



Arctic Hysteria and Other Strange Northern Emotions

Case Studies in Finnish Literature

Edited by

Riikka Rossi, Sarianna Kankkunen and Elise Nykänen

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Introduction to Arctic Hysteria in Finnish Literature

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Arctic Hysteria and Other Strange Emotions: Case Studies in Finnish Literature participates in a thriving area of research on the cultures of the North and the Arctic in the light of case studies in Finnish literature and emotions. The book addresses the cultural history of Arctic hysteria in the Finnish context in particular and maps emotions depicted and evoked in literature of the Finnish North in general. By focusing on the imagined North in the literature of modernism and late modernity, the contributions offer views to experiences of modernisation and the changing Northern environment; they ask how Finnish literature has reflected and re-imagined anxieties and hopes provoked by the effects of the Anthropocene.

Arctic hysteria, which is also known as *piblohtok*, *gievvat*, *kebovat*, *meryak* and *menerik*, is a myth of a culture-bound syndrome linked with many Northern cultures. The concept refers to an alleged hysterical condition that was believed to affect people living in the Arctic region in winter during the long periods of darkness and sub-zero temperatures. The idea of Arctic hysteria has fascinated numerous scientists, psychiatrists, anthropologists and artists since it was first referenced by researchers of Siberian shamanism in the 1860s and by early explorers of Greenland in the 1910s.¹ During the 'Arctic hysteria' attack, natives were reported to experience a sudden dissociative period of extreme excitement or extreme rage, tear off their clothes, run naked through the snow and scream during convulsive seizures, fall into trance and perform irrational or dangerous acts, followed by amnesia concerning the event. However, contemporary studies have shown that what has been called 'Arctic hysteria' is a catch-all rubric under which explorers lumped various anxiety reactions among the indigenous people (see Dick 1995, 1). More importantly, 'symptoms' of Arctic

1. The concept is first referenced in the study of Siberian Shamanism (Eliade 1951, 24) and later in the studies among the Inuit population in Canada (Dick 1995, 1) and the Skólt Sámi (Äimä 1932, 409).

hysteria were induced by stress reactions to colonialism; it was a concept reflecting obsessions of the Western explorers during the heyday of Freudian psychoanalysis.

Arctic hysteria as a culture-bound syndrome is a rejected theory in anthropology. However, it is not widely known that the concept has lived on in the Finnish cultural imagination. After the Second World War, Finnish modernist authors adopted the concept and expanded and redefined Arctic hysteria making it signal to the whole cultural mentality of the nation. Some contemporary authors have reinterpreted the term positively and turned it into a source of artistic creativity and unique identity. In this approach, Arctic hysteria has been transformed into an ambivalent, sometimes even a positive emotion, mood or condition and its uniqueness can be seen as reflecting the general strangeness of some other emotions and moods typical of Finnish literature. Now that contemporary Finnish literature has begun to imagine entirely different futures and emotions for the North and the Arctic area, irreparably changed by anthropogenic climate change, it is relevant to examine its past and present environmental emotions.

The concept of 'Arctic hysteria' is known in Finnish scholarship especially due to Markku Ihonen's illuminating article 'Arktisen hysterian äärellä' [Towards Arctic Hysteria] (1999). For Ihonen, Arctic hysteria is a culturally produced construct that has shaped Finnish literature since the late 19th century. As noted by Ihonen, the tradition of Arctic hysteria is not geographically limited to the literary portrayals of the Arctic region. Rather, the tradition expands and displays communities living in harsh weather conditions in Central and Eastern Finland, Ostrobothnia and Finnish Lapland. According to Ihonen (1999, 231), the poetics of contrasting light and darkness, guilt and anxiety, death and suicide, social and social-economic isolation, impulsive sexuality and religious abuse of power culminate in post-war modernist works. From the very beginning, 'Arctic hysteria' has carried ambivalent political implications. Historically it has involved a keen outside interest in Sámi culture, revivalist Laestadian movement and 'hysterical' behaviour of women in the Finnish North. Sanna Karkulehto insightfully reflects on the return of these topics in the contemporary fiction of the 21st century in her article 'Pohjoinen puhuu taas' [North Speaks Again] (2010), focusing on the literary history of the Finnish North. The ironic rewriting of the earlier tradition results in fiction, which is grotesque and dark yet celebrates the Northern mentality of survival.

While these important analyses have inspired our approach, the affective effects and multiple manifestations of Arctic hysteria in Finnish literature have not been thoroughly examined. In this volume, we focus on Finnish fictions that explicitly or implicitly tie with the concept of Arctic hysteria and its cultural history yet we dig deeper to map and identify its various versions and narrative functions and study the political and environmental dimensions invested in the concept. Moreover, the selected case studies provide views to other related conceptions of Finnish cultural mentality such as melancholia, loneliness and anxiety in Finnish literature. Through the lens of recent studies in literature and emotion, attention is directed to poetic, rhetoric and narrative strategies of depicting and triggering emotions, affects and moods in texts. For instance, we explore the ways in which a comforting or alienating sense of anxiety or an ecstatic mood is generated in Finnish literature. The chapters provide views to nuanced affects and feelings manifested by the fictional characters when living in the Northern habitat and to historical emotion cultures in the region.

By studying how Finnish literature has depicted and evoked emotions related to Northern living environments characterised by cold, darkness, ice and winter weather, the book participates in the research on the imagined North by extending the study of the discourses of the North to experientiality and emotions. 'The imagined North' is itself a multifaceted concept. As Daniel Chartier (2018, 12) has defined, it refers to a plural and shifting discursive system, produced both outside and inside the Arctic and subarctic literatures and cultures and which functions in a variable manner according to the contexts of enunciation and reception. The ideas of the North are not limited to the North as a region, but fiction can also create temporary Norths or alternative imaginary geographies that envision elements of the Arctic, such as cold, snow, ice and darkness, outside the real-world North. Furthermore, as representations these imagined communities and narrated spaces can affect how the real North and its peoples are felt and perceived.

The understanding of the North as a relational concept, and the idea of the imagined North as a discourse created by cultural artefacts provide a starting point for the present study. However, our interest lies in the affective aspects of this system and of literary texts produced both outside and inside the Arctic and subarctic regions. We study the ways in which the idea of the North itself has been shaped by and reflected various emotions and feelings evoked in literary texts. Our approach has been inspired by the research on literature and emotions, that has in recent years become a flourishing field in literary studies. It draws from interdisciplinary research on emotion and uses multiple tools and methods. Affective aspects of texts are multi-layered. The objects of study range from words of emotion and the narrators' and characters' emotions to affective atmospheres in texts; this is usually called the textual tone or mood (Ngai 2005). Research on readers' emotional responses to texts and the study of narrative empathy have also been key approaches in this field (Keen 2007; Hogan 2010).

Moreover, the study of emotions and texts covers their social and cultural impact. In recent years, many scholars have argued that emotions themselves should not be regarded only as psychological states but also as social and cultural practices. Emotions are not 'in' either the individual or the social but they are produced in and shaped by the interaction between the individual and the society (e.g., Ahmed 2004). Culturally encoded emotion discourses can provide available grammars and vocabularies for language speakers and trigger ritualised ways of expressing emotions or even develop into automatised cognitive habits (see Reddy 2001) and circulate in cultures over generations that are adopted in 'emotional communities', to use Barbara Rosenwein's (2006; 2016) concept. In this view, the study of the imagined North and emotions extends to what Sara Ahmed (2004) has called the cultural politics of emotions: what do emotions do in societies and how have they shaped the cultures in which people live?

Historical Imaginations of the North in Europe

Northern regions and peoples have inspired writers, artists, philosophers and geographers both within and outside the North since Antiquity (e.g., Chartier 2018; Davidson 2005; Hansson and Norberg 2009; Briens 2016; Hansson et al. 2017).

Previous research already implies that cold regions have been characterised as places where many desires and fears are evoked (Spufford 1996; Davidson 2005; Halink 2019). Historically, discourses of the North have included an aspect of environmental psychology by suggesting that the Northern climate and the environment have a major effect on how its inhabitants think, feel and act.² Already ancient geographers believed that climatic conditions had a major effect on the emotions and cultures of peoples and persistent discourses on the South and the North as well as the East and the West were initiated already in Antiquity. The rugged and barbaric North also served as the antipode of the more civilised South in later cultural imaginations in the Middle Ages; later, the discursive opposition was sometimes strengthened by real encounters between the representatives of the formal Southern and more informal Northern courts. The area of Scandinavia was considered as even more peripheral, mystical and less known than Germany (see Stadius 2005, 29–31). As part of the Swedish empire until 1809, Finland was seldom, if ever, mentioned as a separate geographical or cultural area.

The era of Romanticism was a cultural game changer for the North because writers, philosophers and other thinkers in Germany and elsewhere began to imagine the region in more positive terms: as having unique national cultures and mythologies that differed positively from the classical, pan-European traditions that originated in the South. The discourse of the North developed in new directions (Halink 2019, 2–3). For instance, for Madame de Staël (1800, 162–164), the North was a realm of melancholic, contemplative emotions that differed from the more active and joyous emotions of the sunny and warm South. As the climate and the environment were seen as producing differences in emotions, the approach appears as an early form of environmental psychology that examines how the surroundings affect the human psyche. In general, Romanticism was a very significant intellectual and literary movement for Finland since it helped the writers and thinkers to create the idea of and imagery for the Finnish nation once the area had been separated from Sweden in 1809 and annexed by Russia as an autonomous Grand Duchy. The Romantic discourse of the melancholic North is also presented as an expression in the Finnish national epic, the *Kalevala*, created by Elias Lönnrot, in the mournful, passive emotions of its lachrymose heroes (see Isomaa and Kankkunen 2022).

At the same time, the sublime and the Picturesque played a particular role in the Romantic version of the North and in the perceptual baggage with which nineteenth-century explorers and travellers travelled the globe. The feelings of the sublime offered techniques of adaptation and masked terror in environments that could include real-life dangers and disastrous consequences for the explorers (MacLaren 1985, 89). The nineteenth-century Romantic and Decadent authors in particular, from Edgar Allan Poe to H. C. Andersen and Charles Baudelaire, engaged with a way of writing about the North as an extreme and mysterious space at the end of the world (e.g., Davidson 2005). In the Romantic context, the North frequently involves a risk of being lost in the wilderness, overcome by darkness and snow, eaten by bears or

2. This aspect has been re-considered in recent environmentalist or ecocritical approaches, which have reconsidered how the contemporary literature of the North depicts and reflects climate change and re-imagines the relationships between humans and nature (e.g., Körber et al. 2017; Lahtinen 2013; Perkiömäki 2021).

wolves, losing the sunlight, numbed by the kiss of the Snow Queen or confronted by the merciless whiteness of the permafrost. For Baudelaire's traveller in *Spleen de Paris* (1869), the lands from Tornio to the Northern Pole represented "the counterfeits of Death". However, for the traveller, life at the North Pole appears monotonous and approaches nothingness, since instead of variety, the milieu is characterised only by the slow alternation of light and darkness, the only break and entertainment being the sparkling light of the aurora borealis that the speaker associates with Hell's fireworks.³ In Baudelaire's imagination, the North is both serene and strangely unsettling.

The idea of the imagined North is perhaps best known through colonial travelogues and the Romantic dark North narratives on the unknown Arctic. Recent postcolonial approaches to the imagined North have shifted the focus from the exoticised outside perspective to the inside view. Imaginations of the North tend to reflect power relationships between the centre and periphery and between the dominant groups in the South and indigenous peoples in the North (e.g., Ridanpää 2005; Carlsson et al. 2010; Briens 2016). The concept of 'Borealism', which is a re-formulation of Edward Saïd's renowned 'Orientalism', has been developed to illustrate how the idea of the exotic North has been produced especially in the Central-European cultural discourses. The difference between the 'inside' and 'outside' views to the North is naturally not straightforward or binary but rather a layered system of power relationships. As Chartier (2018, 10) notes, Scandinavian or Nordic imaginations of the North usually situate between the inside and outside perspectives. While Nordic literature provides views to the experiences of the inhabitants of the North and the Arctic region, the outside perspective is sometimes circulated and consolidated within the Nordic literature itself (Chartier 2018, 10). This perspective extends to Finnish literary imaginations of the North. A complex of internal power relationships between the South and the North of Finland, centre and periphery, Finnish and the Indigenous Sámi population, is also discernible in the Finnish-language corpus of the present study. This aspect will be reflected in the case studies in more detail.

The Paths of Arctic Hysteria in Finnish Literature

In Finnish literature, the myth of Arctic hysteria and its various versions can be traced back to post-war modernist literature in particular. In Finland, the concept gained general acceptance through Finnish anthropologists and linguists in the 1920s and 1930s. Sakari Pälsi (1882–1965), a Finnish anthropologist, explorer and author, used Arctic hysteria in his travel narrative *Tukkimetsistä ja uittopuroilta* [From Timber Forests and Log Streams] (1923), which describes the working life of Finnish lumberjacks in the logging industry of Finnish Lapland. In this work, Pälsi used the concept of Arctic hysteria to illustrate the nervousness and quick-tempered nature that he attached to the population of Finnish Lapland in general. The concept was also used by a Finnish linguist Frans Äimä (1875–1936) in his study on the Skolt Sámi

3. The idea of the North as a frightening realm of death and night is indeed characteristic of many outside imaginations of the North. From the *Old Testament* to the *Kalevala*, the evil comes from the North. Even the ancient Aztecs associated the North with night, war, death and Hell (Chevrel 1999, 15).

language (1932). Especially through Pääksi's studies, the concept became popularised and began to circulate in the Finnish press. In the 1930s and 1940s, the term was used to refer to Finnish and Northern cultural mentality in general and to describe intense, emotional outbursts in various contexts ranging from the political in socialism to the religious in various practices of the pietistic movements of the North.⁴

After the Second World War, the concept of Arctic hysteria was extended to designate the whole cultural atmosphere of the nation. Marko Tapio (1924–1973), the author of the novel series *Arktinen hysteria* 1–2 [Arctic Hysteria 1–2] (1967–1968) was the first to explicitly adopt the notion to explain the nation's destructive path to the civil war in 1918. Tapio's definition of Arctic hysteria can be found in his 1958 article before he began writing his series. In Tapio's work, the term, which Pääksi and Äimä elaborated from the early indigenous studies to explain the imagined polar temperament of the peoples living in the Finnish Arctic region, was transformed into a myth of Finnish mentality. According to the author's vision, every Finn carried the seeds of Arctic hysteria in them, even though the condition manifested only in those individuals whose mental or physical 'weaknesses' were revealed in the extreme weather or social conditions of the North:

Arctic hysteria is not a disease. We don't know what it really is. It is melancholia that doesn't know any limits when it is set free. A man of few words stays happy and peaceful for months, sometimes even for years, sometimes even for decades, but then, all of a sudden, he starts to drink and continues drinking until he collapses, starts it rapidly, roams furious and restless in his neighborhoods, rants and raves, talks endlessly, explains his whole life, sad. In other words: he burns. Till the very end. [– –] Every so often, [this] extreme phenomenon appears in that region: that's arctic hysteria. Its outbursts reach utmost extremes and no means of self-control can contain them. (Cit. Palm 1995, 124.)

While the concept is heavily charged with a racist history of colonisation, even fascism in Tapio's case, Arctic hysteria has been a term used in Finnish literary studies to denote a strand of post-war modernist literature. Ever since the concept of Arctic hysteria was introduced in the literary field, it has sparked cultural controversy and self-reflective criticism. Even before the publication of Tapio's *Arktinen hysteria* novels, Northern authors and scholars addressed the complexities of regional cultural politics, gender politics, economic exploitation and the social marginalisation of Northern regions and religious-spiritual traditions, including Sámi culture. Other Lapland

4. Previous research has drawn attention to the circulation of ideas of *sisu*, which is often called the Finnish national emotion, in the 1920s and 1930s. The concept, as difficult to translate as it is, can be understood as a form of perseverance, which has both negative and positive connotations (see Tepora 2012). The Northern environment, including long periods of darkness and sub-zero temperatures, is unfavourable, even lethal to many organisms and requires special capacities of adaptation (Michel et al. 2021). In a positive sense, *sisu* has been attached to capacities of adaptation and survivalism in extreme conditions: to a feeling of finding energy in the moment more than about long-term endurance, goal setting and achievement or to surpass one's preconceived limitations by accessing stored-up energy reserves (Lahti 2019). Recently, however, the connotations and ideas related to *sisu* have become pejorative again, as have many other national symbols; *sisu* has inspired proponents of right-wing nationalism and it has been used in an extreme right political context in Finland.

authors, such as Annikki Kariniemi (1913–1984), who the press called the ‘priestess of sex’, were suspected of exoticising and marginalising Lapland and the Sámi people in their portrayal of the global North. As noted by Ihonen (1999), the representations of Arctic hysteria have circulated among Northern authors and different literary traditions; thus, they take distance from the naturalist, dark ‘realism’ or nature neo-romanticism of post-war Lapland literature, not to mention the Sámi tradition.

The new forms of Arctic hysteria have extended into realms of gloomy fantasy, imagination and dream in both serious and humorous forms. On the other hand, Finnish writers Rosa Liksom (b. 1958) and Miki Liukkonen (1989–2023) have used the concept in a positive sense, to refer to resistance to the norms and ideals of civilisation and for the concept’s potential for self-reflection, parody and creativity (see Liukkonen 2020). Contemporary authors Tommi Liimatta (b. 1976) and Hanna Hauru (1978–2021) continue to comment on and re-assess the post-war literary tradition of far Lapland, either in a humorous or raw, matter-of-fact style. Readers’ interests in primitive myth, shamanism and sexual or neurotic excesses are also the subject of modernist or contemporary authors who deal with issues of social injustice, religious ecstasy and sexual abuse by aesthetically distancing these topics or seeking relief through humour.

However, it is important to note that although Finnish-language authors have found in Arctic hysteria even carnivalesque material for self-parody, in the Sámi context the term reminds people of its colonial history. In his pamphlet for the Sámi people *Terveisiä Lapista* (1971 transl. *Greetings from Lapland* 1983), Nils-Aslak Valkeapää lists the term as one of the pejorative notions used to describe the indigenous peoples. Niillas Holmberg (b. 1990) is one of the contemporary Sámi authors who convey the painful effects of colonisation, modernisation and climate catastrophe on today’s Sámi lifestyle and culture (Mattila 2022) yet do not use the term.

From Loneliness to Eco-anxiety

In order to provide a nuanced view to emotions and the imagined North in Finnish prose fiction and essay-writing, this volume considers various aspects and dimensions of evoking emotions. The chapters map the emotions of the fictional characters and narrators and challenge the notion of Arctic hysteria (see e.g., the chapter on contemporary dystopia by Saija Isomaa and Kaisa Kortekallio) or analyse its parodic potential (see the chapter on Rosa Liksom by Elise Nykänen, Sarianna Kankkunen and Charlotte Coutu). The real readers’ responses to melancholic fiction (see Anna Ovaska’s chapter) question how Finnish literature has shaped emotional communities and antimodern thought (e.g., Antti Ahmala’s chapter) and what kind of affective styles and ideas of emotions are invested in this corpus of texts. The role of tone, affective atmospheres and moods depicted and created in texts forms one key issue that is discussed in several chapters (e.g., chapters by Elise Nykänen, Riikka Rossi and Sarianna Kankkunen). Various aspects of literary texts, from words of emotions to descriptions of objects to narrative points of view and stylistic aspects are important in creating moods in texts and trigger emotional effects in the reader.

In chapter II 'Loneliness, Solitude and Northern Melancholies', Elise Nykänen examines existential loneliness, its affective styles and effects in Finnish prose fiction from the early stages of modernisation to late modernity and beyond. Beginning with Juhani Aho's neo-romantic, Decadent novella *Yksin* [Alone] (1890), Finnish authors have contemplated the pleasures and pains of lonesome melancholia, considered a symptom of modernisation. Aho's work invites readers to feel with and share the narrator's sorrowful moods of homesickness as he travels to the metropole of Paris. In Marko Tapio's book series *Arktinen hysteria 1–2*, the young nation's turn to industrial modernisation involves both aversion and enchantment, resonating with the first-person narrator's ethically estranging fixation with authoritarian and fascist ideas. In his novels, Tapio adopts the myth of Arctic hysteria to study the violent histories between families escalating since the Finnish Civil War in 1918. The lone wolf's rant lures in readers with a combination of extreme emotion and passive indifference, which trigger aversion in an alert reader. In Rosa Liksom's internationally acclaimed novella *Hytti nro 6* (2011, transl. *Compartment No. 6* 2014), the seemingly neutral narration evokes estranging amusement and sympathy for the solitary female protagonist. The grinding encounter between a lonesome Finnish girl and a Soviet ex-prisoner on a Trans-Siberian train embodies the violent past of Finland under Russian domination and the Northern nation's imagined prehistory in Mongolia.

In chapter III 'An Upstart Nation: the Finnish National Character and Modernity in the Writings of Pentti Linkola and Timo Hännikäinen's *Hysterian maa*', Antti Ahmala addresses the interpretation of the Finnish national character and the effects of modernity on the Finnish psyche as presented in the essays of Pentti Linkola (1932–2020) and Timo Hännikäinen (b. 1979), two antimodern cultural critics. Linkola's radical ecological antimodernism involves the idea that technological and material progress is destructive for both the environment and for the Finnish people's mental and physical well-being. Ahmala pays special attention to Linkola's negative views of the working class and its banal, materialistic values that according to Linkola have become dominant in all areas of Finnish society at the turn of the 21st century. Ahmala examines Hännikäinen's essayistic literary study *Hysterian maa* [Land of Hysteria] (2013), which offers an analysis and interpretation of Marko Tapio's two *Arktinen hysteria* novels (1967–1968). Ahmala shows how Hännikäinen's reading of Tapio and the myth of Arctic hysteria resonates with Hännikäinen's own far-right antimodern thought. Hännikäinen's cultural antimodernism involves a large canon of literary influences stretching from 19th century French antimodern writers to Oswald Spengler, Linkola and Michel Houellebecq, among others. In Hännikäinen's interpretation, Arctic hysteria as it is depicted by Tapio represents the primitive and dark side of Finnishness, an integral part of the national character that despite its destructive potential should not be the source of shame but rather celebrated. The chapter relates Linkola's and Hännikäinen's thought to the history of Western antimodernism. Ahmala also discusses the two authors as public characters and influential figures for today's Finnish far and extreme right movements.

In chapter IV 'Ecstasy and Ecstatic Techniques in Timo K. Mukka's *Maa on syntinen laulu* and *Kyyhky ja Unikko*', Riikka Rossi investigates ecstasy both as a topic and a style of literary representation. The long-lived cultural myth of the Arctic as a dark, melancholic realm of death and destruction is both affirmed and re-assessed in her chapter on ecstasy in Mukka's ballad novels *Maa on syntinen laulu* [The Earth

is a Sinful Song] (1964) and *Kyyhky ja Unikko* [The Dove and the Poppy] (1970). She shows that Mukka's depictions of the ecstasy of the characters, narrators and poem speakers frequently pairs with the ecstatic qualities of his texts. Cumulative energy typical of ecstasy is increased by affective intensifiers such as oxymorons and upsetting images of force and aggression; fusion-increasing techniques such as parallelism and phonetic patterning add a sense of dissolution of borders. In line with Tapio's manner of rhetorically putting the careless reader under the spell of his words, Mukka's 'trance-inducing' techniques of enchantment decrease rather than increase the potential ethical awareness related to feeling with controversial narrators and characters. Using multiple poetic and rhetoric devices, Mukka's novel generates the emotional effects of ecstasy, targeted to the implied reader to produce high intensity, pleasure and fusion by loosening the reader's sense of control and rational faculties. The ecstatic qualities of Mukka's texts distract the reader to feel aesthetically elated in responding to those narrative elements which, in their celebration of painful passion and female sacrifice, may also emerge as ethically disturbing.

In chapter V 'Emotion, Space and Gendered Nation in Rosa Liksom's *Everstinna*', Elise Nykänen, Sarianna Kankkunen and Charlotte Coutu return to Liksom's oeuvre by analysing *Everstinna* (2017, transl. *The Colonel's Wife* 2019), a fictional autobiography based on the imagined life of Lapland author Annikki Kariniemi. In their reading of the affectively endearing, engaging narration of Liksom's novel Nykänen, Kankkunen and Coutu show how narrative form, drawing from the myth of Arctic hysteria, evokes readerly responses, such as ecstasy or ethical estrangement that are familiar from the earlier literary tradition of Arctic hysteria. The affective intimacy of the first-person narrative in the novel blurs the clear distinctions between right and wrong as the narrator-monologist, fascinated by domesticated ideas of fascism, invites readers on her journey of healing and reconciliation after her violent marriage to a Finnish colonel and sexual re-awakening with an underage Sámi lover. On the other hand, Liksom's work embarks on geographical and spatial reformulation of the association between violence and the North. Through her ecstatic encounters with northern wetlands, the protagonist gradually outgrows her extreme nationalist ideas and religious upbringing. The stirring effects of the text arise from norm-breaking emotional expression as regards gender, sexuality, nationality, ethnic minorities and social class. The chapter demonstrates how Liksom uses parody, satire and hyperbole in her carnivalistic work to offer a counter-narrative to early, violent portrayals of Arctic hysteria, including female victimhood and masculinist narratives of the gendered nation: the Maiden Finland, who is forced to repeatedly surrender to military attacks, destruction and (domestic) violence.

In chapter VI 'The Sense of November: Strange Emotions and Entanglements of the Self and the World in Tove Jansson's *Sent i november* (1970, transl. *Moominvalley in November* 1971), a different sense of melancholy is explored. In her analysis, Anna Ovaska examines the last book in Jansson's Moomin series, which readers have found both melancholic and consoling. In readers' experience, the strange atmosphere of the book is tied to the absence of the Moomin family, denoting their parting at the series' ending. In dialogue with prior academic and non-academic readings of flesh and blood readers, Ovaska states that the strangeness of the affective states Jansson conveys in her book involve the way her characters' mental and physical being is entangled with and shaped by the changing natural environment. These entanglements produce

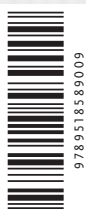
the 'sense of November': it is both the distressing feeling of anxiety and gloomy mood and the need to seek shelter and comfort that are evoked by the change in environment and in one's embodied being. For readers, the book itself can function as what Ovaska calls 'affective scaffolding': the book shapes its readers emotions and helps them to cope with the winter darkness. Especially the metafictional features of the novel emphasise the theme of creativity as well as the aesthetic frame that creates a sense of safety and potentially alleviates the experiences of sorrowful loss of summer, even winter depression.

In chapter VII 'On the Edge: Spatial and Emotional Extremes in Finnish Contemporary Prose Fiction', Sarianna Kankkunen studies entanglements of emotion and space in three Finnish contemporary novels: Ulla-Lena Lundberg's *Is* (2012, transl. *Ice* 2016), Tommi Liimatta's *Autarktis* [Autarctic] (2017) and Hanna Hauru's *Jääkansi* [Deck of Ice] (2017). The novels take their readers to spaces and communities that hover far away from the centres of power or that remain close yet are hard to reach such as the outer archipelago in the South-West (Lundberg) and Finnish Lapland in the North (Liimatta and Hauru). In her study of the geography of emotions, Kankkunen shows how the spatial understanding of emotion, seeing emotions as socially shared and spatially mediated, can significantly broaden the examination of literary works and the effects of the emotions they evoke in readers. Many fears involving space, as shown already by the case of *Sent i november* are, in fact, related to the presence or absence of other living beings. As noted by Kankkunen, the true challenge in Northern or Arctic peripheries is not coldness but isolation and distance, which trigger extremes in emotion, thought and action. All three Finnish contemporary novels invite their readers to pay attention to how they feel and narrate spaces around them. In Lundberg's *Is*, the Finland-Swedish islanders' sensitivity towards weather and landscape is a recurring theme in the narrative, reflecting the animistic worldview of the oral folk tradition and premodern communities. Liimatta's *Autarktis*, in turn, gives voice for three men of the underclass of Lapland peripheries from three generations, united only by their spatial coordinates. Hauru's *Jääkansi* emphasises pain and painful contacts between the human subject and the surrounding non-human nature in the portrayal of the neglect, the violence and extreme poverty of the female protagonist's childhood in post-war Finland. In an otherwise emotionally distant narrative, the intimacy between the feeling subject and surrounding wilderness stages the importance of bodily and tactile sensation and the way wilderness can invade the human subject.

In the concluding chapter VIII 'Negative Environmental Emotions in 21st century Finnish fiction', Saija Isomaa and Kaisa Kortekallio examine contemporary Finnish apocalyptic and climate fiction that imagines contemporary or future worlds where the ecological condition has worsened due to unsustainable human activities. Their chapter analyses the effects of environmental change on the human psyche as they are portrayed in *Memory of Water* (2014) by Emmi Itäranta, *Korpisoturi* [Wilderness Warrior] (2016) by Laura Gustafsson, *Lupa* [Promise] (2018) by Emma Puikkonen and *Maa joka ei koskaan sulaa* [The Land That Never Melts] (2021) by Inkeri Markkula. Isomaa and Kortekallio claim that some of the characters' responses to anthropogenic climate change resemble the kind of extreme emotions and symptoms of psychosis that could have been perceived as Arctic hysteria by previous generations.

This volume opens a new perspective on the thriving area of research on the imagined North by studying emotions in the light of case studies in Finnish literature. It addresses the cultural history of Arctic hysteria and maps other strange emotions depicted and evoked in literature of the Finnish North. The case studies range from the works of internationally renowned authors, such as Rosa Liksom, Emmi Itäranta and Tove Jansson, to the affectively controversial and provocative writings of Timo K. Mukka, Marko Tapio and Pentti Linkola. By focusing on the imagined North in the literature of modernism and late modernity, the authors offer fresh views on experiences of modernisation and the changing Northern environment in the age of the Anthropocene.

The book is intended for scholars and students in literary studies, together with everyone interested in the imagined North and emotion, Finnish literature and culture.



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