

Contents

Prologue 9

1. Introduction 10

An Eternal Cinderella? 10

Selected Material 12

Earlier Writings on Helsinki in Finnish Literature 13

Real and Imagined Cities 14

Outline 15

2. Ways of Writing and Reading the City 17

Perspectives on the City in Literature 17

Dichotomies 18

Ambiguity 19

Metaphorizations of the City 20

Towards a Poetics of Movement 23

Trajectories through Space and Narrative 25

Focalization and the *Flâneur* 26

Walking as Enunciation 27

3. The Shock of Arrival. Expectations and First Impressions of the City 30

Arrival in the City in Juhani Aho's *Helsinkiin* (1889) 31

Mobility and the Degenerating City 34

The Young Man/Woman from the Province 38

Expectations and First Experiences of Helsinki 40

Competing Visions 40

Restlessness and Rootlessness 42

Arrival and the Paralyzing City 46

An Experience of Shock: Conclusion 49

Helsinki 1890–1918: A Short History 53

4. The Fateful Esplanade. The Stratification of Public Space 56

A Shorthand Expression for the City 57

A Male Bourgeois Ritual 60

The Gaze and the Right to the City in Eino Leino's *Jaana Rönty* (1907) 65

Jaana Rönty 66

Public Space – Public Women? 67
The Experience of Helsinki’s Public Space under the Aegis of the
“Frost Years” 70
The Esplanade as Agent Road 73
Uneasy Encounters 74
Traces of *Flânerie* Beyond the Esplanade 76

5. Experiences of a Metropolis in Motion. Changing and Disappearing
Helsinki 81

A Panoramic View of the City 82
Helsinki in Arvid Järnefelt’s *Venehøjalaiset* (1909) 86
A Novel about the Land Question 87
City of Sin: the Brothel Scene 88
Tentacular City 91
Helsinki in Transformation 92
Intimations of Apocalypse 96
Nocturnal Outing to the Fortress 97
“All culture is swaying, all forms are inverted” 100
The Whore of Babylon 106
Towards a Sense of Belonging 107
A Fully-fledged Helsinki Novel 111
Helsinki 1917–1940: A Short History 115

6. Aestheticizing the City. The Internalization of a New Helsinki 117

The Internalized Urban Experience in Mika Waltari’s *Suuri illusioini*
(1928) 118
City Archaeologies 124
Thoughts Breaking off in Mid-Sentence 129
The Nocturnal Car Drive 131
Aestheticizing “New Helsinki” and Helvi Hämäläinen’s *Säädyllinen
murhenäytelmä* (1941) 136
Helsinki as Urban Pastoral 142
Conclusion 145

7. Towards the Margins. Cumbersome Movement through the Urban
Fringes 147

Krokkelby in Joel Lehtonen’s *Rakastunut rampa* (1922) 148
Henkien taistelu (1933): the Margins of the City as Testing Ground 150
A Deformed Landscape 152
From Carnavalesque to Grotesque Landscape 153
“Like meat on a grill” 155
The Slaughterhouse 159
Mapping a Socially Divided City: Place Names 160
The Loss of the Centre 166
The Shop Window and the City as a “Bordello of Consumption” 167
The Centrifugal City 168
Hampered Mobility 171

A Divided City: Class and Gender	173
A Home in the Margins?	176
Conclusion	179
Notes	183
References	216
Primary Sources	216
Secondary Sources	219
Abstract	238
Index	239