scientist, a devil, an *Übermensch* (see, e,g., Envall 1988).

As noted, although the narrator controls or filters everything the other characters say or do, many comments from other characters point to problems in the protagonist's ethics. Toward the end, when the protagonist's morals are suspected by the other characters, there are more incidents. However, already at the very beginning of Part Two, Raiski gives a description of the protagonist which hints that there is something wrong and which becomes more meaningful later. Raiski does this in midst of an emotional turmoil, angry at the protagonist because he does not sympathize with the problem he has (Raiski is jealous of Niilas because he spends time with Lili):

> But I know what you are. I have known for a long time: you are a cunning observer, cold and ruthless man, a real devil, that's what you are! You look at people only as if they were some interesting specimen, like a scientist looks at animals, guinea pigs, what are they called. You're a real filth, that's what you are!
>
> Mutta kyllä minä nyt tiedän mikä sinä olet. Olen jo kauan tietänyt: pirullinen tarkkailija, kylmä ja säälimätön mies, oikea saatana sinä olet! Kaikkia ihmisiä katsot vain mielenkiintoisina yksityistapauksina kuin joku tiedemies elukoita, marsuja vai mitä ne ovat. Oikea kyttä sinä olet! (TF 120.)

As on many other occasions (for example when Marke accuses the protagonist of "making her a whore"; or in the "doctor's business" scene when Irma accuses him of being an emotionally dead, brutal doctor who has "no knowledge of the female soul"[231]), readers have two options. Either we can believe Raiski and take the accusations as a hint about the cruelty of the protagonist's "scientific" worldview. Alternatively, we can trust the narrator and accept that Raiski is only rambling. Things take another turn, as the narrator defends himself against Raiski's accusations, but at the same time reveals to the readers: "You are mistaken, my brother, I said adamantly. Because Raiski really was mistaken: he thought too well of me. Because I was only playing. My toys were people. I knew them all too well already."[232] Paradoxically, this is likely to draw readers closer: his confession has a melancholic tone that gives an impression that he is being too hard on himself, directing the interpretation toward mental problems rather than moral ones. Raiski's accusations are also so hyperbolic (and comical, e.g., his loss of words: "guinea pigs, what are they") that they are ironized in turn. The narrator-protagonist's misogyny, misanthropism, and nihilism also begin to appear as roles that cover something else. The question remains: is he mad, bad or both? The scene continues and offers one more hint:

> – You are mistaken, you don't know me through and through, I repeated. Because in fact I too had a life, another life, a more real life in which I lived with Lerkkanen and Riitu and Finckelman and in which I was a devoted and a trustworthy friend. Me, an actual Finckelman…

https://doi.org/10.21435/sflit.13

> – Erehdyt, et tunne minua pohjia myöten, kertasin, sillä olihan elämä tosiaan minullakin, toinen, todellisempi, oikea, jota elin Lerkkasen ja Riitun ja Finckelmanin kanssa ja jossa minä olin altis ja luotettava ystävä. Minä, itse Finckelman… (TF 120–121.)

He lives a "truer" life, an imagined life, in the company of Dr. Finckelman, as "an actual Finckelman."

From Unreliability to Undecidability

The narrator of *Tohtori Finckelman* often under- or misreports events: he leaves gaps in his story but also keeps on hinting and denying things, and not doing a very good job at covering his tracks—a strategy used by Korpela to remind readers of the narrator's unreliability. Furthermore, the narrator creates an impression of naiveté and irony, suggesting that the experiencing I is misinterpreting what happens around him (see also Salin 2002, 155). The narrator's reports about certain events can be questioned, either because he might be deliberately lying to hide his actions, or because he himself is not conscious of what he experiences and because his mind is shattering. His perception of the world around him, of women, his ideology and ethics are deeply troubling, especially from the perspective of a today's reader, but the protagonist's emotional detachment from others and experiences of being above moral codes were also noticed by the earliest readers in the 1950s. The protagonist sees himself as a machine and other people as his puppets—something that is most likely alarming to any reader in any historical context.

It is thus safe to say that the narrator-protagonist is a misogynous character. What remains open is why and to what extent? Is he also a rapist? We could say that as a young man—influenced by Riitu and the other men—the protagonist begins to see the world in a morally unsustainable light, resulting in complete alienation and estrangement from other people and society. We might begin to suspect that even when writing his story (his "novel") after the breakdown, the narrator is trying to turn the blame away from himself and to hide his actions. In particular, the two incidents that shed light on his "doctor's business"—drugging Raiski and having sex with Irma—gather evidence that could be used to accuse him of the rape. However, in this reading we would end up judging him based on something other than the actual crime. This would be an interpretive act that is highly problematic, as also Camus's *L'Étranger* reminds its readers.

As Salin remarks, the narrator is most unreliable when narrating the rape scene: the events are depicted from the perspective of the experiencing I who is in a confused state. The narrator leaves gaps in the story, and the readers never find out—without at least a hint of doubt—whether he is guilty or not, and whether even the narrator himself knows this or not. (See Salin 2002, 40; 200.) There are some grounds for claiming that the rape does not happen in the storyworld, but only in the narrator's imagination or hallucinations, and that it is a sign of a more existential kind of suffering and guilt—but this would be a very generalizing, allegorical reading that would make much of what happens in the novel irrelevant. The lack of information and the protagonist's delusional state of mind in the rape scene make it impossible to

https://doi.org/10.21435/sflit.13

know what actually happens. The unreliability is turning into undecidability and uncertainty, and the ontological status of the storyworld is at stake: we are on the "sur-realist" level of the text. As Ansgar Nünning (2008, 41) notes, "the notion of unreliability presupposes that an objective view of the world, of others, and of oneself can be attained." This becomes uncertain as we take a closer look at the borders between the actual world and the "other" world where Dr. Finckelman exists.

The Other World

As in *Kaunis sielu*, in *Tohtori Finckelman* the readers encounter another world inside the storyworld, one of imagination and hallucinations. However, in addition to the narrator-protagonist's experiential world, there are also other levels of reality that create different kinds of structures of meaning. These consist of *mise-en-abyme* structures and intertexts that offer new paths for interpretation, such as Riitu's stories, which the protagonist supplements and which are built into larger universes of meaning, and allusions to other fictional worlds like those created by Dostoyevsky and Camus. Reading *Tohtori Finckelman*, we are invited to maintain several different realities at the same time: the "realist" and the "sur-realist" levels of the storyworld, as well as the worlds of meaning created by the intra- and intertextual references.

The best example of the complexity of different levels is Chapter 27 which portrays the rape. The events are narrated mostly from the perspective of the experiencing I who is in a shattering state, and this makes it possible for the narrator to claim that he does not know what actually happened (see also Salin 2002, 200–201). The beginning of the chapter creates a link to the prodromal symptoms of psychosis: the world around the protagonist is getting a curious meaning, and the atmosphere could be described as delusional (see Sass 1994, 44–45). Furthermore, there are strong parallels between the protagonist's experiences and the way Camus depicts Meursault's thoughts and sensations just before his crime in *L'Étranger*: the weather is hot, the protagonist is close to water, the narration focuses on bodily sensations, and there is a feeling of heaviness and pressure (see Camus 1942, 92–95; see also Salin 2002, 201). So again, there are at least two mutually intertwined paths for interpretation: psychological and metafictional/intertextual.

Let us look at the chapter more carefully. It begins with the narrator recounting that he was very tired after a week at the hospital and that he was suffering from the oppressive heat. In the previous chapter, which the narrator has named "the fatal chapter," he has had the horrible argument with Lili. He has talked about his *Übermensch* morality to Lili and Lili has called him insane and "Finckelman." After the encounter, the protagonist has deeply regretted his behavior: he has realized that he has said things he was in no way meaning to say (already when talking to Lili he has felt that "some unknown force"[233] was putting the words in his mouth). In short, readers can see that he is in a very unstable state of mind. He now goes to a forest and sits on a stone—much like he used to do when he was young and melancholy and thought about the death of his parents and the police chief's daughter.

https://doi.org/10.21435/sflit.13

A careful description of his environment, bodily experiences and sensations follows, also focusing on his bodily memories and evoking sensory imagination:

> I am bareheaded and without a coat. I go the lake shore nearby and sit on a stone. The lake is smooth as glass, the trees are reflected in the water and they look very tall, the water seems to continue endlessly. The pressure down there must be immense, it occurs to me, it must be hard to breathe. But I breathe freely again now, I draw breath for a long time so that I don't die out of lack of oxygen. The air is somehow oppressive, I feel tired, I don't think about anything. And when I caress the stone, it feels weirdly familiar. Have I once in the past read mysterious things from its side? It is difficult to leave from there, from the stone, it is as if I were glued on the spot. I get up anyway, I take a few steps. But when I walk further, the air starts to feel weirdly familiar. It is as if there was a thin veil on it. I try to remember, I try to remember, perhaps once before I have been somehow close to this air and this current state? Where? When? Was it perhaps in my youth or in a completely foreign land and long, long ago? Or perhaps in my past life? I lift my feet mechanically and I don't really know who I am. Perhaps I am just someone who is here by accident.
>
> Olen avopäin ja ilman takkia, menen läheisen järven rantaan, istuudun kivelle. Järvi on peilityyni, puut kuvastelevat siihen ja näyttävät hyvin pitkiltä, vettä näyttää olevan loppumattomiin. Mahtaa olla paine suuri tuolla alhaalla, tulee mieleen, siellä varmaan olisi vaikea hengittää. Mutta minä hengitän nyt taas vapaasti, vedän pitkään etten kuolisi hapen puutteeseen. Ilma on jotenkin painostava, raukaisee, en ajattele mitään. Ja kun sivelen kiveä kädelläni, se tuntuu ihmeen tutulta, olenko ehkä joskus menneisyydessä lukenut sen kyljestä salaperäisiä asioita? Siitä on vaikea irrota kiveltä, on kuin olisin liimautunut siihen paikkaan. Nousen kuitenkin, otan muutaman askelen. Mutta kun kävelen pitemmälle, rupeaa ilma tuntumaan kumman tutunomaiselta. Siinä on kuin ohut harso päällä. Muistelen ja muistelen, kenties siis joskus ennen olen ollut jotenkin lähellä tätä ilmaa ja nykyistä olotilaa? Missä? Milloin? Oliko se ehkä nuoruudessani vaiko aivan vieraassa maassa ja kauan, kauan sitten? Vai edellisessä elämässänikö? Nostelen koneellisesti jalkojani enkä tiedä oikein, kuka olen. Ehkäpä olenkin vain jokin tänne sattumalta eksynyt… (TF 259–260.)

The narrator adapts himself once again almost completely to the perspective of the experiencing I. The water is still, endless, and pressuring, and the air is heavy. He is caressing the stone, imagining "mysterious things," walking, and trying to find answers. Several interpretations are offered: there is a sense of mystery, and it is suggested that the protagonist somehow returns to the stone of his youth, or even to a more ancient time, to a "foreign land." He first feels that he is "glued" to the stone and then experiences a "veil" in the air. He is "mechanically" lifting his feet and does not "really know who he is." There is a loss of sense of self, place and time, as Salin (2002, 201) also notes. The experiences can be interpreted as prodromal symptoms: the delusional atmosphere is coloring the world around him and it seems that an episode of psychosis or dissociation is developing. However, at the same time, the possibility of a mystical explanation is maintained.

https://doi.org/10.21435/sflit.13

The following passages that lead to the rape scene are worth examining closely. First, the narrator continues by recounting how he was trying to console himself but is suddenly disturbed by another person in the forest, and the reality "changes" once again:

> Anyway, this is good… It is much better like this…
> This is how I speak quietly and walk ahead. A person comes toward me. They seem weirdly distant. Why won't you leave me in peace, I would like to say. Stay on your own side…
> And I *went* to the land that does not exist, and I watched the movement of nothingness there. And it was a good land, there was no burden on the shoulders, no ring around my temple, it felt light to be. And I said to all of them: This is a good land, the air smells empty… I am part of the same tribe, exactly, the same: only a piece of air, a light breeze, I don't smell like anything… And they accepted me fully…

> Joka tapauksessa näin on hyvä… On paljon parempi näin…
> Noin puhelen hiljaa ja kuljen eteenpäin. Joku ihminen tulee vastaan. Hän vaikuttaa oudon etäiseltä. Miksi ette jätä minua rauhaan, haluaisin hänelle sanoa. Pysykää omalla puolellanne…
> Ja minä *menin* maahan jota ei ole, katselin siellä olemattomuuden liikettä. Ja se oli hyvä maa, ei ollut punnuksia hartioilla eikä rengasta ohimoni ympärillä, oli kevyt olla. Ja sanoin heille kaikille: Tämäpäs on hyvä maa, ilma tuoksuu tyhjälle … Olen samaa heimoa, niin juuri, aivan samaa: vain palanen ilmaa, ohut henkäys, en haise millekään … Ja he hyväksyivät minut täydellisesti … (TF 260, emphasis added.)

Whereas he earlier was (as if) in the forest of his youth, he is now in the "other land" with his "friends." He appears as disembodied, detached, and dissociated from his actions, and there is a sense of lightness and belonging. As the passage continues, the different realities begin overlapping and he seems to "return" to the forest and continues speaking to himself: "So I am walking here, I say to myself just to say something. I feel enormous pity for myself because I am walking in that spot, there, and I feel even more enormous pity because it is me. But I try to not think about it, it is enough that I get to take a look at the yard where the unshackled people are…"[234] He seems to be longing to the "other land" where people are "free" ("unshackled"). After these thoughts, he suddenly hears a sound that splits the time—and that could be interpreted as a trigger of dissociation. However, as usual, the protagonist immediately denies what he is experiencing: "I hear three sharp whistles in my ears. They do pierce the air a little bit unpleasantly and it is as if they were dividing the time into two, but otherwise I don't care about them at all. I start walking in their direction, I don't know why."[235]

As he continues to the direction of the whistles, he sees again the person walking in front of him and starts to follow them (the Finnish pronouns allow that the gender is not revealed), feeling alienated and light: "I don't know who they are […]. And I don't want to know, because all people are very far from me now […]. They reach the edge of the forest. I go after them, my feet appear to be in that direction and take me forward, they carry

https://doi.org/10.21435/sflit.13

me well, my body is light as a feather and it weighs almost nothing."[236] The motif of acting without his own volition is repeated in the description of the way he moves. Then he suddenly starts to speak in a strange language: "I splutter out vague words, I don't know what language that is. Perhaps it is Lili language… My eyes spread, and I live an ancient life…"[237] He seems to be in the exhilarating mood that sometimes comes over him when he is in contact with Lili (see also Salin 2002, 204)—and we can also recall the dance with the actress of Holy Virgin in Part One.

Suddenly, he understands that he is actually following a couple: "There are two human beings walking in front of me, I realize, I am not alone although I should be. One *was* bigger, the other one smaller, a man and a woman, to be exact. Something familiar in them both. Everything *is* familiar to me now, stones, trees, people. Where are they going? What is the purpose of my life at the moment…" (emphasis added) [238] The tense changes twice in the sentence: first the narrator seems to come forward to reflect on the appearance of the people, then the perspective returns to the protagonist who experiences a strange feeling of familiarity. The different levels of reality continue to exist simultaneously: he is in the forest but also in his youth and in the "other land."

After this, he begins to feel uncomfortable: "My path doesn't feel as reliable as before, different kinds of feet trample it and make it dirty."[239] He has a thought about being a shadow following the couple and starts bragging to himself: "I am a shadow behind the children of men, it comes to my mind. It is metaphorical speech, I explain to myself, it is very well said, few people could say like that. Because I am light as a feather, I fly on my heels…"[240] He rushes on, as his feet are taking him forward into this "mysterious" world, he "walks and walks" and then stops. Suddenly his patient Reseda comes to his mind and he thinks that he has "suspected" something but we do not learn what: "I startle. Was it Reseda? The thought flashes in my consciousness like a lightning, I have perhaps been thinking about this the whole way. But I should have realized it. I have suspected."[241] He remembers the three whistles, and starts to struggle with himself about what he should do. He also wonders who the second person is, and continues that he is tired after working "with the maniacs" all week: responsibility weighs on him. Finally, he says to himself that "there is freedom in the forest..."[242] The thought is unfinished but it seems to refer to the freedom enjoyed by Dr. Finckelman: being above moral codes, without "shackles," having no responsibility or duty to anyone.

Then comes the rape scene:

> I know now what is going on, I am sure. A strange feeling of powerlessness and shame overcomes me, I stand there without moving. I stand and I stand. A moment later I recognize a strange growl, it is as if some animal was uttering something, spit falling from its mouth. It is lust, I say to myself. Are these human beings? I ask.
>
> Then the other one, the man, says something, I cannot hear what.
>
> Perhaps he forbade because the growl became quiet, silent. Then there is only panting.
>
> Suddenly I whistle, three times, sharply. It is Reseda, I say to myself, it is her! But I must protect her, after all, I am bound by duty. Who is the other? It is him,

https://doi.org/10.21435/sflit.13

> I say, probably it is him, most certainly it is him…
> Tiedän nyt mitä on tekeillä, olen varma. Omituinen voimattomuuden ja häpeän tunne valtaa minut, seison hievahtamatta. Seison, seison. Hetken kuluttua erotan merkillistä ölinää, on kuin jokin eläin ääntelisi, kuola valuen pitkin suupieliä. Se on hekumaa se, sanon itsekseni. Ovatko nämä ihmisiä? Kysyn.
> Sitten sanoo jotakin se toinen, mies, en kuule mitä hän sanoo.
> Ehkäpä kielsi, koska ölinä hiljentyi, vaimenee kokonaan. Sitten on vain huohotusta.
> Äkkiä vihellän, kolmasti, terävästi. Se on Reseda, sanon itselleni, se on hän! Mutta minun on häntä suojeltava, on sittenkin, olen velvollinen siihen. Kuka se toinen on? Se on hän, sanon, luultavasti se on hän, aivan varmasti se on hän… (TF 262.)

He seems to be in shock: he feels powerless, ashamed, unable to move, listening. It is as if *he* were the victim. Suddenly, *he* whistles three times and becomes again convinced that the other person is Reseda. He realizes that he has a "duty" to "protect" her. He first suspects and then is sure who the man is—we may recall his habit of becoming sure of something he has imagined—but only refers to "him" with the pronoun and we never learn a name. He then runs to the scene: "I jump out from my hiding place. The man has just stood up, the three whistles have surprised him. I see him disappearing to the thicket like a shadow."[243] The man escapes and he is left alone with Reseda who seems to be unconscious. Moments later he introduces himself to passers-by as "Dr. Finckelman" (TF 263). He takes Reseda to the surgical hospital and tells a surgeon to examine her, explaining quite nonsensically: "Perhaps an operation has to be performed."[244] All the details suggest that he is now Dr. Finckelman.

Three Interpretive Paths

How should readers interpret the scene? In it everything we have been told earlier is used in a thick composition. There is the familiar style of thought: doubt, constant denials, and bragging. There are familiar motifs: the stone, the veil (which he once saw in the forest also when he was young), the sensations of heaviness and lightness, the machine-like quality, the other world, and the sense of being guided involuntarily. The description of the pressure and the ominous feeling at the beginning resembles the prodromal stages of psychosis, and the "other land," its lightness and strange meaningfulness, could be interpreted as a world of full-blown psychosis. The description of the "time split in two" could be a sign of dissociative trauma. The narration even hints at vicarious trauma experienced by someone witnessing an act of violence: the protagonist is overwhelmed by powerlessness and shame. On the other hand, there are hints at the protagonist's past and something "mystical." It is also strange how the protagonist first seems to be following the whistles involuntarily and then suddenly whistles himself.

The biggest question disturbing readers is: is the protagonist guilty of rape? And this question leads to others: What do his experiences of paralysis and shame mean? Why does he whistle? Is he the "shadow" or the other man (and what is the difference)? Who is he? Why does he introduce himself as "Dr. Finckelman"? In the passages that follow the rape scene, the narrator

https://doi.org/10.21435/sflit.13

recounts how the other characters started to suspect him of the rape, and the readers probably will, too. There are again several different ways to interpret the events. Let us focus on three possible interpretations that pay attention to 1) the intratextual connection between the rape scene and Lieutenant Saleva's earlier blackmail scene, 2) the *mise-en-abyme* structures (Raiski's novel and Riitu's story), and 3) feelings of guilt.

(1) Saleva's Scene

Several hints point to Saleva's guilt and he ultimately confesses the rape. One of these hints is an earlier scene that anticipates the rape scene (see Salin 2002, 202). In Chapter 23, when Saleva has accused the protagonist of sleeping with the nurses and patients of the hospital and then left the protagonist's office, the protagonist has heard three whistles coming from the outside. He has been upset about Saleva's accusations—which we know to be at least partly true—and refused to be blackmailed by him. What is interesting is that right after hearing the whistles, the protagonist "moves" to the other world and only "returns" when Reseda appears at his office:

> I turned my back to the vile slanders and left the gossips there.
>
> Suddenly I woke up, I heard three sharp whistles; the window was open. But I didn't pay any special attention to this, I just remarked it. Because I moved away from here, I ended up in a strange region, I, the deep-water fish. And the pressure was enormous down there, the weight of the masses above my head, I felt it with my every nerve. […]
>
> From those sentiments I was woken up by Reseda. She was standing at my door with a bouquet of flowers in her hands. She had gone to pick them. The door had been open, she had been able to come in. Her cheeks were rosy, she was staring at me incessantly like always. She gave me the flowers. I thanked. Where had she gotten them? From the forest.
>
> Käänsin selkäni kaikelle alhaiselle ja jätin juorut siihen paikkaan.
>
> Havahduin, kuulin kolme terävää vihellystä, ikkuna kun oli auki. Mutta en kiinnittänyt siihen erikoista huomiota, vain totesin. Sillä minä siirryin täältä pois, osuin oudolle seudulle, minä syvänmeren kala. Ja paine oli siellä hirvittävä, vesimassojen paino pääni päällä, tunsin sen jokaisella hermollani. […]
>
> Noista tunnelmista minut herätti Reseda. Hän seisoi ovellani kukkakimppu kädessä. Oli käynyt poimimassa. Ovi oli jäänyt auki, hän oli päässyt sisään. Hänen poskensa punoittivat, hän tuijotti minua herkeämättä kuten aina ennenkin. Hän ojensi minulle kukat. Kiitin. Mistä hän oli ne saanut? Metsästä. (TF 185.)

In this move to the other world the protagonist experiences immense pressure, just like at the beginning of Chapter 27 at the lake shore. There is no lightness, no enjoyment, but he tells himself that he will "get used" to the pressure and make friends: he then summons Lerkkanen and Finckelman and goes to his "own people" (TF 185). When he wakes up, Reseda is there, and we learn that she has been in the forest and brought him flowers. After reading the rape scene, we can connect this earlier scene to it. In the rape scene the whistles the protagonist hears seem to first remind him of Reseda, but in the middle of the violence it is suddenly the protagonist himself who

https://doi.org/10.21435/sflit.13

whistles three times and then rushes to help her. As mentioned earlier, the whistles could also be interpreted as triggering an experience of dissociation or depersonalization in the protagonist. Who is he and what happens to him during his visits to the "other world"?

In the end, the protagonist is certain that he is innocent and that Saleva is guilty, but it is unlikely that any reader would be convinced: Saleva's guilt is not conclusive and there are also several things that hint otherwise. His confession seems forced and there are many reasons to suspect the protagonist who, as readers can infer, uses his profession and judge Niilas's help to be cleared of the charges. Most importantly: Reseda identifies the protagonist as the rapist. The protagonist claims that Reseda (who according to him is "retarded") has been in love with him and is "fantasizing," and he uses his institutional powers to silence her and to shift the blame on Saleva (TF 275). Based on everything we know about the protagonist's misogynous ideas, he appears to be highly unreliable in his defense. On the other hand, it could be that (also) Saleva has been abusing Reseda: during a "long interrogation" he confesses that he has been whistling outside the hospital to call Reseda to join him in the forest (TF 276).

Kare (1952/1996, 360) and Vainio (1975, 190) have suggested that Saleva and the narrator-protagonist are actually one and the same person. Saleva is guilty, but so is the narrator (see also Salin 2002, 204–205; 218–219). On the one hand, the whistling supports the interpretation that Saleva is the protagonist's double (or a manifestation of his "subconscious," as suggested by Sarajas 1953/1980, 72). On the other hand, as Salin (2002, 220) argues, we should read Saleva as a character who does exist in the storyworld, not only as a part of the protagonist's unconscious or dissociated personality. Even though Saleva is the protagonist's double in many ways, they are not strictly the same. The protagonist has also other doubles: Niilas, Mellonen, Simpanen, and especially the imaginary-hallucinatory Dr. Finckelman, whose identity he fully adopts after the rape. Readers are left to oscillate between the protagonist's and Saleva's guilt—unless we agree that the guilt is somehow shared between the two, as some readers imply (see Kare 1952/1996, 360–361; Vainio 1975, 190 and Sarajas 1953/1980, 72).

(2) Mise-en-abyme Structures: (a) Raiski's Novel and (b) Riitu's Story

Second, it is possible to look for answers from the *mise-en-abyme* structures of the novel, as Salin (2002, 208–216) has done in her reading. Riitu's story and writer Raiski's novel both reflect the crime. Reading the scene in terms of mirror structures makes sense especially because the other characters are more like webs of intertextual connections than "mimetic" figures resembling actual people. Here we have come far from the reading of the protagonist through common psychological frames. As discussed in Chapter 2, *Tohtori Finckelman* cannot—as if any fictional text could—be read only through real-world frames: it uses them, connects them to other readings of other texts, and creates a composition that follows aesthetic principles and has ethical functions, in addition to evoking experiences of dissociation, hallucination, and psychosis.

https://doi.org/10.21435/sflit.13

Let us first look at the connection between writer Raiski's novel and the rape (*2a*). In an early discussion between the protagonist and Lili, he has told her about Raiski's novel. Later, readers can notice that the novel (or what little we learn about it) reflects the situation after the rape.[245] The protagonist explains the story to Lili: "Some man has committed a murder but says that despite everything he is innocent. He cannot explain, he is a simple human being, but he feels that he is innocent. He has been guided by strange powers at the time of the murder… It is about something like that."[246] There are several connections to the protagonist: he too often feels that he is "guided by strange powers." Sometimes this can be interpreted as a symptom of mental distress, sometimes as a hint of "mystical things."

In Raiski's novel, the man is convicted, but Lili thinks that this is wrong. The protagonist tells her that also Raiski, the author, has started to regret the ending:

> – This is what Raiski thinks too, he has changed his position. Or he is uncertain, falters. But I disagree. The way the author produces evidence is not convincing, it is not certain enough that the protagonist would be innocent.
> – Can it be proved then? No, it can't be because no one can see the soul of another human being. Who is guilty, who is innocent – who is able to tell? Can you?
> – One has to be able to, it is part of the profession. In light the of modern psychology… or how should I say—the brilliant insights of modern psychology… One of the basic truths of psychoanalysis is, you see…
> – Stop blabbering!
>
> – Sitä mieltä Raiskikin on, on muuttanut kantaansa. Tai on epävarma, horjuu. Mutta minä olen toista mieltä. Kirjailijan todistelu ei vakuuta, päähenkilön syyttömyys ei ole kyllin selvä.
> – Voidaanko se sitten todistaa? Eihän sitä voida, eihän kukaan voi nähdä toisen ihmisen sieluun. Kuka on syyllinen, kuka syytön – kuka sen voi sanoa? Voitteko te sanoa?
> – On pakko voida, se kuuluu ammattiin. Nykyaikaisen psykologian valossa …tai kuinka sanoisin – uuden psykologian nerokkaat oivallukset … Psykoanalyysin perustotuuksiin kuuluu nähkääs …
> – Älkää jaaritelko! (TF 160.)

In this discussion, the protagonist takes the position that it is possible to decide who is guilty or innocent. He relies on "modern psychology."[247] He seems to imply that there are no "strange powers" that could be blamed, other than those that can be found via psychoanalysis. If we take the protagonist at his word and if Raiski's novel and the rape mirror each other, then there are no alleviating circumstances, no mysterious "forces" that can be said to have caused the crime. We, the readers, have access "to the soul" of the protagonist through the book we are reading: we can go through all the evidence, assess his thoughts, speech and actions, connect them and make a judgment about his guilt or innocence. However, based on their thoughts about Raiski's novel, it seems that Lili and Raiski would absolve the protagonist from the crime—and as we learn much later in the epilogue, Oskari, Pomila, and Lili will do exactly this, for no matter what the protagonist has done (or failed to

https://doi.org/10.21435/sflit.13

do), they will give him another chance—and following the example given by the other characters, so might the readers as well.

Another, even more important *mise-en-abyme* structure is the story that Riitu begins and the protagonist supplements (*2b*) (see also Salin 2002, 208–216). As we have learned, in Part One Riitu introduces the characters of Lerkkanen and Ellinora to the protagonist, who invents Dr. Finckelman. In Part Two, in Chapter 25, the group of friends (the protagonist, Mellonen, Raiski, Niilas, Lili, later Saleva and Pomila) have the party at Mellonen's club and each participant offers monologues about the meaning of life, except the protagonist who is quiet and seems alienated but would not want to be a "bystander." When he becomes drunk, he suddenly decides to tell a story about Finckelman, Riitu, Lerkkanen, and Ellinora. Raiski reveals that the protagonist has been talking about Finckelman also sometimes before when he has been drinking and encourages the protagonist to tell them more. The protagonist begins his story with Riitu and Lerkkanen, reflecting the way also Riitu used to tell his stories, talking about flagrant crimes and belittling them: "And I recounted the funny tricks they made—robberies, murders, rapes—but so cunningly that they were always able to show that they were innocent."[248] He then describes Dr. Finckelman and his moral code (supplementing Riitu's story):

> – And then the group was joined by Finckelman: a civilized, fine man, respected in the society, fancied by women, genius, who was above all crime…
> – What do you mean by that?
> – It's very simple. No crime exists in itself, reasoned Finckelman, there are only customs, habits, a common decision that one thing is seen as appropriate, another one as inappropriate and marked with the word 'crime'. Finckelman could not take this, he looked at things from a higher branch. He too drew some lines, but the lines he drew crossed a different terrain than those of regular citizens.

> – No sitten sakkiin tuli Finckelman: sivistynyt, hieno mies, yhteiskunnan kunnioittama, naisten ihastus, äly, joka oli kaikkien rikosten yläpuolella…
> – Mitä sillä tarkoitat?
> – Hyvin yksinkertaista. Mitään rikosta ei sellaisenaan ole, järkeili Finckelman, on vain tapoja, tottumuksia, ihmisten yhteinen päätös siitä, että jokin asia katsotaan sopivaksi, toinen sopimattomaksi ja merkitään sanalla 'rikos'. Finckelman ei tällaista sietänyt, hän katseli asioita korkeammalta oksalta. Kyllä hänkin veti rajoja, mutta hänen linjansa kulkivat eri maastossa kuin tavallisten kansalaisten. (TF 212–213.)

Finckelman's is an ethics of complete relativism: he too "draws lines" but not where other people do, he is above all ethics. The protagonist then tells his audience how Riitu, Lerkkanen, and Finckelman fight over Ellinora, and how in the morning they find her dead. According to the story, Finckelman decides to frame her death as a suicide by hanging:

> – […] One can of course hang a dead person, he thought; with someone who is alive it is different, it is best to kill that one with poison…
> – You say horrible things!
> – Finckelman was like that, Riitu was the one who told this to me.

https://doi.org/10.21435/sflit.13

> – […] Kyllä kuolleen voi aina hirttää, hän ajatteli; elävän kanssa on asia toisin, se on paras tappaa myrkyllä…
> – Tehän puhutte hirveitä!
> – Finckelman oli sellainen, Riitu tämän minulle kertoi. (TF 214.)

Lili is horrified, but the protagonist hides behind Riitu, evading responsibility: the story "belongs" to someone else (although we know that Dr. Finckelman is the protagonist's own invention). After this, the storytelling is interrupted. Mellonen returns to the party after kicking out the drunk Saleva and the protagonist does not get to finish the story—and actually he even could not, as the narrator confesses that he had run out of ideas.

Later, Lili and the protagonist are alone together, and Lili wants to know the end of the story:

> – […] So how did it go? Who was guilty?
> I was in trouble, I did not know how to reply. I had forgotten the whole story. – Finckelman, I said at random.
> – He?
> – Yes. He had given poison to Ellinora…
> […]
> – What an interesting man. Do you know him?
> – Very well.
> – It would be great to meet him. Bring him with you sometime, when you visit.
> – Thank you, definitely!
>
> – No miten siinä kävi? Kuka oli syyllinen?
> Olin pahassa pinteessä, en tiennyt miten olisin vastannut. Olin unohtanut jo koko kertomukseni. – Finckelman, sanoin summassa.
> – Hänkö?
> – Niin. Hän oli antanut Ellinoralle myrkkyä…
> […]
> – Olipa mielenkiintoinen mies. Tunnetteko hänet?
> – Oikein hyvin.
> – Olisi hauska tutustua. Tuokaa hänet joskus mukananne, kun käytte.
> – Kiitos, varmasti! (TF 219.)

In the story, Dr. Finckelman is guilty, although this is quickly decided by the protagonist since he does not know how to continue. In the end, Lili and the protagonist turn the story into a joke. However, later, when the group starts to dance, the protagonist begins to feel alienated again (and humiliated because Lili has said that he dances like Raiski), and suddenly he grabs Lili. The narrator recollects his thoughts in the moment—or more precisely, what he seemingly *was not* thinking:

> What was I thinking? Nothing at all, it definitely did not occur to me to strip her off her clothes and do violence to her, it did not occur to me at all. No, that would be crazy! On the contrary, I shunned the thought, because I only wanted to squeeze her against myself, that was my purpose, only to squeeze her right and at most strangle her to death—that was all.

https://doi.org/10.21435/sflit.13

> Mitä oikein ajattelin? En kerrassaan mitään, ei juolahtanut mieleenikään riisua häntä alasti ja tehdä hänelle väkivaltaa, ei tullut mieleenikään tuo ajatus. Ei, mitäs hulluja! Päinvastoin minä kavahdin tuota ajatusta, sillä halusin vain puristaa häntä vasten itseäni, se oli tarkoitukseni, vain likistää oikein ja korkeintaan kuristaa hänet kuoliaaksi, ei muuta. (TF 232.)

His thoughts, through the hyperbolic denial, reveal violent urges toward Lili. Lili bites him and is able to escape. After the incident, the protagonist is deeply embarrassed and makes up a new speech: "I am a dog, you hear, a horny dog! Hear me! I said. […] I am the devil from the book of Revelation, hahaha… I am Finckelman, I laughed out loud to make what happened an object of a funny joke and to put the embarrassing thing out of people's minds."[249] The club scene reveals that although the Finckelman story is a "joke" or "play" (as the protagonist will claim many times later when he is trying to defend himself), Dr. Finckelman, the protagonist's invention, has become a part of his identity. The text maintains the possible reading of the protagonist's actions during the party as due to him being very drunk, but his drunkenness also reveals his (unconscious) identification with Finckelman. When encouraged or pushed, the protagonist takes the doctor's position, even at the crime scene when he introduces himself as "Dr. Finckelman"— and this is the main reason why the other characters start to suspect him. This leads us to a third interpretive path that draws on the events after the rape and takes us to the conclusion that the protagonist is guilty: that he is either acting as or identifying with Dr. Finckelman (see also Salin 2002, 206).

(3) Feelings of Guilt

After the rape, the search is on for a person called "Dr. Finckelman." The protagonist's friends are abandoning him, and it is gradually confirmed that the protagonist and Dr. Finckelman have become one. The narrator shows Dr. Finckelman speaking directly to him in a scene that happens just before the protagonist goes to do his "doctor's business" and abuses Irma. For the first time, readers are in direct contact with Finckelman. He is now "alive," looking at the protagonist, and the narrator reports his speech to us:

> And Finckelman fingers his beard, looks at me under his brows with his horribly crooked eyes, and replies: From the day you, through the testimony of Riitu Jänkäläinen, resurrected me, I have been following you. And I shall travel with you until the end of the world, though only with the condition that you are worth my company. I just ask: is it already believed…
>
> And I concede: you are right. And from that moment we are inseparable, I and Finckelman. Only death can us part…
>
> And in an enormous swamp, squashy mud under our feet I spend wonderful moments with Finckelman. A sensuous celebration…

> Ja Finckelman sormeilee leukaansa, katsoo minua alta kulmain umpikieroilla silmillään, vastaa: Hamasta siitä päivästä lähtien jona sinä Riitu Jänkäläisen todistuksen kautta minut herätit henkiin, olen seurannut sinua. Ja olen käyvä kanssasi maailman loppuun asti, tosin sillä ehdolla, että sinussa on minulle arvoistani seuraa. Minä kysyn vain: jokos uskotaan…

https://doi.org/10.21435/sflit.13

> Minä myönnän: oikeassa olet. Ja olemme siitä hetkestä erottamattomat, minä ja Finckelman. Vain kuolema voi liittomme murtaa..
>
> Ja suunnattomalla suolla upottava lieju jalkojen alla vietän Finckelmanin kanssa ihastuttavia hetkiä. Hekumallista juhlaa… (TF 268.)

The protagonist admits that he and Dr. Finckelman are inseparable. The narrator borrows words from the wedding vows ("Only death can us part") and tells us that they enjoy an exhilarating "sensuous celebration" at a swamp. Dr. Finckelman is the protagonist's invention, but as Markus Envall (1988, 113–114) lists, he is also "the culmination of the development of the miserable man"; "a life-project"; "an idealization of becoming non-human"; "a Nietzschean *Übermensch*"; "the Devil or its incarnation"; and finally, "a substitute for self, an ideal self, a professional role and an *alter ego*."

Soon after his "union" with Dr. Finckelman, the protagonist begins to experience inexplicable feelings of distress and guilt. In Chapter 32 we learn that Lili has shot Niilas (by accident, as we learn later), he has died, and the protagonist goes through another delusional episode. This time it does not result in feelings of lightness. His world is being "pulled" out of its place:

> Everything is quite strange, nothing is as it should be. It feels empty, stagnant, as if nature had had a stroke. Something has happened, I realize, something that very unpleasantly pushes its way into my life too. It is as if some kind of ropes were pulling my world off its rails. Invisible ropes. This is none of my business, nothing that has happened, I say, not at all, there's no point in pulling… Leave me alone, I am an outsider… But still they force their way through, something keeps pulling the raft on which I am standing, although all sense says that I should have my own raft, my own world that is mine alone. The raft should absolutely belong to me alone, no one else should have anything to do with it. But no, no! Something is wrong. Something is pulling and drawing, downwards rather… I cannot stand it, I escape. I go to the land where I am my own lord and king. It is different than this over here, it is a land of Great Freedom. And Finckelman is also there.
>
> Kaikki on perin kummallista, ei mikään ole niin kuin pitäisi. Tuntuu tyhjältä, seisahtuneelta, on kuin luonto olisi saanut halvauksen. On sattunut jotakin, havaitsen, jotakin joka hyvin epämiellyttävästi työntyy minunkin elämääni. Jonkinlaiset köydet ikään kuin kiskovat minunkin maailmaani pois raiteiltaan, näkymättömät köydet. Ei tämä minulle kuulu, tämä kaikki mikä on tapahtunut, sanon, ei ollenkaan, turha kiskoa… Jättäkää rauhaan, olen sivullinen… Mutta ne työntyvät sittenkin, jokin vain kiskoo sitä lauttaa jolla seison, vaikka kaiken järjen nimessä minulla pitäisi olla oma lauttani, minun maailmani, joka on vain minun. Kertakaikkiaan sen pitäisi olla yksinomaan minun, muilla ei pitäisi olla asiaa. Mutta ei, eipäs vain! Jokin on vinossa. Jokin kiskoo ja vetää, paremminkin alaspäin…En voi sietää sellaista, pakenen. Menen maahan, jossa olen oma herrani ja kuninkaani. Se on toista kuin tämä täällä, se on Suuren Vapauden maa. Ja Finckelman on siellä myös. (TF 314–315.)

He insists that he is "an outsider" but appears to be ridden with guilt: he is not free or detached from others, without responsibility. He escapes to

https://doi.org/10.21435/sflit.13

the other land of “Great Freedom” where Finckelman is, but there he meets someone:

> Some man is walking on a road, a road that is different from all other roads. Perhaps it isn’t a road at all… It just is… He walks on it, sees nothing, notices nothing, just looks in front of him, looks and looks, peeks to the pit of nothingness, over the border, it is quiet around, as it always is in that land. So he walks, I can see him clearly. And everyone can see him, everyone who is there, they stare at the man. But he sees no one, nothing, not even the black water into which he falls without noticing. Because suddenly the road has disappeared, the ground is gone, there is only the deep water. “Help!” the man screams with a pitiful voice. But they only watch, no one raises a finger to help, they only look with their eyes that are like stone. “My goodness doesn’t anyone help a man who is drowning?” I hear myself ask all of them. “No,” they say, “here no one helps, this is how it is. But here no one burdens another, everyone is their own master.” “Help! Help!” the man howls in a horror of death. “Finckelman, help!” “I help no one. I am an educated man, I respect the human being. Everyone has a right to walk their own road.” I am horrified to hear that, it raises a sweat on my forehead, especially as I notice, to my surprise that the howling man is me. It is me!
>
> I startle as I walk on the road. Where do these things come to my mind…
>
> My feet are strangely heavy.

> Eräs mies kulkee tietä, kulkee sellaista tietä joka on erilainen kuin kaikki toiset tiet. Eikä se oikein tie olekaan … Onpahan vain … Hän kulkee sitä pitkin, ei näe mitään, ei mitään huomaa, katsoo vain eteensä, katsoo ja katsoo, kurkistelee olemattoman syvyyksiin, rajan yli, ympärillä on hiljaista kuten siinä maassa aina on. Näin hän kulkee, minä näen hänet selvästi. Ja kaikki hänet näkevät, kaikki jotka siellä ovat, he tuijottavat miestä. Mutta hän ei näe ketään, ei mitään, ei edes mustaa vettä, johon hän huomaamattaan pulahtaa. Sillä äkkiä tie onkin poissa, maa on kadonnut, on vain syvä vesi. ”Auttakaa!” mies parkuu surkealla äänellä. Mutta he katsovat vain, kukaan ei nosta sormeaankaan auttaakseen, katsovat vain kivettynein silmin. ”Hyvänen aika, eikö täällä kukaan auta hukkuvaa?” minä kuulen kysyväni heiltä kaikilta. ”Ei,” he sanovat, ”täällä ei auta kukaan, täällä on näet sellainen tapa. Mutta ei täällä kukaan painakaan toista, jokainen on täällä oma herransa.” ”Auttakaa! Auttakaa!” se mies ulvoo kuoleman kauhussa. ”Finckelman, auta!” ”En auta ketään. Olen oppinut mies, kunnioitan ihmistä. Jokaisella tulee olla oikeus kulkea tiensä loppuun.” Minua hirvittää kuulla, se nostaa tuskanhien otsalleni, etenkin kun ihmeekseni huomaan, että se ulvova mies olen minä. Minä itse!
>
> Hätkähdän siinä tiellä kulkiessani. Mistä ne tuollaiset tulevatkaan mieleen …
>
> Jalkani ovat kummallisen raskaat. (TF 315–316.)

The other land is no more a good place. He realizes that “the howling” drowning man who gets no help from others is himself. At the end of the passage he wakes up from the hallucination and his feet feel “strangely heavy.” The trip to the other world appears as an allegory of his situation after the rape.

In the actual world, however, it still seems that the protagonist is on the “winning” side. Just like the protagonist’s uncle earlier, the chief physician has suddenly died, and the protagonist has become the head of the hospital.

https://doi.org/10.21435/sflit.13

The narrator reveals this casually, as if in passing: "I was the chief physician of our hospital now, you see: the former one had died, and I was appointed to his post. It was a great honor for a young man."[250] He has the new position and he is becoming more and more wealthy: he sells Niilas's (who is now dead) worthless quarry shares to Mellonen who goes bankrupt and loses his mind, and at the same time the protagonist's own quarry at Riitu's former cottage proves to be extremely profitable. In addition to Mellonen, Raiski and Saleva end up in the hospital, as does Lili. In the end, Niilas's ex-wife Irma is the only one who "survives": "I am leaving now, she said to me sharply. […] Yes. Goodbye, Dr. Finckelman! Then she left. I was left there high and dry."[251] After all his other friends have ended up as his patients, the protagonist focuses on developing "humane treatments" at the hospital: "'Treat them humanely,' I said. I myself tried to understand them even better, for example Raiski, even Saleva…"[252] However, as can be expected, the talk about "humane treatment" is soon negated as a disorder breaks: "Finally, the nurses were able to calm the patients so that they were able to lock them again in their rooms."[253] But although he seems to be managing on some level, not everything is well: "I became more and more careful, I watched behind my back constantly, no one could surprise me."[254] Finckelman's shadow seems to be following him: he is ridden with guilt.

Dr. Finckelman

In Chapter 33 the "true face" of Doctor Finckelman is finally revealed to the protagonist himself. Things are bad: "There were discussions, whispers, they were plotting behind my back. And patients, nurses, even the interns pulling the same rope! This is the most devilish place where a man can be, I told myself. This is torture!"[255] Once again there are two ways to interpret the narrator's words: either the protagonist is delusional, or the people actually are gossiping about or even plotting against him (we can also recall Raiski, Marke, and Irma in very similar situations earlier). Both interpretations are as plausible: although Saleva is found guilty, there are still rumors about the protagonist's guilt, and he has betrayed so many people that they might very well be scheming against him—or he is paranoid out of guilt. The scene also mirrors another scene from the end of Part One in which the young protagonist says his goodbyes to Riitu: Riitu is in a confused, paranoid state and refuses to drink the milk the protagonist offers him, saying that it is "poisoned" (TF 102). In the epilogue, Oskari reveals to the narrator that Riitu had killed people: "But this broke his mind, he was afraid of everybody. That's the case. Sin does these things… It's in human nature…"[256] The connection between Riitu and the protagonist has now come full circle.

The people's actual or imagined whispers haunting him, the protagonist for the last time tries to take refuge in the other land, but it brings him no comfort:

> I escaped. I went to a land I had visited before, to the other land, where my friends were. But it was a deserted land, stood still, people frozen in their places. They stared at me with pale lips, did not say a word. What is this, I said to myself,

https://doi.org/10.21435/sflit.13

> is this appropriate even… I had been here before. Is my home not anywhere anymore? […]
>
> "Away from here, away!" I howled in horror. "This is a cold land, the soul shivers here…"
>
> "It is not so easy to get out of here," he [Dr. Finckelman] replied. And they all smiled mysteriously.
>
> Minä pakenin, menin maahan jossa olin ollut, siihen toiseen maahan, ystävieni joukkoon. Mutta se olikin autio maa, pysähtynyt, ihmiset jäykistyneinä paikoilleen. He tuijottivat minua kalvain huulin, sanaakaan eivät sanoneet. Mitäs tämä nyt on, minä puhelin itsekseni, onkos tämä enää laitaa… Olinhan minä ennen täällä. Eikö ole kotiani missään? […]
>
> "Pois täältä, pois!" Ulvoin kauhuissani "Tämä on kylmä maa, täällä sielu kalisee…"
>
> "Ei täältä niin vain pääse pois," hän [Dr. Finckelman] vastasi. Ja he kaikki hymyilivät arvoituksellisesti. (TF 322–323.)

Finally, the protagonist realizes:

> So this is what Finckelman is like, I thought puzzled as I returned from there. So this is Finckelman… I sneered, wondered, tried to remember carefully what he was like. And yes, it was him, Finckelman, it really was him, there was something inexplicably familiar in him. The more I remembered, the more familiar he became. In the end he was amazingly familiar, like my own image. I flinched. I flinched furiously. *Because—damn it!—it was actually me. So right here was some other man…*
>
> Vai sellainen se on siis Finckelman, ajattelin hämmentyneenä tullessani sieltä takaisin. Vai tämä se on Finckelman… Hymähtelin, ihmettelin, muistelin tarkkaan, minkälainen hän oikein oli. Ja tosiaan, kyllä hän oli Finckelman, oli kuin olikin, hänessä oli jotakin selittämättömän tuttua. Mitä enemmän muistelin, sitä tutummaksi hän kävi, olipa lopulta vallan ihmeellisen tuttu, oman kuvani kaltainen. Hätkähdin. Ja oikein rajusti. *Sillä – saakeli vie! – sehän olinkin minä. Tässä näin oli siis joku toinen mies…* (TF 323, emphasis mine.)

The true face of Dr. Finckelman is revealed. And here comes the final duck-rabbit illusion: the protagonist has become an ambiguous image. The "other man" or "some man" (whom we have encountered in the forest, drowning in water, in the other world, and who will appear even in the epilogue), Finckelman, and the protagonist himself are all the same.

After this, the narrator recounts how he started to avoid people, afraid that they would notice that he is not himself: "I locked myself inside my apartment, I could not continue the deceitful lie with my eyes open."[257] He still tries to convince himself that everything is all right, but here the narrator comes to the fore and admits explicitly that he was only lying to himself, for instance in saying that he had forgotten Lili: "I have almost forgotten her, I told myself […]. But it was idle speech, I had not forgotten her. I remembered her every day, once a day, only once, but it lasted for twenty-four hours."[258] He starts to hear his patients shouting "Finckelman, Finckelman, Finckelman" (TF 326) and finally calls Oskari to help. Oskari comes, takes care of everything,

https://doi.org/10.21435/sflit.13

and even makes the protagonist give Mellonen his money back. They return to the farm where the protagonist spends "days, weeks, years": "Darkness, night. Life standing still. I remember, I remember, I remember nothing. I try and I try—I remember at least something."[259]

In the epilogue, we learn how the narrator-protagonist slowly, over many years, returns from "his grave" and how he asks Oskari to bring him a pen and paper and starts to write down his story. He is visited by Simpanen who has found faith, and then by Pomila who has a message from Lili. The visitors urge him to look for a "spark of love": "medicine that makes the madman wise."[260] However, old doubts haunt him. In the very end, he escapes once more to the "other land": he sees Finckelman and tries to get away from him, but then the figure turns into "some man" walking in the desert—a man we can interpret as Christ—and the narrator tries to follow him. We are told that he returns to his profession as a psychiatrist. On the final page, Lili tells him to look for a "medicine." Even here the narrator tells his readers that Finckelman's "shadow" is haunting him and that sometimes he "takes up the old mask." [261] Nonetheless, he vows to keep on looking: "Because a medicine has been invented, a healing medicine. One must look for it in the grave, finally one finds it inside one's own chest. I wish I could learn how to use it!"[262] Korpela leaves the ending open: we never find out which side of the narrator ultimately wins, the human or Dr. Finckelman.[263]

As Salin (2002, 219) points out, Korpela's novel resembles many of Dostoyevsky's works in the way the guilt seems to be shared, although it is uncertain who is actually guilty of committing the crime. Korpela himself suggested in an interview, following Dostoyevsky, that "The guilty one can be found everywhere, and everyone is as guilty."[264] The protagonist is punished with guilt that drives him insane and ultimately forces him to try to change his relationship to himself and to others: to look for a medicine from within. However, as Salin (2000, 221) notes, it remains uncertain *what* he is actually guilty of: we never find out for sure whether he is guilty of raping Reseda, or, in a more allegorical interpretation, of failing to help her, Lili, and himself.[265] As Salin (ibid.) puts it: "The uncertainty about his crime is a greater burden to the readers than a clear certainty about his guilt. […] The lack of resolution, in the common sense of *punishment*, does not negate the demand for justice. Rather it makes the guilt infinite and unreconcilable."[266] Korpela brought Dostoyevsky's themes to the situation after the Second World War, and his treatment of guilt, responsibility, and reconciliation could be read in this context: the guilt is about letting things happen, letting oneself and the world be subsumed by cruelty and violence. Ultimately, the uncertainty and ambivalence that permeates the novel invites us to pay attention to structures that create pain and suffering: to forms of violence and abuse of power.

The Ethics of Reading Others

The narrator-protagonist of *Tohtori Finckelman* creates his own solipsistic universe in which the others are his mirrors, doubles, or figments of imagination. His solipsism is quite different from what we saw in the narrator

https://doi.org/10.21435/sflit.13

of *Kaunis sielu*. Whereas it is clear for the readers that the experiences of *Kaunis sielu*'s narrator color the world and other people around her, in *Tohtori Finckelman* the narrator's relationship to others is more ambiguous and readers need to work harder to recognize the power the narrator has over his environment. At first sight, the narrator of *Tohtori Finckelman* appears less solipsistic than the narrator of *Kaunis sielu*: there are the other characters whose speech and sometimes even thoughts are conveyed to us. However, on a closer examination it is easy to notice that the narrator-protagonist sees what he wants in others, he makes them do what he wishes, and plays with them. As a narrator he controls their minds and depicts them as he wants. As a psychiatrist he observes them and even feeds them ideas (for example convincing Raiski that Lili is his long-lost daughter). As Dr. Finckelman he places himself above all others and looks at them with contempt and cruelty. As Salin (2002, 177) writes:

> Korpela's novels form a constant dialogue between encountering the other and solipsism. The protagonist of *Tohtori Finckelman* lives alone in the cramped world of his selfhood, he defines (and as a psychiatrist he also diagnoses) other people in ways that suit himself and despises them, washes his hands of them. At the same time, he is looking for an identity by mirroring himself to others; he is utterly dependent on others. […] Korpela's novels force us to think about how the encountering of the other actually happens? Is it even possible? Do we encounter the other in another human being, or only a figment of our own imagination, a reflection of our own fears and hopes—a fiction?[267]

It becomes clear that the kind of relationship to others that the narrator-protagonist creates is not sustainable. Ultimately, Reseda's rape and Lili's shattering force him to face his ethical responsibility to other human beings.

One part of the criticism of forms of violence in *Tohtori Finckelman* is directed against psychiatry as a profession and as a science with the purpose of "knowing" the minds of others. The problems of psychiatry are made explicit in the ironic description of the "wonderful" profession by the narrator at the beginning of Part Two, as he describes himself as a young psychiatrist who had a "goal":

> I was an esteemed person; I was a doctor, a nerve doctor. My goal was to study the human, to take a look at the depths of the human soul, so to speak. To have a glimpse at the endless pit. And I was quite advanced in my task, *at a point where madness could be cured, if we only found a healing medicine*. Oh, we knew the diagnosis! So, there was nothing more to do but to wait for that medicine and hope for the best, even to pump to others that vitalizing liquid of hope. That was my profession, mine. Others had other professions.
>
> And the goal? To heal the sick human being. To invent a machine that would make sane those who are insane…
>
> Was it a beautiful goal? My dear people, you know yourselves that there is something wonderful about it. You have to admit it; it's your duty to do so. And I did my best. I never missed an opportunity to try to achieve my goal. No. On the contrary, I walked the endless aisles of the mental hospital all day, all night, and every time I came into a doorway of a patient's room, I asked kindly: How are we doing here? Thank you, we're doing great. I continued and came to another

https://doi.org/10.21435/sflit.13

doorway. And I said: Doing great, right? Great, great, thank you for asking. And I continued.

Sometimes we went together, the chief physician and I. Those times we asked the questions in turns. It was easier that way, and it brought some change to the patients' monotonous lives. But the chief could not manage it every day, a person cannot manage endlessly.

Olin arvossapidetty henkilö, olin lääkäri, hermolääkäri. Tarkoitukseni oli tutkia ihmistä, silmätä niin sanoakseni ihmissielun syvyyksiin. Kurkistella olemattoman kuiluun. Ja olin päässyt kokolailla pitkälle, *nimittäin siihen pisteeseen, että hulluuskin voidaan parantaa jos vain keksitään parantava lääke*, – diagnoosit, ne olivat selvillä kyllä! Ei siis muuta kuin odottaa tuota lääkettä ja olla toivorikas, vieläpä pumpata toisiinkin tuota elähdyttävää toivon nestettä. Se oli minun virkani, minun. Toisilla oli toiset virat.

Ja päämäärä? Parantaa sairas ihminen. Keksiä kone, joka tekisi viisaaksi hullun…

Oliko kaunis päämäärä? Hyvät ihmiset, tiedätte itsekin, että siinä on jotakin suurenmoista. Myöntäkää pois, se on teidän tehtävänne. Minä puolestani tein parhaani, en milloinkaan kiertänyt tilaisuutta päämäärään päästäkseni. Ei, päinvastoin kiertelin päivät pitkät suuren mielisairaalan loputtoman pitkiä käytäviä, ja aina kun tulin jonkin potilashuoneen ovelle, tein ystävällisen kysymyksen: Kuinkas täällä voidaan? Kiitos hyvin voitiin. Jatkoin matkaani ja tulin uudelle ovelle. Silloin sanoin näin: No hyvinkös täällä voitiin? Kiitos kysymästä, hyvin täällä voitiin. Jatkoin matkaani.

Joskus kävimme yhdessä, ylilääkäri ja minä. Silloin kyselimme vuorotellen, se oli helpompaa ja toi vaihtelua potilaiden yksitoikkoiseen elämään. Mutta ylilääkäri ei jaksanut joka päivä, ihminen ei jaksa loputtomiin. (TF 109, emphasis mine.)

Once again, the irony is clear: according to the narrator it would be extremely easy to cure madness—if only there were a cure! It is also uncertain which is more important: that the profession is esteemed and offers its practitioners wealth and power, or that its purpose is to help people. The argument the narrator implicitly makes is in line with the antipsychiatric views that were developed around the same time as *Tohtori Finckelman* was written: psychiatry has not been able to find a "cure" for madness; mental hospitals are filled with people with no hope of recovery or of life outside the institutions; the diagnostics have been developed to the point of absurdity; and "therapy" is just a hollow exchange of words. Moreover, the larger narrative about psychiatry that is constructed throughout the novel suggests that the people diagnosing and "treating" illnesses are just as mentally distressed as their patients. The novel thus offers itself for an allegorical reading: a critique of psychiatry, of categorizing people, and of misogyny and abuse of power.

However, paradoxically, the novel invites its readers to try to "read" and interpret the narrator's mind: to reveal his hidden thoughts and to diagnose him. *We* are looking at him "from above" when we try to distance ourselves from him and judge him. And when we empathize with him, there is a danger of falling prey to his manipulations. The novel makes the readers oscillate between the need to be able to read the minds of others and the

https://doi.org/10.21435/sflit.13

impossibility of doing this: the ethical necessity to connect with another and understand one another, and the power relations inherent in such endeavors.

What would then be an ethical relationship between the self and another? The problem is thematized in Chapter 25 in which the characters spend the drunken evening at the club. In his monologue, Pomila presents a "theory" about the self and other. He articulates—albeit in a clumsy way—the experience of a gap between the self and other and the problems of language and speech that were brought up also by the narrator in the prologue and later by Lili when she came to meet the protagonist for the first time:

> But sometimes it feels as if we did not understand one other enough. And it is bad. It feels as if we were completely foreign to one other although we spoke the same language. It is as if we spoke a different language. But it is because—I have been thinking—because the minds are on different levels and they cannot intersect, or they are on the same level and they do intersect, so that there can already be flashes, do you understand? Unions of minds, understanding, pleasure. But it is not until they are on the same level and run parallel to one other that there can be a good feeling for a human being, a wonderful feeling. Don't you agree?
>
> Mutta toisinaan tuntuu kuin emme aina ymmärtäisi toisiamme tarpeeksi. Ja se on paha. Tuntuu nimittäin kuin olisimme aivan vieraita toisillemme vaikka puhummekin samaa kieltä. On kuin puhuisimme eri kieltä. Mutta se johtuu siitä – olen ajatellut – että tajunnat ovat eri tasossa eivätkä voi edes leikata toisiaan, taikka ne ovat kyllä samassa tasossa ja leikkaavat toisensa, niin että voi jo olla välähdyksiä, ymmärrättekö? Tajuntojen yhtymisiä, ymmärtämystä, mielihyvää. Mutta vasta kun ne ovat samassa tasossa ja kulkevat samansuuntaisina, voi syntyä oikein hyvä olo ihmiselle, ihmeellinen. Eikö teistäkin? (TF 225.)

The irony in Pomila's speech is that he has difficulty in expressing and conveying his thoughts to others. However, at the same time, he can be read as a "wise fool" who has a lucid understanding of himself, others, and the world (see also Salin 2002, 255). After Pomila's rambling speech, Raiski adds to the comicality and self-importantly declares that he had "always thought and said the same thing."[268] Later in the evening, Pomila joins the protagonist at his home and continues his theories:

> – […] But there is no equation.
> – Equation?
> – Yes, equation. You see: a human being continuously creates a system—this we discussed already, we agreed. So! Now we would need the system of systems, the culmination of everything, what some specific person thinks, in other words the whole mental world of that person, a culmination, a concentration of his thoughts, which could be written in the form of a simple equation. So we would simplify the whole varied whole. Only a short equation! It would be as if in blazing letters always in front of my eyes—only a look at it, and the person could in everything—even in his speech—follow a clear, consistent line. What do you say? Is this good?

https://doi.org/10.21435/sflit.13

> – […] Mutta kun ei ole yhtälöä.
> – Niin yhtälöä?
> – Aivan niin, yhtälöä. Katsokaas: ihminen luo alituisesti järjestelmää – siitä oli jo puhe, olimme yksimielisiä siitä. No niin! Nyt pitäisi saada järjestelmien järjestelmä, kaiken huipentuma, mitä joku määrätty henkilö ajattelee, siis koko tuon ihmisen ajatuselämän, ajatusmaailman huipentuma, pelkistymä, joka voitaisiin kirjoittaa lyhyen yhtälön muotoon, siis yksinkertaistaa tuo monivivahteinen kokonaisuus siinä määrin. Vain lyhyt yhtälö! Se olisi kuin tulikirjaimin aina silmieni edessä – vain katsaus siihen, ja ihminen voisi kaikessa – puheessaankin – noudattaa selvää johdonmukaista linjaa. Mitäs sanotte? Onko hyvä? (TF 237.)

The statement becomes ironized yet again as Pomila's own thoughts are far from consistent. However, this speech as well as the earlier one reminds us of the narrator's wish to "cut a piece of flesh into his every word" (TF 4). "An equation" would convey everything there is about a person: it would "simplify the whole varied whole" into a "blazing" clause. It would help them live "consistently." But we can see that the dream is futile: no such equation could ever exist. Nonetheless, paradoxically, there is hope: Pomila suggests that Lili is a person who has the answer.

On one level, Lili is nothing but the narrator-protagonist's reflection, an alter ego or a figment of his imagination. She is his conscience, or the emotional, humane side of him to which he is unable to create a connection. On another level, Lili is an actual other with whom the protagonist tries to connect, whom he loves but also pushes away. The way different readers have interpreted Lili is highly interesting. Even though Pomila claims that Lili has the "equation," that everything she is could be expressed in a few blazing letters, Lili has caused trouble for readers who have described her as "contourless," "unrealistic" and "strange" (see Sarajas 1953/1980, 71; Salin 2002, 14). In his review, Rafael Koskimies taps into Korpela's technique in which Lili is hidden from the readers' view. As Salin (2002, 188) also notes, Koskimies touches upon the ethical meaning of the technique, but doubts its aesthetic value:

> She [Lili] should according to the plot be someone who deeply affects the way the events unfold, but after reading the book we know about as much or even less [about her] than when we were reading the first pages. The author has shown skill in the way he hides this person from curious gaze as perfectly as one could wish. A completely different question then is whether such a blind man's bluff is satisfying to anyone. When the narrator's technique is developed until this point—when instead of revelation a thick curtain is drawn in front of a portrait—there is reason to ask whether this is completely legitimate.[269]

Lili is, in the end, an "unreadable mind" in Abbott's (2008) terms or a Lévinasian Absolute Other, as Salin (2002, 264) describes.[270] Korpela makes sure that the narrator—and because we are dependent on the narrator's words, also readers—are unable to infiltrate Lili's mind. The narrator-protagonist cannot control Lili, but she moves him in different ways: she makes him reflect, feel, love, and despair. The connection and the oscillation between Lili and the narrator-protagonist lasts until the end of the novel: Lili

https://doi.org/10.21435/sflit.13

commits a crime (by accident, we learn later) and she too goes insane. After playing a part in destroying Lili, the protagonist also loses his mind. But Lili recovers: she serves her sentence, and, in the epilogue, she comes to bring the narrator back to life. The shadow of Finckelman is haunting him even at the end, but there is hope.

The other person in the novel who remains completely other, even more than Lili, and has an important effect on the narrator-protagonist and his story, is the victim of the rape, Reseda. She is introduced at the very beginning of Part Two where the narrator describes his profession. Just before mentioning Reseda, the protagonist has complained about the stigma of half-heartedness that haunts his life. After this, the narrator describes his mood changing, and the melancholy thoughts are turning into claims of indifference and (false) righteousness:

> Well, one can live like this as well, I talked to myself and tried to adjust to the matter of things and live as if I had never expected anything more from life. I am anyway able to fill my place in society, and that is the main thing, I added consolingly and looked at the lovely flowers, which Reseda, one of the mentally retarded, brought to my room every day. And they were beautiful, we often admired them together, Reseda and me. The flowers are beautiful, thank you, I might have said to Reseda. She *stares* at me as if I was a god, smiles incessantly, speaks nothing. Go on to your work, I then say.
>
> No, eleleehän sitä näinkin, puhelin sitten taas itsekseni ja koetin sopeutua oleviin oloihin ja olla niin kuin en olisi ikänäni elämältä sen enempää odottanutkaan. Joka tapauksessa täytän paikkani yhteiskunnassa ja se on pääasia, lisäsin vielä lohdullisesti ja katselin ihania kukkasia, joita Reseda, muuan vajaamielinen, huoneeseeni päivittäin kantoi. Ja kauniita ne olivatkin, usein ihailimme niitä yhdessä, Reseda ja minä. Kukat ovat kauniita, kiitos sinulle, saatoin sanoa Resedalle. Hän *tuijottaa* minua kuin jumalaa, herkeämättä hymyilee, mitään ei puhu. Menehän nyt taas töihisi, sanon sitten. (TF 111–112, emphasis added.)

There are again two directions for reading. Either Reseda is an actual person, a patient whom the protagonist rapes or allows to be raped, or Reseda and the protagonist are connected in some mysterious way: Reseda is a side of him that is abused and victimized. Reading this passage with all the knowledge we have, it is possible to see different warning signs in it. Once again, the tense suddenly changes in the middle of the paragraph and the past is evoked as if it were present: the narrator suddenly adapts the position of the experiencing I. The present tense constructs a sense of time standing still for a moment. Then the protagonist tells Reseda to go back to work.

The way the narrator takes the position of the experiencing I suggests that there is something we are not told. The scene creates a connection to the later scene in which Reseda also brings him flowers (after Saleva's visit and after the protagonist has visited the "other land"). The fact that the protagonist thinks that Reseda sees him as "a god" is alarming, and the strange atmosphere is reinforced with the flower motif which is repeated throughout the novel. At the beginning of Part Two, we already know about the protagonist dreams of flowers that are his only "friends" and that he

https://doi.org/10.21435/sflit.13

would "caress": during one of his visits to the forest in Part One, he has said that he would "save" them from "judgment" by cutting them and taking them into his hands (TF 10). He has also explicitly connected the police chief's daughter to the flowers. We are here told that Reseda brings him flowers every day, and her name, Reseda, itself is a flower (like Lili). Right after this passage, as we can recall, the protagonist starts to complain that everything becomes stale, "even flowers, patients, friends, everything" (TF 112) and he brings forth Dr. Finckelman in his imagination.

All this together suggests that the protagonist views himself as a powerful, omnipotent figure, a god who has control over his "flowers," the women around him. However, we can remember the hints, for example in the rape scene, that the protagonist himself is suffering from dissociation—that he is a victim of some kind of trauma, we just never learn exactly what this trauma is. Is *he* the flower—the victim of himself?[271] It is also possible to read the story about Riitu as more alarming, paying more attention to what the text tells us about him, his history of violence, and how Riitu affects the young protagonist through his storytelling. In the epilogue, Oskari directs readers to this interpretive path. The protagonist accuses his servant of not understanding the crimes he has committed, but Oskari explains that he is not guilty of anything. In Oskari's eyes, it is Riitu who is the criminal:

> – I'm just a simple man, but I do understand criminals. And you should believe that! But the thing is that you have been thinking too much already when you were a young boy and you spent too much time with the madman Riitu. But there is a difference between you and Riitu. Riitu had a reason to be mad… […] To be frank, he had killed two people once, Riitu I mean. But we shouldn't talk about that, I promised to your mother. But I'm telling you now.
>
> – Minä olen näitä tavallisia meikäläisiä, mutta kyllä minä ymmärrän rikollisiakin. Ja se on uskottava! Mutta se on sillä tavalla asia, että sinä olet niin paljon ajatellut tyhjiä ja jo silloin poikasena liian kanssa olit sen hullun Riitun matkassa. Ero on kuitenkin sinulla ja Riitulla. Riitulla nimittäin oli syytäkin olla hullu… […] Se oli aikoinaan tappanut pari ihmistä, Riitu nimittäin; jos nimittäin asiat suoriksi puhutaan. Mutta siitä ei pitäisi puhua, jo äitisi kanssa sovittiin niin. Minä nyt kuitenkin sinulle sanon. (TF 341.)

As Salin (2002, 209) suggests, Oskari frees the protagonist from Riitu's heritage with his words. It is clear that Riitu is in some way guilty for the protagonist's situation, but we never learn the exact meaning of his role. What readers can be sure of is that the "heritage" of Part One, the death of the protagonist's parents and the inherited farm as well as the "heritage" he receives from Riitu, ultimately shapes his life, splitting him into multiple identities: Dr. Finckelman—but also perhaps Lili, Reseda, and all the other characters.

In the end, readers are left oscillating between interpretations in which the other characters are sides or doubles of the narrator-protagonist (either psychologically or metafictionally) and in which the others are actual in the storyworld, "imagined in flesh and blood." The novel supports the two interpretations at the same time: there is the same amount of textual evidence

https://doi.org/10.21435/sflit.13

for both. However, as the protagonist himself insists in his conversation about Raiski's novel with Lili, perhaps we need to judge who is guilty and who is innocent. As Salin points out, rape brings up the questions of power and violence. It forces the readers to decide: it would be unethical not to try to find answers to what happens to Reseda. The protagonist is a fictional character and he does not exist in anyone else's mind except the readers': ultimately the responsibility for the interpretation is ours. (Salin 2002, 220–221.) In the end, *Tohtori Finckelman* is a deeply unsettling novel because it confirms the narrator-protagonist's guilt on many levels but also leaves us to reflect on his possible innocence, even victimhood.

It is possible to empathize with the narrator and "fall prey" to his persuasions. As discussed, the narrator uses several strategies of "bonding unreliability" (Phelan 2007, 223–224). When compared with Riitu, the narrator's untrustworthiness appears less severe: he initially seems to learn his style of storytelling and his misogynous talk from Riitu. In the end, after the breakdown, Oskari, Simpanen (who has found faith), Pomila, and Lili (who has suffered her sentence) offer the narrator a second chance and in a way "vouch" for him. Even though the narrator is unreliable, he can be seen as conveying what could be understood as "metaphorical truths" (Phelan 2007, 226): what happens to a person if he rejects a part of himself (the parts manifested by Lili and Reseda) and fails to create a connection to himself and to the people around him.

As many narratologists have stressed (Tammi 2012; also Cohn 1999, 307), unreliable narration can exist only in certain kinds of, often fictional, narratives: it requires an implied author who in one way or another signals that the narrator is unreliable. In real life, there is no "author" doing the signaling.[272] Another way to look at this is to pay attention to how unreliability is developed inside the aesthetic frame. The aesthetic frame protects readers from the narrator's deceptions and moral transgressions to some extent, but in *Tohtori Finckelman* the protagonist's misogyny and Dr. Finckelman's ethics of being "above" all morality and all people are also constantly questioned, criticized and made ironic. The notion that there is no responsibility toward another human being is proven destructive. Readers are able to endure the ambiguity and undecidability of the novel because we know it is fiction: the novel has an endless number of layers, and it creates an "endless dialogue," as Salin (2002, 252) puts it. My own reading experience is that it is easy to move between the different interpretive paths and to read the protagonist through different lenses in turn: psychological, metafictional, and ethical. This also means that the novel leaves its readers to ask questions, and to participate in the "endless dialogue."

Tohtori Finckelman invites "difficult empathy" (Leake 2014, 175): a kind of openness to difference and understanding that is directed at figures that are morally questionable—criminals, murderers, and rapists. The protagonist grows into a man who hates women, he is perhaps a rapist, perhaps a culmination of a development into mysterious "evil," an *Übermensch*. At the same time, he is an outsider, an abject hero, a person suffering from deep disconnection both to himself and to others, perhaps a victim of trauma. Korpela offers all these interpretive possibilities simultaneously.

https://doi.org/10.21435/sflit.13

The text invites us to listen to and to remain open to someone who does not necessarily deserve our compassion and to pay attention to the normative scripts, models, and discourses that create violence and suffering. Such difficult empathy invites us to pay attention to phenomena and actions that we would not want to think about but that nonetheless need to be reflected on and understood. Ultimately, the criticism of *Tohtori Finckelman* is directed at violence and abuse of power, toxic forms of masculinity, norms and narratives that produce suffering and violence, and at frames of interpretation in which others are too easily labeled as "sick" or "evil."

https://doi.org/10.21435/sflit.13

5. Trauma and Tragedy: Timo K. Mukka's *Tabu* (Taboo)

> Remember, God, that I called for you when I was in distress and when sorrow and tears tore apart my chest. […]
>
> God, you did not look upon me when I needed you; when I wanted to find you. You escaped from me then.
>
> I took my heart into my own hands. With my own eyes I examined my paths; with my own lips I kissed my wounds and healed my pain. I do not want to know you, God; I do not want to see you; I do not want to love you.
>
> With these words I leave my God…
>
> That night, when I came from the field, I was pale, wet, and smelled of hay. My hair flew in straight bundles on my shoulders. It was wet through and dripping water, and the top of my head was curlier than ever before or since, as my hair was short then, only two or three inches on the top, although otherwise it was long. Naturally, I cannot remember all of this myself, but I can imagine it now.[273]
>
> Muista, Jumala, että huusin sinua silloin kun hätä oli ylläni ja murhe ja itku raastoivat rinnassani repivinä. […]
>
> Jumala, sinä et katsonut puoleeni silloin kun minä sinua tarvitsin, silloin kun minä halusin sinut tavata. Silloin sinä pakenit minua.
>
> Minä otin sydämeni omaan käteeni. Omilla silmilläni tutkin teitäni, omilla huulilla suutelin haavani ja lääkitsin kipuni. Sinua Jumala en tahdo tuntea, en tavata, en rakastaa.
>
> Näillä sanoilla minä jätän Jumalani…
>
> Sinä iltana tulin niityltä kalpeana, märkänä ja heinille tuoksuvana. Tukkani valui suoriksi oienneina kimppuina hartioille. Se oli läpikotaisin märkä ja tippui vettä ja minun päälaellani hiukset olivat silloin kippuraisemmat kuin koskaan ennen tai jälkeen sen, sillä silloin tukkani oli päälaelta lyhyt: vain kaksi tai kolme tuumaa, vaikka se muualta olikin pitkä. Itse en luonnollisesti voi tätä kaikkea muistaa, mutta voin kuvitella sen nyt. (T 7–8.)

Timo K. Mukka's second book, the novella *Tabu* (The Taboo, 1965) opens with a prayer that draws on the bodily and affective language of Pietist hymns and prayers: the speaker's tears tear her chest apart and her lips kiss the wounds. However, the prayer is an inverse one and in it the speaker abandons her God. Then she begins her story, returning to a night over twenty years

https://doi.org/10.21435/sflit.13

earlier when she was coming home from a hayfield. The description of her body, hair, and appearance, as well as the deixis ("that night") guide the readers' first steps in the storyworld and create anticipation: something has happened, and we are about to learn what. As discussed in Chapter 2, *Tabu* is a story about a thirteen-year-old girl, Milka, who falls in love with an adult man, not knowing that he also has an affair with her mother. In the course of the story, we are shown how the girl becomes pregnant and how both the girl and her mother lose their minds.

The novella has previously mainly been read through the different mythical, generic, and intertextual structures that can be seen working in the background of the story. Already the title, "the Taboo," refers to what is prohibited and hidden in a society, yet deeply affective: something that is forbidden, sacred and repulsive at the same time. For example, according to Leena Mäkelä-Marttinen's psychoanalytical reading, the relationship between the man and the girl breaks the taboo against incest, and Milka and her mother are punished for their transgression with "madness": they become "embodiments" of the "sacred horror" of the taboo (Mäkelä-Marttinen 2008, 192; 194; 207). Mukka himself explained the story as a profane interpretation or a "rewriting" of the holy family: it reveals how "a myth is born" and dismantles the story of the virgin birth (see Lahtinen 2013, 64; also Paasilinna 1988, 74; 76). This is visible also in the characters' names: "Milka" creates a link to the Hebrew word for "queen" ("Milcah"), which, in turn, refers to "the bride of Christ" in the Pietist, Laestadian discourse (see also Lahtinen 2013, 64); the man who abuses Milka is called "Kristus-Perkele," "the Christ-Devil," by the people of the village; and Milka's mother's name, Anna, refers to Saint Anne, the mother of Virgin Mary. The three protagonists are thus interwoven with Jewish, Christian, and Pietist imagery and symbols. Readers have also paid attention to the realist and naturalist elements of the story: for example, one of the early readers, professor of literature Aatos Ojala, wrote a statement at the publisher's request in which he connected the story to the naturalist motif of a "fallen woman" and defended Mukka's treatment of "mysteries of life" against an anticipated public outrage (quoted in Lahtinen 2013, 77–78).[274]

However, the interpretations that draw from mythical and generic frames, symbols, and intertexts tend to ignore the sexual abuse that happens in the story. In this chapter, I read the novella partly against the previous interpretations—including Mukka's own—and argue that *Tabu* is a story about sexual violence, trauma, and their effects on a subject and the interpersonal world. The mythical and intertextual structures can be found in the text, but I suggest that they interfere with the reading of the text as a story about abuse and direct readers toward interpretations that focus on the novella's aesthetic qualities instead of the ethical questions it raises. In addition to exploring the mythical and symbolic "depths" of the novella, it is thus important to stay on the "surface": to look closely at the text, the linguistic features, the narrative situation, and the portrayal of the characters' affective and bodily experiences, their interactions as well as the religious cultural narratives surrounding them. In other words, I try to look at the mythical, symbolic, and narrative elements of the text from a critical

https://doi.org/10.21435/sflit.13

distance, paying attention to the cultural work that they do as well as to the ways they solicit readers' responses. Like *Tohtori Finckelman*, *Tabu* directs its readers toward different, conflicting interpretations: a mythical narrative or a naturalist description of female sexuality, a tragic love story or a story of abuse, a story about mythical madness or about sexual trauma. However, like *Tohtori Finckelman*, it also invites its readers to acknowledge the violence and the experiences of pain and suffering at the core of the story—if not because of the events themselves, at least because the characters are shattered one after the other.

In what follows, I trace these different interpretive paths and show how the ambiguity of the story is connected to the strange atmosphere of the text. By "strange atmosphere," I refer to the particular mood or affect of the novella which is difficult to define but reported by many readers, and closely connected to the style of the text.[275] For example, in Rauni Mollberg's film adaptation *Milka* (1981) the mood of the story is enacted through foggy landscapes and other visual elements emphasizing the etherealness of the portrayed world. Mukka himself wrote that he aimed at creating a "melancholy impression" (see Lahtinen 2013, 77), and according to the poet Pentti Saaritsa, there is something "almost medieval in the atmosphere of the text" (quoted in Paasilinna 1988, 91). Erno Paasilinna, in turn, lists several stylistic and narrative elements that can be understood as sources of the strange atmosphere: "the lyrical and beautiful rhythm of the style, the sensitivity of the description, and the mythical sphere of the events which are remote and detached from everyday reality."[276] Furthermore, Mäkelä-Marttinen (2008, 189) describes the novella as "dream-like," "lyrical," "tragic," "strange," "archaic," "romantic," and "distancing." According to the readers, there is something mystical, surreal, and ineffable in the text. In the following, I suggest that in addition to these stylistic elements, the strange atmosphere can be traced to the novella's narrative and plot structures: for example, to the narrative situation and the prayers which are embedded in the story and which frame Milka's storytelling; to the evocative descriptions of bodily experience and affects ("the sensitivity of the description," as Paasilinna writes); to the ways the characters tragically misunderstand one another and themselves; to their actions and decisions that remain unexplained; and finally to the way the experiences of suffering and "madness" spread in the village community.

Particularly the narrative situation and mode are clear sources for the strange atmosphere and the ambiguity of the text. The narrator's recollections of the events are fallible, as we learn at the beginning when the narrator states that "Naturally, I cannot remember all of this myself, but I can imagine it now." The prayer at the very beginning with its corporeal imagery (the wound, the tears) evokes experiences of pain and suffering and reveals the narrator's state of mind at the time of narration: she addresses her words to God, accuses him of turning away from her when she was in distress and sorrow and states that she abandons him. The following events are mostly depicted from Milka's perspective at the ages of thirteen, fourteen, and fifteen. There is something "childlike" and "naïve" in the way the story is narrated, as Mäkelä-Marttinen (2008, 194) has noted. The narrator hardly

https://doi.org/10.21435/sflit.13

ever evaluates or reflects on what happens, but rather adopts the perspective of her young self who constantly, tragically misinterprets the events around her: she does not know enough to be able to understand the actions of the adults close to her, whereas the readers likely do.[277] When read through the mythical frame, she also seems to be guided by different sexual and social taboos that are largely unconscious. The narrator describes in detail the material environment, Milka's body and her bodily sensations, feelings, and emotions (for example, the rain, the wet body, the hair, and the smell of hay) but does not explain them at all, leaving their meanings unarticulated.[278]

Readers are thus left with the sensory details and with the experiential, fallible perspective through which the storyworld is constructed—and with the mythical and religious meanings that can be read into almost everything that is told. The narrative is, in other words, saturated with symbolic meaning, but this may distract us from recognizing or acknowledging the abuse and violence in the story. The events themselves are likely to be understood as traumatic by many twenty-first-century readers, but the narrator never names them as such.[279] There is even uncertainty about some of the events as the other characters ultimately seem to believe in Milka's "Immaculate Conception." As Mäkelä-Marttinen (2008, 200) points out, readers may be "puzzled" when faced with the "possibility of a miracle." However (unlike in *Kaunis sielu* and *Tohtori Finckelman*), we do know what actually happens.[280]

Reading Trauma and Abuse

Trauma, from the ancient Greek word *traûma* for "wound" or "injury," is often understood as the shattering of a person's ability to survive an event or a series of events (see Caruth 1995, 4; 1996, 4). Traumatic experiences are characterized by a difficulty to integrate them into one's life story and to put them into words: they are unsayable, close to impossible to represent or narrate. Trauma may manifest as involuntary flashbacks or memories, or in body memory, as an inability to move or act in the world and as "blind spots" in day-to-day living (see Caruth 1995; Fuchs 2012). As such, traumatic experiences are similar to wounds that are not visible in or on the body, but enacted in a person's bodily experiences, actions, and movement in the world. They break down the boundaries of "mental" and "physical," "inner" and "outer."

Furthermore, traumatic experiences are also social and intersubjective. Trauma affects a person's intersubjective engagements, and psychological and physical wounds inflicted by other people are often more damaging than those in which nobody else is involved: they shatter a person's trust in the shared intersubjective world (Ratcliffe 2017, 114; 118; see also Herman 1992, 51–54). Trauma shapes the way a person relates to other people and the world, and it can be manifested in the way one is able to move in the intersubjective world and in physical spaces or engage with other people (Fuchs 2012, 69–70). Traumatic experiences thus diminish a person's ability to see possibilities for action in the world: they create "a sense of a foreshortened future," a feeling that the future is "bereft of positive, meaningful life events" (Ratcliffe 2017,

https://doi.org/10.21435/sflit.13

116–117). Finally, trauma can also travel in time and space: from one person to another and even over generations—I suggest that this happens in *Tabu*.

The representation of traumatic experiences raises multiple ethical questions for readers (see also Whitehead 2004; Andrews 2010). How can we recognize and acknowledge testimonies of trauma? How should we listen to traumatic experiences? We can recall what LaCapra (1999, 699) calls empathic unsettlement: "a kind of virtual experience through which one puts oneself in the other's position while recognizing the difference of that position and hence not taking the other's place." Or as Sara Ahmed writes, following Cathy Caruth: "Our task [...] is to learn how to hear what is impossible." (Ahmed 2004, 35; see also Caruth 1995, 10.) This is especially important when reading a text like *Tabu* in which the narrator describes experiences of pain and shattering and events that can be interpreted as traumatic but does not name them as such.

Familial Bond

The first paragraphs of the novella lay the groundwork for the readers' affective and bodily empathy for Milka and her mother. As we saw, adult Milka begins the story of her past with a detailed description of her return from the hayfield. The scene continues with a portrayal of Anna, who is waiting for her at home worried. The first and second paragraph supplement each other in an interesting way, moving between Milka's and Anna's perspectives:

> That night when I came back from the field, I was pale, wet and fragrant of hay. My hair flew in straight bundles on my shoulders. It was wet through and dripping water, and the top of my head was curlier than ever before or since, as it was short then: only two or three inches, although otherwise the hair was long. Naturally, I cannot remember all of this myself, but I can imagine it now.
>
> Yet I remember my mother's gaze from that night. She had been alarmed, because I had stayed in the field for so long, even after the rain had started. She had been about to come after me. She looked at me sternly, standing next to the table, fumbling the corner of the cloth, but I saw that she was happy that I had not lost my way.
>
> Sinä iltana tulin niityltä kalpeana, märkänä ja heinille tuoksuvana. Tukkani valui suoriksi oienneina kimppuina hartioille. Se oli läpikotaisin märkä ja tippui vettä ja minun päälaellani hiukset olivat silloin kippuraisemmat kuin koskaan ennen tai jälkeen sen, sillä silloin tukkani oli päälaelta lyhyt: vain kaksi tai kolme tuumaa, vaikka se muualta olikin pitkä. Itse en luonnollisesti voi tätä kaikkea muistaa, mutta voin kuvitella sen nyt.
>
> Äitini katseen sentään muistan siitä illasta. Hän oli ollut hätääntynyt, koska olin viipynyt niityllä vielä pitkään sateen alettuakin. Hän oli ollut jo lähdössä minua vastaan. Hän katsoi minua ankarana, seisoen pöydän ääressä, sormillaan liinan kulmaa hypistellen, mutta aavistin hänen kasvoillaan kuitenkin ilon siitä, etten ollut eksynyt. (T 7–8.)

https://doi.org/10.21435/sflit.13

The second paragraph turns from the description of Milka's body to her mother's gaze, which she says she still remembers. The narrative structure is quite complex. In the first paragraph, the first-person narrator recounts something she says that she does not actually remember but tries to imagine. It could even be argued that the events are described from the perspective of the mother: narrator-Milka adopts her mother's gaze and imagines what Anna saw and what it was like for her to be worried about her daughter, and then see her coming home in the rain. In the second paragraph, narrator-Milka adopts the perspective of her young self observing her mother: Anna's stern look when she is waiting, her fingers fumbling the cloth and the inkling of joy and relief on her face when Milka arrives. Through this intermingling of perspectives, we learn about the connection between mother and daughter which will become one of the central motifs of the novella.[281] Despite the stern look, Milka knows that her mother is glad that she is back, although Anna does not say anything.

Not much happens in the scene but when we read closely, we can recognize the subtle description of intersubjective relations and bodily engagement. In real life, we usually do not have to infer what others are thinking or feeling. Rather, we effortlessly perceive others' experiences and emotions from their bodily expressions and from the worldly contexts and (cultural) narratives we share (see Gallagher & Zahavi 2012, 213; 215). This is how Milka perceives her mother's relief from her face although nothing is said. There is a connection between daughter and mother: they easily recognize what the other is experiencing, although they do not know everything about each other. The readers, on the other hand, have experiential (affective and bodily), cultural and social knowledge about similar forms of intersubjective engagement, and about the care and love between mothers and daughters. The description of the mother's worry and relief is likely to evoke affective resonance in most readers, and by directing us to identify with the mother's perspective, the text also leads us to empathize with young Milka and to worry about her. However, the scene also emphasizes its own fictitiousness: the narrator makes explicit that she must *imagine* the scene, and her power as a narrator is to adopt the mother's perspective and imagine how Anna saw her when she came home.

What ultimately makes the scene tragic is that we soon learn that the mother's relief is misguided. She has reason to worry; she just does not know it yet. Milka carries something in her hand and refuses to show it to Anna: "I did not open my fist. Instead, I started to cry."[282] Readers are offered the first hint that something is wrong. Anna tries to comfort Milka, and when the daughter still refuses to show what she has in her hand, she finally decides to leave the matter at that: "– Just keep it, keep it, little Milka, if it is so dear to you… and come to sleep soon."[283] We are told all this before we learn what has happened: the events of the day are narrated in reverse, creating suspense. As suggested earlier, the very first words of the story, "that night," point to the fact that something significant (and worth telling) has happened. Right after this scene, the character of Kristus-Perkele is introduced and the narrator recounts the events of the day.

https://doi.org/10.21435/sflit.13

The Christ/Devil

After the short prelude, narrator-Milka begins her story by situating her readers in time and place: "Now it has been more than twenty years."[284] She recounts that it was haymaking time and describes how the "warm air was shimmering" in the field.[285] Kristus-Perkele is introduced through his engagement with Milka and Anna: "We drank sour milk by the trench, and I sang with Kristus-Perkele. Also mother sang sometimes, because the man had a beautiful voice and he knew many songs. Most of them were actually dirty shanties, but some also devotional hymns."[286] Looking closely at the way Kristus-Perkele is characterized throughout the first chapter, various allusions to dividedness emerge: we learn that his name, Kristus-Perkele ("Christ-Devil"), was given to him by the villagers because "years ago he had the habit of cursing every other word [...]. And he got to keep his name although he nowadays did not utter a curse word even by accident."[287] The man's surname is Ojanen (we never learn the first name), but only Anna uses it in the novella; Milka always calls him Kristus-Perkele or even "Kristus" (Christ). We then learn that Kristus-Perkele lives in a cottage built by "some half-mad man"[288] on the edge of the village. He makes brooms, buckets, sledges, and "everything one can imagine that can be made of wood with skillful hands."[289] Later, it is revealed that the villagers' opinion of the man is divided: some people "treat him like a relative," and some say "many bad things" about him.[290] These characteristics, the doubled name, the songs that are pious yet sexual, where he lives, and the villagers' mixed views of him, can later be understood as first hints of his doubled nature.[291] Furthermore, as the narrator describes the man's handsome looks and skills, she mentions that his moods often changed: "He was a tall, dark man who had a black stubble on his weather-beaten face and small, brown eyes that were laughing or grave—just like he himself wanted them to be."[292] At first, these appear as innocent, small remarks; the descriptions become meaningful only later.

After the introduction of Kristus-Perkele, a key scene of the novella is narrated. We learn about a sexual act between the man and the young girl. Anna has left the field and Milka is alone with him:

> Then I sat beside him, I went to sit on his lap and whispered in his ears. He took my small hands into his own, they disappeared completely inside his big palms. With a fearful look in his eyes, he caressed me. My head, my legs, my knees—he touched my bottom, turning his fingers soft. He caressed me everywhere, and even if he had not done it, I felt that I loved him with all my heart and I myself also caressed his chest and neck.
>
> – Milka… little Milka, he moaned repeatedly with his voice trembling.
>
> Pity filled me and I comforted him:
>
> – Kristus [Christ]… Do not be sad. I will always remember you. You know that there is no one I love more than you, I said.

> Silloin minä istuin hänen viereensä, menin hänen syliinsä ja kuiskutin hänen korviinsa. Hän otti minun pienet kädet omiinsa niin että ne hukkuivat kokonaan hänen suuriin kouriinsa. Pelokas ilme silmissään hän hyväili minua. Päätäni, jalkojani, polviani – takapuoltani hän kosketti sormensa pehmeiksi muuttaen. Hän hyväili minua kaikkialta, ja vaikka ei olisi hyväillytkään, minä kuitenkin

https://doi.org/10.21435/sflit.13

> tunsin koko sydämestäni rakastavani häntä ja itsekin hyväilin miehen rintaa ja kaulaa.
>
> – Milka… pikku Milka…, huokasi hän useaan otteeseen ääni täristen.
>
> Sääli täytti minut ja lohdutin häntä:
>
> – Kristus… Älä ole surullinen. Kyllä minä sinua aina muistan. Tiedäthän, etten ketään rakasta niin kuin sinua, sanoin. (T 11–12.)

The narrator describes in detail her encounter with Kristus-Perkele: how he undresses her and ejaculates on her stomach. If we pay attention to the characters involved, the sexual content of the scene creates a disturbing effect: the focalizing, experiencing character is a thirteen-year-old girl who interprets her own feeling of (sexual) pleasure as love and the man's fearful look, gestures, and trembling voice as an expression of sadness: she feels pity for the man and wants to comfort him. It is also notable how the girl calls Kristus-Perkele "Christ" and actively seeks his attention. The text manipulates its readers to move between young Milka's experiential perspective and a more reflective adult perspective that includes perhaps knowledge about sexual abuse and power relations, as well as cultural and literary awareness of other stories like this. The narrator, adult Milka, stays completely in the background and offers no guidance for the readers, only reporting the actions, perceptions, bodily experiences, thoughts, and emotions of her past self and the ways she read Kristus-Perkele's expressions.[293]

Even though the narration focuses on the bodies, bodily expressions, and movements, and we are guided by young Milka's interpretations, readers are likely to attribute motivations and thoughts to Kristus-Perkele based on knowledge that young Milka does not have. The text guides us to suspect that Milka (as a thirteen-year-old girl) is misreading Kristus-Perkele: readers probably interpret the man's "fearful" look and "trembling" voice differently than her. Where Milka perceives sadness, a reader who interprets the scene as a beginning of sexual abuse sees Kristus-Perkele's fear of being caught and perhaps shame or guilt, and perhaps even an effort to stop himself.[294]

As discussed, in real life we mostly understand others through their bodily expressions, gestures, actions and the worlds and cultural narratives we share. However, if we do not share mutual worlds and narratives, intersubjective communication is easily shattered. In Milka's encounter with Kristus-Perkele, much of this very basic intersubjective engagement goes wrong: Milka does not have sufficient means to understand Kristus-Perkele. She misreads his bodily expressions and seems to rely on an "innocent" cultural narrative about love when she interprets his actions. There is even a discrepancy between what she is described as feeling and what we can understand that she is feeling: she misreads her own sexual experience as love. Readers are, in other words, invited to follow how Milka's intersubjective understanding fails in her encounter with the man. The scene is tragic and at the same time psychologically convincing: Milka is a thirteen-year-old girl who does not know much about the adult world, sex, or even her own body. She is "innocent" and "naïve" (see Mäkelä-Marttinen 2008, 194–195). At the same time, twenty-first-century readers can see that this is how abuse often happens: power relations and lack of knowledge may prevent a victim from

https://doi.org/10.21435/sflit.13

recognizing abuse at first and makes them unable to express their experience to others—there might be no language to speak about the experiences, and they may be considered taboo.

After the sexual act, the distressing scene gets a symbolic manifestation in the radical change of weather: "[…] the rain suddenly began. That is when he left, crying. I could see it from his back, from the way it was quivering. I stood there without my pants and my skirt, the rain pouring over me. Kristus-Perkele walked his shoulders bowed, ashamed."[295] Milka is again interpreting the man's experiences from his bodily movements, and even the rain seems to mirror the man's tears.[296] Next we are told that the man returns and tells her to go home: "Put the skirt back on… go home. Your mother must be waiting for you… quickly!"[297] Milka identifies with the distress she recognizes in the man's expressions and gestures: "He did not look at me but past me somewhere. Then I felt how my heart became sick and desperate and I would have wanted to cry. … Shame was burning in my mind as well."[298] Even though Milka does not seem to understand the reasons for the man's shame, the emotion is contagious and she is overwhelmed by it. We are then told how the man gives her a silver coin and she runs home (where she first keeps the coin sealed inside her fist and then hides it in the crack in the wall, as we are told in the prelude).

It may be difficult for readers to recognize sexual abuse in the story because our view of Kristus-Perkele is always colored by the perspective of young Milka. A "direct" access to his mind is offered only through short fragments of quoted speech. When Milka later tells Kristus-Perkele that she wants to become his wife, the man's answer is elliptic:

> Little Milka, you are so young… too young to marry me. You are not even allowed to marry for the next five, six years… by then you will have changed your mind. You will find another, good man. You will understand when you become a woman. And even if your mind would not change, I do not want you. I will live like I have lived until now… unmarried. It is best for me like this…
>
> Pikku-Milka, sinä olet niin nuori… liian nuori mennäksesi naimisiin kanssani. Et vielä viiteen, kuuteen vuoteen edes pääse avioliittoon… siihen mennessä mielesi kyllä muuttuu. Löydät toisen, hyvän miehen. Ymmärrät sen kyllä kunhan kehityt naiseksi. Ja vaikka mielesi ei muuttuisikaan en minä sinua halua. Minä elän niin kuin olen elänyt tähänkin asti… naimattomana. Näin on minulle parasta… (T 21–22.)

What is most revealing in Kristus-Perkele's speech, is his choice of words and the gaps in his speech: "another, good man"; "live like I have lived until now… unmarried"; "It is best for me like this…." For reasons that are not revealed, Kristus-Perkele sees himself as bad, or at least as not good enough for Milka.[299] It is better that he does not marry: he leads a life that is not suitable for marriage. What this life is, is not revealed to us, and, as discussed, even the speech is filtered through Milka's perspective.

Because of Kristus-Perkele's ambiguous actions and because so much about him is left in the dark, readers are invited to attribute mental states, thoughts, feelings, and motives to the man based on their own imagination.

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While Milka (and later also Anna) continues to dream about marrying him, readers can either follow her and begin to read the text as a love story, or resort to other interpretive frames. We can draw from folk psychology, psychological theories, and our knowledge of sexual abuse. In addition, we can read him through familiar literary tropes: he appears in the storyworld as a stranger or outsider who disrupts Milka's and Anna's intersubjective bond (see also Mäkelä-Marttinen 2008, 197) and ultimately destroys the whole community—an "evil" coming from "outside."

After the first encounter between Milka and the man has been described, a careful reader may notice that the text regularly emphasizes his doubled and depressed nature. Later, the narrator reports a disturbing, self-destructive monologue in which Kristus-Perkele talks about Milka bringing flowers to his grave:

> …I wish you were my girl, Milka. I would sing beautiful songs for you. I would make you a cradle and put you to sleep, I would rock you to sleep every night… you would feel good all the time, you would always remember me when I had died… […] You would bring flowers to my grave, little Milka. You would cry for me…
>
> …olisitpa sinä minun tyttöni, Milka. Laulaisin sinulle kauniita lauluja. Tekisin kehdon ja liekuttaisin siinä sinut nukkumaan, tuudittelisin joka ilta… sinun olisi hyvä mieli aina, aina muistelisit minua kun olisin kuollut sitten… […] Toisit kukkia haudalleni, pikku Milka. Itkisit minua… (T 32.)

It becomes clear that Kristus-Perkele is on one level taking the place of Milka's deceased father (see also Lahtinen 2013, 65); on another he becomes her abuser and "lover." The scene also offers an explanation for why Milka often tries to get the man's attention and talks about "always remembering him" (for example, in the hayfield scene, T 12): she seems to be connecting Kristus-Perkele to her late father. It is occasionally hinted that Milka's father has died very tragically, but we do not learn how. The implicit narrative about the father's death frames the whole story and explains some of Milka's and Anna's behavior: when read in the interpretive frame of abuse, it becomes clear that Kristus-Perkele is taking advantage of Milka's (and Anna's) vulnerability and past trauma. Later, we are told more about his changing moods, and it is hinted that he is himself struggling because of his actions:

> On some days he was sad, melancholic. He sat on the bed for a long time, his hands on his temples, staring at the logs on the walls of the cottage. But when I comforted him, he changed and laid with me in his bed. On other days he was happy. He was signing, planing or carving wood. If I touched him then, he became unresponsive, he chased me away and cried alone in his cottage.
>
> Toisina päivinä Kristus-Perkele oli surullinen, alakuloinen. Hän istui pitkät tovit sängyllä, kädet ohimoille painettuna, tuijottaen mökkinsä seinähirsiin. Mutta kun lohdutin häntä, hän muuttui ja makasi kanssani vuoteessaan. Toisina päivinä hän oli iloinen. Hän lauleskeli, höyläsi tai vuoli puuta. Silloin jos kosketin häntä, hän muuttui umpimieliseksi, ajoi minut pois ja nyyhkytti yksinään mökissään. (T 48.)

https://doi.org/10.21435/sflit.13

Much can be read into his behavior and emotional expressions, although adult Milka does not reflect on them in any way, only describes them. There could be experiences of guilt, shame and, most importantly, knowledge that his actions are morally questionable and damaging.

Step by step, the first chapter offers an image of Kristus-Perkele as an abuser: First, he is introduced through symbols and allusions that hint at his doubled nature. The narration then moves to the hayfield scene, and when the first sexual act is described, the readers already have much implicit, cultural, and symbolic knowledge about him, although the events are narrated from the perspective of young Milka who misinterprets the man and his actions. Later, the readers' understanding of the man as a doubled, internally torn character is deepened through the portrayal of his changing moods and conflicted actions.

Ambiguity, Abuse, and Trauma

From today's perspective, Kristus-Perkele's expressions of his emotions, behavior, and actions can be read as a detailed description of the psychology of someone suffering from pedophilia. However, in the context of the 1960s Lapland in which *Tabu* was written, it would have been difficult to recognize the abuse: there was no vocabulary for pedophilia and such stories were often silenced, cultural taboos. There is, in other words, a curious conflict in what can be seen in the text in different times and contexts, and what is clearly there to be found. As discussed, recent academic readings of *Tabu* also largely ignore the question of abuse when considering the relationship between Kristus-Perkele and Milka. The analyses are focused on the incest taboo and trauma in the psychoanalytical context (Mäkelä-Marttinen 2008, 192)[300] or on the "sexual awakening" of the young girl (Lahtinen 2013, 63). An exception is Outi Oja's (2004) short review of a new edition of *Tabu*. Oja interprets the title of the novella as a reference to the taboos surrounding pedophilia. She also notes the different interpretative frames the text offers and suggests that they make it difficult for the reader to process the story. I agree with Oja, and I have suggested here that the mythical and intertextual frames interfere with our efforts to recognize the portrayal of trauma and abuse. I would also argue that the readers might even try to avoid the interpretation in which the pedophilia is acknowledged: *Tabu* is shocking and unsettling, because it tears open the secrets surrounding pedophilia and the sexual abuse of children.

There are many reasons in the text itself why it is easy for the readers to omit the hints of sexual abuse. As discussed, the story is narrated from the point of view of the young girl who is deeply attached to the man: she seeks his attention, she describes her own feelings as love and even dreams of marrying him. It is also possible for a reader to ignore the descriptions of Kristus-Perkele, which imply his fear of being caught, and rather emphasize his positive characteristics: he is depicted as a skilled and good worker who really does help Anna and Milka. Furthermore, the shame and pain experienced by Milka in the hayfield could be interpreted as a reaction to being suddenly left behind by the man and as experiences that simply mirror the man's expressions—not as shame that is connected to abuse and trauma.

https://doi.org/10.21435/sflit.13

The sexual acts the man performs are never addressed as the cause of Milka's pain and shattering: rather, Milka is shown to be suffering because she feels that she has been abandoned by a man she loves or because she feels that *she* has sinned. As Mäkelä-Marttinen (2008, 195) notes, the sexual act itself is taboo in the social world of the novella, in the community it portrays, and this taboo affects Milka although she does not seem to be fully aware of it. There is something "innocent" in Milka: she knows very little about sexuality and her desire is portrayed as something very "natural" (ibid.). The experiences of shame and pain are thus ultimately detached from the man and centered on Milka. This narrative strategy becomes apparent especially in Milka's prayers which (like the whole plot of the novella) may guide readers to read Milka through the lens of a "fallen woman" (see also Mäkelä-Marttinen 2008, 190).

Another source of the unsettling effect of the story is that Mukka really does try to shock his readers with the detailed descriptions of sexual acts while at the same time maintaining a silence about their meanings. Milka's narration consists mostly of descriptions of the environment, bodies, and action: Milka's bodily experiences and reactions, her feelings and emotions, Milka and Kristus-Perkele in the field, and the sexual act. There is no reflection or evaluation of what happens. At the beginning, the narrator describes how Milka begins to cry when Anna asks her to show what she has in her hand, but we are not told why.[301] The meaning of the experiences and reactions is left unverbalized. Anna lets the matter be and does not push her daughter further. As Mäkelä-Marttinen (2008, 195) suggests, Anna is unable to see her own daughter's sexuality, and this is her most tragic mistake. It appears that Anna is guided by the cultural taboos controlling sexuality, and this prevents her from seeing what is happening around her. Everything relating to sexuality is silenced, and everything is taboo (see also Mäkelä-Marttinen 2008, 195). In addition, the most important thing that remains unsaid is that what Kristus-Perkele does is wrong (see also Oja 2004). This is left for the readers to recognize. Readers thus have a serious responsibility: to be witnesses to Milka's narrative and to recognize it as a story about abuse and trauma.

The first chapter of *Tabu* ends with two prayers. In the first one, adult Milka recounts the prayers she prayed as a young girl in the evening after the hayfield. Again, she emphasizes that she cannot remember her exact thoughts or words, but tries to imagine them:

> I took bread and milk from the cupboard and ate, I went to sleep behind mother's back in the big bed in our other room. It was safe there. Mother held me with her warm hands, and I was not cold at all. I cannot remember, but I think that I prayed:
>
> Dear God, a sore thorn has risen in my heart. Come my God, take it away. Do not lead me into temptation but deliver me from evil. Protect your child so that she would not make herself guilty of sin and shame and so that she would not put despair into her mother's bosom. Give me the light, give me the purity, for yours is the kingdom, the power and the glory, forever…

https://doi.org/10.21435/sflit.13

> Otin kaapista leivän ja maidon ja söin, menin nukkumaan äidin selän taakse isoon sänkyyn, toiseen huoneeseemme. Siellä oli turvallista. Äiti puristi minua lämpimillä käsillään, eikä minun sitten ollut yhtään kylmä. En muista sitä, mutta ajattelen silloin rukoilleeni:
>
> Rakas Jumala, minun sydämeeni on tullut kipeä oas. Tule sinä Jumala; ota se pois. Älä saata minua kiusaukseen, vaan päästä minut pahasta. Suojele lastasi, ettei hän tekisi itseään syypääksi syntiin ja häpeään ja ettei hän saattaisi ikävää äitinsä rintaan. Anna minulle valkeus, anna minulle puhtaus, sillä sinun on valtakunta, voima ja kunnia, iankaikkisesti… (T 13.)

Nothing is made explicit, but the references to being safe and protected in the bed behind her mother's back can be read in relation to what has happened earlier. There is also an allusion to the idea of being safe behind "God's back": the mother is a protective figure who is supposed to take care of her child. The prayer mentions feelings of temptation, sin and shame (repeating phrases from the Lord's Prayer), and 13-year-old Milka explicitly prays that she would not cause pain to her mother.[302] The connection between Milka and her mother is emphasized, as is the way the religious myths and narratives of temptation, sin, and shame affect the young girl.

In the second prayer, which follows right after the first one, adult Milka is praying at the time of narration, reflecting on the past:

> My God. Still then was my mind innocent. Then was my soul innocent. And then was my body innocent. Now I am exhausted with sin. Now I have swum over the wide streams. Now I have wandered in the valley. Now I understand your secret. Now is the time—time has ripened me. Now I abandon you, God.
>
> Jumalani. Silloin minun mieleni oli viaton, silloin minun sieluni oli viaton, silloin minun ruumiini oli viaton. Nyt minä olen synnistä nääntynyt, nyt minä olen uinut leveitten virtojen yli, nyt minä olen rotkossa kahlannut, nyt minä sinun arvoituksesi ymmärrän. Nyt on koittanut hetki – aika on kypsyttänyt minua. Nyt minä sinut hylkään, Jumala. (T 14.)

The prayer once again makes explicit Milka's experiences which are tightly connected to religious cultural narratives and myths: the loss of innocence and being exhausted with sin. The imagery and symbols are borrowed especially from the Laestadian discourses. Finally, the narrator denounces her God. As mentioned earlier, it is unclear whether the prayers are addressed to God or to Kristus-Perkele. When they are read in the framework of trauma and abuse, it could be argued that the narrator, adult Milka, has come to terms with the events she is describing and now abandons both her love for Kristus-Perkele and for God, who allowed the events to happen. Another plausible interpretation is that she is still tied to the fiction of love for the man and stuck in the past (see also Mäkelä-Marttinen 2008, 205). Her sorrow and pain would be caused by the trauma that she is unable to acknowledge, by the loss of love, and by the way the events change the course of her life. In this reading, Kristus-Perkele's betrayal, and the reason why both Milka and Anna are shattered in the end, would not be the abuse, but rather the way he deceives and abandons them (see also Mäkelä-Marttinen 2008, 199).[303]

https://doi.org/10.21435/sflit.13

What does it mean that Milka, as an adult woman, returns to this story of her past? Why does she, as a narrator, take up the task of recounting past events? Usually narrating the past is used to reflect on one's history and selfhood and to create self-understanding as in *Kaunis sielu* and *Tohtori Finckelman*. Recollecting and recreating one's life story creates a space for self-reflection and for imagining possible worlds and possibilities for change. In *Tabu*, however, there is almost no self-reflection apart from the prayers, and as we will see later, there seem to be no possibilities or futures opening from the act of telling. Milka constructs a seemingly coherent narrative of her past and creates narrative agency for herself, but it hardly offers her any relief. From the prayers, we learn that adult Milka is still suffering, but as she narrates the events, she almost never reflects on them or evaluates them, or if she does, it is still in terms of her experiences of love, temptation, and sin. The narrator seems to be telling the story of a painful love affair and about "sin," activating the naturalist interpretation of Milka as a "fallen woman." At the same time, the readers are invited to read the novella as a story about abuse and trauma. It becomes the readers' task to interpret the events and to put the pieces together. In this way *Tabu* resembles *Kaunis sielu* and *Tohtori Finckelman*, although in *Tabu* this task is not made explicit.

The first chapter leaves readers with a network of intersubjective relations and cultural meanings and with a story that is ambiguous and permeated by traumatic silences and blind spots. The thirteen-year-old Milka is in love with and in an abusive relationship with the "Christ-Devil." She is spontaneously interpreting Kristus-Perkele's bodily movements, acts, expressions, gestures, and behavior, engaging with him effortlessly but without crucial social and cultural knowledge, tragically failing to understand many of Kristus-Perkele's actions. In contrast, readers are invited to reflect on the ambiguity of the events: to interpret Kristus-Perkele's behavior "behind" both young Milka's and adult Milka's backs and to decipher the meaning of Milka's prayers which reveal her suffering.

The evocative descriptions of bodily expressions, experiences, and emotions of the first chapter solicit our basic tendency to feel with others. They evoke sensory experiences and direct our attention to very basic forms of intersubjectivity: intercorporeal and interaffective relations, our attunement to other people's bodily expressions, affective states, and emotions, and how we resonate with others and effortlessly understand one another—or tragically fail in our understanding. Readers' experiences are solicited through several techniques. For example, the detailed description of bodily experiences and sensations invites our bodily resonance and the misunderstandings between the characters and the fact that we know more than Milka calls for our empathetic responses. Readers are asked to engage with the descriptions and events on an embodied and affective level, but ultimately, we are pushed to move beyond this level. There is a need to reflect on, and at the same time an inability to "make sense" of, the painful, traumatic events, which ultimately cannot be explained, only witnessed. As the story goes on, we can notice how a tragedy form begins to develop. This might give readers more tools to cope with the story, but at the same time it makes the novella even more ambiguous as it invites aesthetic frames of reading.

https://doi.org/10.21435/sflit.13

Construction of a Tragedy

> The West's images of madness always come back to tragedy and are, essentially, tragic. (Padel 1995, 248.)

The story Mukka creates leads one by one to the shattering of the characters. There is something ineffable and mysterious in the way the events unfold: a "mythical sphere of the events which are remote and detached from everyday reality," as Paasilinna wrote.[304] This links the novella to classical tragedies and their modern adaptations and the way they repeat motifs and images of "madness."

Looking at the structure of the whole novella, it is easy to see that the events follow the typical tragedy plot of *hamartia*, *anagnorisis*, and *peripeteia* described by Aristotle in *Poetics*. The hero has a tragic flaw or makes a tragic mistake (*hamartia*), which in both Milka's and Anna's case is the blindness to the events around them. Furthermore, the motif of excessive pride (*hybris*) becomes explicit in Anna's story.[305] What follows is the recognition or critical discovery, *anagnorisis*, which leads to the culmination of events, *peripeteia*: the turning point or reversal of fortune in which the fatal flaw brings the hero(es) down. Finally, there should be a *catharsis*, a purging of readers' emotions through pity, fear, and shock, but in *Tabu* this remains ambivalent, following the naturalist and modernist traditions. Instead, an ambiguous, strange atmosphere is created.

Tragic Mistakes

An important element of the tragedy constructed in *Tabu* is the way in which the characters fatally misread and misunderstand both one another and themselves. In addition to the way Milka misreads Kristus-Perkele, she is unable to recognize the relationship between him and her mother. The readers are invited to understand both of these misreadings "behind" Milka's back: the narrator adapts the position of her young self and readers have to infer what is happening without any explanation, based on the hints we can find.

In Chapter 4, the whole picture begins to become clear to the readers. A year has passed since the first events, and it is again haymaking time. The narrator recounts that she did not see Kristus-Perkele much during the year. Similar events and actions to those in the beginning of the novella are repeated, with the exception that we now find out that Anna has been visiting Kristus-Perkele's cottage:

> Haymaking time came. Kristus-Perkele arrived again at the house, carrying his scythe and singing a song. I had not seen him more than twice after the Pentecost. But mother had visited his cottage.
>
> All three of us went to the hayfield to work. Kristus-Perkele was mowing the field and laughing with mother. We drank sour milk together from the same dish on the edge of the trench.

https://doi.org/10.21435/sflit.13

> Tuli heinäntekoaika. Kristus-Perkele saapui taas meille viikate olallaan ja laulua laulaen. En ollut nähnyt häntä kuin kaksi kertaa helluntain jälkeen. Äiti oli kylläkin käynyt hänen mökillään.
>
> Kolmisin lähdimme heinäntekoon pellollemme. Kristus-Perkele niitti, nauroi äidin kanssa. Ojanpientareella joimme piimää kaikki kolme samasta astiasta. (T 35.)

Nothing is made explicit: young Milka seems to give no meaning to her mother's visits, but for readers, they are the first hints of Anna's relationship with the man.

In the same chapter, another sexual act between Kristus-Perkele and Milka (who is now fourteen) is described. The events are framed with an account of Milka misinterpreting not only Kristus-Perkele but also her own body. This time the narrator acknowledges her mistake and looks at her past self with the knowledge she has at the time of narration, but refrains from commenting on the events in any other way:

> This summer the first signs from which I could have inferred that I was becoming a woman had bled from me. I had sat in sauna and dried the blood on a cloth and cried, because I thought it was caused by what had happened the past summer.
>
> – Milka, don't you like me anymore? Kristus-Perkele asked me.
>
> I stroked his hand and smiled.
>
> – I do like you, but I am not the way I used to be… I am not the same…
>
> – What are you then?
>
> I did not reply.
>
> Then Kristus-Perkele laughed. He squeezed my hands and stroked my bottom. He made me fall on the hay, took off my pants by force and I was no longer ashamed.

> Tänä kesänä minusta olivat vuotaneet ensimmäiset merkit, joista olisin voinut päätellä, että olin tulossa naiseksi. Olin istunut saunassa ja kuivannut veren raasuun siellä, itkenyt sen vuoksi, sillä ajattelin sen johtuneen siitä mitä edellisenä kesänä oli tapahtunut.
>
> – Milka, etkö enää pidä minusta? Kysyi Kristus-Perkele minulta.
>
> Minä silitin hänen kättään ja hymyilin hänelle.
>
> – Kyllä minä pidän sinusta, mutta en ole enää niin kuin ennen… en ole enää sama…
>
> – Mikä sinä sitten olet?
>
> Siihen en vastannut.
>
> Silloin Kristus-Perkele nauroi. Hän puristeli käsiäni ja silitti takapuoltani. Hän kaatoi minut heinäläjään, riisui housuni väkisin enkä minä enää hävennyt. (T 35–36.)

Milka relies on an (unconscious) cultural narrative according to which menstruation is a punishment for a sin—for what happened the previous summer (an interpretation that is conflated with the cultural narrative of menstruation as a punishment for the biblical sin). She also enacts the understanding of menstruation as a taboo: it is something abject and ineffable that cannot be talked about. After Milka does not reply to Kristus-Perkele's question, he laughs and then forces himself on Milka. The narrator recounts

https://doi.org/10.21435/sflit.13

that she was "no longer ashamed": Milka is in love and what happens feels right. When they return home, more hints are given about the mother's feelings for Kristus-Perkele:

> I put my pants back on, wiped the blood off my thigh with a bunch of grass and started walking with stiff legs before him. At the well, I washed my hands and my face.
>
> Inside the house mother was bustling around excited, more excited than I had ever seen her. She was laughing heartily at Kristus-Perkele's every word, at his every look and offered him food, more than he could ever have eaten.
>
> Panin housut jalkaani, hankasin ruohotukolla veren reidestäni, lähdin kävelemään kankein jaloin hänen edessään. Kaivolla pesin käteni ja kasvoni.
>
> Sisällä äiti hyöri innoissaan, innokkaampana kuin olin häntä koskaan nähnyt. Hän nauroi heleällä äänellä jokaiselle Kristus-Perkeleen sanalle, jokaiselle miehen katseelle ja tyrkytti ruokaa hänelle, enemmän kuin hän ikinä olisi jaksanut syödä. (T 36.)

The text creates an unsettling analogy between the fourteen-year-old girl who is in love and has just had sex with an adult man and the mother who is "bustling around" and flirting with the man who has just abused her daughter.

The story continues with an account of Kristus-Perkele building a new room for Anna and Milka.[306] When the room is finished, Kristus-Perkele spends the night there:

> And often I woke up when mother sneaked into the new room to be with the man. I thought that he has to be very dear to her because she spends so much time with him and enjoys his company so much. I slept and I was happy because mother was not in a bad mood or sad. In the morning mother was bustling around, her face was shining with joy and Kristus-Perkele looked at her pleased.
>
> Ja usein heräsin, kun äiti hiipi uuteen huoneeseen miehen luo. Ajattelin, että mies oli hyvin rakas hänelle, koska hän niin hyvin viihtyy tämän luona ja pitää tämän seurasta. Nukuin iloisena siitä, ettei äiti ollut pahantuulinen eikä surullinen. Aamulla äiti hyöri ympäriinsä kasvot ilosta paistaen ja Kristus-Perkele katsoi tyytyväisen näköisenä häntä. (T 39.)

At this point, it should be clear to all readers that Kristus-Perkele has a sexual relationship with both the mother and the daughter. In the same chapter yet another sexual act between Kristus-Perkele and Milka is described, and the chapter ends with a description of Milka's continued failure to understand the relationship between Anna and the man:

> That night mother stayed in the new room until morning. I saw this when I woke up: no one had slept on mother's side of the bed.
>
> In the morning, Kristus-Perkele and mother laughed together. Mother called the man Ojallinen[307] and Kristus-Perkele spent the whole day cutting small wood for us. I was happy about that—making the small logs had been my task the whole year.

https://doi.org/10.21435/sflit.13

> Sinä yönä äiti oli uudessa huoneessa aamuun asti. Näin sen aamulla herätessäni; vuoteessa äidin puolella ei ollut nukuttu.
>
> Kristus-Perkele ja äiti naureskelivat toisilleen aamulla. Äiti nimitti miestä Ojalliseksi ja sen päivän Kristus-Perkele hakkasi ranteella pikkupuita meille. Minä olin iloinen siitä – olihan pikkupuiden teko koko vuoden ajan ollut minun työtäni. (T 47.)

Instead of paying attention to the fact that the mother has spent the night with Kristus-Perkele, the narrator emphasizes her relief at not having to cut wood anymore. Just before this, we have also seen Milka talking to their cat about sex with Kristus-Perkele, saying that her mother "would say that it is shameful, she would not let him do that to her."[308] We are shown how the religious narratives about sex as a sin and as a taboo contribute to Milka's silence about the relationship to her mother, and also to both Milka's and Anna's failures to understand what the other person is going through. Even though Milka will not tell Anna about the relationship because of the cultural norms, she herself strongly feels that the sex is right because she loves Kristus-Perkele and believes he loves her too.

The *Hybris*

The tragedy plot constructed in *Tabu* begins with Kristus-Perkele and Milka, Milka falling in love with the man and with her tragic mistakes, and it is then developed especially through Anna's character. Milka misunderstands the events because she is a child, and to some extent Anna's mistakes are also very ordinary, such as a mother's failure to see what her child is going through. However, as the story evolves, Anna's plotline begins to follow a clear tragedy form. Another layer of meaning is constructed on top of the basic intersubjective engagements and failures in intersubjectivity.

Chapter 3 depicts the spring before the second haymaking season and reveals Anna's pride over her daughter. Pentecost is approaching and Milka is trying on a yellow dress that Anna has made for her. Anna talks out loud, partly to herself, partly to Milka, as she often does, about Milka's looks:

> – Walk, Milka. Yes… you are such a pretty girl. Not even a princess is more beautiful. They are so jealous of you, the other girls of the village. There is no one like you in this corner of the world, although one should not say things like this.

> – Kävelepä, Milka. Noin… kyllä oletkin kaunis tyttö. Prinsessakaan ei vedä vertoja sinulle. Kyllä ovat kateellisia sinulle kylän toiset tytöt. Totta on, ettei näillä perukoilla sinun vertaistasi, vaikka niin ei pitäisikään puhua. (T 27.)

We get a first hint of Anna's *hybris*. On Pentecost Sunday, Milka wears the dress to church, where they go together with Kristus-Perkele. He is driving a carriage borrowed from the neighboring farm, Laanila, and we are told that "everybody" is looking at them. The scene is packed with symbols and motifs of youth, spring and fertility, and it foregrounds a later scene in which Milka will be pregnant and married in the same church wearing the same dress.[309]

In Chapter 5, Anna's *hybris* is made even more explicit. It is spring a year after the Pentecost and almost two years after the first summer. Anna has

https://doi.org/10.21435/sflit.13

been courted by the old cantor of the village but rejects his marriage proposal in a harsh way:

> Mother went to the stairs to meet the cantor, she talked mockingly to him and did not let him inside. A blush appeared on the cantor's face, he moved his legs, crossed his arms and looked at mother solemnly, as if from above, although mother was standing on the stairs.
>
> Äiti meni portaille vastaan, puhui ivallisesti kanttorille, eikä päästänyt häntä lainkaan sisään. Kanttorin kalpeille kasvoille levisi punerrus, hän siirteli jalkojaan, risti kätensä ja katsoi äitiä arvokkaasti kuin ylhäältä päin, vaikka äiti seisoikin portailla. (T 50.)

It becomes clear that Anna has decided to defy what is expected of her. Narrator-Milka recounts Anna's words to the cantor and the remorse she immediately fells afterwards:

> – […] I don't have the feeling in my chest that would be needed in order for me to be able to marry. It is spring, but although you cantor perhaps think that "she has been without a man for such a long time—now I have a good chance, since during the spring women want men the most"—I still do not want you. And frankly, I do not think that anyone else has such feelings for you either…
> Mother's words shocked the cantor so badly that he became completely bewildered and left our yard bowing and mumbling in a dignified voice:
> – Right, right…
> Mother closed the door and came in.
> I thought that she might laugh but she did not. She wiped the tears from her eyes, went to the new room and sat down in the rocking chair.
> – What if I will be abandoned like I abandoned the cantor! She whispered.
> I went next to her, stroked her black hair and consoled her.
> – Who would you like to have? I asked.
> – You will see then, if God allows. It is entirely up to Him, mother said.
>
> – […] Eikä minulla myöskään ole rinnassani sitä tunnetta, joka olisi tarpeellinen, jotta olisin otollinen avioliittoon. Nyt on kyllä kevät, mutta vaikka te kanttori ehkä ajattelettekin näin: hänpä on ollut kauan miestä vailla – nyt minulla on hyvä tilaisuus, koska juuri keväällä naiset parhaiten kaipaavat miestä – en silti halua teitä. Ja suoraan sanottuna, en usko monen muunkaan tuntevan sellaisia tunteita teitä kohtaan…
> Kanttoriin äidin sanat koskivat niin, että hän typertyi kokonaan, poistui pihaltamme kumarrellen ja mutisten arvokkaalla äänellä:
> – Jaha, jaaha…
> Äiti pani oven kiinni, tuli sisälle.
> Ajattelin, että hän nauraisi, mutta niin ei ollut. Äiti pyyhki kyyneleen silmästään, meni uuteen huoneeseen, istuutui keinutuoliin.
> – Jospa minutkin näin hyljätään, niin kuin minäkin kanttorin jätin! kuiskasi hän.
> Minä menin seisomaan hänen viereensä, silitin äidin mustaa tukkaa ja lohdutin häntä.
> – Kenet sinä haluaisit? Kysyin.
> – Sitten sen näet, jos Jumala suo ja niin tahtoo. Hänestä se kokonaan riippuu, virkkoi äiti. (T 50–51.)

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After this scene, Milka prays to God to help her mother, not knowing that what Anna wants is actually Kristus-Perkele. As Mäkelä-Marttinen (2008, 196–197) suggests, the "symbiotic" relationship—or intersubjective bond—between the girl and her mother is gradually destroyed by the man and the patriarchal power he represents. Later, in Chapter 8, after it has become clear that Kristus-Perkele has left and Anna does not yet know why, Anna makes explicit the connection between her abandoning the cantor and Kristus-Perkele disappearing, spelling out her moment of *hybris*: "This is how I am punished for talking to the cantor so arrogantly."[310]

The Recognition

After the readers already know what is happening, also Milka and Anna begin to move toward a moment of recognition: the *anagnorisis* begins to take shape. Chapter 6 recounts the events that happen later in the spring. Milka is about to turn fifteen and Anna is getting over having rejected cantor Malmström. She is spending more time with Kristus-Perkele. There are several hints before Milka understands what is happening: the narrator describes how the "mother's face looked happy" and how she was "smiling coyly" and "blushing."[311] A partial recognition happens after the man has finished building the new room for Anna and Milka and stays for the night in their home:

> That night mother slept with Kristus-Perkele in the new room. I tried to listen to their talk, but they did not say much. I could not sleep either. I laid in the big bed in the alcove, rolling and turning around. From this day on I would be fifteen years old—that is what I was thinking. In the small hours I saw mother through the chink of the curtains as she went out. She was naked, she had only a scarf around her waist: she tiptoed over the garden and came back. The night was light and I could see her face, smiling. *Perhaps then I suspected something.*
>
> But I only suspected, I did not understand enough to think about it then, and when I finally fell asleep, I slept soundly until midday.
>
> Yöllä äiti nukkui Kristus-Perkeleen luona uudessa huoneessa. Yritin kuunnella heidän puhettaan, mutta eivät he paljoa puhuneet. Minäkään en saanut unta. Makasin nukkumakamarin suuressa sängyssä kierien ja kääntelehtien. Tästä päivästä lukien olin viidentoista—sitä ajattelin. Aamuyöllä näin ikkunaverhon raosta äidin, kun hän kävi pihalla. Hän oli alasti, vain liina vyötäisillään: sipsutti varpaisillaan yli pihan ja tuli pian takaisin. Valoisan yön yli näin hänen hymyilevät kasvonsa. *Silloin minä ehkä aavistin jotakin.*
>
> Aavistin vain, en ymmärtänyt sitä silloin vielä ajatella ja kun viimein nukuin, nukuin sitkeästi puoleen päivään asti. (T 55, emphasis mine.)

The next day her mother wakes her up, full of joy. The question of understanding another and knowing the others' experiences is thematized in Anna's speech:

> – Milka, my child… I wish you knew, I wish you knew what a good day this is… How wonderful I feel!

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Mother hummed as she performed her chores, she did her work like a sleepwalker.

– …perhaps soon, Milka dear, you will get a father, she said.

I put the cup of porridge down, washed it, I thought about those words. My God, how I tried to think! From her words, I suspected…

– Do you mean him, mother?

– Him. Who else would be as good…

– Milka pikkuinen… tietäisitpä, tietäisitpä, miten hyvä päivä tämä on… Miten hyvä minun on olla!

Äiti kulki hyräillen askareillaan, toimitti töitään kuin unissakulkija.

– … ehkäpä piankin, Milka pieni, saat isän itsellesi, hän puheli.

Minä panin puurokupin pois, pesin sen, ajattelin noita sanoja. Jumala paratkoon, miten minä ajattelin! Aavistelin hänen sanoistaan.

– Häntäkö tarkoitat, äiti?

– Häntä. Kukapa muu niin hyvä olisi… (T 56.)

At this point, Milka finally understands what is happening. The narrator recounts that "I waited for the evening to come as if I were ill […]."[312] In the evening, Milka rushes to meet Kristus-Perkele and several new misunderstandings occur: "– What has happened? I saw from his eyes that he feared that something had happened to mother."[313] Milka once again interprets Kristus-Perkele's thoughts, but we have no way of knowing whether she is right or not. A more plausible explanation would perhaps be that he is afraid that Anna has finally found out about his sexual relationship with her daughter. Milka then confronts Kristus-Perkele:

– Why are you abandoning me now?
– I am not abandoning you, Milka my friend. I am yours. I do not think about anyone else than you.
– But still you will take my mother as your wife. Take me!

– Miksi sinä minut nyt hylkäät?
– Enhän minä sinua jätä, Milka ystäväni. Sinun minä olen. En minä muita ajattele kuin sinua.
– Mutta kuitenkin otat äidin vaimoksesi. Ota minut! (T 57.)

Milka takes off her clothes and talks to the man, calling him once again "Kristus" (Christ):

I whispered:

– Christ… come, come…

He turned around and looked at me lying there. I wanted to have him as my own, this is why I closed my eyes and let him look at my body. But he came to me, took my head in his arms and looked me in the eyes with an agitated and timid look and asked me:

– Milka, tell me… Is there still blood coming from you?

– Not any more, I replied smiling. – Aren't you happy about that?

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Kuiskasin:
– Kristus… tule, tule…
Hän kääntyi ja katsoi minua, kun makasin siinä. Halusin saada hänet omakseni, siksi suljin silmäni ja annoin hänen katsoa ruumistani. Mutta kun hän tuli luokseni, hän otti pääni käsiinsä ja katsoi silmiini vauhkon ja säikkyneen oloisena ja kysyi:
– Milka, sano minulle… vieläkö veri tulee sinusta?
– Ei enää, minä vastasin hänelle hymyillen. – Etkö ole siitä iloinen? (T 57.)

The readers and Kristus-Perkele find out almost simultaneously that Milka is pregnant. Or more precisely, the readers learn through the description of Kristus-Perkele's behavior and shock, and the pregnancy is confirmed when he asks Milka about her period. This is Milka's final misinterpretation: she believes that her "sins" have been forgiven since her period has stopped. There is a chain of recognitions: first Milka finds out about the relationship between Anna and Kristus-Perkele, then Kristus-Perkele and readers realize that Milka is pregnant.

The chapter ends with Kristus-Perkele giving a wooden ball to Milka as a present for her fifteenth birthday. As instructed by Kristus-Perkele, she seals the coin (which he had given her in the hayfield almost two years earlier) inside the ball. Kristus-Perkele says goodbye and at this point readers are likely to understand that he will disappear. The chapter ends with Anna looking at the ball:

– The things he comes up with, mother said admiring the ball. – What is inside it?
– I do not know, I said. – It is impossible to open the ball…
– Perhaps he will tell me, said mother.

– Kaikkea hän keksiikin, sanoi äiti palloa ihaillen. – Mitä sen sisällä on?
– En tiedä, sanoin minä. – Palloa ei saa avatuksi…
– Ehkä hän sen minulle sanookin, sanoi äiti. (T 58.)

All the elements of the tragedy are now in place and the moment of *peripeteia*, the turning point, has arrived. The readers, like Kristus-Perkele, now know everything but Milka and Anna are still partly in the dark, and we are left to wait for their final recognitions. We expect the shock to come. At the same time, the meaning of the ball remains ambiguous. It becomes a symbol of the secret at the heart of the novella, but no one seems to know exactly what the secret is. We are all invited to give our own interpretations of the object like Anna does. The ball gets different meanings depending on the perspective from which it is looked at: the three main characters, the early readers, different academic readers, and today's readers. Depending on the point of view, the secret and taboo is the pregnancy, the sexuality, the incest, or the sexual abuse and trauma.

When Kristus-Perkele does not return, Anna becomes worried and sick. At this point, narrator-Milka focuses on how Anna waits for him and becomes increasingly desperate: "He did not come back. Mother sat by the window day after day, stared outside and waited, knitted a sweater for the man, sighing. Neither of us went to the village and the villagers did not come

https://doi.org/10.21435/sflit.13

to us."[314] Finally, Milka and Anna visit Kristus-Perkele's cottage and see that it is abandoned: the windows are broken, and everything is gone. The narrator recounts how Anna's state becomes even worse:

> At home mother went to bed, she lay there for several days, crying, sometimes falling asleep. I milked the cows, wiped the floors, cooked for myself. Mother did not eat anything during those days. Then, after having lain down for a week, she got up, walked slowly creeping, staring at someone with a serious face. I did not see a smile on mother's face anymore, she did not go to the village, not even to Laanila.
>
> Kotona äiti paneutui vuoteeseen, makasi usean päivän ajan itkien, joskus nukahtaen. Minä lypsin lehmät, lakaisin lattiat, laitoin ruokaa itselleni. Äiti ei syönyt mitään niinä päivinä. Sitten hän toipui viikon maattuaan, nousi ylös, kulki hiljaa hiiviskellen, jotakuta tuijottamaan pysähdellen, totisin kasvoin. Hymyä en nähnyt enää äidin kasvoilla, kylälle ei äiti enää lähtenyt, ei mennyt edes Laanilaan asti. (T 63.)

Anna's interpretation is that she is being punished for abandoning the cantor—for her *hybris*. The narrator also describes a change in the mother's appearance:

> Mother brushed her hair with shaking hands. She had lost weight, there were dark veins under her eyes, deep under the surface of the skin, her cheeks had lost their roundness, only her lips had kept their color: they were even bloodier than before, like pieces of raw bloody meat. From the pale face they were visible like a dark mark. But there was no smile on mother's lips. With a quiet voice she talked as if to herself, almost not seeing me. I sat quietly: I listened to her.
>
> Äiti siveli hiuksiaan kädet vavisten. Hän oli laihtunut, silmien alle olivat painuneet tummat juonteet syvälle pinnan alle, poskista oli mennyt pyöreys, vain huulet olivat säilyttäneet värinsä: ne olivat verevämmätkin kuin ennen, kuin kappaleet veristä, raakaa lihaa. Kalpeista kasvoista ne erottautuivat tummana jälkenä. Mutta hymyä ei äidin huulilla enää ollut. Hiljaisella äänellä hän puhui kuin itsekseen, minua tuskin lainkaan huomaten. Minä istuin vaieten: kuuntelin häntä. (T 65.)

Whereas Anna's monologues were earlier addressed both to herself and to Milka, now Milka feels that Anna talks only to herself, barely noticing her. The mother's sorrow has an effect on Milka, which narrator-Milka tells empathically, adopting her young self's voice in a narrated monologue: "I felt as if also my heart had been filled by her pain. Oh, oh, how full of pain."[315] Occasionally, Anna seeks comfort from Milka, talking to her out loud:

> But we do have each other, Milka, maybe it is the way it should be. Perhaps only the body desires, even now as I am waiting for him here alone. Perhaps the body is weak, but then God gives us strength so that the soul would be strong and fight against the body…

https://doi.org/10.21435/sflit.13

> Onhan meillä toisemme, Milka, ehkä sen täytyykin olla näin. Ehkä vain ruumis himoitsee, nytkin kun ilman häntä odotan tässä. Ehkä ruumis on heikko, mutta Jumala antaa silloin voimia, jotta sielu olisi luja ja taistelisi ruumista vastaan… (T 66.)

The religious cultural narrative according to which the body is sinful is repeated in Anna's speech: she implies that her love and desire for the man has been a sin—in her world, everything related to sexuality and sex is wrong.

Finally, Anna understands that her daughter is pregnant. The recognition is narrated through a reported monologue, and the narrator also describes Anna's expressions and gestures. Milka is silent while her mother gradually realizes what has happened:

> – Milka, how come your stomach is so… so, now that you bend down? Mother asked.
>
> She came to me, tested my stomach with her hands, a horrified expression spread on her face.
>
> – Oh my God, Milka… Milka…., mother whispered.
>
> – With whom have you been? I can see…
>
> She climbed up to the benches with tears in her eyes. I stood on the floor.
>
> – ….she has not been with anyone, no. Except maybe he… or maybe, maybe Laanila's son has been with you, Milka… she said staring at me.
>
> – You are a child. What about Ojanen? How could it be that you, Milka… you will have a child!
>
> – Milka, miten sinun vatsasi on noin… noin, nyt kun kumarrut? Äiti kysyi.
>
> Hän tuli luokseni, koetteli vatsaani käsillään, kauhistunut ilme levisi hänen kasvoilleen.
>
> – Hyvä luoja, Milka… Milka…, kuiski äiti.
>
> – Kenen kanssa olet ollut? Näen kyllä…
>
> Äiti meni lauteille kyyneleet silmissään. Minä seisoin lattialla.
>
> – …eihän hän kenenkään kanssa ole ollut, eipä kyllä. Paitsi hän… tai ehkä, ehkä Laanilan poika on ollut sinun kanssasi, Milka…, puheli äiti minua tuijottaen. – Lapsihan sinä olet. Entä Ojanen? Miten siis voisi olla niin, että sinä, Milka… sinä saat lapsen! (T 65.)

First, Anna speaks to Milka but then stops and addresses the words to herself, realizing that Kristus-Perkele must be the father. Finally, she confronts Milka, practically asking her to deny what she knows to be true:

> – Milka, say you have not lain with anyone, haven't you…? Say it, Milka… You went to Ojanen often, what did you do there? Tell me, tell me! My God, tell me that you did not do anything! Mother shouted with a horrified, crying voice.
>
> – Milka, ethän ole hänen kanssaan pannut vuoteeseen makailemaan, ethän…? Sano, Milka… sinä kävit Ojasen luona usein, mitä teitte siellä? Sano, sano! Hyvä Jumala, sano ettette tehneet mitään! Huusi äiti kauhuisalla itkevällä äänellä. (T 70.)

Milka then denies that she has been with anyone, and the narrator describes how she, too, gradually understands that she will have a child and how she

https://doi.org/10.21435/sflit.13

stays adamant: she has not been with anyone. There are multiple possible ways to interpret the reasons behind Milka's lie, from experiences of shame and fear to love for Kristus-Perkele and efforts to protect the mother. Ultimately it becomes clear that there are no words for what has happened, and the secret is sealed inside the ball.

The reality of the storyworld is torn in two when Milka lies to her mother (and later also to the cantor) and her mother accepts the lie although, on some level, she seems to know the truth. Two opposing states of events become true at the same time: Milka has slept with Kristus-Perkele and will have his child *and* Milka is a virgin and will have God's child. The readers *know* the latter to be untrue, but the discrepancy is kept up in the storyworld: Milka will not admit the truth to anyone, no matter what happens. Kristus-Perkele has disappeared and Anna and other characters accept Milka's denial. A false shared world in which Kristus-Perkele is not the father is created. The actual meaning of the fact that Kristus-Perkele is the father of Milka's child is never made explicit in the story: Milka is a victim of abuse and Anna has failed to protect her daughter.

This continuing ambiguity is reflected in adult Milka's prayers: as discussed, readers never find out without a doubt what the prayers mean and to whom they are addressed. They are a confession of sin—but also an "inversed prayer," an abandonment of God and faith (see also Mäkelä-Marttinen 2008, 189). On one level, they are addressed to God, but in Milka's (and later Anna's) mind, Kristus-Perkele has become God (see also Mäkelä-Marttinen 2008, 199; Lahtinen 2013, 65).[316] At the time of narration, adult Milka prays: "I do not want to see your eyes anymore, I do not want to kiss your lips anymore, I will not lie beside you anymore, I will not open my thighs for you. You do not exist anymore, God…"[317] The religious and the sexual experiences are intermingling, and this is aligned with the symbolism of the Laestadian discourses in which sexuality and the sacred are often combined. On the level of the events, young Milka connects her pregnancy to God: "Dear God, I am carrying your child under my heart, you have hidden your seed inside me. […] God, do not forget your most beloved. Be like a father to me, be the safety for your child, be with me God…"[318] There are symbols and references to religious narratives: the unborn child is the hidden seed of God, and the sexual and familial love for a father are merging.

At this point, Milka is expressing both Anna's and her own thoughts and experiences:

> So we both cried in the new room, sitting by the bed made by Kristus-Perkele, mother and I. And although neither of us said it out loud, we both knew: we cried because of him, nothing else. When he had left, he had left us a thought, a memory of himself that was very painful.

> Niin itkimme molemmat uudessa huoneessa, Kristus-Perkeleen tekemän sängyn laidalla istuen, äiti ja minä. Ja vaikka ei meistä kumpikaan sanonut sitä ääneen, tiesimme kyllä kumpikin: häntä me itkimme, emme mitään muuta. Hän oli lähtiessään jättänyt meihin itsestään ajatuksen, muiston, joka oli hyvin kipeä. (T 75.)

https://doi.org/10.21435/sflit.13

As Mäkelä-Marttinen (2008, 188) remarks, everything around Milka and Anna is made by Kristus-Perkele. The man has not only left a thought or a memory of himself, but he has also created the material world that scaffolds Milka's and Anna's experiences—the room, the bed, the chair—and of course he has also left a child. Chapter 10 begins with Milka accepting that Kristus-Perkele is gone, and she describes how her mother also understood and how she changed:

> Kristus-Perkele did not come back. Even the last kindling of hope that he would return disappeared and we stopped waiting for him. Not even mother waited—it is easy to see things like that even if they were hidden. The eyes of a person who waits reveal their thoughts to others—the look that expresses that a soul is waiting for its loved one did not live in mother's eyes. It had already disappeared from her.

> Kristus-Perkele ei palannut. Viimeinenkin toiveen kipinä siitä, että hän tulisi takaisin, sammui, emmekä enää häntä odottaneetkaan. Tuskin äitikään enää, sillä sellaiset asiat oli helppo huomata, vaikka ne salattaisiinkin. Odottajan silmät paljastavat ajatuksensa muille – äitini silmissä ei enää ollut sitä näköä, joka ilmaisee että sielu vartoo rakastaan. Se oli jo äidistä kadonnut. (T 76.)

The "first act" of the tragedy then ends with Anna going insane. Let us now turn to the "second act" in which "madness" begins to spread in the community. I first look at the symbols of madness, and then turn to the question of shared trauma.

Shared Madness and Trauma

> Greek tragedy represents madness as something temporary, come from outside... It is inner writhing, expressed externally in dancelike jerkiness. People know you are mad by how you look and move. (Padel 1995, 238.)

As Padel writes, the madness of tragic characters becomes visible in the way they look and move: in their bodies, gestures, and actions. After Milka's and Anna's *anagnorisis*, Milka describes how Anna is sitting in the new room, half awake, talking to herself, avoiding her daughter. Even the way she speaks has changed: "But her voice was as if strange now, as if it belonged to someone else, but no longer to mother."[319] Milka again depicts both their feelings and the way she read her mother's thoughts from her gaze: "Sorrow and anxiety lived under both of our chests. I guessed that my mother was thinking about the child inside me, because most often her gaze was directed at my stomach where the bump was. I could not look her in the eyes. If I tried, she turned away her head."[320]

The most emblematic scene of madness in the novella is the one in which Milka sees her mother at the well: "Through the window I saw mother combing her hair at the well. She was so insane."[321] There is a window, a glass pane separating the mother and the daughter, and Anna's loose hair and the open well function as symbols of madness. Mäkelä-Marttinen (2008, 213)

https://doi.org/10.21435/sflit.13

offers a more detailed interpretation of the symbols: the way Anna combs her hair can be read as a ritual for trying to clean herself from "the dirt of the taboo," and the well symbolizes a path to the otherworldly. Hair is also an object of liminality and abjection (like menstruation), and we can recall that also Milka was originally introduced to us through her hair that was "dripping water." Both characters are thus gradually moving to a state that is in the margins of subjectivity.[322] As the story is coming to its end, we are shown how the "madness" is shared: Milka ends up narrating the others' shattering as well as her own. In the final chapters, the narration moves between Milka's description of her own experiences and her account of her mother and the neighbors' young son, Auno, both losing their minds.

The final events begin to unfold after Kristus-Perkele is gone. Auno from the neighboring farm, Laanila, comes to help them with haymaking. His help is a gesture of neighborly kindness, but we also know that he is in love with Milka and has been trying to get her attention since the beginning of the story. In the background of the story about Milka, Anna and Kristus-Perkele is an implicit narrative according to which Milka and Auno are expected to get married when they grow up. When the hay is brought into the barn, Milka allows Auno to touch her as a "reward" for his work in the field.[323] In this moment, Auno, too, realizes that Milka is expecting a child. Milka's pregnancy comes as a shock also to Auno:

> – Milka, how come you are? I felt it… you are expecting a child… to whom? To whom are you expecting? To Kristus-Perkele, I can guess… Milka, Milka, what do you say…? Words came out of his mouth irrationally, agitated, so fast that I cannot remember precisely everything that he said.
>
> – Milka, miten olet? Minä tunsin sen… sinä odotat lasta… kenelle? Kenelle odotat? Kristus-Perkeleelle, minä arvaan… Milka, Milka, mitä sanot…? Hän puhui sanoja järjettömästi suustaan päästellen, kiihtyneenä, niin nopeasti, etten saata muistaa kaikkea mitä hän sanoi. (T 83.)

Auno is the only character who seems to understand without a doubt that the father of the child is Kristus-Perkele. The readers are likely to be on Auno's "side": he is correct in his recognition, and we may sympathize with him because of his love for Milka—although he, too, repeats some very disturbing models of masculinity.

A scene that is familiar from the beginning of the story is now repeated for the third time: it is the third haymaking, Milka and (this time) Auno have been lying in the hay and there has been a sexual encounter. After Auno's recognition, Milka runs out from the barn. Once again, it suddenly begins to rain, and narrator-Milka describes her feelings of distress and the way she was wandering aimlessly in the rain and crying:

> My mind was as if sick and helpless and cries were strangling my throat. Perhaps, I thought then, perhaps I like Auno a little. The rain was bursting on the ground around me, and the surface of the road was filled with puddles. I walked over a kilometer barefoot, soaking wet, my teeth chattering. My hair was tangled: hay was sticking from it. The house of Hieta where cantor Malmström lived was by

https://doi.org/10.21435/sflit.13

> the road, on an island created by a small stream: by the house, the stream forked in two and it was connected again by the forest. That is where I went.
>
> Mieleni oli kuin sairas ja avuton ja nyyhkytykset kuristivat kurkkuani. Ehkäpä, ajattelin minä silloin, ehkä pidän hieman Aunosta. Sade ryöppyi maahan ympärilläni, tien pinta oli täynnään vesilammikoita. Avojaloin kuljin toista kilometriä, likomärkänä ja hampaat kalisten. Tukkani oli kuin takkuna: heinänkulmut törröttivät hiuksissani. Hiedan talo, jossa kanttori Malmström asui, oli tien laidassa, pienen puron muodostamassa saaressa; talon kohdalla puro haarautui kahdeksi yhtyen taas metsänreunassa. Sinne minä menin. (T 84.)

For reasons that are not explained in any way, Milka goes to the cantor's house. She is soaking wet like she was when she was returning from the hayfield at the very beginning of her story. She tells him that she wants to marry him, takes off her clothes and invites the cantor to have sex with her. The cantor, too, recognizes that Milka is pregnant: he rejects her and suggests that she has been "playing with some boy,"[324] but Milka denies that she has been with anyone. Ultimately the cantor, like Anna earlier, seems to believe her, and later he even refers to the story of the Immaculate Conception as an explanation for Milka's pregnancy: "We do know one incident from the Word… God moves in a mysterious way..."[325] He accepts Milka's refusal to talk about the pregnancy and agrees that if Milka would still want to marry him the next day, he would accept her. Much can be read into his decision: a mixture of sexual desire, kindness, even revenge for his hurt pride, and also a religious belief that he could be facing a miracle. As the man puts his hand on Milka's thigh, she describes a sense of losing ownership of her own body:

> He forgot his hand on my thigh. I did not take it away, how could I have. It did not matter whether he kept his hand on my waist or in his pocket. This I did not think then. My mind was like the rain: hasty, fearful but fierce. The water hit the window of the chamber, becoming stronger and relenting again.
>
> Hän unohti kätensä reidelleni. En ottanut sitä pois, miten olisin ottanutkaan. Eihän ollut väliä sillä, pitikö hän kättänsä uumallani vaiko taskussaan. Sellaista en silloin ajatellut. Mieleni oli kuin sade: hätäinen, pelokas, mutta raju. Vesi iski kamarin ikkunaan yltyen, laantuen taas. (T 86.)

Milka's state of mind is compared to the rain: it is as if a force of nature guided her actions. In a symbolic reading, the mythical base structure of the novella seems to govern her actions, and the strange atmosphere is developing. I return to Milka's decision at the end of the chapter, but let us first look at the final events of the novella.

When Milka returns home, she reveals her decision to her mother. Anna accepts the news submissively, focusing more on herself: "…it is understandable, my child, it is. I suppose he will take you, you are a big girl already, Milka. You know what to do and what not to do. I have been crushed by sorrow already… You understand, don't you?"[326] Her talk can be compared to what trauma theorists have called "the sense of a foreshortened future": there seems to be no future left for her (see Ratcliffe 2017, 117). Whereas

https://doi.org/10.21435/sflit.13

the words evoke a feeling of resignation, her bodily actions show affective experiences that are not explained: she takes Milka on her lap, stroking her hair and they rock in the chair until Anna falls asleep. The roles of mother and daughter are gradually being reversed (see also Mäkelä-Marttinen 2008, 201).

The following chapter (Chapter 12) begins from the next morning. Milka sleeps late but Anna receives Laanila's wife who has come to talk about Auno and Milka. When the wife has left, Anna tells Milka that (also) Auno wants to marry her:

> Mother's words made me so sad that I began to cry. I cried in horror because of myself, because it felt like my own being had become foreign and inexplicable to me, as if I knew nothing about myself, not a moment about my life forward.
> […]
> – I know, I know, I cried. – I knew it… but still I will marry the cantor.
>
> Äidin sanoista mieleni pahoittui niin, että puhkesin itkuun. Nyyhkytin kauhuissani itseni takia, sillä minusta tuntui kuin oma olentoni olisi käynyt minulle yht'äkkiä vieraaksi ja selittämättömäksi, enkä olisi tiennyt itsestäni mitään, en hetkeäkään elämästäni eteenpäin.
> […]
> – Tiedän kyllä, itkin minä. – Tiesin sen… sittenkin otan kanttorin. (T 90.)

Milka describes a feeling of hopelessness, loss of future and loss of self. Again, the experiences can be read in the framework of trauma. However, they also evoke an impression of a lack of psychological depth: Milka is acting like a character in a tragedy, an actant in some unknown plot without any real agency of her own.

As mentioned earlier, Ratcliffe has emphasized the loss of trust in others and in the world resulting from traumatic experiences that are inflicted by other people. As he puts it, "'losing trust' involves losing a habitual confidence that more usually permeates all experience, thought, and activity" (Ratcliffe 2017, 120). Our experiences are to a large extent interpersonally regulated and supported: we are often dependent on others to know and remember things, we trust others to help us and guide us in the world, and sometimes even our perceptions are dependent on others who can verify or deny whether what we are seeing or experiencing is true or not. In trauma, much of this interpersonal world is altered: "If others in general are not to be trusted, then practices that depend on their behaving in certain ways are not to be trusted either." (Ratcliffe 2017, 147.) After Kristus-Perkele is gone, Milka's and Anna's whole world is changed. Both Milka and Anna are faced with a destructive violation of trust by Kristus-Perkele. Nothing has been the way they thought, and their worlds are shattered. This also involves a shattering of their intersubjective bond: there is no more "us."

In the end, not only Anna and Milka but also Auno are portrayed as losing their minds. After Milka's decision, we are told about a change in him: "I saw that he had become thin, his cheeks were as if hollow. Was he sad because of me? I thought, but I did not want to think about it further. Why would I care about Auno?"[327] As a first-person narrator, Milka has no

https://doi.org/10.21435/sflit.13

access to Auno's thoughts, but she sees how he has lost weight and how he is changing. Thoughts of concern and responsibility arise in her mind, but she interrupts them immediately and the narrator does not elaborate on Milka's decision to reject Auno any further.

After the decision to marry the cantor, Milka describes that she lived as if in a dream. She is now fifteen and old enough to get married, but she must be confirmed first. Her time at confirmation school is described in short flashes: "The whole period was almost like a dream. I read diligently the whole week, even at night."[328] The motif of memory loss is then repeated: Milka does not remember her wedding, or more precisely, the only thing that she remembers is her mother's distress:

> We were wed on the second week of November, but my memory has lost the event, I cannot remember it anymore. I only remember that mother sat in the church on the first bench, laughing and crying in turns—that day she lost her mind for good, and her speech and behavior were never again like others'. The few people who were at the church that Sunday stared at my mother more than me and the cantor. When we drove home in Laanila's carriage, mother laughed the whole way. A light drizzle was falling from the sky, so that we all were wet before arriving at home. I wore my yellow dress: I had myself made it longer. The cantor was blowing his nose and mother was stroking his shoulders.
>
> Marraskuun toisella viikolla meidät vihittiin, mutta muistini on jättänyt minulta pois sen tapahtuman, en enää saa sitä mieleeni. Vain sen muistan, että äiti istui kirkossa ensimmäisessä penkissä nauraen ja itkien vuorotellen – sinä päivänä sekosi hänen järkensä lopullisesti, eikä hän käytökseltään ja puheeltaan ollut enää niin kuin muut ihmiset. Ne harvat, jotka sinä sunnuntaina olivat kirkossa, tuijottivat enemmän äitiä kuin minua ja kanttoria. Kun Laanilan kieseillä ajoimme kotiin, nauroi äiti koko matkan ajan. Hienoinen sade vihmoi vettä taivaalta, niin että me kaikki kastuimme ennen kotiin pääsyä. Minulla oli ylläni keltainen leninkini: olin itse pidentänyt sitä. Kanttori turisteli nenäänsä ja äiti silitti hänen olkapäitään. (T 100–101.)

The passage offers an explicit description of the mother "losing her mind" permanently on the wedding day. Milka makes what could be described as "folk psychiatric" interpretations about her mother's state of mind: Anna laughs and cries and does not behave like other people. The description is also steeped with symbolic meaning: the event creates an allusion to the previous church trip during Pentecost a year and a half earlier as Milka wears the same yellow dress that she wore that spring.[329] The cantor has taken the place of Kristus-Perkele in the scene and the mother is caressing the old man's shoulder. It is as if the two visits to church, for Pentecost and the wedding, were intertwined and time was looping. We are also told that on the wedding night, Anna sits in the new room and stares at Milka and the cantor in their bed, made by Kristus-Perkele. At night, Milka feels disgust at the old man's body and in the morning, she sees how Anna is combing her hair at the well.

The descriptions of nature continue to mirror the characters' emotions and mental states. The narrator depicts how even nature has become ill:

https://doi.org/10.21435/sflit.13

> The air outside had cooled. Bleak wind was blowing from the Hillock: the scarce yellow leaves, the last ones attached to the birch branches, were torn rejoicingly with the wind, they flew to the ground dancing fiercely, trembled a little, then settled in their place. The ground was full of yellow, even black decomposed leaves. The pine forest behind the strips had also turned yellowish—a disease had killed the pine needles and made them yellow this year—and wind was blowing in the twigs.
>
> Ulkona oli ilma jäähtynyt. Kolkko tuuli puhalsi Kummulta: harvat keltaiset lehdet, viimeiset, jotka vielä olivat koivujen oksissa jäljellä, riistäytyivät riemuiten tuulen mukaan, lensivät hurjaa tanssia tanssien maahan, värähtivät jonkin kerran siinä, asettuivat sitten paikalleen. Maa oli täynnä keltaisia ja jo mustiksikin maatuneita lehtiä. Mäntymetsä sarkojen takana oli sekin kellervä – tauti oli tänä vuonna tappanut männyn neulaset keltaisiksi – ja tuuli suhisi sen havuissa. (T 102.)

A page later, she recounts how a piece of paper was flying uncontrollably in the wind:

> In the yard, the short hay was bent. The wind was brushing the tops of the hay, a big brown piece of paper was raising up like heavy breath in the wind, pressing itself to the ground, hesitating, wavering, finally throwing itself to the wind. It flew over the yard, was hit at the fence post and stuck on it.
>
> Pihalla lyhyt heinä taipuili. Tuuli siveli heinänlatvoja, suuri ruskea paperinkappale kohoili kuin raskas hengitys tuulessa, maata vasten likistäytyen, epäröiden, arkaillen, viimein heittäytyen lentoon. Se lensi yli pihan, paiskautui aidantolppaan ja tarttui siihen. (T 103.)

The description of nature, the disease in the forest and the paper flying and crushing on the pole evoke a sense of loss of control. As Lahtinen (2013, 66–67) notes, the story follows the changing seasons: it is now autumn and the end of growth and development. The "cosmic" powers implied in the description of nature can also be seen as one element in the creation of the strange atmosphere of the novella.

In the second to last chapter, Milka begins her married life. From Auno, she learns that Kristus-Perkele has been caught after stealing Laanila's horse and imprisoned. The news shocks her, but she seems to be unable to reflect on it further: "For a moment it was fun that the white snow covered the ground, but soon that joy was over. Not because of the cantor or mother; otherwise, inexplicably my mind was as if sick and crippled and I all the time thought: what are they doing to him now… I wish someone would come who could tell…"[330] She cannot really understand the reason for her state of mind. From her shock at the news, it nonetheless becomes clear that she is sad for Kristus-Perkele, worrying about him and his fate, and she is still in love with him. At the same time, her connection with her mother is gone. Anna is strange and horrifying, and Milka is even afraid of her. Anna's eyes in which Milka earlier saw her experiences are now empty: "I was horrified each time I looked into mother's eyes. She was laughing but her eyes did not have any

https://doi.org/10.21435/sflit.13

expression, she was sometimes caressing the cantor, stroking the back of his neck. But nothing she did or said was natural."[331]

Anna is also walking around the house, looking at and talking about the objects made by Kristus-Perkele:

> – …he did this here, planed… fixed. How skilled he was! Even this here! Here, here has a man been working, so good it has become. Everything so fine. How he knew… I know that… There are few people like that, it is rare that a skillful infant is born…
>
> – …hän teki tämän tässä, höyläsi… laittoi. Miten taitava hän olikaan! Tämäkin tässä! Siinä, siinä on mies puuhaillut, hyvä siitä on tullut. Hyviä kaikki. Kylläpä hän osasi… tiedänhän minä sen… Ei ole moniaita sellaisia, harvoin sattuu syntymään saapakätinen ihmislapsi… (T 106.)

Like Milka in her prayers, Anna is now clearly connecting Kristus-Perkele to Christ and God. She chatters to herself, wondering about the wooden ball in a way that reveals the associations she makes:

> She took the wooden ball from the table, rolled it around in her hand, stared ahead with eyes that saw nothing.
> – … what is inside… here? It rattles sweetly. He knows it. He has hidden a secret inside. Someone shall try to find out. Wonderful is his providence. No one can guess what is inside here, should one even. A punishment is given for it… for curiosity. Wonderful are his works… unknown are the ways of the Lord…
>
> Hän otti puupallon pöydältä, pyöritti sitä kädessään mitäännäkemättömin silmin eteensä tuijottaen.
> – … mitähän on sisällä… täällä? Tämä helähtää somasti. Hän sen tietää. Hän on sinne salaisuuden piilottanut. Yrittäköön joku ottaa siitä selvän. Ihmeellinen on hänen johdatuksensa. Kukaan ei aavista, mitä täällä on, onko se tarpeellistakaan. Rangaistushan seuraa siitä… uteliaisuudesta. Ihmeellisiä ovat hänen työnsä… tutkimattomia ovat Herran tiet… (T 106.)

Milka has completely lost her connection to her mother. Instead, Anna speaks her fragmented thoughts aloud and the narrator merely records them. Likewise, Auno is depicted in an even more severe state than earlier:

> Auno was sitting in the dark in the corner of the room. He did not speak, not a word, just sat there dark and grave, I almost was afraid of him. He had become even paler; his cheeks were even hollower than before. It was as if he was plagued by a severe disease. Even his eyes had fallen in their sockets and become large and immobile. […] He did not say anything to me, although I sat on the bench right next to him and quietly in my mind wished that he would have something to say to me.
>
> Auno istui hämärässä tuvan nurkassa. Hän ei puhunut mitään, ei sanaakaan, vaan istui uhkaavana ja totisena alallaan, niin että miltei pelkäsin häntä. Hän oli entisestäänkin kalventunut ja posket olivat kuopalla enemmän kuin aikaisemmin. Oli kuin hän olisi sairastanut vaikeaa tautia. Silmätkin olivat

https://doi.org/10.21435/sflit.13

> painuneet kuoppiinsa ja käyneet suuriksi ja liikkumattomaksi. […] Hän ei sanonut minulle mitään, vaikka istuuduinkin penkille aivan hänen viereensä ja hiljaa mielessäni toivoin, että hänellä olisi jotakin asiaa. (T 107–108.)

Milka tries to find a connection to Auno, but also this proves impossible. At this point, everyone close to her is shattered.

In the final chapter (Chapter 15), Christmas is approaching, and the child is born in the first week of December. Auno's mother comes to help with the birth and the child is healthy, but after giving birth, Milka gets a high fever. During her illness, she hallucinates Kristus-Perkele and feels how her whole body is craving for him. The child is taken elsewhere to be fed while Milka is ill, and when Milka recovers and the baby is brought back, she notices that Anna seems to be afraid of the infant. Milka even fears that Anna might hurt him, but she doesn't, she just stares at him and talks to "Christ," asking for "mercy."

The novel ends with an ambiguous prayer:

> My God, my most beloved. Many nights I have waited for you, I have slept with my lap open, I would have spread my legs for you. Why have you abandoned me, why have you forsaken your child. At night I tremble with coldness, at day my eyes peer out to the village—you will not answer my call.
>
> Jumala, minun rakkaimpani. Monina öinä olen odottanut sinua, olen nukkunut sylini levittäneenä, jalkani olisin avannut sinulle. Miksi sinä olet minut hyljännyt, miksi olet lapsesi unohtanut. Öisin värisen vilusta, päivisin silmäni kylälle tähyävät – sinä et vastaa kutsuuni. (T 116.)

The last prayer seems to combine several different perspectives and it is difficult to locate it temporally inside the story. Most strongly it appears to belong to young Milka after the birth of her son. It repeats the way both Milka and Anna were waiting for Kristus-Perkele to return when he first disappeared and they were "peering out to the village." Before the birth of the child, both had given up hope, but in the last prayer, Milka seems to be waiting again. The narrator, who abandoned "God" at the very beginning of the story, has for some reason become silent. At the moment of narration, Milka has to be about the same age as Anna was when the events happened, and one could even argue that in the prayer Anna and Milka become one: Milka is shattered like her mother.[332]

The sense of foreshortened future involved in trauma can be characterized with what Mark Freeman has called a "narrative foreclosure": "the premature conviction that one's life story has effectively ended: there is no more to tell; there is no more that *can* be told." (Freeman 2000, 89; see also Ratcliffe 2017, 117.) The novella ends with the enigmatic prayer, and we are told nothing about later events—it is as if the future did not exist. Apart from the prayers in which adult Milka abandons God, she appears to be stuck in the past. This has also been noted by Mäkelä-Marttinen (2008, 205) who writes that Milka is "imprisoned" in her memories.[333] From an aesthetic and affective perspective, Mukka's decision not to elaborate on adult Milka's life or the situation in which she is telling her story is extremely effective: it adds to the

https://doi.org/10.21435/sflit.13

sense of uncertainty, loss of trust in the world, and loss of future.

The understanding of the characters' shared trauma can also be supplemented with a mythical reading. As Padel (1995, 238) notes, "Greek tragedy represents madness as something temporary, come from outside." It is understood as a punishment of the gods. The "madness" coming from "outside" in *Tabu* is Kristus-Perkele, a stranger who is an internally torn character and who breaks down the intersubjective, social world. The events triggered by his arrival drive Anna, Auno, and ultimately Milka insane. Symbolically they end up paying the price for Kristus-Perkele's transgressions and crimes (see also Mäkelä-Marttinen 2008, 192). Their intersubjective world is destroyed, and it is not reestablished in the end, although Kristus-Perkele disappears and Milka's son is born healthy. However, there is some hope, albeit very precarious. The villagers come to help when Milka's son is born: Auno's mother helps with the birth and the child is nursed by the shopkeeper's wife during the time Milka is ill. The community's acts of help and kindness offer a chance of a future, at least for the child.[334]

"Madness" is used in the novella as a symbol that points to cultural taboos, secrets, silences, and traumatic experiences. It circulates in the village community: it spreads from the character of Kristus-Perkele, and destroys Anna, Auno, and Milka. Many of its meanings are formed in the framework of tragic literature in which the characters' fates are sealed by unknown forces. However, the mythical frames of the text should not prevent us from recognizing and acknowledging *Tabu* as a story about sexual abuse.

A Strange Atmosphere

> Everything gets a new meaning. The environment is somehow different—not to a gross degree—perception is unaltered in itself but there is some change which envelops everything with a subtle, pervasive and strangely uncertain light. (Jaspers 1963, 98.)

The laws that regulate our shared world do not hold in Mukka's storyworld: the actions of the characters are guided by a strange logic; things are true and not true at the same time. We are forced into a kind of double bookkeeping: to believe in two contradictory things at the same time and to move between two realms of meaning (see Sass 1994, 275; Ratcliffe 2017, 63; 153). I suggest that the "strange atmosphere" that readers can experience while reading *Tabu* can be described through Jaspers's notion of "delusional atmosphere," which Ratcliffe connects to the development of trauma. It has two characteristics: a subtle change in the way the world is perceived and a "pervasive" and "unpleasant" feeling of uncertainty. (Ratcliffe 2017, 111.) As we have seen, *Tabu* portrays how the world changes around Milka and Anna. The traumatic events can be understood as a cause of their shattering, but they are never named as such explicitly. We are given the impression that Milka and Anna lose their minds because they lose the man they love, and we are even invited to join them in hoping for his return. However, the tragedy is bigger than the disappearance of one man. Ultimately, the readers

https://doi.org/10.21435/sflit.13

are left alone to reflect on the events, without a knowledgeable narrator or implied author to guide us. The "strange atmosphere" is in the end a readers' construction, our version of a traumatic, delusional atmosphere, developed inside the protective aesthetic frame, but distressing nonetheless. It makes reading the novella unsettling, and it is linked to the uncertainty about how to read the text: how can we enjoy the aesthetic qualities and reflect on the difficult ethical questions at the same time?

As suggested earlier, the strange atmosphere has several sources that are tightly connected. It can be traced to the linguistic and narrative elements of the text and to its overall "style": the prayers, the use of religious narratives and symbols, the sensitive description of bodily experiences, and the lack of reflection. As we saw at the beginning of this chapter, readers have described this narrative style, for example, as "lyrical," "archaic," and "detached" (see, e.g., Paasilinna 1988, 91; Mäkelä-Marttinen 2008, 189). Moreover, the atmosphere could be characterized through the three overlapping themes addressed in this chapter:

1) The misreadings: the misinterpretations between the characters, the strange or unexplained acts they take and decisions they make, and the resulting uncertainty about what has happened and how to interpret the events.
2) The mythical base structure: the cultural narratives, myths, and taboos the novella uses, which also underlie the characters' interpretations, actions, and decisions, and which likewise make the text difficult to interpret.
3) The uncertainty: the way the experiences of trauma, suffering, and "madness" spread from one character to another and wrap the readers inside the traumatic uncertainty and loss of trust in the world.

To conclude, let us briefly look at these themes through a motif that has not been explicitly discussed thus far: the unsettling logic of "exchange" that is visible in the story and emphasized by Milka's strange decision to marry the cantor.

As discussed, one source of the strange atmosphere is the way the characters make mistakes in their understanding and interpretation of one another and the events around them: there are Milka's misunderstandings of Kristus-Perkele's actions and her inability to perceive the relationship between him and her mother; Anna's inability to perceive and understand the way her daughter changes and how she is abused by Kristus-Perkele; and both Anna's and the cantor's acceptance of the idea of the Immaculate Conception. The events of the novella and the way the story is pushed forward are strongly motivated by these mistakes, misreadings, misunderstandings, blind spots, and false beliefs, and they result in actions that often defy common expectations. For example, the description of Milka's decision to marry the cantor invites an interpretation in which Milka is seen as acting blindly, like an actant in a predetermined plot.

The marriage has been interpreted in different ways. For example, Mäkelä-Marttinen suggests that Milka marries the cantor as a form of compensation: "Milka repays the sin of her mother's pride and having given herself

https://doi.org/10.21435/sflit.13

[to Kristus-Perkele] by offering herself as a wife to the cantor."[335] (Mäkelä-Marttinen 2008, 188; 190; see also Lahtinen 2013, 72). Furthermore, Lahtinen suggests that Milka tries to avoid the shame brought by the pregnancy and to secure an income for herself and her mother (Lahtinen 2013, 70). It is true that the cantor's prestigious position is mentioned in the text, and we are shown the villagers' respect for him, but otherwise there is no textual support for the interpretation other than "common sense": marriage with the cantor would be a plausible reaction in Milka's situation in the historical context of the events. However, in this very pragmatic line of thought, it would have been even more sensible to marry Auno, who is closer to her age, who is the heir of a wealthy farm, and whom Milka even seems to "like a little," as she says. Lahtinen's suggestion implies that Milka makes a conscious choice, but as we have seen, the text does not explain anything about the moment of the decision: Milka just finds her way to the cantor's house in the rain, full of distress. As Mäkelä-Marttinen (2008, 188) notes, the marriage between the cantor and Milka is "uncanny."[336] The readers have to infer Milka's feelings of sin and shame, her possible ponderings about security and respect from everything else we are told, and we end up projecting different kinds of cultural narratives on her.

This brings us to the second main source of the strange atmosphere. Milka's actions appear strange but also highly symbolic and even mythical: her decision-making seems unconscious, and her actions are not depicted as calculated or rational, but they become meaningful in the context of the cultural narratives, myths and taboos that regulate intersubjective life and guide her movements. Milka's act can be read as a sacrifice that is determined by the narrative form: she enacts the narrative of a "fallen woman" and the way such acts are resolved in naturalist and realist stories. Since Milka does not die in the end, she must marry and/or go insane. She also follows the story in which the Virgin Mary is married to the older Joseph. Moreover, from a psychological perspective, Milka's decision is "insane," but it also makes sense in an unsettling way. It can be read as a symptom of trauma: Milka has no more ownership of her own body, and it does not matter what is done with it. Or more precisely, the traumatic experience is re-enacted in her body and the way it is offered to the cantor.

Milka's decision also underscores and sheds light on the other forms of "exchange" portrayed in the text: Kristus-Perkele gives Milka the coin after the first sexual act and the wooden ball before he escapes; Milka offers herself to Auno as payment for haymaking; and finally Milka gives herself to the cantor after her mother has rejected him.[337] None of these exchanges are "rational" or "logical" in any common sense: they are not the result of ordinary decision-making. They are rather consequences of different kinds of narratives: Milka's and Anna's love for Kristus-Perkele and their dream of marrying him, or of the cultural narrative according to which girls and women can be "owned" by men and their bodies can be transferred from man to man like commodities (see also Mäkelä-Marttinen 2008, 192). Milka's and Anna's experiences, decisions, and acts are deeply affected by the narratives of love and marriage that they seem to have internalized. At the same time, we can see how Kristus-Perkele's actions are made possible by the taboos

https://doi.org/10.21435/sflit.13

surrounding sexuality, the narratives of male ownership, and the religious narratives of temptation, sin, and shame.

The third main source of the strange atmosphere is the secret and uncertainty at the core of the story: the traumatic events that are described, but nonetheless ambiguous and invite conflicting interpretations. In addition to the textual evidence and phenomenological descriptions of trauma discussed above, the reading of *Tabu* as a story of abuse finds support from psychological and sociological research and personal narratives of abuse. It is often difficult for victims of sexual abuse to accuse their abusers, sometimes even to recognize being a victim of abuse, and feelings of shame and guilt are sometimes directed at oneself rather than the perpetrator. From an extratextual point of view, the culture of sexual abuse in secluded religious communities, like the ones Mukka was familiar with, creates an interpretative frame for the relationship between Milka and Kristus-Perkele that is very different from mythical and generic frames of reading. The reading of *Tabu* as a description of sexual abuse and trauma also sheds new light on Milka's prayers. Social scientist Johanna Hurtig (2013) has shown how Laestadian religious discourses were used to turn the shame involved in sexual violence on the victims in real-life cases of abuse in Lapland from the 1970s onward. Similar processes—yet in a fictional form—can be seen at work in Milka's story. Even if the first readers of the novella in the 1960s were not aware of the sexual abuse happening in the closed religious communities in Lapland when *Tabu* was written, twenty-first-century readers probably are. Moreover, the intertextual connection between *Lolita* and *Tabu* reminds us of the problems of stories that portray sexual violence ambiguously and leave interpretive responsibility to the reader. Whereas the narrator of *Lolita* is unreliable because he is the abuser and because he initially begins to tell his story to justify himself, the narrator of *Tabu* is unreliable because she is abused as a child and as an adult her mind is shattered. As a result, the events are not explicitly named as abuse, but from today's perspective both novels are clearly stories about sexual violence.[338]

In *Tabu*, Kristus-Perkele's abuse of Milka becomes an open, yet forbidden secret: a taboo. The characters know on some level that Kristus-Perkele is the father of Milka's child but they close their eyes to the truth—and most importantly, they close their eyes to the fact that Kristus-Perkele is an abuser. Kristus-Perkele's violence is only hinted at in the rumors in which the villagers accuse him of "bad things," but the narrator frames this talk as evil gossip. Ultimately the abuse not only shatters the life of the victim, but the suffering and blame are spread around the community. Milka, Anna, and even Auno become victims of Kristus-Perkele's actions. However, at the same time, Anna and the cantor share some of the responsibility through their failures to protect Milka: Anna in her failure to see what is happening to Milka and in her tragic blindness when she falls in love with Kristus-Perkele herself; the old cantor in his desire to marry the fifteen-year-old girl and thus take the place of Kristus-Perkele (see also Mäkelä-Marttinen 2008, 190).

How should one then read a text like *Tabu*? The narrator offers no moral judgments, and this makes normative readings of the text, such as those that condemn Kristus-Perkele, more difficult (see also Oja 2004). But if we fail to

https://doi.org/10.21435/sflit.13

recognize the sexual abuse of a child in the novella, we risk of normalizing sexual violence. From this perspective the early reviewers who condemned the sexual content and detailed descriptions of sex in *Tabu* were right from an ethical point of view, although for the wrong reasons—for condemning the sex instead of the sexual violence. Mukka's *Tabu* raises a similar ethical question as Nabokov's *Lolita*: what if readers fail to read these stories as descriptions of sexual abuse?

There are no easy answers to this. It is important to see that the text itself offers support for readings that recognize the abuse and trauma and that pay attention to the gender and power relations and to the oppressive and destructive religious discourses, narratives and myths that become visible in the novella. I agree with Mäkelä-Marttinen (2008) that the worldview in Mukka's works is highly polyphonic and heterogeneous and that there are hints of criticism of the treatment of women.[339] This, however, does not mean that *Tabu* could or should be read without paying attention to its ethics. The text risks perpetuating sexual abuse: it is ambiguous, and it refuses to condemn the abuse, although condemnation may be seen as implied in the suffering of the characters. It is thus important to read *Tabu* against the myths, images, and cultural narratives it uses. Returning to Mukka's own idea about deconstructing myths in his works, it is possible to interpret *Tabu* as a text that breaks down the cultural myths and taboos that help to maintain the silence about sexual violence. However, to do this we must read the novella as it is: a story about trauma and abuse.

https://doi.org/10.21435/sflit.13

6. Meanings of Psychosis: Maria Vaara's *Likaiset legendat* (Dirty Legends)

Schizophrenia pseudoneurotica
(*Borderline case*)

One shouldn't actually read this, at least not at the coffee table. If you read, you will understand hardly anything. Or you might think: exactly, dirty legends. Or you will become anxious, very anxious. Or maybe you will understand.

I don't know a lot about schizophrenia, not even enough to know if the words at the beginning are spelled correctly.

I don't know about transference, about destructive dependence, about the self, about Maria. But still I and Maria, Maria and I know something: We know it, the Inside. We have been there.

We know a lot about something that you, Johannes, don't know anything about.

But listen anyway.

No one in this book exists in reality, because not everything that is true is real.

Maria[340]

Skitsofrenia pseudoneurotica
(*Borderline case*)

Tätä ei oikeastaan kannata lukea, ei ainakaan kahvipöydässä. Jos luet, et ymmärrä juuri mitään. Tai ajattelet: todellakin, likaiset legendat. Tai tulet ahdistuneeksi, hyvin ahdistuneeksi. Tai ehkä ymmärrät.

Minä en tiedä kovin paljon skitsofreniasta, en edes sen vertaa, että osaisin sanoa, onko alussa oleva kirjoitettu oikein.

En tiedä tunteensiirrosta, tuhoavasta riippuvuussuhteesta, minästä, Mariasta. Kuitenkin minä ja Maria, Maria ja minä tiedämme jotakin: Tiedämme sen, Sisäpuolen. Olemme käyneet siellä.

Tiedämme paljon siitä, mistä sinä, Johannes, et tiedä mitään.

Kuuntele silti.

Tässä kirjassa kukaan ei ole todellisuutta, sillä kaikki, mikä totta on, ei ole todellisuutta.

Maria (LL 5.)

https://doi.org/10.21435/sflit.13

Maria Vaara's autobiographical novel *Likaiset legendat* (The Dirty Legends, 1974) begins with a preface, a reading instruction that at first sight seems to be addressed to us, the readers of the text. We are warned about reading the novel, and the writer (the passage is signed "Maria") anticipates our reactions: we might not understand anything, or we might reject the text altogether, thinking: "exactly, dirty legends." The writer suspects that the story might cause us anxiety—take us somewhere we do not want to go. Or perhaps we would understand. The experiences depicted in the novel might even be familiar to us, and if not, the text might help us to understand them. In the end, however, the addressee gets a name, Johannes. The communication is doubled: Maria is writing to her psychiatrist, Johannes, as well as to us: anxious readers, understanding readers, and possible fellow-sufferers of mental illness. She warns all of us about the dangers of reading but nonetheless urges us to listen. The instruction also reveals the two overlapping aims of the novel: to create a path for intersubjective communication and to convey experiential knowledge—knowledge about the "Inside" of psychosis and about its meanings for the person going through it.

The reading instruction can also be understood considerimg the novel's socio-historical context. As discussed in Chapter 2, Vaara's *Likaiset legendat* was one of the first autobiographical texts in Finland that openly discussed psychotic experiences and opened a psychotic world to its readers. It is likely that Vaara felt a need to frame the text and give her readers some guidance. The preface also emphasizes the experiential, yet fictional nature of the text, as well as the tension between the actual and the hallucinatory worlds it depicts: nothing that is told is "real," but nonetheless it is the "truth." Unlike the three novels discussed in the previous chapters, *Likaiset legendat* is overtly based on its author's experiences. Furthermore, it underlines a psychiatric diagnosis: the first words, "Schizophrenia pseudoneurotica (*borderline case*)," offer a diagnostic label for the whole text, inviting us to read it through a psychiatric category. However, the diagnosis, and especially the stigma it carries, is contested in Vaara's later novels, and already *Likaiset legendat* has a political, even antipsychiatric undertone: the novel shows the importance of a safe therapeutic relationship, but also reveals problems in mental health care and advocates for listening to the patients' voices and experiences.[341]

The first part of the novel focuses on Maria's relationship with Johannes. It is narrated mostly by a third-person narrator who reports and reflects on Maria's thoughts and emotions from the outside. However, occasionally the narrative mode changes into first person and character-Maria becomes a narrator who is writing about herself. The narration thus oscillates between third and first-person perspectives, showing Maria's mind from the "outside" and the "inside" in turns as if highlighting the experience of becoming detached from oneself. The second part of the novel consists of short hallucinatory stories that form the "dirty legends" of the title: in these "legends," Maria has conversations with figures like her mother, father, and siblings, the Virgin Mary, baby Jesus, Saul and Paul, and Satan. Part II is written almost completely in the first person and it creates a psychotic experiential world: a dream-like reality in which Maria's experiences of her

https://doi.org/10.21435/sflit.13

body and her sense of time and space have changed and she has lost the boundaries between perceiving, remembering, dreaming, and imagining.

In the psychiatric literature, psychosis is usually characterized by its "positive" and "negative" symptoms which also form a significant part of the diagnostic criteria.[342] Negative symptoms refer to experiences that seem to "lack" something: there is a flattening of emotions and inability to act. Positive symptoms, in turn, are experiences that "add" something to regular experience, such as hallucinations and delusions. Vaara's writing focuses mainly on the positive symptoms, and the negative symptoms are referred to only in passing, as the readers for example find out that Maria has been lying in bed while the text depicts a hallucinatory world. The narration is filled with voices and images that haunt Maria, descriptions of thoughts that feel as if they were "inserted" into her mind and delusions of being controlled from the outside. She complains about voices that "come uninvited"[343] and goes through experiences of separation from herself ("I have gone away"[344]). She is also disturbed by voices called "the scattered" (*irralliset*) which constantly mock and question her and evoke deep feelings of shame and guilt. The world created in the text is characterized by a pervasive feeling of uncertainty about what is real and what is not, as the narrator states: "What is going on with my sense of reality? It is as if there were too much of everything."[345]

Vaara's portrayal of psychosis can be aligned with phenomenological accounts (see Parnas & Sass 2011; Sass & Pienkos 2013; Grünbaum & Zahavi 2013; Ratcliffe 2017) as well as phenomenological surveys of actual experiences of auditory hallucinations (see Woods et al. 2015). In phenomenological literature, psychotic experiences are often characterized as a loss of sense of agency and sense of reality, and they are understood particularly as problems of the "minimal self"—of the most basic sense of self: there are changes in the way a person feels their own experiences as belonging to them and in the very basic experience of being immersed or present in the world.[346] The phenomenologists suggest that alterations in the minimal self cause problems in the ability to distinguish between what is real and what is not, leading to symptoms like delusions and hallucinations. For example, hallucinations can be understood as kinds of mistaken imaginings.[347] However, compared to imagined things and objects, hallucinatory experiences feel real; they resemble perception, but do not really feel like perceptions either. They are strange, ambiguous, or indeterminate: an "unfamiliar kind of intentionality," as Ratcliffe (2017, 39) describes.

Another perspective that illuminates the experiences described in Vaara's novel is the understanding of the contents of psychotic experiences as partly interpersonally formed. Already in "On Narcissism: Introduction" (1914/2012), Freud suggested that hallucinatory voices could be understood as traces of the voices of other people, relatives, and authorities that have been internalized. In recent years, mental health advocacy groups like the Hearing Voices Movement have likewise emphasized how distressing voices are tied to our relations with other people, for example to experiences of abuse and trauma (see Romme & Escher 2012; also Woods et al. 2015). In these views, hallucinatory voices and delusions are connected especially

https://doi.org/10.21435/sflit.13

to traumatic events and circumstances, although there are also psychotic experiences that have more clearly neurological causes.

Combining the two views—the phenomenological understanding of psychotic experiences as problems of the minimal self and the emphasis on interpersonal trauma of the Hearing Voices Movement—Ratcliffe (2017, 30; 132) suggests that the alterations in the minimal self and the development of certain kinds of hallucinations and delusions could occur due to a loss of trust in the interpersonal world that characterizes for example traumatic experiences.[348] As discussed in the previous chapters, our experiences are to a large extent interpersonally regulated and supported, and Ratcliffe argues that our sense of reality—and, more precisely, our ability to know whether we have perceived, imagined, or remembered something—is partly guaranteed by other people with whom we share a common world.[349] When trust in others and in the world is shattered, the ability to differentiate between different modes of intentionality can become compromised. In other words, hallucinations and delusions can be understood as disturbances in the sense of being in one or another kind of intentional state—as an erosion of the ability to differentiate between perception, imagination, and memory—due to a loss of trust in others and the world. (Ibid., 184.) This understanding of psychotic experiences as a result of interpersonal trauma and loss of interpersonal trust also resonates with Vaara's portrayal of psychosis, which emphasizes the role of painful relationships with others and traumatic events as a source of psychotic experiences, as we will see.

As its preface suggests, the explicit aim of *Likaiset legendat* is to reveal what Maria calls the "Inside" of schizophrenia. However, researchers who have studied first-person accounts of illness have pointed out some of the epistemological problems involved in narrating one's own experiences: there are problems in remembering and verbalization, and the narrative techniques and the aesthetic form can "distort" experiences (see Radden & Varga 2013, 100). An important question relevant to Vaara's writing then is: What kind of knowledge can we gain from first-person accounts? And more generally: What is the role of fictional and fictionalized accounts as forms of knowledge? Vaara's novel responds directly to this challenge. It underscores the importance of experiential, non-propositional knowledge that is different from psychiatric knowledge, diagnostic and therapeutic notions and theories. As Rita Felski notes, literary fiction is able to create knowledge that is "more akin to *connaître* than *savoir*, 'seeing as' rather than 'seeing that,' learning by habituation and acquaintance rather than by instruction." Felski also pays attention to the artistic constructedness of such experiential knowledge: "And yet the paradox lies in this sense of realness being achieved through artful means, with literature's epistemological license allowing it to convey a uniquely multi-layered sense of how things are." (Felski 2008, 93.)

Rather than creating psychiatric knowledge, Maria asks her readers *to listen* to her story. The novel conveys experiences to the readers in the sense that it invites us to attune to the text and to reflect on the experiences constructed in it. Vaara's writing is guided by a strong belief in the possibilities of language to create experiential worlds and invite readers "inside" them, while it at the same time creates understanding about the artificiality and

https://doi.org/10.21435/sflit.13

constructedness of the fictional minds and worlds and about the limits of language and narration.[350]

The Loss of Self

> – Why are you mad? Can you talk about it, Maria?
> – I came to the reception as planned. But the office door was closed. Then I thought that I had perhaps come to the wrong place and I came to ask here at the outpatient clinic. […] The lively young woman was again here, and it seemed that she didn't believe that I was the right person in the right place. I felt I was insane when I got the impression that you, Johannes, had never been in this building and that I had no chance of finding you here. *That is what I thought and what Maria thought as well.*
>
> – Miksi sinä olet vihainen? Voitko puhua siitä, Maria?
> – Minä tulin vastaanotolle niin kuin oli sovittu. Huoltotoimiston ovi oli lukittu. Sitten arvelin että ehkä olin tullut väärään paikkaan ja tulin kysymään täältä, poliklinikalta. […] Täällä oli taas pirteä nuori nainen, joka ei oikein tuntunut uskovan, että olin oikea ihminen oikeassa paikassa. Tunsin itseni heikkomieliseksi kun sain sen käsityksen, että sinä, Johannes, et ole koskaan käynytkään tässä talossa, että minulla ei ole minkäänlaista mahdollisuutta löytää sinua täältä. *Näin minä luulin ja Mariakin luuli.* (LL 9, emphasis added.)

The novel begins at a therapy session. When Maria finds Johannes, she tells him that she felt "insane" when she was told that he was not there. In the dialogue, we also get the first hint of Maria becoming detached from herself. Johannes addresses her as "Maria" but in her speech she makes a distinction between "I" and "Maria." She continues elaborating on her confusion:

> – But I stayed to wait for you, although even I started to feel that I was a wrong person in a wrong place. Soon I won't even know my own name. In fact, I don't know. *I don't know if I am Maria or the other or someone else*. Sometimes I know everything very clearly.
>
> – Jäin kuitenkin odottamaan sinua, mutta minusta kyllä alkoi itsestänikin tuntua, että olen väärä ihminen väärässä paikassa. En kohta enää tiedä omaa nimeänikään. Enkähän minä tiedäkään. *En tiedä, olenko Maria vai se toinen tai joku muu*. Välistä taas tiedän kaiken hyvin selkeästi. (LL 9–10, emphasis added.)

The small blunder—not finding the person she was looking for and being mistreated by accident—triggers in Maria an experience of becoming detached from herself. She describes to Johannes how the experience begins as a—quite common—feeling that she is the "wrong person in the wrong place" caused by the unfamiliar receptionist's behavior. But then the feeling grows into uncertainty about herself: "I don't know if I am Maria or the other or someone else."

As we read further, it becomes clear that the separation between "Maria" and "I" is reflected in the structure of the novel: in the background of the passages in which Johannes and Maria are speaking is the extradiegetic

https://doi.org/10.21435/sflit.13

third-person narrator. The structure is complex: the narrator (assumedly the "Maria" of the preface, whom we can also interpret as the implied author) is reporting the experiences of character-Maria (the "I" of the previous passages) who is talking to Johannes and at the same time looking at herself (a third "Maria") as if from the outside. The structure reminds readers of the distinction between the narrating I and the experiencing I which characterizes all autobiographical and first-person narration, however, at the same time it evokes the phenomenological experience of becoming detached from oneself: narrator-Maria is separated from character-Maria, and, from the perspective of character-Maria (who is at the reception talking about her experiences to Johannes), "Maria" is actually someone completely different. She is thus separated from herself on the level of narration, but also on the level of the events.

Once the mistake about the reception has been cleared up, the narrator describes how Maria leaves Johannes's office relieved:

> She would have wanted to sing and fly and whistle and shout and embrace the whole world.
> – I, Maria.
> I can stay in a momentary feeling of happiness, but at some point, soon there will be a backlash, and it's not good to fall from the heights, thought Maria.
> It was raining, the ground was muddy, the leaves were flying, the wind was cold, and she liked even that.
> – Let Maria swing for a while somewhere in the heights of the Milky Way – it's so easy to fall to the ground from there," said a scattered, one of Them.
>
> Hän olisi tahtonut laulaa ja lentää ja viheltää ja huutaa ja ottaa syliin kaiken maailman.
> – Minä, Maria.
> Voin kyllä viihtyä tilapäisessä onnellisuuden tunteessa, kyllä se vastaisku tulee joskus ja pian eikä korkealta ole hyvä pudota, ajatteli Maria.
> Vettä satoi, maa oli kurainen, lehdet lensivät, tuuli oli koleata ja hän piti siitäkin.
> – Annetaan Marian vähän aikaa keinua jossakin Linnunradan korkeudella – sieltähän on niin helppo pudota sitten maahan, sanoi irrallinen, yksi Niistä. (LL 11.)

The narrator reports Maria's thoughts and the way she is now able to feel herself as herself. But the passage also introduces "the scattered" who suggest that Maria will soon fall from her heights. Throughout the novel, the scattered embody voices of judgment: "– Maria, you are a child and sick and crazy, a scattered said"; "– You are very selfish, Maria, a scattered said."; "– Your husband was a drunk, a scattered whispers."[351] The passage is a good example of the way the text brings together and intermingles different voices and modes of presentation: there are passages of character-Maria's quoted speech and thought, passages of narrated monologue in which narrator-Maria's and character-Maria's voices come together, Johannes's quoted speech, narrator-Maria's reports about character-Maria's experiences, and the voices of the scattered.

https://doi.org/10.21435/sflit.13

As we read further, what becomes particularly interesting is the oscillation between third- and first-person perspectives (narrator-Maria's and character-Maria's). Since the narrator repeatedly records Maria's speech and thoughts, the text contains many first-person statements which are mostly signaled with dashes before character-Maria's lines. The readers can thus quite easily separate narrator-Maria's discourse from the speech and the quoted thoughts of character-Maria. However, gradually the borders between third-person and first-person perspectives start to become hazier:

> *Maria* has been forced to be away from Johannes for three weeks. Why? She is going to ask it when she arrives. Three weeks is a long time. Maria thinks that it is a punishment.
>
> *I* would like to find you immediately. I don't want to look for you for long, *Maria still thought in the train*. I would like to use your actual name. I do not dare. What is going on with my sense of reality? *It is as if there were too much of everything. Someone is talking and it is not Maria or I.*
>
> *Marian* on pitänyt olla poissa Johanneksen luota kolme viikkoa. Miksi? Hän aikoo kysyä sitä, kun tulee perille. Kolme viikkoa on pitkä aika. Maria ajattelee, että se on rangaistus.
>
> *Tahtoisin* löytää sinut heti. En tahdo etsiä kauan, *ajatteli Maria vielä junassa*. Tahtoisin käyttää sinun oikeata nimeäsi. En uskalla. Mitenkähän todellisuudentajuni laita on? *Kaikkea on ikään kuin liikaa. Joku puhuu eikä se ole Maria enkä minä*. (LL 37, emphasis added.)

The third-person narration smoothly turns into character-Maria's quoted thoughts as the paragraph changes. The narrator still signals when Maria's thoughts are quoted with the tag "Maria still thought," but the first-person sentences take control of the text. Although the perspective changes, the passage is easy to follow. In fact, a hasty reader might not even notice the change, and the overall sense of reading the whole novel could be that it is actually narrated in the first person.[352] The shifts in perspective carefully signal the alienation and dividedness Maria goes through, but they probably do not confuse readers or force them to distance themselves from the text: we easily attribute everything we are told to one Maria. In other words, although character-Maria feels that she is an "other" or "someone else," the readers likely hold on to the idea that there is just one person, and the feelings of detachment are read and felt as signs of delusion. At the same time, the changes of perspective capture some of the phenomenal experience of being divided and detached from oneself.

In addition to the multitude of different perspectives and voices, Maria's experience of splitting into many, shattering, and losing control of herself is enacted using metaphors and similes. For example, the passage quoted above uses the metaphor of being "too much": "It is as if there were too much of everything. Someone is talking, and it is not Maria or I." Later, Maria explains to Johannes her experience through images of "growing" and "walking on ice": "My self, Maria, starts to scare me. It is as if I was growing into many directions which I don't know and which I don't want. As if I had to walk on thin ice further and further."[353]

https://doi.org/10.21435/sflit.13

In the first chapters of the novel, a more severe psychotic breakdown is constantly anticipated, and approaching the end of Part I, the narrator reports a sudden change for worse:

> A culture week began in Paltamo, festively. Maria had to be involved, although only a little bit at the library. During that week something must have happened, and Maria could not cope any longer, she simply could not cope.
>
> Paltamossa alkoi kulttuuriviikko, juhlallisesti. Marian oli pakko olla mukana, tosin kirjaston vähäiseltä osalta. Sillä viikolla kai tapahtui jotain, että Maria ei jaksanut enää, yksinkertaisesti ei jaksanut. (LL 55.)

The narrator is empathetic but not completely sure what is going on and why Maria feels the way she does. The narrated monologue ("she simply could not cope") emphasizes the closeness between the narrator and the character and focuses on the feeling of confusion that Maria experiences and that the narrator cannot explain. After mentioning the culture week, the narrator reports a dialogue between Maria and Johannes in which Maria tries to explain that she feels abandoned and that the therapy is not helping because it makes her feel even more alone. During the session, we hear one of the scattered say: "– Maria, it would be better if you were dead […]."[354] The session then ends with an agreement that Maria can call Johannes while he is away for two weeks, and when Maria returns home, she promises herself to stay alive until Johannes returns. The following chapter reports on the culture week in diary form: "1.5. May Day. I have just arrived from the May Day matinee […]. Now I am sitting at home, listening to records and crying. I don't really know why I am crying and who is crying. I think that I should call the municipal doctor, she's the closest."[355] On the following page, Maria explains that she has tried to get help elsewhere and has not called Johannes. Then the diary is interrupted: there is a short dialogue, assumedly between Maria and the municipal doctor, in which a voice says: "– I have to get into hospital, I cannot go home."[356]

In the passage that follows directly after this, the narrator reports that Maria is admitted to the hospital. The third-person narration stops again, and the voice of character-Maria continues the narration:

> *Maria* is in hospital, in Room 2, Ward 21. This is a psychiatric hospital and an open ward.
>
> This looks like hell, but *I could still not and dare not go home*. I have been able to arrange a nurse for the children and a substitute at the library. I don't have the strength to care about anything else.
>
> *Maria* on sairaalassa, huoneessa 2, osastolla 21. Tämä on psykiatrinen sairaala ja avo-osasto.
>
> Tämä näyttää helvetiltä *enkä kuitenkaan tahtoisi enkä uskaltaisi kotiin*. Olen vielä kyennyt siihen, että lapsilla on hoitaja ja kirjastossa sijainen. Muusta en jaksa välittää. (LL 61, emphasis added.)

https://doi.org/10.21435/sflit.13

The text has already been sporadic, but after this passage, it becomes even more fragmented. The diary form, the third-person narration, and fragments of speech (Johannes, a nurse called Untuva and Maria herself) are alternating, and there are also typographical changes:

> 12.5.
> I have heard Johannes's voice. I called Uusikaupunki in the evening. It felt warm to hear a familiar and safe voice. I was not able to say anything other than: Do you like me?
> I know that Johannes talks kindly like a doctor to a patient, but that voice touches me softly.
>
> I HAVE HEARD JOHANNES'S VOICE.
>
> And Maria stopped in that voice for a long time, perhaps forever. Maria does not know.
>
> – Untuva, I cannot make Maria say anything, she is completely closed.
> – I found some papers in her bedside table drawer. Do you want to read them, Johannes, said Untuva.
>
> It is dark.
> – Couldn't somebody still help me?
>
> Maria has gone away, I have gone away. The others have come.
>
> JOHANNES HAS GONE SOMEWHERE FAR AWAY.
>
> 12.5.
> Olen kuullut Johanneksen äänen. Soitin illalla Uuteenkaupunkiin. Oli lämmittävää kuulla tuttu ja turvallinen ääni. En kyennyt juuri muuta sanomaan kuin: Pidätkö sinä minusta?
> Tiedän, että Johannes puhuu ystävällisesti kuin lääkäri potilaalle, mutta se ääni hipaisee pehmeästi.
>
> OLEN KUULLUT JOHANNEKSEN ÄÄNEN.
>
> Ja Maria pysähtyi siihen ääneen pitkäksi aikaa, ehkä lopullisestikin. Maria ei tiedä.
>
> – Untuva, en saa Mariaa puhumaan mitään, hän on aivan sulkeutunut.
> – Löysin hänen yöpöytänsä laatikoista joitakin papereita. Haluatko lukea, Johannes, sanoi Untuva.
>
> Pimeää.
> – Eikö joku voisi vielä auttaa minua?
>
> Maria on mennyt pois, minä olen mennyt pois. Ne toiset ovat tulleet.
>
> JOHANNES ON MENNYT JONNEKIN KAUAS POIS. (LL 63.)

https://doi.org/10.21435/sflit.13

The text tries to capture the experience of a psychotic break: the loss of orientation and gaps in memory. It moves from the diary form to third-person narration and to fragments of a dialogue (conversation between Johannes and Untuva) and to the narrator's short remark: "It is dark." Then a voice, which the readers probably interpret as character-Maria's, asks for help. Finally, the narrator reports that she is disappearing together with "Maria." The final words, in capitals, reiterate one of the assumed triggers and basic experiences of loss, "JOHANNES HAS GONE SOMEWHERE FAR AWAY," and the experience is emphasized by the chapter ending. After this scene, Part II begins, and the rest of the novel consists of dream-like hallucinatory stories that are situated partly in a hospital environment and partly in a hallucinatory, psychotic world. From a phenomenological perspective, the events of Part I can be seen to reflect Ratcliffe's (2017) description of a loss of trust in the shared world. Maria's deep and repeated experiences of being abandoned—from the small blunder at the reception to the break in the therapy—appear as triggers that cause the experiences of losing herself and ultimately result in full-blown psychosis.

A Shattering World

Part II of *Likaiset legendat* is situated in the psychiatric hospital. It is narrated completely in the first person and mostly in the present tense, creating an impression of immediacy.[357] The narrator-Maria who looked at herself from the outside in Part I has disappeared and we are inside the psychotic world of character-Maria who is now narrating the events in the first person. The chapters are filled with hallucinatory spaces and images: the hallucinations carry Maria to different environments and to the past. Her body is going through transformations and there are sudden flashbacks of what can be interpreted as events from her childhood and marriage. The boundaries between perceiving, imagining, and remembering are hazy, and readers are invited to follow the changes in Maria's sense of immersion and presence in the world.

The first chapters of Part II reveal nightmarish stories in which Maria is a small child whose hands are cut off as a punishment for a sin. I discuss the meanings of these stories and their characters (the Virgin Mary, Paul, Saul, Satan) shortly, but first let us focus on the construction of Maria's experiential world and the way readers are invited "inside" it. The narration creates an unsettling experiential world in which the basic experiences of being an embodied subject embedded in a shared reality have become altered. The stories reveal alterations in Maria's experience of her body, space, and time and invite the readers to enact hallucinatory experiences based on their experiential knowledge of being bodily agents situated in the world. Furthermore, they solicit the readers' sense of presence in perception, memory, and imagination.

Starting from Chapter 5 of Part II, Maria has "arrived" in a new place, or more precisely on a new "level" of reality. She is beginning to reflect on

https://doi.org/10.21435/sflit.13

the psychotic environment and, simultaneously, what it is like to be on the psychiatric ward[358]. The two realities overlap:

> It is best to see what it is like here while one still can. I would of course open my eyes and look the regular way, but naturally one cannot do that here. One must choose a different way. I have hands, they are strange though, but they are hands nonetheless.
>
> The wall seems to be close. I can always touch. I stretch out my arm. The hand moves in the water like a pondweed. Slimy, brownish green fingers. I cannot reach the wall. It escapes from touch like a quiver of the eyelashes.
>
> I pick up speed and swim. There is space since the arm cannot reach.
> I bump into the strong, solid wall: my fishhead is dizzy for a while. What a strange oven [*uuni*] this is! Round, soft, full of water. I laugh. I am not a fish. I am not even a fish dish. And this is not an oven [*uuni*]. This is a dream [*uni*]. A fish has no fingers or toes; therefore I am not a fish.
>
> It's actually sinful to be here. Somehow I know that. There has been drumming and dancing all night.

> Parasta katsoa, minkälaista täällä on niin kauan kuin ennättää. Avaisin tietysti silmäni ja katsoisin tavalliseen tapaan, mutta eihän täällä voi niin tehdä. On valittava toinen tapa. Minullahan on kädet, vieraat tosin, mutta kädet kumminkin.
>
> Seinä tuntuu olevan likellä. Voinhan koskettaa. Ojennan käsivarteni. Vedessä käsi liikkuu kuin ahvenvita. Ruskeanvihreitä limaisia sormia. En yllä seinään. Se pakenee kosketusta nopeasti kuin ripsien värähdys.
>
> Otan vauhtia ja uin. Onhan täällä tilaa, kun kerran käsi ei yllä.
>
> Törmään sileään lujaan seinään, niin että kalanpääni on pyörryksissä vähän aikaa. Tämäpä on kummallinen uuni. Pyöreä, pehmeä, vettä täynnä. Nauran. Enhän minä ole kala. En edes kalakukko. Eikä tämä ole uuni. Paremminkin uni. Kalalla ei ole sormia ja varpaita, siis minä en ole kala.
>
> On oikeastaan syntistä olla täällä. Jollakin tavalla minä tiedän sen. On rummutettu ja tanssittu koko yön. (LL 89.)

First, the deictic pronoun "here" evokes a sense of space. The narrator then describes changes in her body: she cannot look "the regular way" but she can use her hands to find out what it is like in this new place. She has new, strange hands with which she tries to touch the wall, but it disappears "like a quiver of the eyelashes," and she begins to swim in the underwater space. At the end of the passage, the narrator realizes that she is not a fish after all ("A fish has no fingers or toes; therefore I am not a fish") and that she is actually dreaming. The passage has a dream-like, associative logic, and there is also a play with the Finnish words *uuni* and *uni*: the narrator understands that she is not in an "oven" (*uuni*) but in a "dream" (*uni*)—the confusion seems to be caused by the similarity of the words.

The way she describes perceiving the environment through touching and moving comes close to the phenomenological and enactivist understanding of perception as action: a person is always situated in a specific environment and gains a sense of presence in the world by moving in the world, through interaction with it. The experience of the world as present and accessible to us, in other words, does not just happen when we open our eyes but rather,

https://doi.org/10.21435/sflit.13

we "achieve" it, as philosopher of mind Alva Noë (2004, 1–2) argues: we make it happen using our sensorimotor skills.[359]

Cognitive narratologists have also used the enactive view of perception as an analogy to readers' experience of storyworlds: the storyworld becomes present to us through our interaction with the affordances provided by the text.[360] Vaara's description of Maria's movements and actions in the space and the way it is altered invites readers to imagine and reflect on these processes of perceiving the world around us. At the same time, the passage also reminds us of its own fictionality, for example, through references to dreaming and linguistic associations that construct the sense of space: in a very concrete manner, the words help Maria to distinguish whether she is inside an "oven" or in a "dream." Naturally, since we are engaging with a literary text, the words create the sense of space in readers' imagination.[361]

The scene continues with a long description of different bodily transformations and a "sinful" dance with the Virgin Mary, the scattered, and Satan. Finally, at the beginning of Chapter 6, after the dance, the narrator announces that she has "arrived." "Once one has danced enough, one finally arrives. Here, where there are dirty windowpanes made of strong glass and twenty-four small squares in each. They have counted me many times and always there are twenty-four of us."[362] Elements of the real world—the dirty windowpanes of the psychiatric ward—are intermingled with Maria's hallucinations.[363] The panes are "counting" Maria, and it becomes clear that there are also twenty-four of her.

In Chapters 6 to 11, the narrator guides her readers around the psychiatric ward and different psychotic spaces. Each chapter begins by offering a sense of location for the readers, describing some small detail of the environment and explaining what is happening. In other words, Vaara builds the storyworld so that it can be shared and imagined by us: we continue to have an idea where we are, but at the same time the environment becomes strange and the different realities are overlapping. Let us now look at some of the ways that the readers are invited to reflect on and to enact the psychotic world: the way the stories solicit readers' sense of perception, memory, and imagination and the way they invite readers to imagine alterations in bodily experiences and sense of space and time.

Chapter 7 begins with a note that "Paul won't come today. Saul will."[364] Saul (from the Bible) then takes the narrator outside, and we are invited to imagine a park inhabited by human-like creatures:

> There are many swings in the park. People are sitting in them. Are they people? People have eyes. Most of them have no eyes, only smooth, white faces. They have mouths; one must have a mouth. Hunger lives in the mouth. And they are all hungry. They also have noses. A nose smells dirty things. One must have ears in order to collect voices, to salvage them.
>
> There is no lack of voices here; one must be careful not to step on them or not to walk through one by accident. One of the eyeless is running with a butterfly net trying to catch the voices. I wish they would be able to get their nets full.
>
> Mother has said that there are no voices and that one should not listen to them, but the voices are there. They come even uninvited. Here, where there are white

https://doi.org/10.21435/sflit.13

> coats, no one is surprised. At home one always had to be careful not to talk to the voices so that someone could hear. Then one would get hit or one's hair pulled.

> Puistossa on monta keinua. Niissä istuu ihmisiä. Ovatko ne ihmisiä? Ihmisellä on silmät. Useimmilla näistä ei ole silmiä, vain sileät, valkoiset kasvot. Suu on, sillä se pitää olla. Suussa asuu nälkä. Ja nälkä näillä kaikilla on. Nenä on myös, se haistaa likaisia asioita. Korvat pitää olla, että voi kerätä ääniä, ottaa talteen.
>
> Täällä niitä riittää, saa varoa, ettei astu äänen päälle tai vahingossa kävele jonkun äänen lävitse. Yksi silmätön juoksee haavin kanssa ja yrittää pyydystää ääniä. Toivon, että hän saisi haavinsa täyteen.
>
> Äiti on sanonut, ettei ääniä ole eikä niitä saa kuunnella, mutta onhan niitä. Ne tulevat kutsumattakin. Täällä, missä on valkoisia takkeja, ei sitä kukaan ihmettele. Kotona piti aina varoa, ettei puhutellut ääniä toisten kuullen. Silloin lyötiin tai tukistettiin. (LL 100.)

The narrator describes seeing people in the park, but the human-like creatures have no eyes. Instead, they have "hungry mouths," noses that "smell dirty things" and ears that "collect voices." As in the earlier scene, the narrator recounts the events as they happen: we are in the present moment and there is hardly any distance between the narrating I and the experiencing I. The description evokes disturbing images and sensory experiences: the multitude of transformed bodies and the fear of walking over and crushing the voices thematize the chaotic experience of hearing voices. The detailed description of the scene creates an impression that it is "real": the narrator invites us to imagine perceiving the park, the swings, and the eyeless people. However, the content of the scene resembles a dream, and it then seems to take the form of a memory: the narrator remembers how the mother said that "there are no voices," that one "should not listen to them" and that one had to be careful at home not to talk to the voices because "one would get hit or one's hair pulled." At the same time, the theme of hearing voices connects the scene to the psychotic world and hallucinations. Readers are thus invited to reflect on the different modes of intentionality evoked in the passage: on the differences between perceiving, imagining, dreaming, remembering, and hallucinating and on the moves from one way of relating to the world to another.

As theories of embodied and enactive cognition suggest, the different modes of intentionality are structurally similar: remembering, imagining, and dreaming are all forms of reenacting (or simulating) past perceptions, and in this sense, there is no intrinsic difference between them (see Noë 2004; Hutto 2017). However, the experience of the different modes of intentionality is quite different, and in regular circumstances, we are usually able to distinguish without any effort whether we are perceiving, remembering, or imagining something.

This is partly because memory and imagination have very different kinds of temporal profiles (or "anticipatory-fulfillment structures" as Ratcliffe puts it) and senses of presence compared to perception (Ratcliffe 2017, 4; 123). For example, when we remember or imagine something, we practically always know what is going to happen next. In other words, memories or imaginings cannot be surprising, whereas things that are perceived in real life can also

https://doi.org/10.21435/sflit.13

surprise us: we might of course guess what is, for instance, behind a door before we open it, but we might be wrong. Furthermore, we don't experience memories and imagined things as present the same way perceived things are present: we know that the objects and people we imagine or remember are not actually in the same space with us. In contrast, the things we perceive appear as present in the way they are reachable and touchable (even if they are far away). Finally, imagination is different from both remembering and perceiving as it can create "spatially and temporally unstructured scenarios" that may be very different from anything that is remembered or perceived, "but without any sense of potential or actual discrepancy or surprise," as Ratcliffe (2017, 4) notes.

In the passage above, the narrator describes perceiving the park environment as if it were real: the eyeless people are present in the same space as her and there is a sense of uncertainty and surprise. However, at the same time, the readers (and the narrator) know that eyeless people do not exist. The scene is unsettling and strange: it is perception-like but at the same time it resembles imagining or dreaming. As discussed, hallucinations are characterized by a feeling of in-between-ness: they are ambiguous, strange experiences, somewhere in between imagination, memory, and perception (Ratcliffe 2017, 39).

This feeling of ambiguity is often referred to as "double bookkeeping": in many psychotic states the experiencers themselves are aware that what they are experiencing is not real, yet it *feels* real (see Sass & Pienkos 2013; Ratcliffe 2017). The ambiguity is enacted in Vaara's text through the description of the unsettling eyeless creatures inhabiting the environment. The description of their appearance, "hungry mouths," noses "that smell dirty things," ears that "collect voices," invites sensory imagination in us: enactment of seeing, hearing, tasting, and smelling. We are invited to imagine and reflect on a situation in which the "normal" ways of perceiving have become altered and replaced by a psychotic logic. Even if we have no experiential knowledge of hallucinations, we can enact the ambiguity of the perceptual experience described in the scene and thus get a sense of the distress it causes. In other words, when we imagine the creatures in Vaara's text, we are invited to enact an experience of distress involved in psychosis.

Likewise, the text invites us to imagine the alterations in Maria's bodily experiences. From the creatures in the park, the narrator moves back inside the hospital. In Chapter 8, she is going through a bodily transformation, and at the same time, the voices of a figure called Annaliina and the scattered connect her to the real world and tell her (and the readers) what is actually happening:

> The corridor looks like a long blood vessel. Resilient and firm. I suppose I am some kind of a red blood cell then.
>
> – Don't you think about those things of yours, Annaliina says. She has leisure time and has come for a visit. – You're supposed to be a human being who knows how to put their shoes on the right feet and keep their apron clean.
>
> But the scattered drag her away in a triumphal procession. She and her apron do not belong here.

https://doi.org/10.21435/sflit.13

I am. I am inside the red blood. Suddenly it floods inside me, my hands become redder and redder. Gallons of red billowing behind my eyes. I am inside the blood vessel and the blood is in me.

– Where do the broken pieces on the floor come from?

Someone is breaking coffee cups and slitting chair covers with a nail file. Who have they let in here raging? Usually there are only kind people here, staring, filled with medicine from head to fingertips. It has to be someone from the other ward.

– It's you they mean, one of the scattered laughs. – It's you.

It cannot be me. Mother spanks me if a cup breaks down by accident, and now the floor is filled with broken dishes.

Käytävä näyttää pitkältä verisuonelta, kimmoisalta ja lujalta. Minä olen kai sitten joku punainen verisolu.

– Älä ajattele taas niitä omiasi, Annaliina sanoo. Hänellä on vapaata ja hän on tullut käymään. – Sinun pitäisi olla ihminen, joka oppii panemaan kengät oikeaan jalkaan ja pitää esiliinansa puhtaana.

Mutta irralliset retuuttavat Annaliinan pois riemukulkueessa. Ei hän sovi tänne esiliinoineen.

Olen, minä olen punaisessa veressä. Yhtäkkiä se tulvahtaa sisääni, kädet tulevat punaisemmiksi, silmien takana lainehtii litrakaupalla punaista. Olen verisuonessa ja veri on minussa.

– Mistä tulee sirpaleita lattialle?

Joku särkee kahvikuppeja ja viiltelee päiväsalin tuolinpäällyksiä rikki kynsiviilalla. Kenet ne ovat päästäneet tänne riehumaan? Täällähän on tavallisesti kilttejä ihmisiä silmät tuijottavina ja sormenpäitä myöten täynnä lääkkeitä. Joku varmasti toiselta osastolta.

– Sinua ne tarkoittavat, nauraa irrallinen. – Sinä se olet.

En se voi olla minä. Äiti antaa piiskaa, jos kuppi särkyy vahingossa ja nyt on lattialla monta rikkonaista astiaa. (LL 106.)

At first, Maria is a blood cell moving in a corridor/blood vessel, but her movement is constantly disrupted by different voices pulling her back toward reality. On the one hand, the bodily description ("Suddenly it floods inside me, my hands become redder and redder") invites us to respond by enacting the sensorimotor patterns we are familiar with through perception (see Caracciolo 2014a, 102). On the other hand, the description of bodily experiences is interrupted by the dialogic elements: the voices. The narrator notices someone breaking coffee cups and slitting chair covers, but as the scattered tell her, it is actually her. Again, we can see how the psychotic world and the psychiatric ward are intertwined. After this, the narrator tells us how "white men take my arms"[365] and how she is pulled into a "grave": we can interpret that Maria is being tied to a hospital bed, but in the hallucination the event is felt as a form of torture—as an experience of being buried alive.

A scene in Chapter 9 reveals even more clearly how different levels of time and space overlap in the text and how the present and the past become intertwined using a bodily metaphor. In the following passage, we are first in the psychiatric ward and everything is very normal and mundane. The patients and the nurses are making Christmas decorations:

https://doi.org/10.21435/sflit.13

> Everyone is sitting in the day room and working. Even nurses aren't playing cards now. We are working obediently. No one can dance now. We will get money and then we get to take a trip to Onkamo and then we can play itsy-bitsy spider again.
>
> Untuva puts a needle in my hand, offers me a long thread and a pile of golden circles. Stars. I feel pity piercing the beautiful star.
>
> I prick a hole with the needle. When the first star is pierced, the scattered images and voices are cut loose. I am such a big girl now that the hemline of my skirt has been lengthened and I can use the apron that Annaliina has left.

> Kaikki istuvat päiväsalissa ja tekevät työtä. Hoitajatkaan eivät nyt pelaa korttia. Tehdään kiltisti työtä. Kukaan ei saa nyt tanssia. Saadaan rahaa ja päästään retkelle Onkamoon ja voidaan taas leikkiä hämä-hämä-häkkiä.
>
> Untuva panee minulle neulan käteen, antaa pitkän langan ja nipun kultaisia ympyröitä. Tähtiä. Säälittää puhkaista kaunista tähteä.
>
> Pistän neulalla. Kun ensimmäinen tähti on puhki, pääsevät irralliset kuvat ja äänet karkuun. Olen jo niin iso tyttö, että mekkoni helmaa on jatkettu ja voin käyttää Annaliinalta jäänyttä esiliinaa. (LL 112.)

The passage brings again together actual and imaginary spaces and different modes of intentionality. The narrator describes how she pierces a golden star and "the scattered images and voices are cut loose." First the narrator is at the ward, but then she suddenly moves into a past in which she is a small girl. The piercing of the star functions as a metaphor for the experience of moving into another reality and it invites readers to imagine the experience of the world suddenly changing.

There are several techniques through which Vaara's text creates the psychotic experiential world and conveys it to readers. First, the text solicits readers' tacit knowledge of what it feels like to perceive, imagine, dream, and remember. The text guides us to imagine situations and scenarios in which it becomes uncertain in which intentional state we are in. Different ways of relating to the world are packed together, forming an amalgam-like structure, and different realities are piercing one another. Second, the descriptions of the alterations in space, time, and bodily experiences invite us to reflect on the ways Maria's sense of immersion in the world and her experience of her own body is altered. The text also uses bodily images and metaphors to evoke a sense of alterations in embodiment, and to thematize the experience of hearing voices and moving in different realities. Finally, the different perspectives and voices thematize the dividedness and multiplicity of Maria's selfhood. The scenes are unsettling and to some extent chaotic, but there is also an embodied and spatial logic that they follow, and it is easy to become immersed in the environments they construct.

It is, however, important to emphasize that the sense of experientiality constructed in narratives is always dependent on the readers' experiential background. The experiences are created in interaction between the reader and the text, and it is impossible for a reader to experience something that is not based on her own experiences of embodied rootedness in the world. As philosopher Daniel Hutto makes clear:

https://doi.org/10.21435/sflit.13

> The only way to understand 'what-it-is-like' to have an experience is to actually undergo it or re-imagine undergoing it. Gaining insight into the phenomenal character of particular kinds of experience requires *practical* engagements, not theoretical insights. This kind of understanding "what-it-is-like" to have such and such an experience requires responding in a way that is enactive, on-line and embodied or, alternatively, in a way that is re-enactive, off-line and imaginative – and still embodied. It involves undergoing and/or imagining experiences both of acting and of being acted upon. (Hutto 2006, 52.)

Understanding what something is like requires going through this experience either in real life or in one's imagination based on one's past experiences. This also means that a literary description cannot evoke the phenomenal experience of, for example, hallucination, if a reader has never experienced hallucinations herself. In other words, a hallucination in itself cannot be reenacted if an experience of hallucination is not a part of the reader's experiential background. Instead, the text can play with different modes of intentionality and invite us to connect experiences in new ways. For example, Caracciolo (2014a, 99) emphasizes the readers' imaginative ability to create new experiences: engagement with fiction triggers and reorders past experiences, thus creating new ones.

Reading Vaara's text, however, it becomes clear that even more important than "triggering" experiences is that we are invited to reflect on our experience of being embodied subjects in the world and to see it in new ways. In other words, although experiences cannot be "shared" in the sense of going through the same experience as another person, reading can make us attune to others and the world differently. We cannot step outside our own bodies and engaging with fiction is not only about simulating others' experiences. Rather, a connection to another person can be created by constructing worlds for us to share, and I argue that this is what Vaara's text does: it invites us to imaginatively engage with unsettling experiential worlds.

Stories of Psychosis

As discussed in earlier chapters, our intersubjectivity—our very basic understanding of others—is not based on theoretical inferences or simulation of others' experiences; rather, we understand one another through the worlds and narratives we share (see Gallagher & Zahavi 2012, 213–215). Vaara's text invites its readers to a world that may be unfamiliar to many. The long descriptions of the hallucinatory spaces in Part II offer us experiential knowledge of a different kind of world than the one we inhabit in our day-to-day lives. At the same time, the novel reveals in a very painful way how the existence of such a world and its meanings are suppressed, rejected, and marked as shameful especially in Western culture and its narratives.

In Chapter 10, Maria portrays the voices she hears as "dirt" that nonetheless cannot be avoided:

https://doi.org/10.21435/sflit.13

I pour the rest in the dust bin. The vacuum cleaner is humming. Elsa makes everything clean. I am going to be nasty. I know that once everything has been vacuumed, I will go there and let the scattered out to fill the rooms and then Elsa must start all over.

– Oh, no, ma'am. Now the floors are again filled with voices and images. Ma'am is so nasty. The doctor has said not to let them loose. Now I must vacuum all over again.

Stupid Elsa. Ma'am knows that it is not like that. One has to learn to live with the scattered. One doesn't have to vacuum them away. Of course I hear voices and see all kinds of things. They are in me and they escape all the time.

Even though mother spanked me and said that they do not exist. But they do.

Kaadan loput roskasankoon. Imuri surisee. Elsa tekee puhdasta. Aion olla ilkeä. Tiedän, että sitten, kun kaikki on imuroitu, menen minä ja päästän irrallisia huoneet täyteen ja sitten Elsa saa aloittaa uudestaan.

– Voi voi sitä rouvaa. Nyt on taas lattiat täynnä ääniä ja kuvia. Rouva on niin häijy. Tohtorihan on sanonut, ettei niitä saa päästää irti. Nyt minun pitää imuroida uudestaan.

Typerä Elsa. Rouva tietää, ettei se niin ole. Irrallisten kanssa on opittava elämään. Ei niitä tarvitse pois imuroida. Totta kai minä kuulen ääniä ja näen kaikenlaista. Nehän ovat minussa ja karkaavat tuon tuostakin.

Äiti tosin piiskasi ja sanoi, ettei niitä ole, mutta onhan niitä. (LL 121.)

Once again, the passage creates a packed moment that brings several realities together: there is a figure called Elsa (who has a connection to Maria's home help), the narrator as "ma'am," and the narrator as a child who is playing with the voices and disturbing Elsa. The real, imagined, remembered, and hallucinated are again intertwined, and hallucinations are linked to a child's imagination. The passage includes a lesson: one has to learn to live with the "dirt," with the scattered. However, the doctor tells not to let them loose, and when they escape, mother spanks Maria.

Different kinds of traumatic experiences in the background of the hallucinatory stories and spaces begin to be revealed. Maria repeatedly returns to the way her mother reacts to the voices she hears. On the one hand, she knows that the voices are extraordinary and important: she has an inner world that others do not have, and she cannot escape it even if she wanted to. On the other hand, her mother punishes her for her behavior. In an earlier scene, Maria mentions that mother treats her differently to "others" (assumedly her siblings):

The others. They cannot see anything or hear anything. They don't have Paul or the Priest, Annaliina or the Virgin Mary or the scattered.

– They don't know anything because they cannot hear what I hear and see, I think arrogantly.

I wonder why mother likes more those who cannot hear and see, those who have no people of their own?

Toiset. He eivät näe mitään eivätkä kuule mitään. Heillä ei ole Paavalia ja Pappia, Annaliinaa eikä Neitsyt-Maariaa ja Irrallisia.

https://doi.org/10.21435/sflit.13

> – He eivät tiedä mitään, koska he eivät kuule niitä, mitä minä kuulen ja näen, ajattelen ylimielisenä.
> Mikähän siinä on, että äiti pitää enemmän niistä, jotka eivät kuule eivätkä näe, joilla ei ole mitään omia ihmisiä? (LL 77.)

The narrator constantly returns to the mother's hostility toward her and to the physical punishments: "Mother always secretly wished that I would die because I was filled with voices and images, and they often came forward. I knew that, I had always known."[366] The text leaves it unclear whether Maria used to experience hallucinations already as a child or was punished for playing and imagining. Nonetheless, a picture has emerged of the mother as an austere and punishing character, someone who treats everything different as "sinful." There is violence in refusing to share—or even to accept—the world of another person, even if it were different and unsettling.

In the moments of "deepest psychosis," the usually quite coherent narrative form of the "dirty legends" is broken, and the focus is completely on the bodily experiences and the sensations of space and movement. The metaphorical and poetic language conveys the way Maria is multiplied, shattered, and nested inside herself. In these moments, the first-person narrator is sometimes looking at herself from the outside, but then she too gives in:

> Maria is far away, deep inside. Let it take her and swing her where it wants to. I won't object. I have no strength left anymore. The one with the velvet coat is stretching me like a string. Grimping shiny teeth on a violet wall.
> I go inside the forest. Inside the mushroom. I eat mushrooms, because they are full of sin. I bite them so that the juice is pouring down the corners of my mouth. Green juice.
> – I am hungry, I am hungry. They have left me outside inside and this is full of me and my forest.
> The poison spreads quickly. Green juice instead of red blood and you are free imprisoned free so deep that one cannot go deeper inside.
> I go inside Maria and inside myself I eat myself I dig into the red mouth and I arrive.
>
> Maria on kaukana syvällä sisäpuolella. Antaa sen viedä ja keinuttaa minne tahtoo. En pane yhtään vastaan. Ei minulla ole voimiakaan enää. Samettinuttuinen venyttää minua kuin naruaan. Irvisteleviä kiiltäviä hampaita violetinvärisellä seinällä.
> Minä menen metsään sisälle. Sieneen. Minä syön sieniä, sillä ne ovat synnillisiä. Puren niin että mehu valuu pitkin suupieliä. Vihreä mehu.
> – Olen nälkäinen, olen nälkäinen. Ne ovat jättäneet minut ulkopuolelle sisäpuolelle ja tämä on täynnä minua ja minun metsääni.
> Myrkky leviää nopeasti. Vihreätä mehua punaisen veren tilalle ja olet vapaa vangittu vapaa niin syvällä ettei sisemmälle voi enää mennä.
> Minä menen Marian sisään itseni sisään syön itseni pureudun punaiseen suuhun ja pääsen perille. (LL 167.)

Such passages signal the moments of deepest psychosis, ones in which Maria is "far away." However, the moments are also rebellious and transgressive:

https://doi.org/10.21435/sflit.13

she is hungry (like the eyeless creatures) but she sates her hunger and eats the mushrooms that are "full of sin." In the forest, inside the mushroom and inside herself, she has "arrived." Such descriptions and passages in which both the narrative and grammatical structure is broken evoke a sense of a complete disappearance of any outside world, yet they are affective and meaningful.

I have so far discussed the ways Vaara's text invites our bodily and affective responses and our experiences of perceiving, dreaming, imagining, and remembering to share the psychotic experiential world. Now, let us look more closely at the content of Maria's psychotic stories: the events and characters depicted in them and the way they are connected to experiences of shame and guilt.

Narratives of Shame and Guilt

> We assembled in an old brewery room, and the scattered locked the door. I had received a red invitation card that was stamped with Paul's thumb. From that I knew that I had to come.
>
> Of course I knew why I was invited, the scattered did warn me on the way and told me that when Paul decides to do something, it will be done.
>
> Everyone was already inside: Paul, the Virgin Mary, the scattered and I.
>
> Vanhaan panimohuoneeseen me kokoonnuimme, ja irralliset panivat oven lukkoon. Minä olin saanut punaisen kutsukortin, jossa oli Paavalin peukalonmerkki. Siitä tiesin, että oli pakko tulla.
>
> Tiesinhän minä, miksi kutsuttiin, irralliset kyllä varoittivat matkalla ja kertoivat, että minkä Paavali päättää, se myös tehdään.
>
> Sisällä olivat jo kaikki: Paavali, Neitsyt-Maaria, irralliset ja minä. (LL 67.)

As discussed, the second part of the novel consists of "dirty legends": the voices Maria occasionally hears in Part I are extended into longer stories that reflect strict religious and cultural narratives of sin, sexuality and punishment. In the first one, Maria is invited to an old brewery room where her hands are cut off on a wooden log. St. Paul has invited her to the ceremony, and he, the scattered and the Virgin Mary take part in the execution.

Anthropologist Tanya Luhrmann (2011) and her colleagues have studied psychotic experiences in different cultures, and the research suggests that in Western countries, hallucinatory voices tend to be disconcerting, violent and disturbing compared to, for example, India where the voices often take a more comforting tone and are more benign and easy to live with (see also Marrow & Luhrmann 2016). The results resonate with the common Western folk psychological conception of hallucinatory voices as bad and disturbing, and, as we have seen, also in *Likaiset legendat* many of the voices are violent and connected to distressing experiences. As Luhrmann (2011, 71) notes, hallucinations are highly influenced by culture: they are "a vivid illustration of the way culture affects our most fundamental mental experience and the way that mind is shaped both by cultural invitation and by biological constraint." The anthropological evidence suggests that in cultures in which psychotic and hallucinatory experiences are less

https://doi.org/10.21435/sflit.13

stigmatized and more accepted as normal, albeit unsettling, the contents of the voices also become less troubling (see Marrow & Luhrmann 2016; see also Woods 2017).

Vaara's text introduces comforting and protecting voices and images, but they are in a minority: the stories are controlled by the figures of the mother, Saul, Satan, and the scattered, who punish and mock Maria, and consoling figures like the Virgin Mary and the father are subject to them. The stories also reflect the cultural narrative according to which hearing voices is something shameful and should be hidden: the mind is "leaking" into the world, and this is understood as something bad and unwelcomed (see also Luhrmann 2011; Woods 2017). In particular, the mother figure of Maria's stories conveys cultural norms, such as the idea that there is something wrong in Maria because of her voices, as we have seen.

Furthermore, the "dirty legends" constantly bring up different religious intertexts. Maria's hallucinatory images are shaped by biblical stories and they reveal the power of cultural narratives in shaping the ways we experience. For example, Chapter 4 is a rewriting of the story of the Roman soldiers looking for baby Jesus: Maria is forced to hide the infant inside her womb to protect him from the soldiers. Also the story of Saul's conversion is referred to throughout the novel: Maria regularly meets either Saul (Saulus), who makes her do "Satan's work," or St. Paul (Paulus/Paavali), who is a just and forgiving figure, someone who conveys love but also punishes. The contents of the "legends" could thus be read in the context of religious hallucinations and mysticism: the hallucinatory stories bring together religious and psychotic experiences and point toward a similarity between them. However, the difference is in their distressing content: what makes the experiences psychotic rather than religious is the effect they have on Maria (see also Luhrmann 2011). The stories and images that Maria goes through are filled with experiences of shame and guilt, but as we will see, she also uses them to help her recover and fights against the stigma connected to them.

Let us first take a closer look at the story in which Maria loses her hands, in Chapter 1 of Part II. The narrator describes the events:

> It felt safe and solemn and I knew that what would happen would be good and right for me. Even mother would be content and the Priest. […]
>
> Without fear I placed both of my hands on the block, and whispers drew my sleeves up. The wrist was ridiculously pale and white. But the hand was big and clumsy. […]
>
> Soon it would happen. The tubs held their breath, the scattered were ready waiting for Paul's orders, and the Virgin Mary knew what she would have to do soon.
>
> – Now, said Paul gently and kindly.
>
> I knew that at that moment the scattered took into use all of their extra hands and grasped the ax. Together they were powerful, and they had the strength to do it.
>
> – Do it, urged Paul.
>
> I felt a burning flash go through my wrists and a red smell filled the room and covered the strong smell of the tubs.

https://doi.org/10.21435/sflit.13

A cloth was lifted from my eyes and I saw that there were two white, loose hands on the log. The scattered were drying the puddles of blood with their extra hands and with the winding sheets that were no longer needed.

Paul said solemnly: – My child, now it has been atoned. We will not leave you handless and the Priest and your mother will be very happy.

Tuntui turvalliselta ja juhlalliselta ja tiesin, että mikä tapahtuisi, olisi minulle hyväksi ja oikein. Äitikin olisi tyytyväinen ja Pappi. […]

Pelkäämättä panin molemmat käteni pölkyn päälle, ja kuiskaukset vetivät hihat ylös. Ranne oli naurettavan kapea ja valkoinen. Käsi sen sijaan oli suuri ja kömpelö. […]

Pian se tapahtuisi. Sammiot pidättivät hengitystään, irralliset olivat valmiina odottaen Paavalin käskyä, ja Neitsyt-Maaria tiesi, mitä hänen kohta piti tehdä.

– Nyt, sanoi Paavali hellästi ja ystävällisesti.

Tiesin, että sillä hetkellä irralliset ottivat käyttöön kaikki ylimääräiset kätensä ja tarttuivat kirveeseen. Yhdessä ne olivat voimakkaita ja jaksoivat.

– Tehkää se, kehotti Paavali.

Tunsin, että tulinen välähdys kävi läpi ranteitteni ja punainen tuoksu täytti huoneen ja voitti sammioitten voimakkaat hajut.

Liina vedettiin silmiltäni ja näin, että pölkyllä oli kaksi valkeata, irtonaista kättä. Irralliset kuivasivat verilammikoita ylimääräisillä käsillään ja tarpeettomiksi käyneillä käärinliinoilla.

Paavali sanoi juhlallisesti: – Lapseni, nyt olet sovittanut sen. Ei sinua kädettömäksi jätetä ja Pappi ja äitisi tulevat olemaan tyytyväisiä. (LL 68–69.)

In the scene, Paul orders the scattered to cut off Maria's hands. The act is described with sensory detail, and readers are invited to imagine the smells of the brewery room and Maria seeing the two white hands on the log when the cloth that covers her eyes is taken away. The passage then continues by revealing the reason for the mutilation, and the hallucinatory world is for a moment conflated with a possible memory: "Already long ago, when I was still little and played under the blanket, mother had warned and anticipated that this would happen. Father was mad, he would not have wanted mother to talk like that, but I saw that his head was hurting and that he could not stay straight for a long time."[367] It is suggested that Maria has masturbated as a child: her mother has threatened her, and her father has failed to protect her. The hallucinatory story thus appears to reenact a partial memory, and it reveals a shame that is connected to sexuality: a cultural narrative about sexuality and shame is manifested in the hallucination. However, at the end of the scene, there is also a sense of relief and atonement as Maria gets new hands and is "forgiven." The Virgin Mary sews the new hands for her:

– Virgin Mary, you are good with your hands and you know better how to do this. Now make it ready, said Paul and walked in purposeful strides next to the tub to wait.

I felt again a warm presence. I knew that Mary was close. I saw a silver needle and some shiny white cotton thread in the eye of the needle. I knew that slender, smooth hands sewed with deft movements a new pair of hands in place of the old ones, exactly the way hands should be. The seam became neat, almost invisible.

https://doi.org/10.21435/sflit.13

Now I had new hands, and the loose ones were waiting for Paul's orders on the log. […]

The song ended. Paul looked at me with his pervasive eyes and said:

– Your mother can no longer punish you for it, you have now new, clean hands. You can go and drink a glass of hot tea. Tell also the priest that now it is done, and you are forgiven. […]

Something very important had happened. Now I could go back to the other children, mother would no longer be angry, and I would get a glass of tea at the same time as the others. Father would understand. I would tell him everything once the others went out and together we would wonder where my real hands would fly.

Maybe I would see them one day.

– Neitsyt-Maaria, sinä olet taitava käsistäsi ja osaat tämän paremmin. Tee se nyt valmiiksi asti, sanoi Paavali ja käveli määrätietoisesti sammion laidalle odottamaan.

Tunsin taas lämpimän läheisyyden. Tiesin, että Maaria oli likellä. Näin hopeisen neulan ja hohtavan valkoista pumpulilankaa naulansilmässä. Tiesin, että kapeat, sileät kädet ompelivat näppärästi uuden käsiparin entisten tilalle ihan oikein päin. Saumasta tuli siisti, melkein näkymätön.

Nyt minulla oli uudet kädet, ja irralliset odottivat pölkyn ympärillä Paavalin käskyä. […]

Laulu taukosi. Paavali katsoi minuun läpitunkevilla silmillään ja sanoi:

– Äitisi ei voi enää rangaista sinua siitä, sinulla on nyt uudet, puhtaat kädet. Voit mennä juomaan lasillisen kuumaa teetä. Kerro myös papille, että se on tehty ja olet saanut anteeksi. […]

Oli tapahtunut jotakin hyvin tärkeätä. Nyt voisin mennä toisten lasten joukkoon, äiti ei olisi enää vihainen ja saisin teelasin silloin kuin toisetkin. Isä kyllä ymmärtäisi. Kertoisin hänelle kaiken, kun muut olisivat ulkona ja yhdessä ihmettelisimme, missä oikeat käteni lentäisivät.

Ehkä näkisin ne joskus. (LL 70–71.)

The passage shows the different forms that hallucinatory experiences can take: hallucinations are not necessarily auditory or visual, but here the Virgin Mary is only felt as a warm presence. The hallucinatory story itself seems to be constructed out of a combination of imagination, cultural narratives, and traces of memory—and as such, it resembles a dream or a nightmare. There are complex experiences of pain and shame combined with a feeling of atonement. The whole story follows the narrative structure of religious absolution or sacrifice. In the end, Maria dreams how she and her father would think together about her hands, which are flying somewhere.

In Chapter 2, the experiences of bodily shame and punishment are revealed again, now in the form of a story in which little Maria's whole body is invaded and bitten by crawling ants. The experiences of sin and shame take an even more bodily expression than before:

But I don't exist anymore. A brown, roaring hymn: – When a sinner only. They even run to the forbidden direction and visit places where I have never been. I have not even thought. Mother says that those places have no names, at least they are not uttered.

https://doi.org/10.21435/sflit.13

> – Don't sing so loudly. I will speak, I will confess. I have been, I have said. I have watched from the mirror and also the neighbor's girl has. Annaliina doesn't know. Mother probably knows and turns the ant highway inside me. Father, poor father cannot stop mother. And also father thinks that I have. Always me. Kind. I won't touch. I won't speak.
>
> And when the tongue is bitten millions of times and sprayed with a burning liquid, it won't speak anymore. Legs are filled with brown, dry needles. The eye is an ant's egg. There is much room for paths inside the fingers, and in the hair. The hair is brown already.
>
> Minuahan ei enää ole. Ruskea kohiseva virsi: – Kun syntinen vaan. Ne ajavat kiellettyynkin ajosuuntaan ja käyvät paikoissa, joissa minä en ole koskaan käynyt. En edes ajatellut. Äiti sanoo, ettei niillä ole nimiä eikä niitä ainakaan sanota.
>
> – Älkää veisatko kovaa. Minä kerron, minä tunnustan. Olen minä käynyt, olen minä sanonut. Olen katsonut peilistä ja naapurin tyttökin on katsonut. Annaliina ei niitä tiedä. Äiti kai tietää ja kääntää muurahaisten valtatien minun sisääni. Isä, isä-raukka ei mahda mitään sille, mitä äiti tekee. Ja isäkin luulee, että minä olen. Aina minä. Kiltti. En koske. En puhu.
>
> Kun kieleen purraan miljoonia kertoja ja ruiskutetaan polttavaa nestettä, ei se puhu enää. Jalat ovat täynnä ruskeita, kuivuneita havunneulasia. Silmä on muurahaisen muna. Sormiin mahtuu paljon käytäviä, samoin hiusten sekaan. Hiuksetkin ovat jo ennestään ruskeat. (LL 80.)

Again, there are several levels of reality: a fragment from a Pietist hymn about sin,[368] a possible memory of her mother forbidding talk about sexual organs and looking at one's vagina in a mirror, a possible memory of sitting in an ants' nest and being bitten, and a hallucination of shame that gets a bodily manifestation: an experience of ants biting Maria's tongue "millions of times" and invading her fingers and hair, her eyes turning into ant eggs. The story enacts a culturally regulated experience and a narrative about sexuality: there are body parts that are taboos—that cannot be spoken about and that cannot be seen.[369]

Furthermore, the "legends" reveal experiences of inexplicable guilt—what phenomenological psychiatry would describe as delusions of guilt. In Chapters 14 and 15, Maria is doing "Saul's work" at the hospital: the narrator describes how Saul makes Maria persuade her roommate Pirjo to hurt herself and Pirjo tries to commit suicide. However, soon we find out that Maria has not actually done anything. Nurse Untuva tells her that "Pirjo will recover, I just called the intensive care, don't worry. And now listen to me carefully, Maria. You have not been to the city, you have not bought any razor blades and given them to Pirjo. You have been in your room the whole night and slept well. You were given a tranquilizer last night. You are not Pirjo, Maria, you have not done anything."[370] Later, in Chapter 17, the guilt and self-accusations are made even more explicit in a scene in which Maria is accused by jury of masturbation. This time (a hallucinated figure of) Johannes tries to explain to her that she is not guilty of anything: "*Johannes (whispers)*: – Maria, you must learn to see the difference between what is real and what is imaginary. You are not guilty. Remember that you have not done anything forbidden, no matter what they said."[371]

https://doi.org/10.21435/sflit.13

These ambiguous feelings of guilt can be traced to cultural norms and to the mother figure, and are enacted in the stories that haunt Maria. At the same time, the content of the stories can be linked to traumatic experiences, shame about sexuality, and past experiences of physical punishment. The hallucinations Maria goes through come close to flashbacks: they form an unwilling reenactment of the past, reminding us of the ways traumatic and psychotic experiences may resemble one another (Ratcliffe 2017, 162). However, at the same time, the past can be changed: memory is always transformative, and perhaps telling the stories can shape the experiences of pain and shame into a new, less painful, form.

Creating Narrative Agency

A continuous aim in Maria's writing is to "go through" the "images" and "legends" that haunt her, to set herself free from them. This way she creates narrative agency for herself: takes control of her own experiences and stories although, like the narrator of *Kaunis sielu*, she doesn't construct a coherent narrative of her past. In Chapter 19, we are told how the Virgin Mary brings Maria back to Rauhala, a house where Maria lived when she was married to Ensio. Some events from their marriage are gradually revealed, but in fragmentary form, and the multiple levels of reality continue to be conflated. As earlier, the scene begins by situating the readers in place and time:

> We are in Rauhala. The old cabin is quiet. The big white oven feels cold although it is summer.
>
> Mary sits in a creaky rocking chair. She is knitting a jacket for the illegitimate child of Samaritan, and I am writing by the big farmhouse table. Maria is writing.
>
> 20.6.
> Finally, school is over. We have moved to Rauhala and it is the summer that I am afraid of. I have to live in Rauhala with Ensio.
>
> Olemme Rauhalassa. Vanha pirtti on hiljainen. Valkoinen suuri uuni tuntuu kylmältä, vaikka on kesä.
>
> Maaria istuu natisevassa keinutuolissa. Hän kutoo nuttua samarialaisen aviottomalle lapselle, ja minä kirjoitan pirtin suuren pöydän ääressä, Maria kirjoittaa.
>
> 20.6.
> Vihdoinkin on koulu loppunut. Olemme muuttaneet Rauhalaan ja on kesä, jota pelkään. Minun pitää asua Rauhalassa Ension kanssa. (LL 175.)

The text constructs several levels of the story at once: there is the moment in which the narrator is writing her story for the Virgin Mary—"Maria is writing"—and there is the diary-like fragment in which Maria reenacts a summer in Rauhala in late June, assumedly years earlier when she was working as a teacher. As the passage suggests, she has returned to the summer that she is "afraid of."

A fragmented short story about the summer follows. The core of it is that during haymaking time, Ensio has insisted that they hire a maid to help

https://doi.org/10.21435/sflit.13

them. In the nightmarish story, Maria is not an adult married to Ensio but a little girl—but she is also the maid's former teacher. As Maria tries to tell the story to the Virgin Mary, she also comments on the writing process:

> The Virgin Mary. It is not actually me who is writing. I cannot write because I have no hands.
> – Maria, tell everything in the right order, one of the scattered says.
> – You don't have to use the most horrible words, let's put away those voices and images that you cannot handle and that you cannot show to Mary.

> Neitsyt-Maaria. En se oikeastaan ole minä, joka kirjoittaa. Enhän minä voi kirjoittaa, koska minulla ei ole käsiä.
> – Maria, kerro oikeassa järjestyksessä, sanoo irrallinen. – Eihän sinun ole pakko käyttää kaikkein pahimpia sanoja, pannaan äänet ja kuvat pois, joita et kestä ja joita et uskalla Maarialle näyttää. (LL 177.)

Traumatic experiences are difficult to turn into words, and here they are first brought forth by explicitly commenting on their painful nature and the difficulty of telling anyone about them: Maria cannot write because she "does not have hands." The scattered urge Maria to recount everything "in the right order" but they also offer support as they say that she does not have to use the "most horrible" words and images. We then learn that, one night, little Maria finds Ensio drunk and naked in the barn with the maid. However, the story is never finished, and it is unclear what has actually happened and who the characters are. After finding the two people, Maria tells the Virgin Mary that she cannot write any more, and we come to the part of the story that seems the most distressing. The scattered tell Maria that she does not have to write because she is dead now and that Ensio has shot four unborn children in Maria's womb. The chapter about Rauhala then ends on the psychiatric ward. We see Untuva comforting Maria: "– Lie still, Maria, Untuva says and holds me with both hands. I am shaking. It's difficult to stay in bed, but Untuva holds me tight. / – You can make it for a short while still, Johannes is coming, Maria, Johannes is coming."[372]

Even though the images are painful, Maria insists that going through them is an important part of her "treatment." Later, in Chapter 21, Maria explains her world and its characters to a fellow patient in the ward:

> The Virgin, Mary the Virgin. She has been participating in the treatment all along. Then there are also my other people. First there is Johannes and, a long way after him, come Paul and the Virgin Mary. And the scattered, one can never get rid of them. Then there are of course father and mother and Ensio. They are all of course dead, but so am I. It is sometimes difficult, because I would not have patience to rest in the coffin and stay on that side. I have so many worlds of my own and I should have time to visit them all. Then I sometimes must shatter and go to pieces and each piece has time to visit where it should. It is just so difficult to collect them once they are so scattered.

> Neitsyt, Maaria-Neitsyt. Hän on ollut mukana hoidossa koko ajan. Sitten on vielä muita minun omia ihmisiä. Ensin on Johannes ja pitkälti hänen jälkeensä

https://doi.org/10.21435/sflit.13

> tulevat Paavali ja Neitsyt-Maaria. Niin, ja irralliset, niistä ei koskaan pääse eroon. Onhan tietysti vielä isä ja äiti ja Ensio. Tietenkin nämä kaikki ovat kuolleet, mutta niinhän minäkin olen. Se on joskus hankalaa, kun ei malttaisi olla arkussa ja pysyä sillä puolen. Minulla on niin monta omaa maailmaa ja kaikissa pitäisi keritä olla. Silloin täytyy joskus mennä sirpaleiksi ja siten kukin sirpale kerkiää käydä siellä, missä pitää. On vain niin vaikeaa kerätä niitä yhteen, kun ne ovat niin hajallaan. (LL 187.)

Maria makes explicit the therapeutic function of her hallucinations: her unsettling experience of being dead (what psychiatry knows as the "Cotard delusion"), "shattering," and finally collecting the pieces. In the following chapters, we are offered several more story fragments that hint at traumatic events. For example, in Chapter 23 Maria is pregnant with Ensio's child (she is expecting "Annaliina" who has also appeared in some of the legends) and is afraid to tell her mother about the pregnancy. She looks for an "angel maker" to give her an abortion, but her mother says that she has sinned and must marry Ensio and move to Rauhala. Finally, Maria tells that she has lost "the orchid baby." She repeats that she has to continue the story: "It is difficult to look at these images. But I must see them through. Johannes has said. Perhaps then they will stop hurting."[373]

Ultimately, it remains unclear what has happened in Maria's past. Recurring motifs in all the legends and images are her mother's violent behavior and threats, the shame connected to imagining and hearing voices, and even deeper shame and guilt which is tied to sexuality. Maria is also haunted by Ensio, his sexuality and violence, and she repeatedly re-enacts a loss of a child or children. In the end, more important than creating a coherent autobiographical narrative out of the fragments is the story of Maria's efforts to recover: the way she tries to heal herself by going through the images and the stories, by carving a narrative agency for herself. In the final chapter of the novel, all the other characters, figures, and voices have disappeared, Maria has been discharged from hospital and she is alone with Satan. He tells Maria that she is completely alone in the world and leaves her with a bottle of pills. On the final page, Maria telephones Johannes and he answers. The following two novels of Vaara's initial trilogy focus more closely on Maria's and Johannes's relationship, on Maria's journey in becoming a writer and on the difficulties and successes of her therapy. The novels become less fragmentary and less layered: the "dirty legends" have ended, and the focus of the narration is on recovery.

Forms of Knowledge

> An inextricable fusion of phenomenal experience […] and cultural meanings, is what we understand by normal subjective experience, and find in all memoirs […]. (Radden & Varga 2013, 112.)

As discussed at the beginning of this chapter, there is skepticism concerning the knowledge we can gain from reading autobiographical accounts of illness

https://doi.org/10.21435/sflit.13

(see Radden & Varga 2013): problems of memory and linguistic expression, the aesthetic design, dramatization, and literary devices all "distort" the "actual" experiences. What can we then learn from reading books like Vaara's? What kind of cultural work do her novels do?

Vaara's texts have a clear political aim: her writings depict psychotic experiences and highlight their connection to other modes of intentionality, as well as to traumatic events and experiences. By inviting readers to reflect on how hallucinatory experiences emerge and the meanings they convey, *Likaiset legendat* shows that they are not "abnormal" mental states, but rather ways of interacting with the world—just like perception, imagination, remembering, or dreaming—albeit often distressing and unsettling. In a later novel, *Myrkkyseitikki* (1980), the autobiographical narrator reflects on the publication of *Likaiset legendat* and explicitly states the political aim of the works:

> Who would dare to read it [*The Dirty Legends*] so that they would find in it a normal human being, drawing a picture of a life that is inside everyone, as long as one dares to face it? What if every one of us has Maria's schizophrenic garden inside us if we just hoe up the soil surface that covers it?
>
> Kuka uskaltaa lukea sen [*Likaiset legendat*] niin, että löytää siitä tavallisen ihmisen piirtämässä, maalaamassa taulua siitä elämästä, mikä on jokaisen ihmisen sisällä, kunhan vain on rohkeutta katsoa siihen. Entäs jos meissä jokaisessa on tuon Marian skitsofreeninen yrttitarha, kun vain kuokimme auki sitä peittävän, hyväksytyn multakerroksen. (Vaara 1980, 235.)

This was Vaara's message in the 1970s, when people suffering from schizophrenia were still most often institutionalized and the diagnosis was extremely stigmatizing. During the intervening decades, researchers have again started to understand psychotic experiences not only as neurobiological disorders but also as normal human reactions to traumatic life events and oppressive circumstances. Groups such as the Hearing Voices Movement, feminist theorists, anthropologists, and most recently phenomenologists interested in psychiatric disabilities have emphasized the role of the interpersonal world and traumatic events in psychotic experiences. In Vaara's novel, the contents of the hallucinatory episodes reveal childhood traumas, marital abuse and oppressive cultural narratives. The psychotic images show a culture in which sexuality is considered as shameful and a sin. The psychotic experiences convey a meaning, as psychiatrist Claes Andersson (1974) wrote in his afterword to *Likaiset legendat*. In Vaara's works, this meaning is passed on through the construction of the psychotic experiential world and by inviting readers "inside" it. It is close to ineffable: it is experiential and affective, and yet it can be turned into words through creative and artistic means—through the fictional worlds and aesthetic language.

Instead of aiming to create a factual and coherent account of one's life, Vaara's life-writing is different. The text seeks to convey experiences of unsettling changes in one's body and sense of self, hallucinatory voices, dreams, and memories that are not a part of the shared world. This is stated from the outset, in the preface: "No one in this book exists in reality, because

https://doi.org/10.21435/sflit.13

not everything that is true is real."[374] Rather than telling us "facts" about Maria's life, the focus is on the experiences and their personal truth. The text invites the therapist and the readers to listen, as we saw: "We know a lot about something that you, Johannes, don't know anything about. / But listen anyway."[375] We are not asked to take the place of the other or think that we can feel what another person is feeling, but rather to read closely, listen attentively, and reflect on our responses.

Likaiset legendat is situated between fiction and non-fiction, and when we read the text, we know that some of the experiences depicted in it belonged to their author. On the one hand, this knowledge enhances what one of the founders of narrative medicine, Rita Charon (2016a; 2016b), has described as "the intersubjective encounter" created by literature: when we read, we can imagine the human being behind the words, connect with other readers, and become conscious of and recognize our own experiences. The knowledge that Vaara's text is based on actual experiences of psychosis may guide readers to approach it differently, perhaps more seriously, than they would if they thought of it as purely fictional. On the other hand, the knowledge of partial fictionality opens up the text, creating space for readers' reflective imagination. It is often argued that autobiographies arouse suspicion and critical distance in readers, whereas fiction may invite readers closer because it frees us from responsibility to protect ourselves through skepticism and distrust (see Keen 2007, 88; 106). Leah Anderst (2015, 277), in turn, has explored narrative empathy in non-fiction and suggested that autobiographies invite empathetic responses in readers by self-reflexively pointing to the problems of telling about one's life accurately. This is particularly true in a text like Vaara's, which constantly reveals its own fictionality and shows the shattering of the borders between what is real and what is not.

Likaiset legendat differs from the fictional narratives of *Kaunis sielu*, *Tohtori Finckelman* and *Tabu* in two important ways: the text is framed as autobiographical and the experiences of suffering described in it are given a diagnostic label, schizophrenia. However, the narrative techniques Vaara uses in her autobiographical fiction are not that different from the ones used in the other texts. The novel makes use of the narrative form to open the experiential world of its protagonist up to the readers: it creates spaces in which different temporalities are layered, it invites its readers to experience through detailed description, images, and metaphors, and it moves between different perspectives, creating a multifaceted portrayal of an embodied mind. Like the other texts, Vaara's novel also constantly challenges our efforts to read it through diagnostic or psychological frames of reference. In addition to the experiential knowledge it creates, *Likaiset legendat* evokes aesthetic and ethical meanings that go beyond psychological or psychiatric insights.

https://doi.org/10.21435/sflit.13

7. Conclusion

> Considering how common illness is, how tremendous the spiritual change that it brings, how astonishing, when the lights of health go down, the undiscovered countries that are then disclosed, what wastes and deserts of the soul a slight attack of influenza brings to view [...] when we think of this, as we are so frequently forced to think of it, it becomes strange indeed that illness has not taken its place with love and battle and jealousy among the prime themes of literature. (Woolf 2012, 3.)

In her famous essay "On Being Ill" (1926), Woolf pays attention to two things that have been important throughout this book. First, she observes the way illness changes us and the world around us. She writes about a "spiritual change" that illness brings, and about "the undiscovered countries that are then disclosed." Being comfortably immersed and present in the world and in one's body is not something that should be taken for granted. The sense of reality is easily shattered, for example, due to traumatic events—or even because of a sudden attack of influenza. When the old, familiar world is lost, a new and unsettling one appears. It is also significant that Woolf, who is writing a few years after the 1918 pandemic, begins her essay with notes on something as common as influenza: an illness that practically everyone is familiar with. However, her remarks also apply to more isolating experiences like trauma and psychosis.

Second, Woolf states that we can "do without sympathy":

> There is, let us confess it (and illness is the great confessional), a childish outspokenness in illness; things are said, truths blurted out, which the cautious respectability of health conceals. About sympathy for example—we can do without it. That illusion of a world so shaped that it echoes every groan, of human beings so tied together by common needs and fears that a twitch at one wrist jerks another, where however strange your experience other people have had it too, where however far you travel in your own mind someone has been there before you—is all an illusion. We do not know our own souls, let alone the souls of others. Human beings do not go hand in hand the whole stretch of the way. There is a virgin forest in each; a snowfield where even the print of birds' feet is unknown. Here we go alone, and like it better so. Always to have sympathy, always to be accompanied, always to be understood would be intolerable. (Ibid., 11–12.)

https://doi.org/10.21435/sflit.13

For Woolf, sympathy refers to efforts to know others' experiences. She points out its problems: the power imbalance, the intrusion into the world of another, the danger of failing to recognize the difference between one's own and the other's experiences. Like the narrators discussed in this study, she reminds us that although literature grants us an "access" to the minds of others, there are experiences that are hidden—from ourselves as well as from others—and it is not even desirable that everything would be revealed. Finally, Woolf's essay offers a third, additional insight: although illness was not a "prime theme of literature" in the 1920s, it soon became one, and its prominence has lasted until today.

Throughout the analyses of this book, I have paid special attention to the ways readers are invited to engage with the minds and worlds created in fictional narratives: the ways that the texts ask their readers to become immersed in the shattering worlds and at the same time reflect on them, their aesthetic features, and ethical and political meanings. We are called to share worlds and to imagine experiences of others, to become "invaded" by minds of others, yet without losing ourselves and our sense of embodied rootedness in the world or the understanding of the difference between the self and the other. Reading fiction thus involves a kind of "double bookkeeping": an experience of inhabiting two realities at the same time. The analyses have also paid attention to the ethical questions and power relations inherent in storytelling and in reading about mental illness: the problems of narrating the experiences of pain and suffering and the danger of appropriation as well as the need for an ethical distance. Readers are invited to attune themselves to the experiences of others while at the same time recognizing their particularities and differences.

Furthermore, the analyses have explored the questions of knowledge and understanding about experiences of pain and suffering that are created in and through narratives. I have tried to show how fictional and autofictional works can offer phenomenological insights about experiences of mental distress, as well as understanding about the ways cultural narratives and norms shape minds and experiences. The novels invite readers to go beyond diagnostic labels, while at the same time acknowledging experiences of suffering and pain and without romanticizing "madness." By inviting us to shift our focus from labels and categories of mental illness to experiences and experiential worlds, the texts discussed in this study also work against the stigmatization of psychiatric disability in the actual world.

It is important to closely examine the ways the texts employ and challenge cultural and medical notions and narratives of mental illness. Likewise, it is important to look at the readerly responses and the techniques through which the texts invite them. I have sought to make explicit my own interpretive frames, but I have also turned to other readers, researchers, and critics and observed their experiences of reading and their interpretations. For example, it is easier to read Timo K. Mukka's *Tabu* from a feminist perspective—as a narrative of trauma and sexual abuse—in today's society than it was when the novella was published (or even twenty years ago). Readers change in time: what was not visible in the text earlier, now becomes apparent. And as we learn to look more carefully at the social and political structures that the

https://doi.org/10.21435/sflit.13

texts convey and the social and political structures that we as readers project on texts, we may become more attentive to the ways we interpret the world and others in general.

Reading is a form of skillful action: an engagement between the reader, the text and the world it portrays. It involves the reader's bodily experiences, emotions and cognition. It requires attention to the structures and techniques the texts use. The "shattering minds" of fiction—in modernist literature and beyond—invite us to reflect on our ways of reading: How do we read—and how do we diagnose—experiences of others? Through what kinds of interpretive frames do we approach texts and the fictional minds they portray? Through what kinds of frames do we approach real others? How are our ways of perceiving, reading, and interpreting socially and politically shaped? How do we "read" ourselves?

This book participates in recent discussions in medical humanities from narratological, phenomenological, embodied cognitive, and feminist perspectives and from the viewpoint of Finnish modernism. The focus of medical humanities has in recent years shifted from the questions of how, for example, literature can create communication and educate its readers about experiences of illness toward a more socially and politically conscious understanding of the ways humanities, arts, and biomedical sciences are deeply entangled and shape one another—toward critical medical humanities (see Viney, Callard & Woods 2015; Whitehead & Woods 2016). The analyses conducted in this study have answered traditional medical humanities questions about the ways narratives convey experiences of illness and create empathy in new ways, emphasizing the constructed nature of the experiences portrayed and evoked in literature, the cultural and political forms carried out in narratives, and the affective and reflective responses of readers. Drawing insights and concepts from narratology has helped me to theorize and describe the reader's interaction with the fictional minds and experiential worlds created in the texts and to outline the narrative strategies employed by the authors. The phenomenological, embodied cognitive, and feminist perspectives have, in turn, provided tools and concepts to look at how the body and the mind and biological and cultural are constantly intertwined, and how subjects are shaped by their social and material circumstances.

The analyses have also offered new perspectives on Finnish modernist literature. They show the ways experientiality, aesthetics and ethics are intertwined in Finnish modernist works. The readings of Hämäläinen's *Kaunis sielu* and Vaara's *Likaiset legendat* are the first extensive ones on these texts, and my analyses hopefully contribute also in situating them as part of the Finnish modernist tradition. I have argued that *Kaunis sielu* is an early, fully modernist text that creates new forms of expression and challenges cultural narratives and norms that govern gender and sexuality. Furthermore, I have discussed how *Likaiset legendat* constructs an evocative portrayal of the world of psychosis and reveals how the experiences of hallucinations and delusions are shaped by culture. Korpela's *Tohtori Finckelman* and Mukka's *Tabu*, in turn, have been discussed from new, politically engaged perspectives, which illuminate the ways the texts employ but also criticize

https://doi.org/10.21435/sflit.13

oppressive narratives about gender and sexuality. The analyses reveal the complexity of first-person narration and the ways the texts invite us to read the narrator-protagonists "behind" their backs, hopefully creating possibilities for more systematic studies of the first-person form in Finnish literature. Both Korpela's and Mukka's novels also raise difficult questions about the ethics of reading and readers' responsibility in the recognition of experiences of trauma and violence.

The analyses have aimed to show how extremely different readings and interpretations the ambiguous and unsettling texts can invite. As Woolf writes: "Human beings do not go hand in hand the whole stretch of the way." The multitude of different kinds of possible readings that the discussed novels may produce—and hopefully will in the future—is also one way in which the texts do their ethical and artistic work: they keep us engaged with difference.

https://doi.org/10.21435/sflit.13

Notes

1. Introduction

1 "Jumalani, Jumalani, tulenko hulluksi? Kaikki on sekaisin, en voi järjestää tapahtumia mielessäni." (KS 8.) All English translations in the text are mine unless otherwise indicated.

2 "Minua ei vaivannut mikään tauti, oli muuten raskasta. Onkohan muilla ihmisillä samanlaista kuin minulla, ajattelin silloin." (TF 9.)

3 "Minä pelkäsin että hän oli menettänyt järkensä, pelkäsin, että omatkin ajatukseni olivat kadottaneet kaikkensa." (T 72.)

4 "Maria on mennyt pois, minä olen mennyt pois. Ne toiset ovat tulleet." (LL 63.)

5 I use here the terms "first-person narration" and "third-person narration" because they are most recognizable for readers outside of narratology (see also Cohn 1978). As James Phelan (2005, xi) notes, Gérard Genette's (1981) more precise terms "intradiegetic" and "extradiegetic narration" are less user-friendly, although they better capture the distinction between narrators who exist on the same level as the characters and who are often protagonists in their own stories (intra-homodiegetic narration) and narrators who narrate events from another level of existence than the storyworld and without participating in the events (extra-heterodiegetic narration). Phelan's notion "character narration," an alternative for "first-person" or intra-homodiegetic narration, also conveys the idea of a narrator who is inside the storyworld and participates in the events, but it, too, is less intuitive than "first-person narration."

6 Other central works which explore the connections between modernist literature, experiences of "madness" and the margins of the self are, e.g., Julia Kristeva's *La revolution du langage poétique* (1974), Shoshana Felman's *Writing and Madness* (1978/2003), Judith Ryan's *The Vanishing Subject* (1991), and the collection *The Mind of Modernism* (2004) edited by Mark S. Micale. There is, however, a danger in conflating "madness" (or "schizophrenia") and "modernism": for example, Mary E. Wood (2013, 5) notes how determinedly especially schizophrenia "comes either to represent something sweeping and general, like modernism or post-modernism, or to signify complete meaninglessness, that which lies beyond language and culture, inaccessible to human reach or understanding."

7 Freud is of course famous for the way he used literature when developing psychoanalysis. For historical surveys on the connections between literature and "madness," see, e.g., Feder 1980; Thiher 1999.

8 Especially Michel Foucault's work on structures of power, medicine, and history of "madness" has influenced recent cultural study of madness as well as the field of (critical) medical humanities. For a recent introduction to medical humanities

https://doi.org/10.21435/sflit.13

as a form of social critique, see Whitehead 2014; Viney, Callard & Woods 2015; Whitehead & Woods 2016. For narrative medicine, see Charon 2006; 2016a; 2016b.

9 This kind of study on the connections between literature, health, and illness is a relatively new field in the Finnish context, see especially Karttunen, Niemi & Pasternack 2007. For discussions on the cultural meanings of illness in Finnish literature and society from the nineteenth to the twentieth centuries, see Ahlbeck, Lappalainen, Launis & Tuohela 2013; Ahlbeck, Lappalainen, Launis, Tuohela & Westerlund 2015 and Kinnunen 2020. For a recent introduction to madness studies in the Finnish context, see Jäntti, Heimonen, Kuuva & Mäkilä 2019. For a study on Finnish (contemporary) trauma fiction, see Jytilä 2022.

10 "Madness" as a social construct and label has at least two meanings: historically, it has been used to stigmatize people suffering from psychiatric disabilities, but it can also be used to create understanding about the experiences of suffering and distress. This second meaning is important, and in recent years researchers in madness studies have done good work in reducing the stigma around "madness" and in reframing and reclaiming the meaning of the term.

11 Narrative scholars have debated over the meanings of this "access" and whether readers' understanding of fictional minds and characters is similar to or differs from our everyday understanding of other people. E.g., David Herman argues against what he calls Cohn's "exceptionality thesis" according to which narrative fiction offers a special access to other minds: he draws from contemporary phenomenology of intersubjectivity and notes that, in real life, we are usually able to know what other people are experiencing based on their bodily expressions and gestures and the world we share with them, and these same resources are at work in our engagements with fictional minds (Herman 2011a; see also Gallagher & Zahavi 2012, 204). However, I would argue that Cohn's argument is more simple: although we have an "access" to other people's experiences in real life through our bodies and the shared world (we, e.g., perceive another person's pain in their bodily expressions) and these same resources are used when encountering fictional minds, Cohn emphasizes that it is a distinctive feature of literary narratives that they can create a representation of the *thoughts, inner speech* and *mental images* of another being. This is something that can happen in real life only if the other person somehow articulates their thought contents or "stream of consciousness" to others. On the "similarity" vs. "exceptionality" of fictional and real minds and readers' interpretive resources, see Iversen 2013a; 2013b; Mäkelä 2013b; Caracciolo 2014b; 2016, xiv; Bernini 2016; Kukkonen & Nielsen 2018; for an overview of the discussion, see especially Bernaerts & Richardson 2018.

12 Alan Palmer's (see, e.g., 2004, 75–86) alternative term for Cohn's psycho-narration, "thought report," neatly captures what the technique is about: it consists of a narrator's report about a character's mental processes (or in the case of first-person narration: a first-person narrator's report about their own mind). In narrated monologue (more commonly known as "free indirect discourse"), the perspectives and voices of the narrator and the character are entangled: the narrator is adapting to the character's position and filtering the character's experiences.

13 As, e.g., Cohn (1978, 12) has stressed and James Phelan (2005, 1) has emphasized further, the communication structure is as complex in first-person narration as in third-person narration. There is no "straight" access to the mind of a first-person narrator: even when the narrator seems to be communicating their experiences to the readers (to the "narratees" in Phelan's terms) directly, without any outside mediation, there is always also an author who has made choices about the narrative design and who is communicating to the readers (to the "authorial audience") through the narrator. In other words, although first-person narrators

https://doi.org/10.21435/sflit.13

create an illusion of a lifelike communication situation, this is a result of a complex structure.

14 Especially modernist texts reveal that first-person narration and figural third-person narration (in which the narrator's and the character's perspectives and discourses are intertwined) can be quite similar in their effects, see also Cohn 1978; Keen 2007, 97. In fact, sometimes it is difficult for readers to remember after reading whether a certain text is narrated in first or third person.

15 Recent empirical research shows that some readers experience fictional characters' voices so vividly that they come close to auditory verbal hallucinations (see Alderson-Day, Bernini & Fernyhough 2017). I borrow the notion "aesthetic frame" from author Siri Hustvedt who uses it to emphasize how the understanding of fictionality is a part of the experience of reading and creating fiction. Readers or authors do not, for example, confuse themselves with fictional characters, even when there are experiences of closeness and immersion (Hustvedt 2016, 374–380; 447–449). In her work on narrative empathy, Suzanne Keen (2007, 88; 98; 106) has discussed the effects of fictionality: she suggests that the knowledge of a text's fictionality releases readers from the obligation of self-protection through skepticism and suspicion, which may then liberate us to feel with the characters in ways that would not be possible in real life. Likewise, in recent empirical research on art reception and the enjoyment of negative emotions evoked by art, Winfried Menninghaus and his group (2017) suggest that the fictional or aesthetic frame helps recipients to avoid the distressing effects of negative emotions.

2. Shattering Minds and Worlds of Fiction

16 I have elsewhere compared Septimus's experiences of merging with the world and his "extended mind" to the similar experiences of the other characters in the novel: in fact, Woolf shows the way *all* experience is shaped, even constituted by the environment, not just experiences that can be interpreted as pathological. What makes Septimus different is that for him, the ways of interacting with and being supported by one's environment have become altered and distressing. See Ovaska 2017b; 2022. For an analysis of Septimus, see also Waugh 2016. Woolf's portrayal of Septimus's experiences is also discussed, e.g., by Judith Herman in her influential psychological study on trauma, *Trauma and Recovery* (1992).

17 The current neo-phenomenological and embodied cognitive theories draw from several philosophical traditions of the twentieth century, e.g., Husserl's, Heidegger's and Merleau-Ponty's phenomenology, Dewey's pragmatism, and Buddhist traditions. On the philosophical background of embodied cognition, see Varela, Thompson & Rosch 1991; Colombetti 2014; for a recent introduction to the historical background, see Newen, De Bruin & Gallagher 2018. On the connections between early twentieth-century philosophy, psychology, and modernist literature, see, e.g., Ryan 1991; Micale 2004.

18 Different theorists have emphasized different "E's." The work which most influentially introduced the notion of *embodied* cognition to contemporary cognitive science and philosophy of mind was Francisco Varela's, Eleanor Rosch's and Evan Thompson's *The Embodied Mind* (1991) which brought together classical phenomenology, Buddhist traditions and neuroscience. In a seminal paper "The Extended Mind" (1998), Andy Clark and David Chalmers emphasized the ways our cognitive processes (like memory) are *extended* into objects and tools such as notebooks. Drawing on Merleau-Ponty's and James J. Gibson's theories of perception, Alva Noë (2004) has underscored the *enactive* nature of perception: perception is something that we do or achieve through our skillful action in the world. Giovanna Colombetti and Joel Krueger have, in turn, outlined the way

https://doi.org/10.21435/sflit.13

affective states are shaped by the social and material world (see Colombetti 2014; Colombetti & Krueger 2015).

19 On embodied and enactive cognition and psychiatry, see Fuchs 2005; 2009; Drayson 2009; Maiese 2015.

20 This kind of views which emphasize the relationality of the mind also come close to the antipsychiatric, feminist, and anthropological perspectives on psychiatric disabilities, as well as the perspectives of mental health advocacy groups such as The Hearing Voices Movement, which stress that experiences of distress are tied to cultural and social circumstances and emphasize that many psychiatric disorders are linked to traumatic experiences, violence, oppression, and marginalization (see, e.g., Bateson 1972; Nicki 2001; Marrow & Luhrmann 2016; Romme & Escher 2012). The phenomenological, embodied cognitive and the cultural perspectives thus agree that psychiatric disorders are not "in the head" but connected in complex ways to the social world, to other people, and to the possibilities to act in the world. They stress that psychiatric disorders have both biological and environmental (social) causes—and that it is difficult to separate the two. Even those illnesses that are understood as largely neurobiological (e.g., schizophrenia and schizoaffective disorder) are affected—improved or worsened—by the support (or lack thereof) provided by the social and material environment. In phenomenological psychiatry, Matthew Ratcliffe (2017) has recently paid attention to the links between trauma and schizophrenia. As he suggests (following Judith Herman (1992)), trauma involves a loss of trust in the world and other people, and this fundamental loss of basic trust may result in alterations in one's sense of time and space and ultimately in experiences like flashbacks, delusions, and hallucinations. I discuss Ratcliffe's views on trauma and psychosis in Chapters 5 and 6.

21 Later in the essay, Woolf emphasizes the materiality of books and the bodily sensations attached to them: "The books gently swelled neath my hand as I drew it across them in the dark. Travels, histories, memoirs, the fruit of innumerable lives. The dusk was brown with them. Even the hand thus sliding seemed to feel beneath its palm fulness and ripeness." (Woolf 1988, 164.) On Woolf's notion of reading, see Flint 1996. Phenomenological approaches to reading have likewise drawn from Woolf's remarks, see, e.g., Iser 1972.

22 Recall Poulet's (1969) understanding of reading as a kind of doubling: as an experience of being invaded by the thoughts of another.

23 In other words, I propose a synthesis of the rhetorical and embodied cognitive perspectives on reading. In his rhetorical approach, Phelan conceptualizes the implied or model reader as an "authorial audience" who is the target of the author's textual strategies, and whose position the flesh-and-blood reader tries to adopt (e.g., Phelan 2005, 19). In cognitive narratology, researchers who draw from theories of embodied cognition have recently discussed the "embodied reader" as a bodily version of Booth's "implied reader" (1983) and Iser's "implicit/implied reader" (1978), see especially Kukkonen 2014. On the actual readers and their bodily responses, see Kuzmičová 2016; Keen 2018. For a similar, much earlier approach to reading that likewise emphasizes the readers' bodily responses and background, see Rosenblatt (1938/1995). Rosenblatt developed her theory of reading as transaction between the reader and the text based on Dewey's (1934/1980) pragmatist philosophy of art.

The term "implied author" also requires some clarification. Following Phelan, I understand the implied author as the "agent responsible for bringing the text into existence"; "a streamlined version of the real author, an actual or purported subset of the real author's capacities, traits, attitudes, beliefs, values, and other properties that play an active role in the construction of the particular text" (Phelan 2005, 45). The implied author is a version of the writer, understood by the reader as such. We

https://doi.org/10.21435/sflit.13

can, e.g., interpret the author as the agent who has chosen whether to use summary or scene, or past or present tense in a novel (Phelan 2005, 134). However, as we will see for *Tohtori Finckelman*, with highly self-conscious narrators, it is sometimes extremely difficult to pinpoint whether certain textual choices should be read as the author's or the narrator's, and this may have consequences, e.g., for how we perceive the narrator's reliability.

24 Cognitive narratologists build, e.g., on the works of John Dewey (1934/1980), Louise Rosenblatt (1938/1995), and Paul Ricoeur (1983/1984).

25 Importantly, this means that readers' responses can differ significantly from the characters' experiences portrayed in the text: story-driven experiences are not tied to fictional characters, and many other narrative elements (such as the description of space, time, and objects, the use of metaphors, and the overall mood or style of the text) co-construct story-driven experiences.

26 The "first-person perspective" can be constructed through first-person narration, but also, e.g., through figural third-person narration, which combines the voices and perspectives of the narrator and the character.

27 Some cognitive narratologists might claim that non-psychologizing frames of reading are "real-life based," which of course they are in a sense (as long as readers are real people). Moreover, there is looping between different frames of reading ("psychological" reading practices are affected by more literary modes of reading and vice versa). However, rather than calling all frames of reading "real-life based," it makes conceptually more sense to distinguish between frames of reading that aim at understanding fictional characters as mimetic creatures (what I call "psychological frames") and that emphasize their constructedness and artificiality (what I call "metafictional frames").

28 See, e.g., Fludernik 1996, 12; Palmer 2004; Caracciolo 2016, 38. On the attribution of mental illness in narrative fiction, see the special issue of *Style* (2009), especially the introduction (Bernaerts et al. 2009) and articles on cognitive and rhetorical narratology (on cognitive narratology and madness, see Bernaerts 2009 and Palmer 2009; on rhetorical narratology, see Phelan 2009). On "mad" and "strange" narrators from a cognitive perspective, see also Fludernik 1998 and Caracciolo 2016.

29 Such intersubjective skills begin developing in early infancy and range from basic affective attunement, mimicry, and mirroring to narrative understanding of others; see, e.g., Stern 1985; Hutto 2007; Gallagher & Zahavi 2012; Colombetti 2014.

30 On "folk psychiatry," i.e., how we attribute mental disorders to other people based on our tacit understanding of what it means to be a functioning, unified self and an agent, see Boyer 2011. Cognitive and affective signs include lack of emotions, emotional contradictions, heightened negative emotions, loss of memory, hallucinations, and delusions. Linguistic signals consist of phenomena like loss of verbal coherence, loss of words, and loss of grammatical structure. (Ibid.) Such experiences and behavior are likely to be interpreted as signs of pathology because they break our very basic understanding of the self as a single, distinct, integrated body that is the agent of actions, an experiencer of feelings, and can communicate their experiences to others understandably (see also Stern 1985).

31 In a way, cognitive and unnatural narratology have worked to supplement each another: the former focuses on how literature employs real-life experiences and cognitive frames, the latter emphasizes the artificiality and constructedness of fictional minds and worlds. In a recent dialogue between the two perspectives, Steven Willemsen, Rikke Andersen Kraglund, and Emily Troscianko (2018, 597) illustrate a key difference between cognitive and unnatural narratology regarding interpretation: "scholars in the cognitive camp have tended to treat interpretation

https://doi.org/10.21435/sflit.13

as an object of study (i.e., investigating the interpretive process), while those in the unnatural field typically treat it as a method of study (i.e., practicing interpretation in the study of narratives)."

32 On the problems of unnatural narratology, especially the difficulty of defining "natural" or "unnatural," see, e.g., Fludernik 2012; Pettersson 2012.

33 As I discuss in Chapter 4, this interpretation has been suggested by many readers of *Tohtori Finckelman*, e.g., Sarajas 1953/1980, 71–72; Vainio 1975, 179; and Salin 2002, 83.

34 The human tendency to imagine, interpret and narrativize other minds, as well as the *failures* in understanding others, are a constant theme in (modernist) fiction, as many narrative researchers have emphasized (see Palmer 2004, 163; Zunshine 2008; Mäkelä 2011, 13; Nykänen 2014, 13).

35 Likewise, the embodied and enactive perspective to intersubjectivity emphasizes that understanding the other is an interactive process: we both remain autonomous, separate beings, but are affected by the other, and something new emerges as a result (see de Jaegher & di Paolo 2007).

36 As Ratcliffe describes, following Dan Zahavi's (2014) work on empathy: "Empathizing is comparable to 'perceiving', 'remembering', and 'believing'; it is a type of intentional state in its own right, a second-person experience of mental states that differs in kind from first-person experience. […] When we perceive the behavior of others, we experience something of their experience *in* their behavior. In doing so, we continue to encounter that experience *as theirs*, and thus in a different way to how we would if it were our own." (Ratcliffe 2015, 232.)

37 As Merleau-Ponty (2002, 415) writes: "For me these situations are displayed, for him they are lived through." Or as Shaun Gallagher and Dan Zahavi (2012, 204) note, following Husserl: "If I had the same access to the consciousness of the other as I have to my own, the other would cease being an other and would instead become a part of myself."

38 The phenomenological notion of empathy differs from Suzanne Keen's (2007, 4; 2013) influential definition of "narrative empathy" as "the sharing of feeling or perspective taking induced by reading, viewing, or imagining narratives of another's situation and condition." Keen's definition and her use of the word "share" does not make explicit the difference between a person's own and the other's experience. For recent narratological discussions on narrative empathy which pay more attention to the difference between the self and the other, see Hammond & Kim 2014; McGlothlin 2016. Like Keen, I use the word "share" in the analyses, but this is not to imply that the experiences would be the same: there is always a difference between my own and other's experience, even when the experience seems to be shared.

39 For an introduction to Finnish modernism from the 1890s to the 1970s, see Riikonen 2007. On the early views on psychoanalysis in Finland, see Ihanus 1994, 228–232. See also Nykänen 2015, 36–44; 51; 2017, 13–19 for an introduction to Finnish 1950s and 1960s modernism.

40 Kirsi Tuohela and Ritva Hapuli name Elsa Heporauta's *Suuri yö* (The Great Night, 1933) as the first Finnish "mental asylum novel" (see Tuohela & Hapuli 2015, 159–163). Another work which deals very explicitly with the topic of mental illness and shattering in the 1930s is Uuno Kailas's *Novellit* (Short Stories, 1936).

41 Considering the years of publication, *Tabu* (1965) and *Likaiset legendat* (1974) could be characterized as examples of Finnish late modernism, approaching postmodernism. However, if we follow McHale's (1987) distinction according to which modernist texts focused on *epistemological* questions (about how we can gain knowledge about reality) and postmodernist texts on *ontological* questions (about the very existence of reality), as well as Waugh's (1984) description of postmodernist metafiction as an exploration of the constructedness of reality,

https://doi.org/10.21435/sflit.13

then *Kaunis sielu* (1928/2001) and *Tohtori Finckelman* (1952), which are more self-conscious of their status as artefacts and in which the status of reality is more uncertain, appear even more "postmodernist" than *Tabu* and *Likaiset legendat*. In other words, *Tabu* and *Likaiset legendat* are closer to postmodernism chronologically but *Kaunis sielu* and *Tohtori Finckelman* are more "postmodern" in the questions they pose. The four texts thus vividly show that the distinctions between modernism and postmodernism are not clear-cut.

42 "[M]uistan, että minussa syntyi hämmentävä tunne, sillä miehet katselivat minua aika omituisesti. Aloin ymmärtää, että jokin oli vinossa." (Quoted in Stang 2015, 225.) The same statement with a slightly different wording is printed in Hämäläinen's memoir: "I remember a disconcerting feeling arising in me when the men stared at me silently and queerly for a long time." ("Muistan, että minussa syntyi hämmentävä tunne, kun miehet vaiti tuijottivat minua pitkään ja omituisesti.") (Haavikko & Hämäläinen 1993, 93).

43 See also Stang (2015, 230) who quotes also an unpublished, undated interview in which Hämäläinen says that she "ran with it [the manuscript] from one publisher to the next, and no one took it, and that was namely because its topic was such an odd one as lesbianism. You understand, of course, that at this time such a topic was not published." In her memoir, Hämäläinen recollects that after she had already become a writer, in 1931, she offered *Kaunis sielu* as part of a short story collection to her publisher WSOY, where editor Elsa Enäjärvi-Haavio read it but did not support the publication. Later in 1939 Hämäläinen was encouraged by writer Olavi Paavolainen (who was her partner at the time) to offer it once more, but at this point she declined herself. (Haavikko & Hämäläinen 1993, 126; 291.) Hämäläinen's first novel *Hyväntekijä* (The Benefactor) was published by WSOY in late 1930. Interestingly, it was celebrated by editor Martti Haavio (who was married with Enäjärvi-Haavio) as a breakthrough of Finnish modernism. He wrote to Hämäläinen: "You truly have all the chances. 'The Benefactor' is, this is how I see it, the first modern Finnish novel; I am looking forward curiously to the reviews." ("Teillä todellakin on kaikki mahdollisuudet. 'Hyväntekijä' on, niin käsitän, ensimmäinen suomalainen moderni romaani; odotan uteliaana arvostelun suhtautumista.") (Haavikko & Hämäläinen 1993, 105.) Formally and thematically, however, *Hyväntekijä* is much more conventional than *Kaunis sielu*: in it, an extradiegetic narrator tells the story of a male protagonist who, like the narrator of *Kaunis sielu*, is guided by aesthetic experiences of art and nature and who struggles between his desire to help people, his love of art, and his profession as a factory owner, as well as between selfish and unselfish reasons to do good deeds. Elsa Enäjärvi-Haavio was not as excited about *Hyväntekijä* as her husband, writing to him before the publication: "WSOY 20.10.1930. Jäntti [the publisher] brought Helvi Hämäläinen's manuscript once more for me to read. But it has no form, it is pure poetry! We should make her write poems instead. The critics wouldn't have time to read this in the middle of the Christmas rush. But if we don't publish it, who knows if H. H. will jump into the Porvoo river. ("WSOY 20.10.1930. Jäntti toi Helvi Hämäläisen käsikirjoituksen vielä kerran luettavaksi. Mutta sehän on aivan muodoton, pelkkää lyriikkaa. Ihminen olisi pantava runoja kirjoittamaan. Tätä eivät arvostelijat varmaankaan jaksaisi joulukiireissä lukea. Mutta jos sitä ei julkaista, kuka tietää vaikka H.H. hyppäisi Porvoon jokeen.") (Quoted in Enäjärvi-Haavio & Eskola 2000, 187.)

44 On the inconsistencies and silences in Hämäläinen's own statements about the topic of homosexuality in *Kaunis sielu* and the whereabouts of the manuscript before its publication, see Kivilaakso 2012; Stang 2015, 227–229. Kivilaakso suggests, and Stang agrees, that Hämäläinen likely wanted to control what was known about the manuscript in public and that the text was probably never actually missing. There is an interesting tension: on the one hand, Hämäläinen

https://doi.org/10.21435/sflit.13

talked about the manuscript in interviews and made sure that its existence was documented; on the other hand, she claimed that it was lost. (See Kivilaakso 2012, 155.)

45 For an analysis of queer topics in *Kaunis sielu*, see also Stang 2015, 233–239.

46 *Kaunis sielu* interestingly resonates with later existentialist works like Camus' *L'Étranger* (1942), or Finnish novelist Kerttu-Kaarina Suosalmi's short story "Synti" (1957) which is narrated by a female protagonist who suffers from mental distress and goes through experiences of guilt and shame (see Nykänen 2022). The anticipation of existentialist topics is likely a result of Hämäläinen's interest in Dostoyevsky and her efforts to develop Dostoyevskyan themes of crime, guilt and responsibility. I thank Elise Nykänen for bringing Suosalmi's short story to my attention and Sari Salin for pointing out the connections between the narrator of *Kaunis sielu* and the Dostoyevskyan abject heroes and heroines.

47 The title refers to the neoclassical/romantic concept of the "beautiful soul," *die schöne Seele*, a soul that has found harmony through aesthetic education (see Norton 1995). But although the "soul" constructed in the novel is constantly looking for aesthetic experiences and goes through feelings of aesthetic beauty and wonder, one could not claim that it reaches any kind of "harmony."

48 "Minä olin tuohon aikaan esteettisen maailmankatsomuksen vanki. Millekään sosiaaliselle tunteelle tai näkemykselle ei mieleni ollut avautunut, vaikka ympärilläni olisi ollut runsaasti siihen aineksia, mutta synkässä kellarihuoneessa minä koin hurmautuneita runoelämyksiä ja kirjoitin kauneudesta ja hyvyydestä. Minussa vaikutti äärettömän voimakas kauneudenrakkaus ja kauneudentaju." (Haavikko & Hämäläinen 1993, 93.)

49 On decadence and (mental) illness in Finnish literature, see Lyytikäinen 1997, 12; 2014.

50 The first more comprehensive Finnish introduction to psychoanalysis was Yrjö Kulovesi's *Psykoanalyysi* (Psychoanalysis, 1933). On psychoanalysis in Finland and in Finnish literature in the 1920s and 1930s, see Ihanus 1994; 1999; Koivisto 2011, 234; Juutila 1999, 373.

51 Hämäläinen discusses the reception of her works in her memoir, see Haavikko & Hämäläinen 1993, 174. On the "morality debates" of the 1930s, see Lappalainen 1999, 324–325.

52 The first edition of *Säädyllinen murhenäytelmä* was partly censored in 1941 (the descriptions of homosexuality were removed) and the full novel was not published until 1995 (see also Stang 2015, 223).

53 See, e.g., Karhu 1977, 109. Although Salin (2002, 25) also notes that Korpela himself seems to have been disappointed with the reception, and he decided to return to a more conventional narrative form after *Tohtori Finckelman*.

54 "Särkynyt maailmankuva, jonka toiset kirjailijat ikäänkuin sivulta käsin teoksissaan merkitsevät muistiin, on Korpelalla ilmennetty rakenteen ja tyylin avulla: romaani itse on maailma, joka särkyy." (Laitinen 1997, 462.)

55 "Jos etsii sodan tai sodanjälkeisen ajan kuvausta Korpelan kahdesta ensimmäisestä romaanista, joutuu toteamaan, että sitä ei ole. Tärkein todiste sodan traumaattisuudesta onkin, että siitä ei puhuta. Sodan kauhut kuitenkin tunkevat esiin päähenkilöiden syyllisyydentunteina, henkilöiden ja tapahtumien groteskiutena, moniselitteisinä väkivaltarikoksina sekä väkivaltaisten pakkomielteiden ja sisäkertomusten runsautena." (Salin 2002, 14)

56 "Keskeistä Korpelan romaaneissa on kahdentuminen ja jakautuminen, joka näkyy romaanien kielellisellä, rakenteellisella ja temaattisella tasolla. Kielellisellä tasolla kahdentuminen on verbaalista ironiaa, rakenteellisella tasolla se on dialogisuutta ja temaattisella tasolla se on persoonallisuuden jakautumista ja henkilöhahmojen kahdentumista (kaksoisolennot)." (Salin 2002, 12.)

57 Salin (2002, 24) also reads *Tohtori Finckelman* as a postmodern, metafictional

https://doi.org/10.21435/sflit.13

novel, drawing on Patricia Waugh's notion of metafiction as a genre that emphasizes its own fictionality and explores the "possible fictionality of the world outside the literary fictional text" (see Waugh, 1984, 2). According to Salin: "What is essential in Korpela's modernism is the radicalization of metafiction and intertextuality and the way they are intertwined with a radical problem of selfhood: the dividedness of the self." ("Olennaista Korpelan modernismissa on metafiction ja intertekstuaalisuuden radikalisoituminen ja kietoutuminen radikaaliin minuuden problematiikkaan, minuuden jakautumiseen.") (Salin 2002, 24–25.)

58 "Ytimeltään Dostojevskin ja Korpelan teema on sama. Heidän teoksensa ovat samaa rajankäyntiä Aljošan yksinkertaisesta laupeudesta Ivanin kuolettavaan järjenkäyttöön." (Sarajas 1953/1980, 59.)

59 "[I]dealistista on kasvanut vaarallinen yli-ihminen, joka vallanhimoisena terrorisoi ympäristöään; mutta samalla hän joutuu maksamaan vallastaan kalliin hinnan […]." (Laitinen 1997, 460.)

60 Laestadianism is a Pietist revival movement that was founded by Swedish priest Lars Levi Laestadius (1800–1861) in Lapland in the nineteenth century. Both Mukka and Maria Vaara grew in areas where Laestadianism controlled the communities and created strict moral codes that guided sexuality, marriage and procreation.

61 Mäkelä-Marttinen (2008, 27) also compares Mukka interestingly to William Faulkner: "Whereas for Mukka, Lapland is a milieu where the inner passions and anxieties of the characters collide with social ideas and the forces of nature, for Faulkner the 'deep south' of the United States has a similar role." ("Kun Mukalla Lappi toimii miljöönä, jossa henkilöiden sisäiset intohimot ja ahdistus törmäävät yhteisön käsityksiin ja luonnonvoimiin, toimii Faulknerilla vastaavassa asemassa Yhdysvaltojen "syvä etelä".")

62 *Tabu* was published together with a short story "Sankarihymni" (A Heroic Anthem).

63 The timeline of the novel suggests that the main events happen after the Finnish civil war of 1918, in the early 1920s. According to Mukka's notes, the adult Milka narrates the events sometime during or after the Second World War (see Paasilinna 1988, 77).

64 "[V]aiettu seksuaalinen ja pyhä kertomus nuoren tytön selittämättömästä raskaudesta." (Lahtinen 2013, 73; see also 63.)

65 Both descriptions are also the titles of Lahtinen's and Mäkelä-Marttinen's respective analyses. However, there is nothing humoristic in the "parody" *Tabu* enacts. In her study, Mäkelä-Marttinen (2008) reads Mukka's works insightfully through psychoanalytical theories and Mikhail Bakhtin's and Michael Bernstein's studies on Menippean satire and "bitter carnival," emphasizing the melancholic nature of Mukka's "parodies." She also pays attention to the traumatic elements in Mukka's texts but does not discuss the question of abuse in *Tabu* further. (See especially Mäkelä-Marttinen 2008, 29; 187; 191.)

66 Lahtinen quotes one of Mukka's letters dated 1966 in which he explains his ideas behind *Tabu* and writes that "sometimes the development into a woman begins very early, and another chapter in itself are the so-called nymphets" ("joskus naiseksi kehittyminen alkaa hyvin varhain ja luku erikseen ovat nk. nymfetit") (quoted in Lahtinen 2013, 71). It seems that Mukka had read Nabokov's *Lolita* but perhaps missed the unreliable narration of the novel and read its narrator's explanations about "nymphets" as a fact—rather than as Humbert Humbert's efforts to justify his own pedophilia by invoking a fictitious myth (on unreliable narration in *Lolita*, see, e.g., Phelan 2005). Lahtinen (ibid.) also mentions *Tabu*'s connection to *Lolita* (1955, Finn. transl. 1959) and notes that the latter novel's "portrayal of a

https://doi.org/10.21435/sflit.13

sexual relationship between an older man and a young girl shocked readers also in Finland" ("kuvaus vanhemman miehen ja nuoren tytön seksuaalisesta suhteesta tyrmistytti lukijoita myös Suomessa").

67 In a footnote, Mäkelä-Marttinen (2008, 195) mentions that both *Tabu* and *Lolita* are "ambivalent stories about incest."

68 There are also a few academic articles on Vaara: I have studied the writing of psychotic depression and the construction of an affective language in *Likaiset legendat* (Ovaska 2017a; 2017b), and Kirsi Tuohela and Ritva Hapuli (2015, 172–176) have discussed its portrayal of the horror connected to mental shattering.

69 "[*Likaiset legendat*] on hajanainen ja kaoottinen olematta silti tarkoituksellisesti 'postmoderni.'" (Sallamaa 2010, 122.)

70 "[...] *Likaisten legendojen* maailma säilyttää sekä epistemologisen kiehtovuutensa että ontologisen ahdistavuutensa. Se on aivan omanlaisensa myöhäismodernistinen romaani, jonka keskeiset esteettiset, eettiset, poeettiset ja sosiaaliset ominaisuudet nousevat vakavan ja hengenvaarallisen sairauden syvyyksistä." (Eskelinen 2016, 492.)

71 This becomes visible in the marketing and reception of the recent autofictional novel *Huomenkellotyttö* (The Morning Bell Girl, 2013) which was written by Vaara's daughter, Sarianna Vaara, and portrays a writer mother's struggle with psychosis and addiction from a child's and young woman's perspective. The readers of *Huomenkellotyttö* referred also to Maria Vaara's works and compared the ways the books represented experiences of illness (see, e.g., blog "Anna minun lukea enemmän" 7.10.2013, online: annaminunlukeaenemman.blogspot.com/2013/10/sarianna-vaara-huomenkellotytto.html). Sarianna Vaara's novel includes a scene in which the protagonist, now a young woman studying to become a nurse, hears a presentation about her mother's works, and through reading the books, finally understands how severely ill her mother had been. *Huomenkellotyttö* is a fictionalized account of Sarianna Vaara's childhood and youth, but it creates an explicit dialogue with Maria Vaara's works through many connections and details, and just like them it underscores the meaning and understanding created through writing and reading.

72 "Marraskuun liike" (The November Movement, 1967–1972) was partly inspired by the international antipsychiatric movement. A very concrete aim was to help people suffering from psychiatric disabilities, the homeless, and prisoners, and the movement's social critique was directed especially against the problems in housing politics and mental health care.

73 "Minä olen pilleristi, syön liikaa lääkkeitä ja sinä puhut uusista lääkkeistä. Sinä olet hullu. Minä sairastan hoitoa ja lääkkeitä, sinä tarjoat hoitoa ja lääkkeitä." (Vaara 1975, 243.) *Kuuntele Johannes* also depicts the embodied meaning of the pills and the way their effect is felt as an affective scaffolding (that is connected to addiction): "Fingers knew only the letter M of the alphabet: Mandrax and Melleril." ("Sormet aakkostivat vain M-kirjaimen. Mandraxia ja Melleriliä.") (Vaara 1975, 146.); "Without the pills she could not make it. One had to be drunk enough to be mute, blind, and away from everyone." ("Ilman pillereitä hän ei jaksaisi. Oli oltava sen verran humalassa, että voisi pysyä mykkänä, sokkona ja kaikista kaukana.") (Vaara 1975, 124.) Addiction to prescription drugs is a central theme also in Sarianna Vaara's *Huomenkellotyttö*.

74 "Nyt Jan-Christian sitten väittää minulle: Et sinä ole skitsofreeninen. Sitä en voi tietää, ajattelen kyllä: En ole skitsofreenikko enkä ole koskaan ollutkaan, vaikka viimeisiin lääkärinlausuntoihin on kirjoitettu *Schizophrenia latens*. Rajatila." (Vaara 1982, 70.); "Papereihin on pantava joku sana diagnoosiksi, selittää Jan-Christian kuin en tietäisi mitään." (Vaara 1982, 199.) Schizophrenia is also a diagnostic category that has often been seen the "a quintessential" form of "madness" in

https://doi.org/10.21435/sflit.13

the modern era (Sass 1994, 13; Davidson 2013) and even as the emblem of the culture of the twentieth century (Deleuze & Guattari 1972; Jameson 1991). For problems of such sweeping claims in which "madness" is tied to "modernism" or "postmodernism," see Wood 2013, 5.

75 E.g., Finnish-Swedish writer Christer Kihlman published a memoir, *Människan som skalv* (The Person Who Trembled, 1971), in which he discussed his own experiences of mental distress and alcohol abuse, and poet and writer Eeva Kilpi wrote about her experiences of depression in a diary novel *Naisen päiväkirja* (A Diary of a Woman, 1978). In Vaara's last novel, *Tulilintu* (1982), Vaara mentions that she was influenced by Kihlman's later autobiographical text *Alla mina söner* (All My Sons, 1980). Before Vaara, there were only a few published autobiographies about life in mental institutions in Finland. The first mental asylum autobiography appears to be Aino Manner's *Viesti yöstä. Mielisairaalakokemuksia* (A Message from the Night. Experiences from a Mental Hospital, 1935) in which Manner describes her life in different psychiatric institutions in Finland during the first decades of the century (see Tuohela 2008, 165; Tuohela 2015a, 213–225; Tuohela 2015b, 226–228; Tuohela & Hapuli 2015, 164–166). Another early autobiography about experiences of mental illness was Maria Åkerblom's (1898–1981) book (written in Swedish) *Maria Åkerbloms autobiografi och första delen af hennes verksamhet* (1920) in which Åkerblom connects her experiences of mental distress to religious insights (see Tuohela 2013, 206–213; Tuohela 2015b, 223–226). Åkerblom led a revivalist Christian movement in the 1920s, and she was influential in the same literary circles in Helsinki in which Helvi Hämäläinen started her career. Although the Finnish publications were scarce, several internationally popular illness narratives and mental asylum autobiographies and novels were translated into Finnish: e.g., Mary Jane Ward's *Snake Pit* (1946) was translated by Toini Havu only two years after it was released (*Käärmeenpesä,* 1948) and Ken Kesey's *One Flew Over the Cuckoo's Nest* (1962) came out as a translation the same year as Vaara's *Likaiset legendat* was published (*Yksi lensi yli käenpesän*, 1974). I thank Kirsi Tuohela for bringing the translation of Ward's text to my attention.

76 Like Renee and Hannah Green, Maria Vaara is originally a pseudonym which consists of the author's maiden name (Vaara) and modified first name (Maija/Maria). However, after the publication of her first works, Vaara changed her name officially to Maria Vaara.

77 For feminist discussions about the connections of gender and psychiatric disability in literary studies, medical history, disability studies, and trauma studies, see, e.g., Chesler 1972; Showalter 1985; Herman 1992; Wood 1994; Caminero-Santangelo 1998; Nicki 2001 (which is also an insightful critique of Chesler); Appignanesi 2008; Usher 2012; and Jäntti 2012. For important studies on oral history and experiences of Finnish mental institutions from 1930s to 2010s, see Jäntti et al. 2022; 2021 and Kuuva & Heimonen 2020.

3. A Transgressive Soul: Helvi Hämäläinen's *Kaunis sielu* (The Beautiful Soul)

78 All English translations of the novel are mine.

79 The narration creates what Herman (2002, 343) has called "double deixis": the "you" (in "Do you understand?") refers both to the readers outside the storyworld and to the narrator's hypothetical narratees inside the storyworld.

80 As Cohn (1978, 15) describes them, "autonomous monologues" (interior monologues) are "unmediated, and apparently self-generated": they give the impression that they are not spoken or written but rather consist of "silent self-communion" of a character. On a similar narrative situation in Sartre's *La*

https://doi.org/10.21435/sflit.13

Nausée (1938), see Cohn 1978, 213–216. However, whereas Sartre's novel at first clearly mimics a diary with the dates written before the entries, the fragments in Hämäläinen's novel are not dated, only numbered. What connects *Kaunis sielu* to the diary form is that the narrator makes references to the moment of writing, the narration has a communicational and reflective aim (but the narrator's audience does not seem to be present in the same space with her), and the narration is not retrospective like in a memoir, but rather the events progress in turns with the narration: the narrator occasionally narrates events retrospectively, and occasionally reports what is happening or what she is experiencing at the moment of narration. In other words, *Kaunis sielu* seems to be based on an autobiographical narrative form but "slides" into the "terrain of the autonomous monologue," as Cohn (ibid., 213) would put it. This is not surprising, since Hämäläinen was influenced by Dostoyevsky's *Notes from the Underground*, in which the narrative situation is likewise ambiguous (it is uncertain whether the narrator is writing or speaking his story) and which anticipated many modernist innovations (see also Cohn 1978, 176).

81 Stang (2015, 227; 232) has also paid attention to the way Hämäläinen constantly treats political and feminist topics in her works (female sexuality, motherhood, abortion, homosexuality) but denies in her interviews and memoir that she had any "political" views as a young writer.

82 I use "affect" and "affectivity" as umbrella terms for different kinds of emotions, atmospheres, moods, and existential feelings (e.g., sense of reality, situatedness, locatedness, connectedness, significance, etc., see Ratcliffe 2008; 2009) through which subjects are attuned to the world. Emotions (e.g., love and hate) are directed to objects, whereas other affective states (e.g., existential feelings and moods) are objectless, longer-lasting, and often remain unconscious. In this view, affects are not understood as "inner" states but as phenomena that scaffold a person's whole embodied being in the world and are formed in interaction between the self and the world. On phenomenological and embodied cognitive perspectives on affectivity, see Fuchs 2013; Colombetti 2014. See also Ahmed 2004 for a feminist phenomenological and cultural perspective.

83 Part of the difficulty of reading *Kaunis sielu* comes from the fact that Hämäläinen herself never properly edited the manuscript. Yet, many of the inconsistencies, contradictions, and repetitions of the text have aesthetic and political functions. As discussed, *Kaunis sielu* is complex because it brings together influences and motifs from so many different literary periods and movements: romanticism, realist and naturalist literature, Dostoyevsky, decadent literature, early twentieth-century psychology, and 1920s themes of modernity and discussions about the "New Woman."

84 "Minä olen kenties tulossa hulluksi. Minun on tämä asia selvitettävä." (KS 10.); "Eikö tämä ole hulluutta?" (KS 77.)

85 "Miksi minä hänet murhasin? Mitään syytä ei minulla ole joka tuntuisi vakavalta, juhlalliselta." (KS 101.); "Minun on päästävä selvyyteen miksi murhasin…" (KS 109.) "Sen minä nyt tunnen, että minun on päästävä selvyyteen miksi murhan tein, se on ainoa millä on merkitystä." (KS 109.)

86 "Olkoon kaikki mosaiikkia, kuvioita, turhanaikaisia neliöitä ja ympyröitä." (KS 120.); "[M]inä olen vain mosaiikkia, sinisiä, harmaita, keltaisia neliöitä. Palikkapino. Surkea palikkapino." (KS 140.)

87 "Minä olen tuomittava hullu; jätän teille palikkani, mosaiikkini. Luokaa minut, järjestelkää, siniharmaat ja keltaiset palikkani. Kuka teistä ymmärtää itsensäkään?" (KS 142.)

88 As narrative theorist Matti Hyvärinen (2008; 2012) has emphasized, the idea of narrative as "coherence" or "unity" is a rather normative one. He criticizes

https://doi.org/10.21435/sflit.13

especially Galen Strawson's (2004) influential claims on the restrictiveness of narrative identity (e.g., Bruner 1987) for misrepresenting narrative (and narrative identity) as something that does not allow fragmentariness and breaks.

89 On the emergence of the "New Woman" and femme fatale in Finnish literature in the beginning of the twentieth century, see, e.g., Hapuli, Lappalainen, Koivunen & Rojola 1992; Hapuli 1992; Rojola 1992; Melkas 2006; Parente-Čapková 2014.

90 "[E]n ole aivan varaton." (KS 126.) See Woolf's *A Room of One's Own* (1929/1998).

91 As Elaine Showalter (1985, 211) writes, women are punished for their sexuality: in the nineteenth century for expressing sexuality in general; in the twentieth century for transgressing heterosexual norms. Sara Ahmed (2010) notes that the habit of "killing off" especially lesbian characters in popular fiction lasted late into the twentieth century.

92 E.g., Sontag 1978; Gilbert & Gubar 1979; Showalter 1985; Caminero-Santangelo 1998; Donaldson 2002; Wood 2013.

93 In her seminal essay *Illness as Metaphor*, Susan Sontag warns of these kinds of metaphorical associations in which illness (she writes particularly about tuberculosis and cancer) is connected to psychological traits or ideas about a person's character: "My point is that illness is not a metaphor, and that the most truthful way of regarding illness—and the healthiest way of being ill—is one most purified of, most resistant to, metaphoric thinking." (Sontag 1978, 3.)

94 "2. […] Minä elän alituisessa kauhussa, etten vain purisi ketään sormeen, läimähyttäisi naamalle, suutelisi kiihkeästi tai kesken hiljaisuutta huutaisi kovalla äänellä jotain sanaa, yksityistä, merkityksetöntä sanaa." (KS 6.)

95 On pages 114–117 of the novel, we find a relatively unified and logical description of the narrator's relationship with her lover and of the reasons why she committed the murder, although this is soon contested. In fact, the narrator offers several different interpretations of the events and her experiences, and thus creates several contradicting narratives.

96 As Cohn (1978, 78) notes, James understood "stream of consciousness" not as purely verbal, but also as consisting of visual images. Also Hämäläinen's text creates an impression that the "stream of consciousness" is composed of associative thought patterns, fragments of inner speech, and mental images.

97 A famous passage from the very end of Molly's monologue goes as follows: "queer little streets and the pink and blue and yellow houses and the rosegardens and the jessamine and geraniums and cactuses and Gibraltar as a girl where I was a Flower of the mountain yes when I put the rose in my hair like the Andalusian girls used or shall I wear a red yes and how he kissed me under the Moorish wall and I thought well as well him as another and then I asked him with my eyes to ask again yes and then he asked me would I yes to say yes my mountain flower and first I put my arms around him yes and drew him down to me so he could feel my breasts all perfume yes and his heart was going like mad and yes I said yes I will Yes." (Joyce 2000/1922, 932–933.)

98 See Cohn (1978, 217–222) for a detailed analysis of Molly's autonomous monologue.

99 "Hän istuskelee seurassa, näen lampun valon tuoleilla. Minun täytyy hänet murhata, ehdottomasti. Hän käy myymälöissä, hän näkee nämä värit ja ihmiset, kaiken liikkeen, pilvet, harmaat, hohtoisat pilvet. Hänen täytyy hävitä, hävitä." (KS 5.)

100 "Mahdotonta, että hän elää täällä." (KS 8.)

101 "En voi nähdä hänen syövän. Minua kauhistuttaa ja inhottaa kun näen hänen haukkaavan voileipäänsä. Minusta tuntuu iljettävältä ja kauhealta, kuin hän jo olisi ruumis." (KS 12.)

102 As neurolinguistic research suggests, we go through similar responses when reading about (or imagining) bodily sensations and movements as when actually moving:

https://doi.org/10.21435/sflit.13

action verbs, emotional language and bodily metaphors trigger somatosensory areas in readers' brain (see Fischer and Zwaan 2008; also Kuzmičová 2014, 276). However, as discussed in Chapter 2, when engaging with fiction, we always know that the experiences described are not real: they are constructed inside the aesthetic frame.

103 "Näiden tehtaitten, raitiovaunujen, satamien ympärillä häälyy surullisuus. Se on kalvakkaan vihreässä lehdessä, mustassa tai harmaassa ilmassa. Tässä kaikessa on jotakin väkevää ja surullista, jotain hahmottumatonta, joka painaa minua." (KS 45–46.)

104 Early in the novel the narrator repeats a few words from "Maisteri S," but it is not until the very end that a very short dialogue breaks the narrator's monologue. A girl (a "prostitute") comes to help the narrator when she is ill, and the narrator briefly cites her words: "Good day. Has the deaconess been there, she asks cautiously." ("– Hyvää päivää. Onko diakonissa käynyt siellä, hän kysyy varovasti.") (KS 129.) One could even argue that the other characters do not exist in the storyworld but are hallucinated or imagined by the narrator. However, she tends to make explicit when she hallucinates or imagines something, and it makes more sense to regard the other characters who are not framed as hallucinations or imaginings as actual in the storyworld.

105 In this sense, the narrator's unreliability (the fact that we do not know whether what she recounts is true in the storyworld or not) is a form of "bonding unreliability" (Phelan 2007, 223–224): it does not distance the readers from her, but rather points toward the fallibility that is part of the human condition. As Greta Olson (2003, 96) would put it, the narrator is "fallible" (sometimes mistaken in her account and often in her interpretations) but not "untrustworthy" (deviating from the norms implicit in the text).

106 "53. […] Minusta tuntui, että kuulin äänen yksinäni ja ettei kukaan toinen olisi sitä kuullut, vaikka olisi seissyt vieressäni." (KS 55.)

107 Early in the novel, she mentions her love for the song of birds, puddles, grass, a dog, and says that she is "condemned amongst human beings" ("ihmisten kesken tuomittu") (KS 14–15), and when she talks about the sensuality of her imagined devils and dreams about "Miss L." she feels that she is "wrongly condemned" ("väärin tuomittu") (KS 38).

108 "Sanoin asiani hänelle, hän katsoi minuun kuin olisi ajatellut minun hourailevan, näytin veristä kättäni ja toistin saman uudelleen." (KS 58.)

109 "Puhuin hitaasti, omituisesti pysähdellen ja yksitoikkoisesti, silmäni tuntuivat kummallisen kankeilta ja liikkumattomilta, katsoin koko ajan samaan kohtaan. Muistan hyvin sen kohdan seinässä, siinä oli eräs tiili hyvin mustunut, silmäni ikään kuin riippuivat kiinni siinä." (KS 58.)

110 "Tällä kohtaa ajatuksissani on tyhjä tila. En muista mitään tapahtumia, aivan kuin en olisi sitä aikaa elänytkään." (KS 58.)

111 "Minut on asetettu tarkastelun alaiseksi, ollaan epätietoisia mielentilastani." (KS 59.)

112 "59. […] Sairauteni tuntuu minusta vastenmieliseltä, kelmeitä, laihoja käsiäni en siedä katsella, kätkeäkseni vedän paidanhihan aina sormenpäihin asti, tosin siten on vaikea kirjoittaa. […] Kas niin, nyt minun täytyy kai lopettaa, tulevat annoksensa kanssa." (KS 62–63.)

113 "67. Miksi minä murhasin hänet enkä itseäni? […] Kaikki on ollut tarkoituksetonta." (KS 70.)

114 "75. […] Tunsinko tunnonvaivoja tästä menettelystäni? En. Minä olen alhainen ja rikollinen luonne ja kenties todellakin henkisesti sairas ihminen." (KS 79.)

115 Meretoja elaborates on Mark Freeman's (2002; 2010, 95–123) notion of the "narrative unconscious": the ways different kinds of cultural narratives affect unconsciously the way we perceive ourselves, narrate our experiences, and understand our possibilities for future (see Meretoja 2018, 18–20; 98–100).

https://doi.org/10.21435/sflit.13

116 E.g., in the psycho- or self-narration of a knowledgeable third or first-person narrator, or in quoted or autonomous monologues (Cohn 1978, 88).
117 This resonates with the phenomenological understanding of the unconscious not as a "hidden depth" of the psyche but manifested in the body memory and in the lived world of the subject (see Fuchs 2012). For an application of the phenomenological theory to the analysis of modernist literature, see Nykänen, Oulanne & Ovaska 2022.
118 On the functions of material objects in inviting story-driven experiences and empathy in modernist literature, see Oulanne 2021.
119 "Olen turvautunut eläimiin. […] Tunnen ne itselleni läheisiksi, rakastan niitä, osoitan niille hyvyyttä arkailematta." (KS 22); "Tuo sinervä emalikansi—siitä on lohjennut pala […] Tunnen hellyyttä sitä kohtaan" (KS 45).
120 The devils are a source of many intertextual references and allusions in *Kaunis sielu*. The narrator lists different images of devils and discusses their meanings, creating a small "essay" on the cultural representations of the devil. One important reference is Ivan Fyodorovich Karamazov (*Brothers Karamazov*, 1880) and his devil that is, as the narrator mentions, one of very few that she as ever seen clothed. She also wonders: "To defame the devil, we attach a tail to its back, we give it horns, a hairy body. We give it the features of an animal. Why animal? Why do we think that animals are filthy?" ("Häväistäksemme kiinnitämme piruille hännän, otsaan sarvet, ruumiiseen karvan. Annamme sille eläinominaisuuksia. Miksi eläinten, miksi eläimet meistä ovat saastaisia?") (KS 74). The detailed, warm and humoristic descriptions of devils could also be compared to Finnish painter Hugo Simberg's paintings in which little devils live their lives amongst people, and in her memoir Hämäläinen mentions the influence of Simberg's works on her poetry (Haavikko & Hämäläinen 1993, 198). Like for Simberg, the devils the narrator of *Kaunis sielu* imagines are grotesque but also sympathetic. Some of them are wounded and pitiful, some are old and disgusting: a mixture of good and evil, happy and sad.
121 "laiha, surullinen, sillä on leveät, lepakon siiven tapaiset jalat"; "ruusuiset kasvot"; "eräällä talonpojan tyhmä naama" (KS 23.)
122 "Hulluutta tämä kaikki on, tiedän. Mutta minun on niitä ajateltava." (KS 23.)
123 "35. Tämä taipumukseni naisiin, onko se todella olemassa vai olenko sen kuvitellut, en tiedä. Se hirvitti ja inhotti minua, herätti minussa rajattoman surumielisyyden. Menin siis tapaamaan maisteri S:ää. Ymmärrättehän?" (KS 39.)
124 "Piruthan voin aivan kepeästi vaihtaa enkeleihin. Mutta, tunnustan sen suoraan, tämä seura ei minua yhtä paljon miellytä." (KS 31.)
125 It is also worth noting that the narrator's thoughts about women are often connected to art: she imagines women she has seen in paintings and sculptures (see also Stang 2015, 235). In some occasions the "artistry" of the depiction of the narrator's "love for women" is so exaggerated that it becomes almost ironic: "I have drunk. It is stupid. Intoxication, I thought it would be a good joke, elevated, spiritual. It is rubbish, everything. The only real intoxication is the one we drink from white limbs, from slender feet, tiny feet. Greater, more fulfilling intoxication I have felt only in the company of Pushkin and Goethe. Intoxication: a light state, where we can feel that we are beautiful, deeply beautiful, where we can talk about thoughts that are otherwise hidden." ("Olen juonut. Typerää se on. Humala, luulin sitä hyväksi pilaksi, korkeaksi, henkiseksi. Roskaa se on koko juttu. Ainoa oikea humala on se, jonka me juomme valkeista jäsenistä, sirosta jalasta, pikkujalasta. Suurempaa, täydempää humalaa olen tuntenut Pushkinin ja Goethen seurassa. Humala: kevyt tila, jossa voimme tuntea itsemme kauniiksi, syvästi kauniiksi, jossa voimme puhua ajatuksia, jotka muuten ovat salassa.") (KS 32.) "White limbs" and "slender feet" of women are connected to her aesthetic experiences. The narrator seems to place herself in the position of male artists: she enacts a male

https://doi.org/10.21435/sflit.13

gaze on a female, objectified body. This is made explicit in the scene where she meets a sculptor friend who tells her "many very interesting stories about women" ("Hän kertoi useita hyvin mielenkiintoisia naisjuttuja." KS 30). The scene with the sculptor is also the first hint about the narrator's interest for women.

126 "70. […] Pirut ovat kirkkotaiteessa alasti, kuten eläimet, koska pirut ovat ruokottomia, iljettäviä, saastaisia. Mutta entäpäs, kun ne herättävät aistillisuutta, ankaraa kiihkoa, niin kuin minussa?" (KS 73.)

127 "Minulla ei tällöin vielä ollut aavistustakaan rakkaudestani naisiin, mutta omituinen ilottomuus, kiihkottomuus valtasi minut heti syleillessämme. Tuntui kuin kaikki riemukas aistillisuus olisi sinä hetkenä himmentynyt, käynyt köyhäksi." (KS 114.)

128 "93. […] Tämä mies ei tyydyttänyt minua henkisesti, ajattelen. Hän oli vähäpätöinen, mitätön, hänen ajatuksensa olivat jokapäiväiset. Kaiken tämän tiesin alusta asti." (KS 114.)

129 "Sitten huomaan ensi kerran mieltymykseni naisiin ja sen vuoksi olen miltei antautumaisillani miehelle, kun odottamatta, käsittämättömästi, en siihen pystykään." (KS 118–119.)

130 "Silloin ensi kerran ajattelin kostoa – ylpeydestä ja raivosta kuohuen – ja tunsin itseni alentuneeksi." (KS 116.)

131 "Hävittää ruumiin, joka oli tullut hänelle kalliiksi, murhata kiihkoisasta mustasukkaisuudesta ja osaksi myöskin vapautuakseen intohimostaan. […] Hänhän oli siten oikeastaan hyvin samanlaisissa ajatuksissa kuin minä." (KS 117.)

132 "Vihasta ja ylpeydestä, mutta myöskin suuresta, toivottomasta surusta hänet murhasin. Sillä toivottoman surullinen minä olin siksi, että hän salli nämä nenän nyrpistelyt." (KS 109.)

133 "Kiristelen hampaitani, kaulasuonet tykyttävät hurjasti, sydän puristuu kokoon, tunnen kuinka suonet pullistuvat, imevät tyhjää, minussa ei ole enää verta. Mistä sitä olisikaan, minähän olen oksennellut sitä lammikoittain ämpäriin." (KS 140.)

134 The storyworld and the narration start to resemble Kafka's early hallucinatory short story "The Description of the Struggle" (1912) in which the narrator goes through strange bodily transformations and experiences of solipsistic control of the world (see also Sass 1994, 317–323).

135 "106. […] Tajuttomuutta. Erehdystä. Sinisiä, keltaisia kolmioita. Yö on tullut. Pimeää. Ei, ei vielä. Viimeinen armottomuutesi." (KS 143.)

136 "Katsot meitä ihanin, kelmein kasvoin, heität viittasi alastomille, saastaisille jäsenillemme. Siniset koivunlehdet ja puhdas, ihana ilma likellä päätäsi." (KS 144.)

137 As mentioned in Chapter 2, "the beautiful soul" (*die schöne Seele*) is a soul that has found harmony between reason and emotions, duty and inclination. It was especially discussed by Friedrich Schiller, who was an important influence for Hämäläinen and whose poems are explicitly mentioned in *Kaunis sielu* (see KS 68; see also Haavikko & Hämäläinen 1993, 83; 496). According to Schiller, beauty enables the person to become a whole, harmonious being: aesthetic education bridges the gap between nature and reason and frees the subject from the burden of "sensual inclinations." In this respect, beauty is linked to goodness and to mental health, and it has a power to resolve the interior conflicts of a human being. (See Norton 1995.)

138 "Kaikki lait ovat minulle käsittämättömät." (KS 140.)

139 Hämäläinen's second published novel *Lumous* (The Enchantment, 1934) resembles *Kaunis sielu* in its motifs of adultery and female sexual desire, but both the narration and the story are much more conventional. *Lumous* is about a woman who is unsatisfied in her marriage and who finds a sense of meaning and experiences of pleasure through an affair, and she ultimately abandons her husband and children. The story also includes a rape scene which is highly problematic from today's perspective: it functions as a trigger for the protagonist's new understanding of her

https://doi.org/10.21435/sflit.13

sexuality. In her memoir, Hämäläinen recounts that her aim when writing *Lumous* was to bring together Iiris Uurto's successful adultery novel *Ruumiin ikävä* (The Body's Yearning, 1930) and the themes of sexuality, drives, and instincts discussed by D. H. Lawrence in his works (Haavikko & Hämäläinen 1993, 161; see also Juutila 1989).

140 "[E]n sitä [aviorikosta] lainkaan kavahtanut. [...] [M]inusta ihminen ei milloinkaan voi olla niin kiinnitetty toiseen, että tämä voisi estää häntä tai että tähän kohdistuva tunne – säälin tai kunnioituksen – voisi muuta kuin joissakin harvoissa tapauksissa olla esteenä, kun hän aikoo tyydyttää jotain voimakasta intohimoa." (KS 110–111.)

141 "[M]inussa heräsi kapinahalu." (KS 115.)

142 Attitudes to homosexuality in the 1920s and 1930s literature and literary circles in Finland were twofold. On the one hand, homosexual desire was linked to illness and degeneration (in, e.g., Elsa Soini's, Riku Sarkola's and Martti Merenmaa's novels which portrayed homosexual characters). On the other, literary society in Helsinki was relatively open to (male) homosexuality. (See, e.g., Hapuli 1995; Koskela 1999; Tihinen 2007; Stang 2015.) E.g., Olavi Paavolainen (Hämäläinen's partner later in the 1930s) explicitly criticized the negative representation of homosexuality in literature in his essay collection *Suursiivous* (The Clean Down, 1932). He was openly bisexual and known for crossing gender and sexual boundaries, and Hämäläinen actually based her descriptions of homosexuality in her later novel, *Säädyllinen murhenäytelmä*, on Paavolainen (see Tihinen 2007, 131–136). However, when *Säädyllinen murhenäytelmä* was published in 1941, attitudes to homosexuality had become more repressive and the passages depicting sex and homosexual experiences were censored. The full, uncensored manuscript was not published until 1995. On the cultural atmosphere regarding homosexuality in Finland and the publication (and censorship) of queer topics in literature, see Juvonen 2007; Stang 2015.

143 American sociologist W. E. B. Du Bois first used the term "double consciousness" in his autoethnographic work *The Souls of Black Folk* (1903) to describe the experience of looking at oneself through the eyes of white people in a racist society: "It is a peculiar sensation, this double-consciousness, this sense of always looking at one's self through the eyes of others, of measuring one's soul by the tape of a world that looks on in amused contempt and pity. One ever feels his two-ness,—an American, a Negro; two souls, two thoughts, two unreconciled strivings; two warring ideals in one dark body, whose dogged strength alone keeps it from being torn asunder." (Du Bois 2007, 38.)

4. A Divided Mind: Jorma Korpela's *Tohtori Finckelman* (Doctor Finckelman)

144 All English translations of the novel are mine. The narrator of *Tohtori Finckelman* has a very distinctive style which I have tried to capture: he is often contradictory, occasionally pompous, and aims for an aesthetic effect. Korpela's father, Simo Korpela, was a famous Finnish hymnwriter and this background is also visible in the style (see also Laitinen 1997, 461).

145 E.g., Annamari Sarajas (1953/1980, 75) has described the reading experience of *Tohtori Finckelman* as "wobbly." For her, this "sense of wobbliness" ("vaappuvuuden tuntu") is a result of the movement between what she calls the "realist" and the "sur-realist" [*sic*] levels of the text.

146 Matti Vainio (1975, 93) notes that the title of the novel was originally "The Story of a Miserable Man" ("Ihmiskurjan kertomus"), but the publisher suggested the

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name "Dr. Finckelman" and "The Story of a Miserable Man" became the subtitle. The two titles thus also reflect the dividedness of the narrator-protagonist.

147 As Vainio (1975, 100) writes in his analysis of *Tohtori Finckelman*, there is a "double vision": "everything is seen through a strange veil of duality, through ambivalence" ("kaikki […] nähdään tuon kummallisen kaksinaisuuden verhon, ambivalenssin läpi"). Or as Salin (2002, 22) puts it: "everything has two sides, two possibilities for interpretation" ("Kaikessa on kaksi puolta, kaksi tulkintavaihtoehtoa").

148 E.g., Kare 1952/1996, 360; Erho 1971, 35; Vainio 1975, 169; and Laitinen 1997, 461 describe the narrator's experiences as "depersonalization." However, especially Sarajas (1953/1980, 59–60; 75–76) (but also Vainio and Laitinen) emphasizes that in addition to their psychological meaning, the experiences have a thematic function. The dividedness of the protagonist embodies the Dostoyevskyan themes of faith and skepticism, compassion and cruelty, and good and evil.

149 The last one is a question one of the characters, Master Pomila, actually asks from the protagonist: "'Who is Finckelman, by the way?' he asked. 'No one.' 'No one? He must be *something*.'" ("– Kuka muuten on Finckelman? hän kysäisi. – Ei kukaan. – Eikö? Kyllä hän *jokin* on.") (TF 245, emphasis added.)

150 The metaphor of putting one's flesh or blood into words is common in twentieth-century philosophy and thought. Jacques Derrida famously emphasized the impossibility of capturing through language what is outside it: "If I compare the pen to a syringe, and I always dream of a pen that would be a syringe, a suction point rather than that very hard weapon with which one must inscribe, incise, choose, calculate, take ink before filtering the inscribable, playing the keyboard on the screen, whereas here, once the right vein has been found, no more toil, no responsibility, no risk of bad taste nor of violence, the blood delivers itself alone, the inside gives itself up." (Derrida 1993, 12.)

151 James Phelan (2007, 223–224) has called these two forms of unreliability "distancing" and "bonding": the former increases the distance between the narrator and the audience while the latter diminishes it. I return to this oscillation between closeness and distance and empathy and estrangement when I discuss the narrator's unreliability.

152 "Panen taloni kuntoon." (TF 8; 12.)

153 "Häntä pidettiin hulluna." (TF 7.)

154 "[H]yvä mies se oli Lerkkanen, monta miestä tappoi…" (TF 18.)

155 Riitu often mispronounces the foreign-sounding name in different ways, turning "Finckelman" to "Vinkkelsman," "Vinkselman" or even "Hinkselmann."

156 As Salin (2002, 87–88) notes, the description of Riitu's cottage is one of the few portrayals of "outside" reality in the whole novel. At the same time, the divided cottage seems to function as a symbol for Riitu's divided selfhood: he is hiding the secrets of his past in the closed part of the cottage which he calls "the holiest place" (TF 55).

157 "En suinkaan pelännyt… jalkani olivat kumman voimattomat" (TF 74).

158 "En suinkaan pelännyt, en, mutta väkisinkin tuli mieleen, mikä ne tietää mielenvikaiset ja vielä kirveen kanssa. Ja entäs Lerkkanen ikkunassa? Jospa on olemassa salaperäisiä ilmiöitä… Rukoilin Jumalaa hädissäni […]." (TF 74.)

159 The image first appeared in the 23 October 1892 issue of *Fliegende Blätter*, a German humorous magazine, and it became famous in the 1950s through Ludwig Wittgenstein's posthumous writings.

160 "Ettekö yhtään arvannut? minä kysyisin häneltä hänen ällistyksensä lomassa. En voinut aavistaakaan, hän vastaisi täynnä kunnioitusta. Se on myöhäistä nyt, sanoisin arvoituksellisesti ja kääntyisin mennäkseni, – luomaan uutta romaania…" (TF 31.)

161 As Salin (2002, 209–210) notes, the idea of a writer's profession is already ironic here, as it turns out that the protagonist's motive for writing is to take revenge on

https://doi.org/10.21435/sflit.13

the police chief's daughter: "I was almost laughing when I thought about a book about Riitu and Lerkkanen and Dr. Finckelman and a certain feckless woman who would be the daughter of a police chief; what a hussy…" ("Minua melkein nauratti, kun ajattelin kirjaa Riitusta ja Lerkkasesta ja tohtori Finckelmanista ja eräästä naisen kekkaleesta, joka olisi maalaispitäjän nimismiehen tytär; aika letukka…") (TF 31.)

162 "Vinkselman jos olisikin ollut, niin sinä olisit ottanut kaikki tytöt." (TF 29.)

163 "Ja kukaties oli varastanutkin, oli hyvinkin voinut." (TF 88.)

164 "Raskain mielin palasin kotiin. Minusta tuntui, että tämä pitäjä ja ympäristö ei sovi minulle. Täällä ei minua ymmärretä." (TF 88.)

165 "[H]ain häntä vielä uudemman kerran. Ja vielä senkin jälkeen, tanssin hänen kanssaan koko illan." (TF 90.)

166 "Olin aina ajatellut, että odotahan, kunhan pääset yliopistoon, niin elämäsi muuttuu… Mutta merkillistä, ei se vain muuttunut, sillä oli edelleenkin puolinaisuuden leima, elämälläni nimittäin." (TF 105.)

167 "Mikä sen tietää, vaikka sinusta paisuisi suurikin herra … Hinkselmannin arvoinen … Semmoinen jos sinusta tuleekin, niin … voi kauheeta …" (TF 102.) Riitu mispronounces the name again. The form "Hinkselman" could be read as a reference to Hitler, as Salin (2002, 103, 236) has suggested.

168 "Lupasipa Riitu minulle kaupanpäällisiksi vielä 'Vinskelmannin nimen ja maineen'. 'Kuin perinnöksi', sanoi hän." (TF 104.)

169 Salin (2002, 101) pays attention to Riitu's witch-like qualities.

170 "Tämä luku on ehdottomasti luettava." (TF 122.); "Romaanini alkaa." (TF 123.)

171 "[…], kaikki ajattelivat" (TF 114); "siltä sivullisesta tuntui" (TF 132).

172 Author Pentti Holappa writes in his review of *Tohtori Finckelman* that Korpela is "in possession of a rich gallery of characters, that can be imagined in flesh and blood." ("[H]änellä on hallussaan rikas henkilögalleria, elävään lihaan ja vereen kuviteltava.") (Holappa 1952/1996, 359.) According to Kauko Kare's review: "Regarding the author's examples, i.e., his humans, they are aptly, even delightfully characterized. Only writer Raiski and Miss Lilian appear bloodless. But even more cheerful are the original characters of the countryside village, especially old men like Oskari and Riitu who combine both grotesqueness and humanity." ("Mitä kirjailijan esimerkkeihin, so. hänen ihmisiinsä tulee, he ovat ylipäätään sattuvasti ja jopa herkullisesti karakterisoituja; vain kirjailija Raiski ja neiti Lilian vaikuttavat verettömiltä. Sitä riemullisempia ovat maalaiskylän originaalit, varsinkin Oskarin ja Riitun tapaiset ukonrähjät, joissa yhdistyvät sekä irvokkuus että inhimillisyys.") (Kare 1952/1996, 362.)

173 See Sarajas 1953/1980, 61; 70; Vainio 1971/1979, 33; 1975, 192–196; Envall 1988, 111; Makkonen 1992, 107.

174 See especially TF 109–113. As I discuss at the end of the analysis, the description of psychiatry as a profession is highly ironic in the novel. See Salin (2002, 109–113) for an analysis of the protagonist as a Faustian doctor.

175 As mentioned in Chapter 2, Korpela did not discuss the war in almost any way in his first works although they were written soon after it. Rather, the novels are filled with allusions to violence like this, and when, in his final works, the war becomes the main subject, the violence disappears. (See also Salin 2002, 14; 224.) Yet, *Tohtori Finckelman* is connected to the war in many ways: through Korpela's biography and the time of its publication; through Lieutenant Saleva's character; through its themes of violence, guilt, and reconciliation; and especially through the connections to other postwar existentialist works like Camus' *L'Étranger* and Mann's *Doktor Faustus* (1947).

176 "Tämä luku on ehdottomasti luettava." (TF 122.)

177 "Romaanini alkaa..." (TF 123.)

178 "Päivät kuluivat. Kiertelin sairaalaa. Otin vastaan potilaita. "Seuraava!" Olin kuin

https://doi.org/10.21435/sflit.13

kone. […] Sillä minä olin vain kone, ja puolivalmis silloinkin." (TF 122–123.)

179 "Ympäriltäni kaikki ikään kuin katoaa, minä katselen sitä ja sanon, että tämähän on kuin unta. Onko tämä unta, minä kysyn itseltäni silloin. Minä olen niin naurettava, älkää pahastuko. Ei se ole unta, kyllä minä tiedän. Mutta se on hyvin raskasta, olen usein aivan toivoton." (TF 125.)

180 After having met Lili at the reception, the protagonist starts to recollect his encounter with the "Virgin of Orleans" (TF 158) in his youth and finally makes the connection explicit: "But when it comes to the virgin of Orleans, to tell you the truth, she wasn't far away from Miss Lili. This is what I noticed to my wonder again. The thought haunted me like a shadow; I could not get rid of it." ("Mutta mitä tuli Orleansin neitsyeen, niin hänestä ei totta puhuen ollut pitkä matka neiti Lilianiin, sen huomasin ihmeekseni sitten taas. Tuo ajatus vainosi minua kuin varjo, en millään päässyt siitä irti.") (TF 166–167.)

181 "[P]itää vain osata sopeutua. Ja siitä saatte varmuutta elämäänne, sisältöä. Sillä varmuus, on, pitää vain päästä siihen asti. Tuohon tapaan puhuin kuin paras pappi. Mutta hänen mentyään tuli mieleeni, oliko minulla itselläni 'varmuus' hallussani, oliko omassa elämässäni toivomisen varaa." (TF 127.)

182 In their meeting, Lili explicitly talks about a "face" that doctors put on when they encounter patients and describes the medical profession as a form of acting: "They say that doctors put on the face of a doctor when they talk with patients, that they act, for money even. It may be so, it probably is. But I must confess that you are a good actor. And that is enough." ("Sanotaan, että lääkärit vaihtavat kasvoilleen lääkärin ilmeen potilaspuhuttelussaan, näyttelevät, vieläpä rahan tähden. Saattaa olla niin, varmasti onkin. Mutta minun täytyy tunnustaa, että olette hyvä näyttelijä. Ja se riittää.") (TF 124.) We can also note how Lili refuses to pass any judgment, although her comment about money could even be read as her way of connecting the medical profession to prostitution (of which she herself is accused in the novel).

183 "[O]lin lääkäri, minun täytyi ajatella potilaitani, ei itseäni" (TF 127.)

184 "Unohdin hänet. Vain joskus hän tuli mieleeni." (TF 127.)

185 "Vaan oli hetkiä, jolloin minäkin olin olemassa ja elin. "Käykäähän sisään," saatoin silloin sanoa puoliääneen, kuin itsekseni. Ja he tulivat, elävät olennot, ja heidän tulossaan oli jotakin rauhoittavaa." (TF 153.)

186 "[H]e kiertävät sylistä syliin […]." (TF 153).

187 "[K]ukaan ei muista mitään…" (TF 153).

188 "Kuljeskelen hetken hautakumpujen lomitse sinne tänne. Täälläpä ihastuttavan rauhallista, täällähän on kuin omiensa parissa, kuulen puhelevani hiljaa. Sitten lähden takaisin. Ihmisiä kartan kuin ruttoa, kierrän heidät kaukaa, he ovat kuin varjo-olentoja tässä todellisuuden maassa." (TF 155.)

189 The protagonist's mysterious "trip" is explicitly linked to the excavations: "In the morning I had returned from one of those trips, and I relive again and again those moods, I am as if in ecstasy when in the evening I go to take a letter to the station. I'm not hiding to whom it was addressed. It was for Oskari. I announced in it that the men and experts from the geological research center would soon come to my house. They would make even more elaborate studies at my lands and mountains, now for a conclusive time." ("Olin aamulla palannut tuollaiselta retkeltä, elän yhä uudestaan noita tunnelmia, elän kuin hurmiossa, kun illan tullen lähden viemään kirjettä asemalle. Enkä salaa kenelle se oli. Se oli Oskarille. Ilmoitin siinä, että pian jälleen tulee geologisen tutkimuslaitoksen miehiä ja asiantuntijoita minun talooni, he tulisivat tekemään entistä tarkempia tutkimuksia minun maillani ja vuorillani, nyt ratkaisevan kerran.") (TF 155.) The excavation plan is on one level quite "realist" and practical, but its links to the Faustian myth and the way the narrator describes his "ecstasy" invite both mystical and diagnostic interpretations.

190 See also Vainio 1975, 24. This inability to mourn the loss of his parents links the

https://doi.org/10.21435/sflit.13

protagonist to Camus' Meursault in *L'Ètranger* (see also Vainio 1975, 105; Salin 2002, 143).

191 "Itsekin hän tietää, että hänen elämänsä on alun perin lähtenyt menemään väärään suuntaan, että hän ei saa kosketusta elämän täyteliäisyyteen." (Havu 1952/1996, 355; see also Vainio 1975, 30.)

192 He seems to reflect himself on others and project his experiences on them, see Sarajas 1953, 61; 71–72; Kare 1952/1996, 360; Vainio 1975, 169–191; Karhu 1977, 112; Envall 1988, 110–114; Laitinen 1991, 461; Salin 1996, viii–ix; 2002, 83–88.

193 "Raskasta, raskasta! Ihmiset inhottavia, elämä kuin tahmea virta. Ja itse olin samanlainen, huomasin lopulta senkin." (TF 113.)

194 "Runous on roskaa! Vain itse elävä elämä on elämisen arvoista." (TF 204.) The wording carries an ironic reference to Camus's Meursault who states the opposite; that everyone knows that life is not worth living: "Mais tout le monde sait que la vie ne vaut pas la peine d'être vécue." (Camus 1942, 173.) (See also Salin 2002, 143).

195 "Tapahtuu ihme: joku ojentaa kätensä." (TF 246.)

196 "Koko romaani onkin oikeastaan vain päähenkilön jatkuvaa yksinpuhelua, muita todellisia romaanihenkilöitä esiintyy tuskin lainkaan. Ilmeisesti onkin niin, että lähes kaikki romaanin sivuhenkilöt ovat tavalla tai toisella päähenkilö-kertojaminän eri luonteenpiirteiden ja personallisuuden osa-alojen lihallistumia tai variaatioita. Näennäisesti monipersoonainen Finckelman voi esim. keskustella jonkun luutnantti Salevan, kirjailija Raiskin, liikemies Mellosen tai vaikkapa Retku-Simpasen kanssa, mutta korkeammalla romaanitasolla liikuttaessa on loppujen lopuksi syytä olettaa, että hän käykin keskusteluja vain oman itsensä eri osapersoonien tai oman Finckelman-yöminänsä kanssa […]." (Vainio 1971/1979, 35–36; also 1975, 189–190; 209.)

197 In this view, none of the other characters would be real in the storyworld. However, I would argue that at least Oskari, Simpanen, Pomila, and Lili exist in the storyworld because we meet them in the preface (Oskari) and epilogue (all four) in which the narrator-protagonist is recovering from his breakdown. One could also argue that Oskari, Pomila, Lili, and Simpanen (who has found faith in the end) are the "good sides" of the protagonist's dissociated personality and this is why they remain after the "bad" ones, Riitu, Saleva, Niilas and others, have disappeared.

198 "Minuus, aivan kuten romaanikin, rakentuu siis muista romaaneista varastetuista kuteista." (Salin 2002, 96.)

199 More on the doubles and intertextuality in *Tohtori Finckelman*, see, e.g., Sarajas 1953/1980; Erho 1972; Karhu 1977; Envall 1988; and Salin 2002, 67. In addition to the Dostoyevskian characters, motifs and themes, the dividedness between the narrator and "Dr. Finckelman" can be read as a direct reference to Stevenson's Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde, as well as to other "mad scientists" like Mary Shelley's Frankenstein or Hjalmar Söderberg's Doktor Glas. The protagonist's profession, the wealth he gains, as well as Riitu's hints about "the mountain" and ore under the ground create a connection to Goethe's *Faust* and to Mann's *Doktor Faustus*. Furthermore, the protagonist and his farmhand Oskari form a carnivalesque pair that resembles Don Quixote and Sancho Pancha (see also Salin 2002, 88; 99–104). The narrator-protagonist himself connects Lili to Joan of Arc. To mention one more allusion, the party at Mellonen's club could be read as a parody of Plato's *Symposium*. In fact, the protagonist often acts like Socrates in his conversations with the other characters: he pretends ignorant in order to make other people reveal their thoughts—and their ignorance. See also Salin (2002, 29) on the "Socratic irony" in the background of Korpela's works. Reading closely, it becomes apparent that Korpela has incorporated a large part of Western literary history in his novel.

200 "Pysyisit pyhimyksenä…" (TF 251.)

201 "Silmäni, säteilkää onnea…" (TF 253.)

https://doi.org/10.21435/sflit.13

202 "– Halveksin auttajia, hän jatkoi, en tarvitse sääliänne." (TF 254.)
203 The interpretation that the protagonist is "possessed" has two directions: either it refers to the symptoms of the dissociative disorder or to some kind of mystical power. See also Salin (2002, 68–78) on the way the protagonist hides behind the "mask" of the doctor and of Dr. Finckelman. The "mask" is explicitly mentioned at the very end of Part Two: Oskari has arrived at the hospital to help the protagonist who is going insane, and the protagonist keeps asking Oskari: "Listen, could you get me another mask?" ("Kuule, voitko hankkia minulle toisen naamarin?") (TF 331.)
204 "Jokin tuntematon voima pani sanat suuhuni ja minä lasketin ne ulos, muulla tavoin en osaa asiaa selittää." (TF 257.)
205 See Salin (2002, 126–129) for a more detailed discussion on the connection to Nietzsche. She also points out that Korpela seems to interpret Nietzsche through Dostoyevsky and as a result, his view of Nietzschean ethics is mostly negative (ibid., 123).
206 "[V]oisin riisuutua hetipaikalla alasti enkä tuntisi häpeää…" (TF 288.)
207 "Vaikka alasti, sanoitte. Hyvä! Nykyisin on vain niin paljon tarjolla…" (TF 288.)
208 "[K]iitos kaikesta, tohtori Finckelman" (TF 302).
209 However, Bernstein (1992, 99) also emphasizes the difference between abject heroes and outsiders. According to him, Dostoyevskian abject heroes are quite different from the outsider figures of existentialist literature: "Dostoyevsky is as powerful an *anti*-existentialist writer as we have, anticipating with contempt most of the standard moves of subsequent existentialist writers. Unlike novelists like Camus, for example, Dostoyevsky refuses the notion that lucidity about one's condition suffices to make one a tragic figure." Salin (2002, 96), following Bernstein, notes that abject heroes are "inauthentic" and "late": they are mere incarnations of literary clichés or "types," "lacking authenticity even in their suffering, where they most need to feel original." (See Bernstein 1992, 22; 104; 106.) This "fictitiousness" and lack of authenticity contrasts (at least to some extent) with the psychological lifelikeness of the strangers and outsiders of existentialism. It seems that Korpela's characters are somewhere in between Dostoyevsky and Camus: feeling alienated, suffering, lacking authenticity, and suffering even more.
210 In this he resembles Raskolnikov. As Cohn writes: "In *Crime and Punishment* the quotation of Raskolnikov's thoughts during his interviews with Porifry and others continuously secures the reader's sympathy for the murderer whose secret he shares." (Cohn 1978, 83.)
211 "En ole näytellyt koskaan, sanoin vaikka olinkin. Ja koko elämäni ajan." (TF 140.)
212 "Olin valmis kantamaan harteillani koko ihmiskunnan taakkaa." (TF 339.)
213 According to Sarajas: "The strangest and most meaningful thing in the structure of the novel is the way it unscrupulously shows the world from a perspective of a non-human." ("Merkillisin ja merkitsevin seikka romaanin rakenteessa on juuri häikäilemätön tapa näyttää maailma epäihmisen näkökulmasta.") (Sarajas 1963/1980, 69–70.)
214 Salin (2002, 159) also suggests the opposite: that the "mental disorder" of the protagonist creates estrangement. However, she connects this to the irony of the narrator-protagonist's "confession": he is unable to confess his crimes, leaving readers to make their own interpretations.
215 As Vera Nünning (1998/2004) has shown, readers' understanding and perception of unreliability of a specific narrator can change from one historical and social context to another: a narrator who is understood as reliable by one generation of readers may appear as unreliable for another, as the context and readers' worldviews and moral norms change.
216 E.g., Vainio (1975, 65) remarks the depictions of women as "prostitutes" but

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suggests that Korpela (not the narrator) treats the female characters "rudely" ("töykeästi"), not paying attention to the narrator's unreliability or to the critical function of the representations. Salin (1996, xi; 2002, 191), however, notes that the labeling of women is ironic: a way to criticize the roles and stereotypes of masculinity. See also Olson (2018) on the political uses of unreliability and unreliability as a form of ideological critique.

217 "En kiinnittänyt vähintäkään huomiota koko asiaan…" (TF 16.)

218 "Sinä yönä menin Marken aittaan, hän oli näet illalla sitä silmillään pyytänyt." (TF 16.)

219 "Ja tuo tyttö on hyvin avulias siinä asiassa, minä olen merkinnyt. Silmistä sen huomaa ja käyntitavasta." (TF 68.)

220 "Hän hymyili, se oli pirullista hymyä, minä näin." (TF 87.)

221 "Saatanan letukka! sanoin. Jumalauta! Huora mikä huora…" (TF 87.)

222 "Tämä luku on ehdottomasti luettava." (TF 122.)

223 "Moni on kakku päältä kaunis… Noin ajattelin hänet nähdessäni ensi kertaa. Erehdys! Hän oli kaunis sisältäkin, kuten tulin myöhemmin huomaamaan. Ja sitä paitsi: ei hän päältäpäin kaunis ollutkaan, jos nyt ei rumakaan…" (TF 123.)

224 "No niin. Mitäpä hänestä enempää kertomaan. Unohdin hänet. Vain joskus hän tuli mieleeni. Mitenhän lienee neiti Lilianinkin laita, ajattelin. […] Mutta tuolla tavalla ajattelin hyvin monista potilaistani. Sillä ihminen tulee ajatelleeksi aina yhtä ja toista. Ajan mukaan se sitten haihtuu." (TF 127.)

225 "Romaanini alkaa..." (TF 123.)

226 See also Phelan (2005, 12) on "redundant telling" through which authors communicate to readers indirectly, and Salin (2002, 58–59) on "unnecessary or redundant denials" which are a recurrent technique in Korpela's novels: e.g., the protagonist and Riitu constantly deny different things (their thoughts, emotions, acts of violence) without any reason, thus actually revealing them.

227 In the end, not only Lili and Nastasya Filippovna (see also Salin 2002, 180, 190), but also Marke and Nastasya are connected, and this creates a link between Lili and Marke although they never meet.

228 "[H]änen ajatustensa—eivät hänen tekojensa—pirulliset langat kietovat samaan kadotukseen koko lähiympäristön." (Sarajas 1953/1980, 72.)

229 "Jonkin ajan kuluttua Raiski nukahti. Hänen viinilasinsa sisälsi näet melkoisen annoksen unilääkettä." (TF 159.)

230 This is part of an interesting dynamic between the protagonist and Niilas. In addition to the protagonist helping Niilas, also Niilas "saves" the protagonist multiple times throughout the novel: he helps the protagonist to win the battle over the uncle's will and to defend himself against charges of rape (and directs the blame toward Saleva). Niilas also hints that the protagonist should quickly sell his quarry shares before they become worthless, and he sells them to Mellonen, causing his bankruptcy. During the party at Mellonen's club it is also hinted that Niilas (not just the protagonist) has a mysterious past with Lili. Other readers have paid attention to the connections between the protagonist and Saleva, but actually more strange connections exist between the protagonist and Niilas.

231 Irma accuses the protagonist in many ways: "You are a nerve doctor, but you cannot heal. There is no human in you… Your emotions have died… You are brutal. You'll take anyone but you cannot follow the deepest currents of an actual female soul, you don't even have a clue…" ("Olet hermolääkäri, mutta et osaa parantaa. Sinussa ei ole ihmistä… Tunteesi ovat kuolleet… Olet brutaali. Sinulle riittää kuka tahansa, mutta todellisen naissielun syvimpiä virtoja et osaa seurata, et edes aavistaa…") (TF 270.)

232 "Erehdyt hyvä veli, sanoin järkähtämättömästi. Sillä todellakin Raiski oli erehtynyt, hän luuli minusta liian hyvää. Sillä minähän vain leikittelin. Minun leluni olivat ihmisiä. Minä tunsin jo heidät liian hyvin." (TF 120.)

https://doi.org/10.21435/sflit.13

233 "Jokin tuntematon voima" (TF 257).
234 "Minä siis tässä kävelen, sanon sitten itselleni paremman puutteessa. Tunnen suurta sääliä itseäni kohtaan sen johdosta, että kävelen sillä kohtaa, siinä, ja vielä suurempaa siksi että se olen juuri minä. Mutta koetan olla ajattelematta sitäkään, riittää kun saan ohimennen vilkaista kahleettomien pihalle…" (TF 260.)
235 "Kuulen kolme terävää vihellystä korvissani, ne vihlaisevat kyllä vähän epämiellyttävästi ja jakavat ajan ikään kuin kahtia, mutta muuten en niistä välitä yhtään. Lähden kulkemaan niiden suuntaan, en tiedä miksi." (TF 260.)
236 "En tunne häntä […]. Enkä välitäkään tuntea, sillä ihmiset ovat minusta hyvin kaukana nyt […]. Hän ehtii metsän rajaan. Menen hänen perässään, jalkani näet sattuvat olemaan juuri siinä suunnassa ja vievät eteenpäin, ne kantavat minua oikein hyvin, ruumis kun minulla on höyhenenkevyt eikä paina paljon mitään." (TF 261.)
237 "Sopertelen suullani epämääräisiä sanoja, en tiedä mitä kieltä se oikein on. Ehkä se on lilikieltä… Silmäni leviävät ja elän ammoin elettyä elämää…" (TF 261.)
238 "Edelläni kulkee kaksi ihmisolentoa, tajuan, en olekaan siis yksin vaikka niin pitäisi olla. Toinen *oli* isompi, toinen pienempi, mies ja nainen jos tarkkoja ollaan. Jotakin tutunomaista heissäkin. Kaikki *on* niin tuttua nyt minulle, kivet, puut, ihmiset. Mihin he menevät? Mikä on tällä haavaa elämän tarkoitus…" (TF 261, emphasis added.)
239 "Ei polkuni ei tunnu enää yhtä luotettavalta kuin juuri äsken, kaikenlaiset jalat polkevat sitä likaiseksi." (TF 261.)
240 "Olen varjo ihmislasten vanavedessä, välähtää mieleeni. Se on vertauskuvallista puhetta, selitän itselleni, se on hyvin sattuvasti sanottu, moni ei osaisikaan niin sanoa. Sillä olen höyhenen kevyt, liitelen kantapäillä…" (TF 261.)
241 "Hätkähdän. Oliko se Reseda? Tuo ajatus välähtää salamana tietoisuuteeni, olen sitä ajatellut ehkä koko matkan. Mutta olisihan minun pitänyt heti se tajuta. Olenhan epäillyt." (TF 262.)
242 "Metsässä on vapaus..." (TF 262.)
243 "Ryntään lymypaikastani esiin. Mies on juuri noussut, kolme vihellystä on hänet yllättänyt. Näen hänen varjona haihtuvan tiheikköön." (TF 262–263.)
244 "Kenties on suoritettava leikkaus […]." (TF 263.)
245 As Salin (2002, 215) notes, the description of Raiski's novel also anticipates the crime Lili commits at the end.
246 "Eräs mies on tehnyt murhan, mutta väittää olevansa syytön siitä huolimatta. Hän ei osaa selittää, hän on yksinkertainen ihminen, mutta hän tuntee olevansa viaton, häntä ovat murhan hetkellä johtaneet vieraat voimat … Jotakin sellaista siinä kerrotaan." (TF 160.)
247 The irony is that he is unable to clarify how "modern psychology" or "psychoanalysis" could explain anything. We never learn the "basic truths of psychoanalysis" because Lili wisely tells the protagonist to stop explaining. It is possible to guess what he would have said, drawing from the straw-man Nietzchean-Freudian philosophy he seems to have developed: that every human being is guided by violent sexual drives and unconscious urges (these become visible, e.g., when the protagonist is about to strangle Lili).
248 "Ja minä kerroin kuinka he tekivät hauskoja kepposia – ryöstöjä, murhia, raiskauksia – mutta niin ovelasti, että aina oli näyttää puhtaat paperit." (TF 212.)
249 "Olen koira, kuulitteko, kiimainen koira! Kuulkaa! sanoin. […] Olen Ilmestyskirjan peto, hahaha… olen Finckelman, hohotin täyttä kurkkua tehdäkseni tapahtuneen tosiaankin hauskan pilan esineeksi ja saadakseni nolon jutun pois päiväjärjestyksestä." (TF 232.)
250 "Olin näet sairaalamme ylilääkäri nyt; entinen oli kuollut ja minut oli määrätty hänen virkaansa. Se oli suuri kunnia nuorelle miehelle." (TF 319.)

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251 "Minä lähden nyt, hän sanoi minulle terävästi. […] Niin. Hyvästi, tohtori Finckelman! Sitten hän lähti. Minä jäin kuin nalli kalliolle." (TF 317.)
252 "'Kohdelkaa heitä inhimillisesti', sanoin. Itse yritin heitä ymmärtää entistä paremmin, esimerkiksi Raiskia, jopa Salevaakin…" (TF 319.)
253 "Hoitajat saivat lopulta potilaat sen verran rauhoitetuiksi, että heidät voitiin taas teljetä huoneisiinsa." (TF 320.)
254 "Tulin entistä varovaisemmaksi, katselin yhtenään taakseni, minua ei kukaan saanut yllättää." (TF 321.)
255 "Keskusteltiin, supateltiin, selkäni takana punottiin juonia. Ja potilaat, hoitajat, alilääkäritkin – kaikki saman köyden päässä kiinni! Tämä on saatanallisin paikka, missä ihminen voi olla, sanoin itselleni. Tämä on kidutusta!" (TF 322.)
256 "Mutta siinä se meni vialle päästään, pelkäsi kaikkia. Niin on asia. Synti teettää kaikenlaista…Se on ihmisluonnossa..." (TF 342.)
257 "Eristäydyin, sulkeuduin asuntooni, en enää avoimin silmin jaksanut kantaa tuota petollista valhetta." (TF 323.)
258 "Olenpa melkein unohtanut hänet, puhelin itsekseni aina toisinaan […]. Mutta se oli turhaa puhetta, en ollut unohtanut. Muistin hänet joka päivä, kerran päivässä, vain kerran päivässä, mutta sitä kertaa kesti kaksikymmentäneljä tuntia." (TF 326.)
259 "Hämärää, yötä. Elämä pysähtynyt paikalleen. Muistelen, muistelen. En muista mitään. Yritän ja yritän, – jotakin sentään muistan." (TF 337.)
260 "Rakkauden kipinä. […] Se on lääke, joka tekee hullusta viisaan." (TF 348.)
261 "[V]edän kasvoilleni vanhan naamion […]" (TF 352).
262 "Sillä lääke on keksitty, parantava lääke. Haudasta asti sitä pitää hakea, omasta rinnastaan sen lopulta löytää. Kunpa vain osaisin sitä käyttää!" (TF 352.)
263 Annamari Sarajas (1953/1980, 61) emphasizes that Korpela leaves the two sides, "Ivan" and "Alyosha" (cold rationality vs. compassion) to fight inside the protagonist. As Salin suggests, instead of simply choosing religion over skepticism, Korpela's novels form what Mikhail Bakhtin called "a great dialogue" in which opposing ideas meet (Salin 2002, 252). Similarly, Eino Karhu (1977, 116) observes that: "it is difficult for artist Korpela to accept a wholly religious perspective and subjugate his story as its vehicle." ("[T]aiteilija Korpelan on vaikea hyväksyä kokonaisuudessaan uskonnollista näkökulmaa ja alistaa kerrontaansa sen välikappaleeksi.")
264 "Syyllinen löytyy kaikkialta, ja kaikki ovat yhtä syyllisiä." (Quoted in Vainio 1975, 134.)
265 In this interpretation, he would feel guilty not for something he does, but rather for not doing enough. In this *Tohtori Finckelman* could be compared to Camus's *La Chute*. See also Salin 2002, 153; Vainio 1975, 133.
266 "Epävarmuus tästä on suurempi taakka lukijalle kuin varma tieto hänen syyllisyydestään. […] Ratkaisun, *rangaistuksen* tavanomaisessa merkityksessä, puuttuminen ei kiellä oikeudenmukaisuuden vaatimusta. Pikemminkin se tekee syyllisyydestä ääretöntä ja sovittamatonta." (Salin 2002, 221.)
267 "Korpelan romaaneissa käydään jatkuvasti dialogia toisen kohtaamisen ja solipsismin välillä. *Tohtori Finckelmanin* päähenkilö asuu yksin oman minänsä ahtaassa maailmassa, hän määrittelee (psykiatrina myös diagnosoi) muut ihmiset itselleen sopivasti ja halveksii heitä, pesee kätensä heistä. Samalla hän kuitenkin etsii identiteettiään peilaamalla itseään muihin, on siis äärimmäisen riippuvainen kaikista toisista. […] Korpelan romaanit pakottavat miettimään, millä tavalla toisen kohtaaminen oikeastaan tapahtuu? Onko se edes mahdollista? Kohtaammeko me muissa ihmisissä toisen, vaiko väistämättä kuvitelman, omien pelkojemme ja toiveidemme heijastuman – fiktion?" (Salin 2002, 177.)
268 "[T]uota samaa minäkin aina olen ajatellut ja puhunut" (TF 225). Note again the similarities between the characters.
269 "Hänen [Lilin] pitäisi kertomuksen juoksun mukaan olla tapahtumien kulkuun

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syvästi vaikuttava henkilö, mutta kirjan luettuamme tiedämme hänestä suunnilleen yhtä paljon tai yhtä vähän kuin ensimmäisiä arkkeja selaillessamme. Kirjailijamme on osoittanut taitoa kätkiessään tämän henkilönsä uteliailta katseilta niin täydellisesti kuin vain voi toivoa. Toinen asia sitten on, tyydyttääkö tämä sokkoleikki lopulta ketään. Kun kertojan tekniikka kehittyy tähän asteeseen, kun paljastuksen sijasta paksut verhot vedetään muotokuvan eteen, silloin on jo aihetta kysyä, liikutaanko tässä aivan luvallisilla teillä." (Koskimies 1952/1996, 364.)

270 Salin (2002, 263) connects Korpela's works to the Lévinasian ethics of otherness. In Lévinas's thought we have to encounter the other as other, not as a version of myself: the other cannot be reduced to the same (to myself) by trying to define the other or by trying to understand them. Rather, we have an infinite, a-symmetrical responsibility to one another (see Lévinas 1969).

271 This interpretation is also supported by a conversation he has with Pomila in the epilogue where he tells him: "My faith has died. It died together with love. I killed it myself." ("Uskoni on kuollut. Se kuoli rakkauteni mukana. Minä itse sen tapoin." (TF 347.)

272 Unreliable narration requires a narrative design. As Tammi (2012) points out, e.g., news broadcasts don't have a design that would make unreliable narration possible (news can, of course, be mistaken, unreliable or untrustworthy, but that is a different matter). Phelan (2005, 66), in turn, notes that sometimes also non-fictional memoirs can have unreliable narrators that are signaled by the implied author (as an example, he mentions Frank McCourt's *Angela's Ashes* in which the borders between non-fictional and fictional memoir become hazy). In fact, it is not possible to distinguish "fictional" narrative techniques from "non-fictional" ones: once a technique has been invented, it can be used by fiction and non-fiction writers alike (ibid., 68).

5. Trauma and Tragedy: Timo K. Mukka's *Taboo* (The Taboo)

273 All English translations of the novella are mine. Mukka's use of religious discourses makes translation particularly difficult. For example, the prayers embedded in the text follow similar sentence structures as old Finnish translations of the Bible, and I have tried to show this in the translation.

274 On "fallen" women in Finnish naturalism, see, e.g., Lappalainen 2008.

275 The reviewers and critics often talk about the "atmosphere" and the "style" interchangeably. I would suggest that "style" is best understood as one of the sources of the "strange atmosphere."

276 "[T]yylin lyyrisen kaunis poljento, kuvauksen herkkyys, tapahtumien etäinen ja arkitodellisuudesta irrotettu myyttinen kehä." (Paasilinna 1988, 91.) Paasilinna (ibid.) suggests that these elements contributed to fact that the accusations of blasphemy and indecency were not as severe as they were in the reception of *Maa on syntinen laulu* earlier—although there were also some attacks on *Tabu* (see also Lahtinen 2013, 77).

277 In Phelan's terms, Mukka creates a case of "restricted narration": "narration that records events but does not interpret or evaluate them" (Phelan 2005, 29). The situation is similar to *Tohtori Finckelman*, but in *Tabu*, we learn even less about what happens after the events and at the time of narration.

278 In this sense, the narrative style is very different from *Tohtori Finckelman* in which we encounter (almost) solely the "inner" world of the narrator (there is very little descriptions of the "outside" world). Both styles of narration are highly subjective, but in *Tabu*, there is no reflection on Milka's experiential world, it just "is there." This is one reason why the text invites symbolic readings: readers begin to look for "depth" when it is not provided for us in the text.

https://doi.org/10.21435/sflit.13

279 Mäkelä-Marttinen writes about trauma in *Tabu* but leaves the question of abuse mostly aside (see Mäkelä-Marttinen 2008, 187; 223).
280 Mukka himself was clear that there is no "miracle": the myths of the Immaculate Conception and the virgin birth are dismantled because the readers know the truth about what happens.
281 From a psychoanalytical perspective, the connection between Milka and Anna appears as "symbiotic" (see Mäkelä-Marttinen 2008, 196).
282 "Minä en avannut nyrkkiäni, vaan purskahdin itkuun." (T 8.)
283 "– Pidä se, pidä pois, pikku Milka, jos se on noin sinulle rakas... ja tule kohta nukkumaan." (T 8.)
284 "Nyt siitä on kulunut yli kaksikymmentä vuotta." (T 9.)
285 On the meanings of the changing seasons in the novel—the time of growth, fertility and pregnancy—and their connection to the ballad form, see Lahtinen 2013, 67.
286 "Joimme piimää ojanpientareella ja minä lauloin Kristus-Perkeleen kanssa. Äitikin lauloi joskus, sillä miehellä oli hyvä ääni ja hän osasi paljon lauluja, joista suuri osa oli kyllä rumia renkutuksia, mutta osa myös harrasmielisiä virsiä." (T 9.)
287 "Useat naiset sanoivat häntä Ojaseksi, mikä olikin hänen oikea nimensä, mutta koska hänellä vuosia sitten oli ollut tapana puhuessaan kiroilla joka toinen sana, oli häntä ruvettu kutsumaan Kristus-Perkeleeksi. Ja vaikka hän nykyisin ei sanonut kirosanaa vahingossakaan, sai hän säilyttää nimensä." (T 9–10.)
288 "Hän asui kylän laidassa, maantiestä puolen kilometrin päässä mökissä, jonka joku puolihullu mies oli rakentanut ja joka hänen kuolemansa jälkeen oli ollut autio, kunnes Kristus-Perkele oli tullut kylään ja asettunut sinne." (T 10.)
289 "Hän teki luutia, vihtoja, saaveja ja rekiä, kelkkoja, ja kaikkea mitä saattoi kuvitella puusta syntyvän taitavan käsissä." (T 10.)
290 "[M]iehen, jota toiset kyläläiset kohtelivat kuin sukulaistaan ja josta toiset puhuivat paljon pahaa" (T 24).
291 As Lahtinen (2013, 64) points out, the name brings together a God-figure who is "born of a virgin" and the Devil "who has seduced the man from the state of nature." Kristus-Perkele's woodwork can also be read as an allusion to Christ as a carpenter—or to Joseph. Furthermore, Mäkelä-Marttinen (2008, 187) connects the way Kristus-Perkele shapes wood to God and the Devil shaping human beings: he also begins to shape Milka as his "bride."
292 "Hän oli pitkä, mustaverinen mies, jolla oli musta parransänki ahavanpuremilla kasvoillaan ja pienet, ruskeat silmät, jotka nauroivat tai olivat toiset, ihan niin kuin hän itse halusi." (T 10.)
293 I use the words "read" and "misread" when describing the way Milka spontaneously understands Kristus-Perkele's expressions, but as Hutto (2011; see also Gallagher & Zahavi 2012) has noted, the notion of "mind-reading" or "reading other minds", which is often used in cognitive theory and in cognitive narratology (e.g., Zunshine 2006; Palmer 2004; 2010; 2011), can be misleading. Minds are not "read" in real life: rather we perceive others' experiences in their bodily expressions and actions, and only in puzzling cases try to "read," interpret or infer their thoughts. In Milka's case, there is no conscious reflection or interpretation, she effortlessly engages with Kristus-Perkele, and the tragedy that develops is partly dependent on the fact that her spontaneous understanding of him proves misguided.
294 However, e.g., Lahtinen describes the scene as a "daring play" between Milka and the man and (following *Tabu*'s intertextual connection to *Lolita*) calls Milka a "seductive figure" and a "nymphet" (Lahtinen 2013, 67; 70, 71; see also Mäkelä-Marttinen 2008, 222). He reads the sexual act between the man and the young girl as "an encounter between the earth and the sky," as the man ejaculates on Milka's stomach and the rain begins (Lahtinen 2013, 66). It seems that these symbols and intertexts, as well as Milka's connection to "bride of Christ," leads Lahtinen

https://doi.org/10.21435/sflit.13

to read Kristus-Perkele and Milka as "lovers" and the relationship between them as a "love affair" (ibid., 64), missing the abuse. Mäkelä-Marttinen, on the other hand, pays attention to the hayfield as the scene of the sexual encounters: they happen "in the border area between civilization and nature. The outside space brings to the scene an element of primitivity which abolishes the laws of culture and humans." ("E]nsimmäinen seksuaaliakti tapahtuu heinäpellolla, sivilisaation ja luonnon raja-alueella. Ulkotila tuo kohtaukseen sivistyksen ja ihmisten lait riisuvaa alkukantaisuutta.") (Mäkelä-Marttinen 2008, 213.) Both interpretations thus ignore the sexual abuse, which nonetheless can be read in Kristus-Perkele's behavior. To be fair, elsewhere Mäkelä-Marttinen does refer to Kristus-Perkele's behavior as abuse and mentions his "deceitfulness" and "weakness of the will" (ibid., 187). Lahtinen's and Mäkelä-Marttinen's interpretations are good examples of how difficult it is to try to bring together the reading of the text as a story about abuse and the mythical interpretation: in the mythical frame of reading, the abuse is easily disregarded.

295 "[K]unnes yhtäkkiä sade alkoi. Silloin hän lähti, nyyhkyttäen mennessään – näin sen hänen selästään; sen rajuista nytkähtelyistä. Minä seisoin housuitta ja hameetta sateen valuessa ylitseni. Kristus-Perkele kulki hartiat kumartuneina, häpeissään." (T 12.)

296 Lahtinen (2013, 66), in turn, interprets the rain as a symbol of the ejaculation.

297 "– Pane hame päällesi… mene kotiin. Äitisi varmaan odottaa sinua… nopeasti!" (T 12.)

298 "Hän ei katsonut minuun, vaan jonnekin ohitseni. Silloin tunsin sydämeni kipeäksi ja sairaaksi ja olisin halunnut itkeä. Vedin housut jalkaani, panin hameen ylleni ja käännyin hänestä poispäin lähteäkseni menemään. Häpeä poltti minunkin mieltäni." (T 12–13.)

299 We can also recall here the villagers' dividedness about Kristus Perkele. Later, when Kristus-Perkele has escaped from the village, the villagers continue talking: "The people told evil rumors about Kristus-Perkele: he had done other things too, he had an evil soul. Such horrible eyes even! The old women whispered." ("Ihmiset juorusivat paljon pahaa Kristus-Perkeleestä: hän oli tehnyt muutakin, oli sielultaan paha juuriaan myöten. Miten pahat silmätkin! Kuiskivat mummot.") (T 67.) But it is not revealed what else he has done, except stolen a horse. The villagers' talk could simply be gossip, but read in the frame of abuse, it could be interpreted as warning: gossip is often used to guard moral and ethical codes, and some of the people who spread the rumors could know about Kristus-Perkele abusing (other) children. However, there is nothing in the text to prove this, only these small ambiguous hints.

300 As discussed, Mäkelä-Marttinen does mention the abuse and pedophilia, but only in passing, without elaborating on it. She first notes that Anna sees Kristus-Perkele as an abuser (Mäkelä-Marttinen 2008, 187) and later also suggests that the wooden ball which Milka receives from Kristus-Perkele and in which she hides the coin is a "taboo object which symbolizes the womb that has been impregnated from an incestuous and pedophilic relationship" ("Puupallo on tabuesine symboloidessaan insestisestä ja pedofiilisestä suhteesta hedelmöittynyttä kohtua"). (Ibid., 223.)

301 There are many possible interpretations: Milka cries because the coin becomes a symbol of the abuse, although she cannot name the events as abuse, or she cries because she recognizes that something "sinful" has happened, or she is distressed because she does not want to reveal to her mother what has happened. Later, in Chapter 3, Milka is playing with her late father's cufflinks and she wonders why "silver is so expensive," which prompts Lahtinen (2013, 73) to connect the silver coin to Judas's betrayal of Christ. According to Lahtinen, Milka "claims a silver coin for her virginity" (ibid., 72). However, once again, the symbolic interpretation directs the reading away from the abuse.

https://doi.org/10.21435/sflit.13

302 The "thorn" mentioned in the prayer can be seen as a symbol of temptation, as Lahtinen remarks, shedding light on Mukka's use the Laestadian (Pietist) imagery (Lahtinen 2013, 66). It is interesting how Mukka on the one hand claims that he is trying to dismantle religious myths (see Lahtinen 2013, 64; Paasilinna 1988, 74; 76), but on the other hand constantly relies on religious discourses.
303 Mukka had also planned that Milka's son would die in the end, and this would be an additional reason for her suffering. Paasilinna (1988, 77) quotes Mukka's notes about *Tabu*: "Milka's child is mentally retarded, but when he is 17 he is suddenly healed and has to go to war. The boy dies. Milka loses her mind and even burns her face." ("Milkan lapsi on vajaamielinen, mutta 17 vuotiaaksi vartuttuaan yhtäkkiä paranee ja joutuu sotaan. Poika kuolee. Milka menettää järkensä, polttaa vielä kasvonsa rumiksi.")
304 "[T]apahtumien etäinen ja arkitodellisuudesta irrotettu myyttinen kehä." (Paasilinna 1988, 91.)
305 Mäkelä-Marttinen (2008, 204–205) notes that there is a motif of pride also in Milka's story: she firmly believes that her love for Kristus-Perkele is right.
306 On the chronotopes and symbolic meanings of the interior and outside spaces, especially the objects Kristus-Perkele makes for Anna and Milka, see Mäkelä-Marttinen 2008, 215. As she notes, many of the objects and spaces become chronotopes for the female body.
307 A tender nickname created from the man's surname, "Ojanen."
308 "Mutta hän sanoisi, että se on häpeällistä, eikä hän antaisi hänen tehdä niin itselleen…" (T 46.)
309 As Lahtinen (2013, 67) notes, in pre-Christian times, Pentecost was a celebration of fertility in the spring.
310 "Näin minua siitä rangaistaan, että lukkaria ylimielisesti puhuttelin, huokasi äiti." (T 64.)
311 "Äidin kasvot olivat iloiset." (T 54.); "Näin, miten äiti hymyili kainosti hänelle, kuin hän olisi ollut pikkutyttö, joka punastuen muistaa hänelle uskotun asian […]." (T 55.)
312 "Odotin iltaa kuin sairastuneena […]" (T 56).
313 "– Mitä on tapahtunut, Milka pieni? Kysyi hän uudestaan. Hänen silmistään näin, että hänen oli hätä siitä mitä äidille oli tapahtunut." (T 56–57.)
314 "Hän ei palannut. Äiti istui ikkunassa päivästä toiseen, ulos tuijottaen ja odottaen, neuloen miehen paitaa, huoaten. Emme käyneet kylällä kumpikaan, eivätkä kyläläiset käyneet meillä." (T 62.)
315 "Minun tuntui kuin sydämeni olisi tullut täyteen hänen tuskastaan. Oh, oh, miten täyteen." (T 65.)
316 Lahtinen (2013, 65) also notes the way Milka explicitly calls Kristus-Perkele "Christ."
317 "En tahdo enää nähdä silmiäsi, en enää tahdo suudella huuliasi, en vierellesi enää asetu makaamaan, en enää sinulle avaa reisiäni. Ei sinua enää ole, Jumala…" (T 73.)
318 "Rakas Jumala, sinun lastasi minä kannan sydämeni alla, siemenesi sinä olet minuun piilottanut. […] Jumala, älä unohda rakkaintasi. Ole kuin isä minulle, ole turvana lapsesi luona, ole minun kanssani Jumala…" (T 93.)
319 "Mutta hänen äänensä oli nyt ikään kuin vieras, kuin se olisi ollut jonkun toisen, mutta ei äidin ääni." (T 77.)
320 "Murhe ja ahdistus asui meidän kummankin rinnan alla. Arvasin äitini ajattelevan lasta, joka oli sisälläni, sillä mieluummin hänen katseensa sattui vatsani sille kohdalle, jossa kohouma oli. Silmiin en saanut häntä katsoa, jos yritin, hän käänsi päänsä pois." (T 78.)
321 "Ikkunasta näin, että äiti kampasi tukkaansa kaivolla, niin mieletön hän oli." (T 102.)

https://doi.org/10.21435/sflit.13

322 Milka has also been interpreted as a "liminal character" between childhood and adult life, spiritual and bodily, sacred and sinful, see Mäkelä-Marttinen 2008, 206; Lahtinen 2013, 69.
323 See also Lahtinen 2013, 72. As usual, Auno's and Milka's actions are not evaluated in any way in the story.
324 "Sinä leikit jonkun pojan kanssa […]" (T 85.)
325 "Tunnemmehan toki Sanastakin tapauksen… ihmeellisiä ovat herran tiet…" (T 93.)
326 "…se on ymmärrettävää, tyttäreni, hyvinkin. Kaiketi hän sinut ottaa, olet iso tyttö jo, Milka. Kyllähän sinä jo tiedät mitä teet, mitä jätät tekemättä. Minut on suru jo musertanut alleen… ymmärräthän?" (T 88.)
327 "Näin, että hän oli laihtunut, hänen poskensa olivat ikään kuin painuneet kuopille. Oliko hän suruissaan minun takiani? Ajattelin, mutta en tahtonut miettiä sitä enempää. Mitä Auno minulle kuului?" (T 96.)
328 "Ikään kuin unta oli jollain tavoin se aika. Luin ahkerasti koko viikon, yölläkin." (T 100.)
329 Lahtinen (2013, 67) offers a more detailed interpretation of the yellow dress and suggests that it can be interpreted as a symbol of the "fertility of the earth" but also of "flowers that have turned yellow because of rain." In this reading Milka becomes a "tarnished" bride.
330 "Hetkeksi riitti hauskaa siitä, että valkoinen lumi kattoi maan, mutta ilo oli kohta ohi. Ei kanttorin, eikä äidinkään takia; muuten, selittämättömästi oli mieleni kuin sairas ja rampa ja yhtenään ajattelin: mitä he nyt tekevät hänelle… tulisipa joku, joka tietäisi kertoa…" (T 105.)
331 "Kauhistuin joka kerta äidin silmiin katsoessani. Hän nauroi ilmeettömin silmin, hyväili toisinaan kanttoria, silitteli hänen niskaansa. Mutta mikään, minkä hän teki tai sanoi, ei ollut luonnollista." (T 105.)
332 As Mäkelä-Marttinen (2008, 202) observes in her Dostoyevskyan reading, Milka and Anna become doubles here.
333 Mäkelä-Marttinen also links Milka to the tradition of abject heroes and suggests, referring to Dostoyevsky's Underground Man, that she is "stuck in the cellar of her loneliness and obsessive-compulsive neurosis" ("yksinäisyytensä ja pakkoneuroosinsa kellariloukkoon jäänyt") (Mäkelä-Marttinen 2008, 205). However, in my view the character of Milka is a very different from the Underground Man (and the abject hero narrators of *Kaunis sielu* or *Tohtori Finckelman*): she does not go through experiences of self-hate, self-disgust or self-pity (see Bernstein 1992, 89–90), and she is not hyperreflexive like the Underground Man (see Sass 1994, 4), but rather lacks self-reflexivity. Mäkelä-Marttinen, too, acknowledges that Milka's shattering seems to be based on trauma: she mentions Milka's "childlikeness," repetition of past events, and her "mute" suffering (Mäkelä-Marttinen 2008, 189; 205–206).
334 This interpretation requires that we ignore Mukka's original plan that the son would ultimately die in the war (see Paasilinna 1988, 77).
335 "Nyt raskaana oleva, rakastajansa hylkäämä Milka hyvittää oman antautumisensa ja äidin ylpeyden synnin tarjoamalla itsensä kanttorille vaimoksi." (Mäkelä-Marttinen 2008, 188.)
336 "The uncanny marriage between Milka and the cantor drives the mother deeper to the madness; the young daughter has her lover's child and is married to her suitor." ("Milkan ja kanttorin kummallinen liitto ajaa äidin yhä syvemmälle hulluuteen; nuori tytär saa hänen rakastajansa lapsen ja on naimisissa hänen kosijansa kanssa.") (Mäkelä-Marttinen 2008, 188.)
337 Lahtinen, too, notices these exchanges but connects them to Milka as a character who, in his view, represents "the irreconcilable conflict" between "the ideal and the real": she is "a child and adult," "innocent and fallen," "virgin and whore," "good

https://doi.org/10.21435/sflit.13

and bad," "the Virgin Mary who loves the Christ" and "Judas who betrays the Christ" (Lahtinen 2013, 72).

338 To be precise, in the end Humbert Humbert does admit that he has destroyed Dolores's (Lolita's) life and acknowledges that he is a rapist. On unreliability and ethics in *Lolita*, see Phelan 2005, 98–131; 2007; Booth 1983, 391.

339 However, Mäkelä-Marttinen (2008, 190; 206) is more optimistic: she suggests that through the ballad form, combined with the naturalist description and the description of "Milka's mute suffering," Mukka manages to "portray the distortions created by the male attitude" and to criticize the role of women in the society ("onnistuu esittämään Milkan mykän ahdingon kuvauksen avulla nimenomaan maskuliinisen asenteen vinoumia").

6. Meanings of Psychosis: Maria Vaara's *Likaiset Legendat* (Dirty Legends)

340 All English translations of the novel are mine. Vaara's text is often fragmentary and especially the portrayals of psychosis have a dream-like quality: the expressions may seem illogical and strange. I have tried to show the inconsistencies and fragmentariness also in the translation.

341 A common problem throughout the twentieth century—in addition to the fact that schizophrenia is in general difficult to diagnose—has been that schizophrenia has been over-diagnosed, especially in women and in people of color (see, e.g., Usher 2012; Metzl 2009). Furthermore, the diagnosis can turn into a stigmatizing label (and an identity that is stigmatized) which in itself hinders the prognosis of the illness (see also Marrow & Luhrmann 2016). I refer to the protagonist's experiences as "psychotic" rather than "schizophrenic" to leave the diagnosis more open.

342 See, e.g., DSM-5, 87–88.

343 "[T]ulevat kysymättä" (LL 100).

344 "[M]inä olen mennyt pois." (LL 63.)

345 "Mitenkähän todellisuudentajuni laita on? Kaikkea on ikään kuin liikaa." (LL 37.)

346 The minimal self, conceptualized by Dan Zahavi (e.g., 2007; 2010; 2014), refers especially to the experience of "for-me-ness": the sense of being the subject and owner of one's experiences.

347 There is a loss of borders between perception and imagination. The phenomenological view on hallucinations is also consistent with other philosophical accounts (see, e.g., Currie 2000). As Currie (2000, 168) writes: "Imagination is a cognitive tool of great power, but it is also potentially a rather dangerous one."

348 It is, however, important to note that Ratcliffe does not argue that *all* psychotic experiences involve traumatic experiences. On the links between trauma and psychosis, see Ratcliffe 2017, 170–181.

349 A simple, very concrete example of this would be a case in which a person is unsure whether they have actually experienced or only imagined or dreamed something and then have to ask another person for corroboration.

350 Especially Vaara's second autobiographical novel, *Kuuntele Johannes* (Johannes, Listen, 1975), focuses on the difficulties of trying to verbalize one's experience to another and on the limits of language.

351 "– Maria, sinä olet lapsi ja sairas ja hullu, irrallinen sanoi." (LL 14.) "– Olet hyvin itsekäs, Maria, sanoi irralinen." (LL 45.) "– Sinun aviomiehesi oli juoppo, irrallinen kuiskaa." (LL 52.)

352 This is also an effect of the figural third-person narration and the repeated use of narrated monologues in which the voices of the narrator and the character

https://doi.org/10.21435/sflit.13

are intermingled, as in the citation on this page. Another factor which creates an impression of *Likaiset legendat* as a completely first-person narrated text is that at the end of Part I, the third-person narration stops and is replaced by first-person narration.

353 "Oma itseni, Maria, alkaa pelottaa minua. Ihan kuin kasvaisin moneen suuntaan, joita en tunne ja joihin en tahdo. Kuin olisi kuljettava heikkoa jäätä yhä kauemmas ja kauemmas." (LL 53.)

354 "– Maria, sinun olisi parasta olla kuollut, irrallinen sanoi." (LL 57.)

355 "1.5. Vapunpäivä. Olen juuri tullut vappumatineasta […]. Nyt istun kotona, kuuntelen levyjä ja itken. En oikein tiedä, mitä itken ja kuka itkee. Minun kai pitäisi soittaa kunnanlääkärille, hän on lähimpänä." (LL 60.)

356 " – Minun pitää päästä sairaalaan, en voi mennä kotiin." (LL 61.)

357 Only the first "dirty legend," which recounts the story of how Maria loses her hands, is narrated in retrospect.

358 On corporeality, materiality, and memories of mental hospital spaces in Finland, see Kuuva & Heimonen 2020.

359 Noë's enactivist view of perception draws especially on Gibson's (1979) theory of affordances and Merleau-Ponty's (2002) phenomenology of the body (see also Chapter 2).

360 When we read, we are invited to imagine (or enact) the storyworld on the basis of the cues provided by the text. As Evan Thompson (2007, 138) writes, in imagination "we do not experience mental pictures, but instead visualize and object or scene by mentally enacting or entertaining a possible perceptual experience of that object or scene." Following Thompson, Caracciolo (2013, 81) suggests that narrative texts—e.g., their descriptions of scenes, objects, and characters—are "sets of instructions for the enactment of a storyworld."

361 This is in line also with the enactive view of fictionality discussed, e.g., by Polvinen (2016; 2017).

362 "Kun tanssii kyllikseen, tulee lopulta perille. Tänne, jossa on likaiset ikkunat lujaa lasia ja kaksikymmentäneljä pientä ruutua jokaisessa. Ne ovat laskeneet minut monta kertaa ja aina meitä on kaksikymmentä neljä." (LL 94.)

363 To be precise, the experience of being "counted" by window panes is closer to delusion than hallucination.

364 "Paulus ei tule tänään. Saulus tulee." (LL 100.)

365 "Valkeat miehet tarttuvat käsivarsiini." (LL 107.)

366 "Äiti aina toivoi salaa minun kuolevan, koska minussa oli ääniä ja kuvia, ja ne tulivat usein esiin. Kyllä minä sen tiesin, olin aina tiennyt." (LL 110.)

367 "Jo kauan sitten, kun olin vielä pieni ja leikin peiton alla, äiti oli varoittanut ja ennustanut, että näin oli tapahtuva. Isä oli siitä vihainen, hän ei olisi tahtonut äidin näin puhuvan, mutta isän päätä särki eikä hän jaksanut kovin pitkään ryhdistäytyä." (LL 70.)

368 The line is from the hymn book *Siionin virret* (Hymns of Zion): "When a sinner only / Can fall asleep in the wounds of the Lord, from the lap of the earth / He will arise in joy." ("Kun syntinen vaan / Saa nukkua haavoihin Herran, niin helmasta maan / Hän nousevi riemuhun kerran.") (*Siionin virret* 218: 3.)

369 This is made explicit also in a later hallucinatory memory in which little Maria asks a teacher about frogs she has seen mating: "I cannot talk to mother. Mother would hit me, because now I understand that this is one of those things that don't exist at our home. Those cannot be talked about at home." ("En voi puhua äidille. Äiti löisi minua, sillä nyt ymmärrän, että tämä on niitä asioita, joita meillä ei ole olemassa. Niistä ei voi kotona puhua.") (LL 156.)

370 "Pirjo toipuu, soitin juuri teho-osastolle, älä ole huolissasi. Ja kuuntele nyt tarkkaan, Maria. Sinä et ole käynyt missään kaupungilla, sinä et ole ostanut partateriä ja

https://doi.org/10.21435/sflit.13

antanut niitä Pirjolle. Sinä olet ollut vuoteessasi koko yön ja nukkunut hyvin. Sait illalla rauhoittavan piikin. Maria, sinä et ole Pirjo, et ole tehnyt mitään." (LL 153.)

371 "*Johannes (kuiskaa)*: – Maria, sinun pitää kyetä näkemään ero todellisen ja kuvitellun välillä. Et sinä ole syyllinen. Muista, sinä et ole tehnyt mitään luvatonta, vaikka he mitä sanoisivat." (LL 164.)

372 "– Makaa hiljaa, Maria, Untuva sanoo ja pitelee molemmin käsin. Minä vapisen. On vaikea pysyä sängyssä, mutta Untuva pitelee lujasti. / – Sinä jaksat vielä vähän aikaa, Johannes tulee heti, Maria, Johannes tulee." (LL 179.)

373 "Näitä kuvia on vaikea katsoa. Mutta minun täytyy katsoa ne loppuun saakka. Johannes on sanonut. Silloin ne ehkä lakkaavat tekemästä kipeää." (LL 210.)

374 "Tässä kirjassa kukaan ei ole todellisuutta, sillä kaikki, mikä totta on, ei ole todellisuutta." (LL 5.)

375 "Tiedämme paljon siitä, mistä sinä, Johannes, et tiedä mitään. / Kuuntele silti." (LL 5.)

https://doi.org/10.21435/sflit.13

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Abstract

Anna Ovaska

Shattering Minds

Experiences of Mental Illness in Finnish Modernist Literature

This study offers a new perspective on unusual and unsettling experiences that are often interpreted as “mental illnesses” and on the techniques through which literary representations invite readerly responses and engagement. The book examines how four Finnish modernist writers, Helvi Hämäläinen, Jorma Korpela, Timo K. Mukka, and Maria Vaara, construct experiences of shattering and distress as bodily experiences that are embedded in the social and material world and entangled with social and cultural norms that govern subjectivity, gender, and sexuality. Drawing on narrative theory, theories of embodied cognition, phenomenology of illness, and feminist theory, the analyses show how literary works can invite readers to respond emotionally and to reflect on our views of the human mind and its interaction with the world. The book sheds light on the fictional portrayals and techniques of representation and on the ethics of narrating and reading about painful experiences. It also illuminates the ways the mind, body, consciousness, and mental distress are discussed in Finnish modernist literature and situates the texts in the international modernist tradition.

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Index

abject hero 33, 59, 101, 135, 215, 229
agency 21, 59, 165, 177; narrative agency 44, 73, 150, 199–201
access to other minds 8, 11, 43, 46, 49, 50, 120, 145, 165, 205, 209; *see also* empathy; intersubjectivity
aesthetic frame 12–13, 24, 28, 52, 82, 102, 135, 171, 210, 220
affect (affectivity) 22, 24, 42–43, 46, 49–54, 58, 60–66, 74 –75, 77–78, 138–139, 142, 150, 164–165, 169, 194, 202, 211, 212, 219; affective engagement 13; 21; 23–28, 61; affective language (affective discourse) 30, 73, 137, 217; affective meaning 13, 26, 29, 48, 57, 62, 63, 73, 80; affective scaffolding 19, 20, 54, 217
affordances (possibilities for action) 19–22, 43, 60, 73, 140, 211, 239; textual affordances 186
alienation 8, 9, 12, 16, 19, 34–35, 44, 47, 69, 77, 88–95, 98–99, 112, 181
allusion 40, 97, 98, 113, 143, 147, 149, 166, 222, 226, 228, 234
ambiguity (ambivalence) 13, 29, 35, 79, 88, 135, 139, 147, 150, 161, 188; *see also* uncertainty
anagnorisis (recognition) 151, 156, 158, 160, 162–163
anxiety 27, 42, 49–50, 61, 91, 92–93, 99, 162, 175–176, 216
artificiality (artificial constructions) 10, 25–27, 43, 49, 53, 77–78, 90, 94, 101, 179, 212
atmosphere 15, 36, 54, 113, 139, 171, 210, 224, 233; delusional atmosphere 15, 113–114, 170; strange atmosphere 15, 99, 133, 139, 151, 164, 167, 170–173, 233
attribution of mental states 11, 25, 144–145; of mental illness 25, 212
autobiographical writing (memoir) 38–40, 77, 176, 201, 203, 218; autobiographical narrative (narrator) 9, 180, 201–202, 219; autobiographical novel (autofiction) 14, 31, 38, 203, 205, 217, 238
autonomous monologue (interior monologue / free direct discourse) 49, 218–221

beautiful soul (*die schöne Seele*) 68, 73–74, 215, 223
Bildungsroman 34, 88, 108

catharsis 151
cognitive narratology 24–26, 28, 43, 186, 211, 212, 234
crime 32, 35, 58, 70, 78, 102, 103, 111–113, 119, 120–121, 123, 128, 133–134, 170, 215, 229, 231
cultural narratives 10, 11, 13, 21–22, 25, 28, 40, 73, 89, 138, 142, 144, 149, 152, 160, 171–172, 174, 191, 194–197, 202, 205–205, 221; unconscious cultural narratives 152

decadence (decadent literature) 30, 32, 59, 215, 219
delusion 8, 15–16, 19, 56, 77, 103, 112, 124, 126, 177–178, 181, 198, 201, 206, 211, 212, 239; *see also* atmosphere
description 36, 47, 52–53, 72, 107, 117, 129, 138–139, 142, 147–148, 150, 166–167, 171, 186–191, 203, 212, 233, 237

https://doi.org/10.21435/sflit.13

diagnosis 8, 10–11, 13, 16, 26, 29, 39–40, 44, 77, 129–130, 176–178, 202–203, 205–206, 217, 238
diagnostic interpretation 10, 23, 25–27, 29, 35, 52, 77, 203, 205, 227; *see also* folk psychiatry; folk psychology; interpretive frames; psychological interpretation
disgust 32, 44, 50–52, 57–58, 60, 63, 66–67, 69–70, 72, 166, 222, 237
dissociation (dissociative disorder) 26, 77–79, 96–97, 101–103, 105, 108, 114–115, 117, 119, 134, 228
distance (distancing) 24, 46, 48–49, 52, 54–55, 77, 79, 83, 94, 100, 102–103, 130, 139, 181, 187, 203, 221, 225; ethical distance 23, 27–28, 205; *see also* empathy; estrangement, unreliability
double (*Doppelgänger*) 34, 96, 98, 105, 109, 119, 128, 134, 228, 237
double bookkeeping 170, 188, 205
double consciousness 74, 224
dream (dreaming) 32, 38, 43–45, 60, 62, 64, 67, 73, 86, 90, 93, 95, 139, 166, 176–177, 184–188, 190, 194, 197, 202, 221, 238

embodied cognitive theories (4E theories, embodied mind) 9, 18–20, 22, 206, 210–211, 219
embodied reader 22–23, 211
empathy 27–28, 35, 63, 77, 79, 87, 102, 130, 135, 141–142, 206, 213, 222, 225; empathetic responses 150; 203; empathic unsettlement 13, 23, 27, 141; difficult empathy 135–136; narrative empathy 203, 210, 213; *see also* access to other minds; intersubjectivity
estrangement 35, 55–56, 77, 89, 102, 112, 225, 229; *see also* alienation; empathy; distance
ethics of reading 14, 23, 35, 37, 78–79, 128–136, 141, 174, 205, 207; *see also* distance
experientiality 24, 26, 53, 190, 203, 206
experiential background 24, 28–29, 190–191
experiential knowledge 25, 52, 176, 178, 184, 188, 191, 203
experiential world (lived world) 8–9, 11, 18–22, 24–25, 27, 38, 42, 45–46, 51, 53, 57, 61, 73, 92, 103, 113, 176, 178, 184, 190–191, 194, 202–203, 205, 206, 221, 233

fantasy 32, 43–44, 57, 60–61, 64–68, 72–74, 78, 86, 89
feminist phenomenology 21, 219
feminist theory 9, 13, 30, 42, 202, 206, 211, 218
fictionality 11–12, 24–25, 30, 43, 78, 82, 90, 102, 186, 203, 210, 216, 239
fictional character (fictional mind) 9, 13, 21, 23, 25–29, 43, 49, 52–53, 78, 88, 90, 98, 101, 135, 179, 206, 209, 210, 212
first-person narration (character narration) 10–12, 21, 30, 53, 180, 207–210, 238
folk psychiatry 25–26, 28, 166, 212
folk psychology 13, 25–26, 28–29, 146, 194
foreshortened future 140, 164, 169

gender 11, 21–22, 30–32, 37, 40, 89, 174, 206, 218, 224
guilt 32, 34–35, 45, 71, 77–78, 112, 118–120, 123–124, 126, 128, 135, 144, 147, 173, 177, 194–195, 198, 201, 215, 226, 232

hallucination (hallucinating, hallucinatory) 8, 12, 15–16, 19–20, 32, 38, 40, 43–45, 47, 55–60, 64, 67, 72–80, 90, 97, 102–103, 112–113, 119, 125, 169, 176–178, 184, 186–202, 206, 210–212, 221, 223, 238–239
hamartia 151
hate 32, 50, 52, 57, 62–63, 71, 135, 219; self-hate 45, 66, 69, 101, 237
hearing voices 187, 190, 195, 201; Hearing Voices Movement 177–178, 202, 211; *see also* hallucination
hyperreflexivity 9, 16, 237

identity 10, 11, 44, 77–78, 119, 123, 238; narrative identity 219; *see also* self
imagination (imagining, imaginary) 11, 13, 19, 23–24, 28–29, 32, 41–74, 78, 82–97, 102–103, 111–114, 119, 129, 132, 134, 139, 142, 145, 148, 150, 177–178, 184, 186–198, 210–203, 205, 212, 220–222, 238–239

https://doi.org/10.21435/sflit.13

immersion 20, 27, 184, 190, 210
interpretive frames 23, 29, 33, 55, 90, 99, 136, 146, 205–206; *see also* diagnostic interpretation
intersubjectivity (understanding others) 9, 11, 39, 50–51, 54, 60, 63, 73, 140, 142, 144, 150, 154, 156, 170, 172, 176, 191, 203, 209, 212–213; interaffectivity 73, 150; intercorporeality 150; intersubjective bond 146, 156, 165; intersubjective skills 25, 212; *see also* access to other minds; empathy
intertextuality 26, 28, 32, 35, 37–38, 77–78, 96, 98, 101–102, 109, 113, 119, 138, 147, 173, 195, 216, 222, 228, 229, 234
inward turn 18
irony (ironic) 34, 52, 77, 79, 84, 89, 90–91, 106–107, 112, 129, 130–131, 135, 222, 225, 226, 228, 229, 231

looping effect 10, 29
loss of borders 8, 15–17, 60, 70, 72–73, 78, 80, 82, 86, 88, 90, 96, 97, 102, 113, 203, 238
loss of possibilities (loss of affordances, loss of future) 20, 29, 165, 170
loss of self (loss of agency) 114, 165, 177, 179–184
loss of trust 165, 170, 171, 178, 184

madness studies 9, 209
masculinity 104, 136, 163, 229
medical humanities (critical medical humanities, health humanities) 9, 206
memory (remembering) 16–19, 24–25, 38, 43, 45, 47–49, 53, 57, 62, 67, 82, 91, 101, 114, 116, 134, 140, 142, 148, 162, 165–166, 169, 177–178, 184, 186–188, 190, 192, 194, 196–199, 201–202, 210, 212–213, 221, 239
metafiction (metafictional) 11, 13, 27, 34, 36, 77–78, 84, 89–90, 96–99, 102, 105, 109, 113, 134–135, 212–213, 215–216
mise-en-abyme 82, 113, 118–121
misogyny 85, 100, 103–108, 111–112, 119, 130, 135
misunderstanding 139, 150–151, 154, 157, 171; misreading 144, 151, 171, 234
modernism 8–11, 13, 15–22, 27, 30–34, 36, 38, 43, 48, 79, 151, 205, 208, 210, 213–214, 216, 218–219, 222
mood 19, 31, 53–54, 76–77, 89, 99, 116, 133, 139, 143, 146–147, 212, 219
murder 44–45, 49–50, 53–61, 64–66, 69–71, 74, 77, 120–121, 136, 220, 229
myths 149, 171–172, 174, 233, 235; *see also* cultural narratives; religious narratives

narrated monologue (free indirect discourse) 11, 15, 159, 180, 182, 209, 238
narrative foreclosure 169
narrative medicine 9, 206, 209
naturalism (naturalist literature) 32–33, 36, 45, 138–139, 150–151, 172, 219, 233, 237
New Woman (*femme fatale*) 33, 45, 74, 219, 220
norms 11, 21–22, 33, 39–44, 47, 56–57, 60–61, 66, 69, 73–75, 89, 101, 136, 154, 195, 205, 220–221, 229
"normal" 11, 13, 25–26, 29, 39, 51, 188–189, 194, 201–202

parody 37, 77, 85, 216, 228
pedophilia 38, 147, 216, 235
perception 10–14, 24–25, 28, 45–49, 53–60, 78, 97, 103, 112, 144, 165, 170, 177–178, 184–189, 202, 210, 229, 238–239
peripeteia 151, 158
phenomenology (phenomenological psychiatry, phenomenology of illness) 9, 15, 18–21, 27–28, 50, 54, 140, 173, 177–178, 184–185, 198, 202, 205–206, 209–201, 213, 219, 221–222, 238, 239
picaresque novel 88, 98
pleasure 16, 60–61, 63–74, 144, 223
postmodernism (postmodernist literature) 31, 36, 38, 208, 213–215, 218
proposition-negation 76, 84, 95, 107
psychoanalysis (psychoanalytical) 9, 20, 30, 33, 63, 73, 107, 120, 208, 213, 215, 216, 231, 233
psychological interpretation 26, 84, 97, 107, 113; *see also* diagnostic interpretation; folk psychiatry; folk psychology

https://doi.org/10.21435/sflit.13

psycho-narration (thought report) 11, 209
psychosis (psychotic) 14–16, 26, 39–40, 83, 90, 102–103, 113–114, 117, 119, 176–178, 182, 184–190, 193–195, 199, 202–204, 206, 211, 217, 238

queer 13, 21, 31, 33, 61, 65, 74, 215, 220, 224

rape 34–35, 40, 78, 92, 97, 102–104, 108–113, 115–121, 123, 125, 129, 133–135, 223, 230
realism (realist literature) 34, 36, 45, 55, 88, 90, 97, 138, 172, 219, 224, 227; anti-realistic; 107; unrealistic 101, 132
reading 22–29; affective and bodily response 23, 28, 30, 52, 72, 141–142, 194, 206; close reading 13, 22–23; frames of reading 13, 23, 25, 27, 38, 90, 101, 150, 173, 212, 235; *see also* ethics of reading; interpretive frames
religious discourses 173–174, 233, 235
religious narratives (myths) 149, 154, 161, 171–172, 235
rhetorical narratology 212
romanticism (romantic literature) 32–33, 58, 215, 219

schizoid personality 77, 89, 93, 96, 102, 108
schizophrenia 10, 11, 38–40, 175–176, 178, 202–203, 208, 211, 217, 238
self 8–9, 12–19, 27–28, 30, 44, 61, 73–74, 77, 89, 96, 98, 102, 114, 124, 131, 165, 175, 177–179, 202, 205, 208, 212–213, 216, 219, 224, 238; *see also* subject; subjectivity
self-understanding (self-knowledge) 10, 12, 47, 70, 150
sense of the possible 29; *see also* affordances
sexual abuse (sexual violence) 14, 37–38, 138, 144 –147, 158, 170, 173–174, 205, 235
sexuality 11, 21–22, 30–33, 36–37, 66, 69–70, 73, 89, 139, 148, 158, 160–161, 173, 194, 196, 198–199, 201–202, 206, 214 –216, 219–220, 224; sexual desire 44, 67, 69–70, 74, 164, 223–224
shame 32, 44, 45, 61, 66, 68–71, 117, 144–149, 161, 172–173, 177, 191, 194–199, 201–202, 215
solipsism 42, 52–59, 73, 98–99, 128–129, 223, 322
stigma (stigmatization) 10–11, 39, 44, 74, 176, 195, 202, 205, 209, 238
stream of consciousness (stream of thought) 18, 43, 48, 49, 62, 209, 220
subject 12, 16–17, 19, 21, 24, 28–30, 33, 41, 45, 63, 73, 75, 77, 138, 184, 191, 206, 219, 222–223, 238; *see also* subjectivity
subjectivity (selfhood) 10, 16–17, 22, 30, 33, 36, 43–44, 75, 77, 98, 129, 150, 163, 190, 216, 225; *see also* subject
sympathy 204 –205; *see also* empathy

taboo 37–38, 138, 140, 145, 147–148, 152, 154, 158, 163, 170–174, 198, 235
third-person narration 11–12, 176, 178, 180–184, 208, 209; figural third-person narration 21, 53, 210, 212, 238
tragedy (tragic) 31, 77, 139–140, 142, 144, 148, 150–151, 154, 158, 162, 165, 170, 173, 229, 234
transgression 13, 31–32, 37, 43–45, 60, 73–74, 102, 135, 138, 170, 193, 220
trauma (traumatic) 13–16, 21, 34, 38–41, 95 –96, 102, 117, 134–135, 138–141, 146–150, 158, 162, 164–165, 169–174, 177–178, 192, 199–202, 204–205, 207, 209–211, 216, 218, 234, 237–238; interpersonal trauma 39, 178

Umwelt 19; *see also* experiential world
uncertainty (undecidability) 35, 47, 55, 77, 79, 97, 103, 113, 128, 135, 140, 170–171, 173, 177, 179, 188; *see also* ambiguity
unconscious 11, 21, 30, 33, 61, 63–64, 73, 97, 106–107, 117, 119, 123, 140, 172, 219, 231; narrative unconscious 221
"unnatural narratology" 26, 49, 212, 213
unreadability (unreadable characters / minds) 27, 94, 132
unreliable narration (unreliability) 12, 14, 55, 79–80, 88, 98, 101–113, 119, 135, 173, 216, 221, 225, 229–230, 233, 238; fallible narration 12, 30, 103, 139–140, 221; untrustworthy narration 12, 103, 153, 221, 233; *see also* distance

https://doi.org/10.21435/sflit.13

violence 34–35, 38, 41, 65, 78–79, 104, 117–118, 122, 128–129, 134–136, 139–140, 173–174, 193, 201, 207, 211, 225–226, 230; *see also* crime; murder; rape; sexual abuse, war

war 15–16, 34–35, 92, 226
wonder 16, 27, 32, 50–51, 71–72, 74, 215

Übermensch 35, 99, 111, 113, 124, 153

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