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Forging a master narrative for a nation: Finnish history as a script during the Second World War

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ABSTRACT

In our article, we study how Finnish historians produced historical texts to be applied inside the Finnish army to give lessons, speeches, and informal talks to the rank-and-file soldiers during two periods: first during the Winter War of 1939–40 and then in the last stages of the Continuation War in 1944. Employing narratological methodology to this task, we examine the purposeful construction of a master narrative of the national past by telling the story of ‘Finland’ and the ‘Finnish people’ in their perpetual, existential fight against Russia. We approach the history texts as emergent scripts that were offered to the particular audience of soldiers so that they would internalize the historical framework of their current situation and experiences. The history texts underline the inevitable continuity and teleology of Finnish history. This is done by constructing a vast historical context into which the hardships of the present moment are embedded through repeating crucial past images and analogues, which reserved the role of sufferer and experiencer for the Finnish people. The historians’ wartime accounts offer a case where the master narrative is purposefully built and propagated under official auspices.

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Introduction

For any modern country, a state of war necessitates strong cohesive narratives that legitimize the use of violence, give meaning to irreversible losses, and enhance continuity and joint prospects in the midst of insecurity. These narratives are inherently political, as they address and define the collective community at war. They are also ideological, touching upon questions of national self-image and its others.¹ Used as a depiction of the (national) past that explains the present and points towards the future, history has been a useful resource in constructing these narratives. Nevertheless, the common way of studying historiography vis-à-vis the nation’s wars has been a retrospective one; to examine how historians have narrated past wars to define present-day national identities and memory politics.² We have the reverse perspective, as we study the application of history in Finland *during* the Second World War.

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In 1939–45, Finland participated in three distinctly different wars. In the Winter War (late November 1939 to mid-March 1940), the country was invaded by the Soviet Union and fought alone to retain its independence. In the so-called Continuation War (June 1941 to September 1944), Finland was a co-belligerent with National Socialist Germany and occupied large areas of Soviet (East) Karelia. Signing an armistice in the autumn of 1944, Finland was obliged to drive out the German troops that were positioned in the northern parts of the country. This so-called Lapland War finally ended in April 1945. These different wars and their various stages required the flexible use of narrative strategies to make sense of the changing situation. However, there was considerable continuity in Finnish war propaganda, which sought to uphold the image of a small democratic state fighting for its existence and independence. The most radical deviation to this narrative happened in 1941, when the Finnish-German 'brotherhood-in-arms' and the looming Soviet defeat created a heightened, aggressive pathos of 'Greater Finland' and anticipated a 'final victory' over the 'eternal archenemy' to the east. In official public rhetoric, this tone was soon tempered or altogether forbidden as the prospect of an imminent German victory faded and the Finns tried to preserve their strained diplomatic relations with the United States.³

The most prominent Finnish historians of the 1930s had an important role in the wartime propaganda work and scholarly duties that supported the war effort. These historians included professors Jalmari Jaakkola (1885–1964), Einar W. Juva (1892–1966), and Arvi Korhonen (1890–1967), as well as future professors Eino Jutikkala (1907–2006) and Pentti Renvall (1907–1974). The most (in)famous case of state-sponsored 'applied historiography' was the employment of historians in 1941 to produce arguments for the expansion of the Finnish territory further to the east. On the eve of Operation Barbarossa, President Risto Ryti commissioned Jalmari Jaakkola to lead a scholarly task force to justify Finnish claims for eastward expansion. The work was published under Jaakkola's name and translated into German as *Die Ostfrage Finnlands* (1941). Furthermore, Ryti commissioned Jutikkala to author a similar work together with geographer Väinö Auer: this book was published only in German under the title *Finnlands Lebensraum* (1941).⁴ These books served the obvious geopolitical trends in Finland's relation to the forthcoming new order of a German-dominated Europe. In addition, historians also published Finnish-language monographies and articles to validate political and ideological aims before and during the Finnish-Soviet Continuation War of 1941–44.⁵

The history of wartime propaganda, information warfare, and censorship has been one of the most studied subjects in the Finnish historiography of the Second World War. Many of these works have also noted the high relevance of historical argumentation in explaining, motivating, and justifying the changing politics of war, and, for example, creating stereotypical enemy images and national identities to boost the war effort. Here, history was used and applied by a number of non-historians: journalists, information officials, authors, priests, military officers, and so on.⁶ Wartime was readily experienced as a historical period, or at least it was easily narrated in historical terms. This is the background for our study on the employment of historical narratives inside the Finnish army.

Research question, approach, and sources

The article at hand is connected to earlier research on the history of historiography and history of Finnish war propaganda, but our methodological approach and our empirical case in point are different. We study how historians produced historical texts to be applied inside the Finnish army to give lessons, speeches, and informal talks to the rank-and-file soldiers. This was a more subtle practice of using history than publishing books or articles; it was also aimed at a specific audience. The idea that these texts would be used as outlines for various kinds of history talks makes them interesting as applicable scripts and curated storytelling,⁷ and thus fruitful for narratological analysis. They also raise a curious question: why did history lessons gain such a prominent role in the Finnish army's internal propaganda work in the first place? Why was it considered relevant to tell soldiers stories about distant and abstract events from the past?⁸

Our empirical material comprises texts produced by Finnish historians to be used in the army's propaganda work in two periods: first during the Winter War of 1939–40 and then in the last stages of the Continuation War in 1944. At both times, Finland as a war-waging country was under serious threat and faced great uncertainty about its future – and so they pose a different context for historical narratives than the summer and autumn of 1941, when 'history' seemed to be on Finland's side. The study of these two periods at the beginning and end of Finnish participation in the Second World War is also well-suited to observe possible changes and continuities in the use of history. Although produced by individual historians, the texts under scrutiny can be considered state-sponsored, authoritative narrations of national history. They were commissioned, distributed, and applied by the state and its officials in the army. We will thus approach them as guidelines that were offered to the particular audience of soldiers so that the men would internalize the historical framework of their current situation and, ideally, align their personal experiences to this national context and transgenerational historical timeline.⁹ We study this process as a case of the purposeful construction of a national master narrative. In recent narrative studies, master narratives have usually been thematized as pre-existing cultural, structural resources, while the actual processes of generating and forging master narratives have received inadequate attention.

Our research task is thus inextricably linked to the question of narrativity and history. Hayden White has famously criticized historiography due to its unavoidable connection with narration. He suggests that narrativity in fiction and history is connected to 'the impulse to moralize'.¹⁰ Herman Paul, in his favourable account of White's thought, emphasizes the way White challenged 'the boundary between history and fiction'.¹¹ However, the study of the relationship between history-writing and narrativity would benefit from a more nuanced understanding of what constitutes fictionality. Contemporary narratologists approach the issue from two different perspectives. Those who follow Dorrit Cohn look for the 'signposts of fictionality', discursive choices that mark a text as fiction (such as the character's ability to account for the thoughts of a third person).¹² For others, fictionality is primarily connected to communicative intent.¹³ Neither of these interpretations follows White's formalism, where fictionality grows directly from narrativity itself.

Similarly, by rejecting White's formalism, we also question his endeavour to characterize all historiography as narration. If fictionality depends on the particular narrative choices (Cohn) or the marked intent of the narrator, we have reasons to look more closely

at the particular, ideological-cum-fictional uses of history in war propaganda. For example, narratologist Monika Fludernik challenges even the idea of the narrative character of history-writing. For her, historiography rather exhibits 'zero-level narrativity' due to the marginal role of experiencing consciousness in historical accounts.¹⁴ However, Fludernik's notion is conceptual and does not indicate the ideological or political innocence of historiography or narratives. Her point is to challenge the causally tight, plot-driven understanding of narrative¹⁵ and to emphasize the central role of experientiality for prototypical narratives. In postclassical narratology, the conception of narrative has in general moved further away from the closure-centred theories resorted to by White. Elsewhere, Fludernik (2000) discusses the difference between narrative and argumentative text types. Neither of these text types needs to exist in a pure form, since a narrative text can include various argumentative parts and vice versa. A professional historical account, even when it can be understood as a narrative representation, needs to contain argumentation about relevant documents, sources, and testimonies, as well as explanatory argumentation to interpret these sources.¹⁶ The state-sponsored historical narratives we discuss in this paper deviate, in a qualitative way, from these standards of historiography by omitting the argumentative part entirely and simply telling 'how it happened'.

The concept of script is relevant to our approach. Originally, cognitive psychologists Roger Schank and Robert Abelson suggested the existence of different cognitive schemas that orient our everyday action.¹⁷ 'Frames' provide atemporal rules of orientation ('this is an article for a scholarly journal'), whereas 'scripts' outline a conventional, expected sequence of events, and 'a plan' fashions intended further steps of action. The famous and strongly culture-dependent example of scripts outlines a visit to a restaurant as a series of expected stages. Similarly, publishing in a scholarly journal can also be depicted as a sequence, from a call for papers, sending an abstract and a manuscript, receiving reviews, making revisions, to having the article accepted and finally published. Psychologist Jerome Bruner maintains that our knowledge about cultural conventionality is largely inscribed in such cultural scripts.¹⁸

For Bruner, the actual stories are told only after a culture's canonical expectations are violated (e.g. a journal loses a brilliant manuscript in the process). The cultural scripts, as such, are not normally told since they do not have anything new to tell to the competent members of the culture, who already know the cultural canon.¹⁹ Furthermore, psychologist Michael Bamberg outlines master narratives almost in terms of scripts, since they 'are setting up sequences of actions and events as routines and as such have a tendency to "normalize" and "naturalize" [...]'.²⁰ Looking at the wartime historical texts from this perspective raises questions about the nature of these narratives: are they examples of an existing, explicit master narrative, or do they rather exhibit a master narrative in the making?

In our thinking, the idea of history texts as scripts is further linked to the German tradition of the history of experiences (*Erfahrungsgeschichte*), which has underlined the socially processed and culturally fashioned definition of 'experience' (*Erfahrung*), in contrast to visceral, unarticulated *Erlebnisse*. The construction of experiences is a matter of language, semantic systems, social interaction, and their societal context; thus, the historical study of experiences is not so much an attempt to get inside the minds of past people than it is to understand the social and cultural framework that shapes the experiences and actually creates them as meaningful acts in the first place.²¹ By studying

the historical texts offered to Finnish soldiers, we see them as a historically specific narrative system that was meant to give meaning to the soldiers' experiences and subjective life events. What kind of scripts did they construct in this respect, and what kind of content or structure did they provide?

It must be noted, though, that we are not analysing the reception of these texts and how they possibly influenced the way soldiers made sense of their experiences – this would require a different kind of approach and sources. We do not consider the soldiers as consumers of history narratives as a *tabula rasa*; it must be clear that they received the stories from different social, educational, and political backgrounds, and that they reacted to them variously as well – most often with indifference and boredom, we would presume. In the same vein, the wartime 'applied historiography' had a history, too: it was closely linked to pre-war history teaching at schools, as well as to popularized history-writing and historical fiction in Finnish culture at large.²² These two trajectories – the wartime reception of history narratives and the continuity and possible change in narrating 'Finnish history' from pre-war to wartime – would deserve examinations of their own, with different sources from those we have used.

We employ two sets of sources. For the study of the Winter War, we have analysed historians' texts printed in a leaflet that was circulated among the army educational officers, who were responsible for organizing propaganda for the troops.²³ In 1939, the leaflet was titled *Valistusaineisto* ('Enlightenment Materials') and three eight-page issues were distributed; in 1940, the title was changed to *Murtaja* ('The Breaker'), with four sixteen-page and one eight-page issues. The first and possibly also the second issue in 1939 were printed before the outbreak of hostilities, and the last two issues in 1940 were circulated when the war had already ended on 13 March 1940. The explicit aim of the leaflet was to offer suitable materials for the army information personnel to be applied in their work with the soldiers, as well as to provide some materials for the information officers' self-education.²⁴ Some of the texts were published under the historians' real name, whereas others were published anonymously.

For the study of 1944, our sources are more scattered. For the spring of that year, we will use a lecture text by military historian and army officer Martti Santavuori, held at the battalion commanders' information days in Savonlinna in May 1944. The nature of this text is thus roughly similar to the printed history texts we use for the Winter War, although this time the target audience were not rank-and-file soldiers but higher-ranked officers.²⁵ In the autumn of 1944, when the Finnish-Soviet armistice caused a radical turn in the political situation, Professor Einar W. Juva was commissioned to write a historical text on the Finnish people's 'community of destiny', which was then printed in the army's 'Information Material' (*Tiedoitusaineisto*) leaflet in October 1944, to be used in the lessons and talks given to soldiers at the time of their demobilization.²⁶ This is thus a very similar source in its purpose of use as the ones we have studied for the period of the Winter War. It serves to observe similarities and changes in historical argumentation in a timespan of roughly five years.²⁷

History mobilized for the war effort

Looking at the eight issues of the *Valistusaineisto/Murtaja* leaflet printed in 1939–40, the first observation is clear: history texts abound and they have a crucial role in how the army's propaganda work was understood at the time of the Winter War. This is in line with

earlier research, which has shown that in the instructions for organizing propaganda work among the troops, dating from August 1939, the 'fatherland's history' was considered to be a kind of 'major subject' in promoting a patriotic spirit and motivation among the soldiers.²⁸ Consequently, historians became the army's main propagandists in supplying texts to be used in field service.

The use of historical narratives begins already in the first *Valistusaineisto* leaflet, which was produced shortly before the outbreak of war in November 1939. This happens in a rather peculiar way, drawing inspiration from a seemingly distant and extraneous history. The first history text introduces professor and librarian Henrik Gabriel Porthan (1739–1804), 'the father of Finland's history', to the ordinary Finnish soldiers. Porthan was not a war hero of any sort and the purpose of the story is far from clear, yet it expresses a strong belief in the role of history and past great men for patriotic thinking. Porthan's significance was in demonstrating that 'Finland' as a people and a state was something distinctive and special, and that this specialness was to be fostered and defended.²⁹ The next article in the same issue, 'Finland's geopolitical position', could be an analysis of the pre-war situation between Germany, the Soviet Union, and Scandinavia, but instead the focus is again on the past. The crucial point is the centuries-long struggle between east and west, which positions Finland as a historical battleground and links the uncertain situation in the autumn of 1939 to a long continuum in Finnish history. Following the dominant ideology of the time, the Finnish Civil War of 1918 is simply characterized as a result of the Finnish 'struggle for freedom'.³⁰

This recent, fratricidal history was risky, since the wounds of the Civil War lived on in oral memory and continued to split Finns into two political camps.³¹ This is one reason why it was tempting to draw examples from the much earlier past – and thus also to implicitly frame the events of 1918 as an anomaly in Finnish history. The third article in the first issue of *Valistusaineisto* was titled 'The unanimous Finland in 1495': a short and effective piece with several crucial points. 'Finland' as a national entity existed already 450 years ago, and even at that time its people had had to fight the Russians. The story is about a Finland that manages to banish its enemies, unanimously and under 'God's protection'.³²

The unanimous Finland is also the theme in the fourth historical article, titled 'Exactly 40 years ago'. The text reminds its readers of what is called the 'Russification' period in the Grand Duchy of Finland at the turn of the 20th century. The article refers to a period of escalating confrontation among the Finns, yet the story is streamlined along the lines of the winning 'White' side of the Civil War, as if this 'War of Liberty' in 1918 would have been a logical and redeeming end to the history of Russian oppression against the Finnish people. In this narrative construction, the war of 1918 was fought against the Russians, not against other Finns, and there is no place for the experiences of the defeated 'Reds'.³³ The rhetorical strategy builds on using coded words ('War of Liberty') and anecdotal history as an exemplum³⁴ in two opposing ways. In other words, the actual history of the 'War of Liberty' is never recounted in explicit narrative form, as with all other wars and incidents; instead, it is recurrently referred to just by mentioning its politically coded name. The provided exemplum foregrounds the detail, a moment, and presents a compelling, easily remembered story. Here, for instance, a simple anecdote of a student collecting names for a petition in objection to Russification in 1899 is used to exemplify the patriotic nature of the 'true' Finnish people.

There is a story about a house where a young student came for this cause [to secretly collect names in a patriotic address to the Tsar]. When he had spoken to the house folks, to his astonishment, he noticed that the people left the room one after another. In a while the master returned, and the others after him. The master said: "We will all sign our names, but this is such a great cause that first we wanted to dress up in our Sunday clothes."³⁵

Such anecdotal stories are prototypical narratives *within* narrative histories and the condensed crux of the ideological point of the larger narrative account. Serving a pedagogical purpose, they are ideally catchy, unlike longer chronicles of past events. The anecdote, by generic attribution a *historical* text-type, therefore epitomizes that interesting area of orality absorbed by the workings of the written text'.³⁶ Thanks to this semi-orality, these anecdotal exempla are easily transported back to oral use. We can see them as an invitation to the soldiers as the targets of these lessons to situate themselves in the story. From another perspective, this passage can be seen as a *mise en abyme*, a condensed image of the whole project of writing histories on 'Finland'. The only way to present the history of Finland is to do it by first dressing in one's Sunday clothes, by only resorting to sublime styles and registers.³⁷

Moral victories of the past

'Could we ever narrativize without moralizing?' asks Hayden White polemically.³⁸ The second issue of *Valistusaineisto* starts with the three-page, two-column lecture 'Excerpts from the history of the Finnish War of 1808–1809', which indeed plays the game of moralizing. The topic of the article is a dramatically lost war, after which the Finnish part of Sweden was annexed to Russia and became the Grand Duchy of Finland. This is at first sight a dubious and enigmatic subject for readers in 1939. What can such an article on a historical defeat accomplish in terms of war propaganda and national unity in the face of a new conflict? Nevertheless, the justification for the curious topic is a moral one, since the events of 1808–09 included 'many gallant memories and famous exploits' that would then inspire the future national-poet Johan Ludvig Runeberg to compose *The Tales of Ensign Stål* (1848/60), a cornerstone epic of emergent Finnish nationalism. In 1939, the ordinary Finnish soldiers heading to the eastern border were thus nourished with ideas of 19th-century patriotic pathos. In this narrative, the unfortunate war of 1808–09 became beneficial, as it launched the gradual Finnish nation-building process. As the culmination of this process, the article again refers to the 'War of Liberty' in 1918 and the consequent establishment of the proper Finnish army.³⁹

The article is primarily organized as a sequence of moral evaluations and opposites rather than as a prototypical narrative.⁴⁰ 'The beautiful and encouraging memory [of 1808–09] is based on the heroic fame of our warriors', whose 'heroic deeds grace' the history of the Finnish War. Particularly important are the tremendous *spirit* and bravery displayed by the 'Finnish' rank-and-file soldiers and ordinary peasants. The guilt for defeat is blamed on 'Swedes' and 'Swedish leadership': the weak King Gustav IV Adolf, the indecisive and incompetent commander-in-chief Count Klingspor, and the cowardly Admiral Cronstedt, whose actions bordered on treason. The 'shameful' surrender of the strong Sveaborg Fortress off the coast of Helsinki is narrated thickly and affectively in the form of an anecdote⁴¹.

The moment of surrender was bitter and shocking for both officers and soldiers. It is told that even those whose lack of judgment and cowardice was the reason for the disaster would in that moment have atoned for their mistake with their blood, had there still existed hope for success and some plan of action.⁴²

The moral saga of bravery and cowardice draws on the biblical tones of sin, atonement, and death. However, the source of all these moral ponderings remains unknown: the story 'is told' in a passive form. The passage also frames a hypothetical, counterfactual, course of events. Had there been a chance of success and a plan, even the guilty ones would have been ready to give their lives. While reporting the inner readiness of the guilty officers, the account resorts to fictionalized narration. All these elements – the biblical vocabulary, hypothetical narration, and fictionality – are used to complete and accentuate the moral resolution: 'Everybody cried, the commanders, the troops, and the wives; curses and words of abuse against the admiral and military council were uttered [. . .]'.⁴³ Instead of a chronicle or short historical summary, the writer here provides a whole scenic view⁴⁴ of the participants' misery and remorse.

In the end, the article wants to cherish the honour of the Finnish troops who had fought gallantly in 1808–09. The reasons for the war's unhappy result were 'incidental' and mostly external to Finland, so the defeat was by no means inevitable. More importantly, '[t]he Russian Government entered the war with the conviction that occupying Finland would succeed with a very modest effort, but it soon realized that it had underestimated the defence capacity of Finland'.⁴⁵ Now, the war is about 'Finland', and against all the miseries accounted for earlier, occupying Finland was surprisingly difficult. The obvious rhetorical purpose is the merging of the years 1809 and 1939, to use the earlier war as an analogue, which emphasizes the potential strength to be found in national determination and unanimity if the people are ready to take their destiny into their own hands. Indeed, the protagonist of the article is 'Finland' as a collective entity. The last issue of *Valistusaineisto* at the end of 1939 continues this mobilization of the 'honourable past of our ancestors' and narrates a nearly unbroken chain of struggle against the east in two separate entries.⁴⁶

Teleological timeline and its passages

At the turn of 1939–40, *Valistusaineisto* changed its name to *Murtaja*. The first issue in 1940 omits historical themes and focuses on psychological presentations of (counter-)propaganda, rumours, leadership, and morale. In the second issue of *Murtaja*, history again has a prominent place. Professor Jalmari Jaakkola starts with a sweeping overview on 'The growth of the Finnish people toward the east'. At first, he attests that the Finnish people were constituted within, rather than migrated to, its contemporary territory. Next, he recounts that 'the Finnish settlement' moved gradually from southwestern Finland to the east, eventually reaching the area of Karelia. In line with his pre-war academic publications,⁴⁷ Jaakkola emphasizes the Finns' inherently Western orientation through commerce and culture, so that the Finnish people had, from ancient times, voluntarily and actively 'grown as the outpost of Western and Nordic civilization'. This age-long attitude opened 'a new world historical mission' to the Finnish people.⁴⁸ The Western character of the Finns is

demonstrated by onomastic examples and details. Jaakkola's justification of the Finns as the Western outpost in the north was a popular image at the time, and it mirrored the wider idea of 'Western' civilization versus 'Eastern' barbarism.⁴⁹

Furthermore, in a more biblical tone, professor of church history and later archbishop Ilmari Salomies paints a historical canvas of the perpetual suffering, want, and persistence of the Finnish people. In contrast to the Spartan heroism and continuous struggle with the east, this entry propagates the eternal scarcity found in Finnish people's lives. However, Salomies reminds that 'let us not forget that this road, despite all the difficulties and sorrows, has also been the road of victories'. As a clergyman, Salomies clearly favoured the sermon.⁵⁰ He evokes past miseries, yet the key message is in eternal return and God's providence: 'Night and day, dark times and light times, alternate in the life of the peoples and individual lives'. Talking to his imagined audience of soldiers, Salomies is very explicit about the meaning of history:

We are living in a time when the present and its great mission take all our strength and captivate all our thoughts. In these circumstances it may feel odd to ask for attention to words that direct our view to the past. Yet it would be a great mistake to ignore all the past times at this fateful moment. The present is the continuation of the past, and countless bonds tie us, who live and fight today, to those who carried their burdens and fought their fights before us. Only in the light created by the past do we fully understand the present.⁵¹

This can be seen as the mission of the whole enterprise of mobilizing history and historians to support the war effort during the Winter War. History was evoked in order to embed the soldiers' current suffering into a larger picture, and thus to align them to a temporal timeline that had its ancient origins in 'the mists of time' (*hämärässä muinaisuudessa*).⁵² All the apparent breaks and disruptions, most importantly the utter devastation brought by the Great Northern War in 1700–21 and the defeat and consequent annexation of Finland by Russia in 1808–09, were, in the end, explained as beneficial trials that had steeled the character of the Finnish people and showed how God's providence guided Finnish history towards its fulfilment in gaining and defending independence. This was a fundamentally teleological story,⁵³ but not necessarily a deterministic one: it required that the Finnish people – and soldiers as its representatives – showed determination and readiness for sacrifice in the present moment so that history would not take a wrong turn. The most problematic historical subject in this regard was the recent Finnish Civil War of 1918, which was almost impossible to interpret as a nationally meaningful, not to say beneficial, 'trial' on the road to freedom. The Red experience of that war was completely erased from the historical narrative: 'The sons of those, who in 1899 [during the onslaught of the "Russification" period] had risen to defend the country, fought for Finland's freedom in 1918, and now it is already their sons who stand guard over our land and cherish this great legacy'.⁵⁴

Not all history texts printed in *Valistusaineisto* and *Murtaja* in 1939–40 manage (or even try) to depict such an overarching historical panorama. In fact, many of the texts are puzzling exactly because they seem to lack any proper historical context or link to the present. In the third issue of *Murtaja*, there is a perplexing one-page story on how the army of 'Sweden-Finland' (the Finnish term of choice for the Swedish kingdom) had daringly crossed the frozen Danish Straits in the winter of 1658 and defeated the Danes. This bold manoeuvre was, of course, spearheaded by the 'Finnish' cavalry, and

thus the story adds to the generational chain of Finnish men in their martial heroics. Otherwise, it is an odd little text to be written to soldiers in March 1940 – especially as the Red Army had around the same time surprised the Finns by successfully crossing the frozen Bay of Vyborg.⁵⁵

Yet however odd it may seem to a modern reader, the story did not come out of the blue for the soldiers, who had most likely been accustomed to such heroic war stories at school and possibly also in other instances of civic education. Indeed, the story of crossing the frozen straits in 1658 was told in *Fältskärens berättelser* (in Finnish, *Välskärin kertomuksia*), which was a historical saga of two Finnish families by Zacharias Topelius, originally published as a series of stories in the mid-19th century and highly popular as canonical patriotic reading.⁵⁶ As a genre, these kinds of historical stories resembled religious talks and texts, which were often learned by heart. If we assume that the people of the 1940s knew the basic storyline of Finnish national history – just as they were expected to know the basics of the Bible and Lutheran confession – then the story was not as detached as it first may appear. Notwithstanding its obvious shortcomings as effective war propaganda in the context of March 1940, it was a passage from the story of the ‘Finnish nation’. Just like biblical passages read aloud in services are often cryptic, their true meaning is rather in testifying to the existence of the Great Story, or the master narrative, than in the exact details of the story.

Intermezzo: from the Winter War to 1944

It is interesting to note that the end of the Winter War in mid-March 1940 did not trigger historically framed ruminations in *Murtaja*. On the contrary, having been numerous in previous issues, historical texts disappear altogether from the last two issues of *Murtaja*, which were printed after the peace treaty had been signed and fighting had ceased but the army was still mobilized.⁵⁷ The lack of history texts may have to do with the unclear circumstances and future prospects in the spring of 1940. Formally, the war was over, and Finland had to cede large territories to the Soviet Union. Yet apparently the situation in 1940 was not perceived as befitting historical conclusions, as the future was still too open. The Second World War had just started, and no one could yet foresee how it would end and what kind of coalitions and treaties would be made. In this context, matters between Finland and the Soviet Union were not considered settled for good. Symptomatically, the period between the Winter War and the Continuation War was called the ‘interim peace’ already at the time, as if the prospect of a forthcoming war was already recognized. In the spring of 1940, the openness of the situation may have held historians and army propagandists back: it was impossible to say what would be the right historical framing and script to contextualize the current events, thus pointing to their future direction.

The beginning of the Continuation War in June 1941 did, indeed, open up a completely different historical vista than the slough of despair in March 1940. At the onset of the Finnish offensive, commander-in-chief of the army, Marshal Mannerheim, set the tone: ‘The freedom of Karelia and a great Finland are glimmering in front of us in the enormous avalanche of world historic events’.⁵⁸ Such a uniquely historical sense of the moment was characteristic for the summer and autumn of 1941; it seemed that Finland was participating in a chain of events that would change the course of history for good. In the Finnish

military chaplains' talks and sermons, studied by Jouni Tilli, the mode was positively apocalyptic: following the collapse of the Soviet Union, Finnish history as the eternal struggle against the east was drawing to close.⁵⁹

By the end of 1941, things had taken a different turn, although this was not yet realized by most Finns. During the long years of the stationary war period in 1942–44, and especially after the German defeat in Stalingrad in early 1943, it became obvious that the earlier rhetoric of a final victory had become profoundly groundless. This was a serious trial for Finnish war propaganda: a way had to be found to uphold the continued will to fight among soldiers and civilians, while at the same time preparing people to confront harsh realities both in their everyday life and in Finland's deteriorating geopolitical situation. Nevertheless, history did not become obsolete as a narrative resource. Although the breath-taking visions of 1941 had to be pushed aside, the national past offered other stories that again emphasized Finnish perseverance, unanimity, and determination in the face of growing challenges.⁶⁰

The return of history in 1944

Consequently, 1944 started in gloomy circumstances. In January, the Red Army broke the siege of Leningrad and pushed the Germans back to Estonia. In February, heavy Soviet air raids on Helsinki were meant to demoralize the Finnish home front. Then in March, the disclosure of Soviet peace conditions with Finland made it clear that all the high expectations of the war's outcome in 1941 had to be abandoned for good. At that moment in March 1944, the Finnish government chose to continue the fight as a battle for survival.

In the spring of 1944, one of the longest and most telling historical narratives in this context was told by military historian Martti Santavuori. The text was used as a history lecture to Finnish battalion commanders apparently on two occasions in May 1944.⁶¹ Santavuori's focus is on military history, and he duly chronicles all the major wars, their leaders, and the consequent changes of borders. However, similar to several other historians, he begins with an ideologically and strategically charged population history. 'When the Finnish tribe lived in the Baltic area, its culture became established and more profound under the influence of Western life forms'.⁶² For Jalmari Jaakkola in his earlier writings, the people of Finland was only formed inside the present Finnish area, whereas Santavuori projects the unitary subject of the Finnish tribe even further, temporally and geographically. The essential east–west distinction defines Finnish history from the outset.

Santavuori recounts the story of the spread of the Finnish population from southwest Finland to the east and northeast. He draws up a huge area of the 'Finnish sphere' from the Baltic Sea to the Arctic Ocean, White Sea, and Lake Onega, which was further closely linked to the adjacent Finnic areas inhabited by Estonians and Ingrians in the south. Finns and their kindred tribes had here an undisputed 'right of indigenous habitation'. Without any mention of the previous Sami population, this territory is nominated as 'Finnish living space', which in this wartime context should rather be translated as Finnish *Lebensraum*. As early as in the 13th century, 'the struggle against the east bursts out and soon [gets] a permanent character'. Slavic influence 'obtrudes' into the west, while Finnish settlements only 'spread' to the east. When the current territory of Finland was incorporated into the Swedish kingdom, 'Finland received support in its struggle against the east'. In

Santavuori's account, both Finland as an entity and its struggle against 'the east' are primaevial constants. The wars against Russia are not any 'disturbances in the storyworld'; they are parts of the regular script. In this sense, the narrativity of the account recedes, and the account starts to border on a chronicle.

Santavuori's account provides a good example of the problematics of narrative strategies in war propaganda. In 1941, historians had been commissioned to justify the Finnish expansion to the east and the consequent creation of a Greater Finland. They did this by constructing an idea of Finland's historical, cultural, and natural *Lebensraum* in the east.⁶³ From the end of 1941 until June 1944, the Finnish-Soviet frontline remained static and the Finnish army occupied large areas of Soviet Karelia, thus realizing Greater Finland for the moment. However, from early 1943 onwards, the earlier confidence in a German victory in the east had deteriorated among the Finnish population.⁶⁴ In May 1944, Finland's vulnerable position must have been clear to any attentive observer, but still the argument for Finnish *Lebensraum* lingers on in Santavuori's lecture. In the Finnish war propaganda, which used historical narratives to construct almost timeless continuities and 'eternal' justifications, it was indeed difficult to retreat from a narrative that had been chosen in the heyday of the Finnish-German offensive in 1941. Narrative strategies have path dependency, and against this background, Santavuori's main message remained Finland's age-long struggle against Russia.

Nevertheless, it is possible to recognize some change in nuance that may be related to the ever-growing uncertainty in the spring of 1944. Using warning examples from the 17th and 18th centuries, Santavuori emphasizes the primacy of always preparing for the Russian threat from the east. Despite its earlier defeats and weaknesses, Russia should not be underestimated, and one should not get distracted by events further south in Continental Europe: 'Finland's destiny should be in the hands of its own men'.⁶⁵ Then, after chronicling the events prior to 1809, Santavuori's presentation ends quite abruptly, as if he had run out of time. There is only a cursory note on the special status of the 'Finnish state' under Russian rule, the preservation of which required that the struggle against Russia was continued in judicial terms. The lecture text is followed by a one-page summary on 'Pain and determination – the main characteristics of our history'. The author of this list of bullet points is not known – it is probably Santavuori's synopsis – but the themes are very familiar: although the present generation of Finns had to face heavy hardships, the earlier generations had suffered much more; while the present war was a 'total' one, Finns had always experienced total wars as Russia's neighbour. These two sombre lessons are then demonstrated through a national timeline of suffering and determination from the 15th century onwards.⁶⁶

The autumn of 1944 and a historian's testament

The events of June and July 1944 changed Finland's situation in the Second World War radically and the future expectations of soldiers and civilians alike. In a matter of a few weeks, the Red Army captured Vyborg, Finland's second largest city at the time, and forced the Finnish army to retreat from Soviet Karelia. Although the last lines of defence finally held, the rapid loss of everything that had been conquered with high losses in 1941 was a profound shock. Furthermore, it had become clear to the Finnish political and military leadership that Finland had to try to step out of the war, if possible.

In September 1944, the Finnish government and parliament accepted the Soviet peace terms. In addition to large territorial losses and war indemnities, the Finns agreed to drive out the German troops in Northern Finland and accept several articles that had a profound effect on the country's internal politics and defence capabilities. A Soviet-led Allied Control Commission arrived in Helsinki and began to observe and dictate Finnish politics. Finland avoided unconditional surrender, but the peace terms were so severe that many considered the situation a *de facto* capitulation – at least if the Soviets were to use all the means now at their disposal.

Among the troops, the business of organizing history lessons recommenced after the heaviest battles were over.⁶⁷ In the autumn, first the armistice on 4–5 September, then the peace terms on 19 September, and finally the opening of hostilities between Finland and Germany put Finnish war propaganda and information officials to a serious test. For many years, they had promoted the people's will to fight against the 'eternal enemy' in the east – now, in a matter of days, they had to explain why it was necessary to accept peace with the Soviet Union under harsh conditions. This was a national turning point that could have become a breaking point as well: the re-emergence of the Finnish Communist Party, the forthcoming demobilization of the army, the vast task of resettling hundreds of thousands of Karelian evacuees, and growing Soviet pressure were all expected to cause political and societal unrest. The enforced master narrative of a unified nation at war was about to be challenged by war-weary sentiments, critical comments, and a Communist counter-narrative of the war years. As the wartime censorship was soon to be loosened, the state's and the army's ability to control information was about to end and the setting of the narrative competition changed. In the last moments of the control policy, there was thus an urgent need for curated stories of national unity.

Historians were once more called into service, and historical argumentation was eagerly used also in journalistic texts. This time, the key lesson taught by history emphasized the mentality of survival and determination that the Finnish people had learned from all the past hardships. The Finns of the present day were bound to an unbroken chain of dauntless men and women from earlier centuries who had carried on in much more desperate circumstances.⁶⁸ For the soldiers about to be demobilized, the army used an article by historian Einar W. Juva, 'The Finnish people's communion of fate'. The text was printed in the army's *Tiedoitusaineisto* ('Information Material') circular with a foreword stating its suitability for use in lessons and talks organized at the time of demobilization. It can thus be read as a kind of historical testament that the soldiers were expected to bring home with them.⁶⁹ Juva was an appropriate author for the text: he was a specialist on the aftermath of the Great Northern War in 1700–21, which had left much of the Finnish territory and population devastated.⁷⁰

Beginning with its title, Juva's article aims at upholding the unity of the Finns after defeat. The term 'communion of fate' (*kohtalonyhteys*) dates back to the German *Schicksalsgemeinschaft*, which was used to refer to a group of people facing a shared danger and destiny. In Nazi propaganda, 'Volk' was thematized in terms of this *Schicksalsgemeinschaft*.⁷¹ In the circumstances of autumn 1944 – and after the years of 'shared' war experiences – the whole future and existence of the Finnish nation were threatened; thus, the original meaning of the term had some aptness. In Juva's history, the political community is systematically 'Finns' as an ethnic group, the Finnish people, not

the political nation and its manifold groups and factions. This *völkisch*, homogenous interpretation of belonging to the nation was typical for Finnish nationalism already at the time of its emergence in the 19th century.⁷²

However, Juva's account departs from the earlier historical texts in at least two decisive ways. While the previous stories are written in the third-person and offer 'Finland' as the main character, Juva moves to the first-person plural, moving 'us Finns' to the centre. According to him, the 'precondition of our rescue is that we close ranks' and that 'a consensus reigns' in matters 'concerning the whole nation'.⁷³ Juva avoids the didactic and tiresome chronicles on recurrent wars, their detailed histories and heroes, and takes a more evaluative and generalizing way of telling the history of 'Finland'. Yet again, it is relevant to begin with the story of the migration of Finnish tribes to the current territory. Juva's version of the original settlement attests that the territory was indeed 'largely uninhabited' and the 'rare Laps' just 'moved out of their way' to the North. This happy process of peaceful settlement was interrupted when the neighbours, the Scandinavians and Slavs, moved closer, and the 'Finnish people felt that it was closed in to a certain territory'.⁷⁴

Quite smoothly, this account of 'the Finnish people' as a community of shared thoughts and destinies becomes a 'signpost of fictionality'.⁷⁵ The ethnic group is portrayed as an organic whole that can have the same feelings and experiences, which the historian in turn can know and reconstruct – without a reference to any sources. The Finns *wanted* to live peacefully, the others *kept wanting* to annex parts of the Finnish area, and Finland became a 'land of contest'. These continuous wars, however, pushed the Finnish tribes together, accelerating the birth of the united Finnish people. In contrast to Santavuori's account, Juva does not eternalize the particular war against the east and Russia; instead, the problem concerns the more abstract 'external danger'. This is a direct consequence of the new, very uncertain political situation; yet the expression does not leave much space for speculation about the source of this external threat.⁷⁶

Juva emphasizes the way the 'core of the Finnish people' has remained healthy despite the conflicts and defeats, even when 'it has been felled and drowned in blood'. If the earlier historical stories could celebrate the bravery and action of Finnish soldiers, Juva's focus is on the Phoenix-like qualities of the Finnish people, in its unbroken vitality after historically recurrent, almost inevitable sufferings. However, the real 'communion of fate' of the sufferers will not be realized without a conscious effort to understand this essence of national belonging. Therefore, Juva underlines the role of the emergent national culture and civilization. While previous historians tended to primarily portray an eternal repetition of wars, Juva also fashions the development and growth of his subject – the Finnish people – into a higher state of self-consciousness where the communion of fate can truly be understood. Fittingly for the moment, Juva underlines the importance of the cultural, judicial, and religious (Lutheran) means of building and preserving Finnish nationality, which may be seen as drawing a cautious parallel between the situations of 1944 and 1809–1917, when Finland was part of the Russian Empire and the nation was built on peaceful terms.⁷⁷ Furthermore, Juva uses history to define the love of freedom, peaceful toil, and a democratic mentality as Finnish characteristics. They bound the Finns to the 'Nordic' tradition, which is a subtle way of positioning Finland in regard to the east–west division. The earlier aggressive, irreconcilable ethos of this divide is now gone, but the distinction against the east remains an essential part of the historical argument on the true nature of the Finnish people.⁷⁸

Elements of the master narrative for Finland: concluding remarks

Our analysis of the Finnish state-sponsored historiography as part of war propaganda during the Second World War can be summarized in the observation that the result from the numerous and varied war stories was not a unitary, prototypical, and compelling *narrative* of Finland, but rather an atemporal, cyclical script about the eternal fate of the Finnish people, which has existed as a collective entity since times immemorial, always belonged to 'the West', and wanted to live peacefully but had to fight heroically against an aggressive and expansionist Russia. The common thread through historical narrations is the persistence of suffering in the history of the Finnish people – coupled with the Finnish persistence to survive and rebuild after all hardships. In fact, this inseparable coupling of suffering and determination is made into a cornerstone of 'Finnishness', so that Finnish history could be described as an almost timeless cycle of eastern aggression, brave struggle, ghastly suffering, perseverance, and recovery.⁷⁹

After the loss of the Continuation War (1941–44), the emphasis changed to a degree from the brave military struggle of Finnish men to the persistent ascent of the Finnish people after every experience of devastation and misery. The eternal struggle against the east was replaced by the more abstract fight against 'foreign enemies'. Also, the element of the gradual cultural growth of the people to full maturity induced a slight change to the old, purely cyclical model of wars, misery, and new ascent. The resulting master narrative – as a script – is directed to the future, offering a hegemonic frame to interpret new events and conflicts. Yet despite these changes, all the history texts pursue the ideological unity of the ethnic Finnish people, not the political and pragmatic unity of Finnish society or its political community. As a consequence, the historical emergence of the Finnish nation and nationalism in the late 19th century is rather depicted as a story of a collective awakening rather than a political phenomenon that included various ideologies and conflicting interests. Most importantly, there is no room here to discuss the fratricidal division of 1918, not even as an implicit rhetoric of 'reconciliation' or 'reintegration'. In this sense, the history texts were fundamentally more conservative and monolithic than the many other political and societal manifestations of unanimity during and immediately after the war, which were already pointing towards a kind of sociological coherence and consensus that acknowledged the plurality of different interest groups and social classes.⁸⁰

Historians, instead, continued to offer a teleological, religious-like story of the Chosen People in its eternal struggle against the east. This becomes visible, for instance, in the historians' obsession of beginning each historical overview with the story of how the 'Finns' had wandered to their present territory almost like the Israelites – or, as in Jalmari Jaakkola's interpretation, how the Finns were moulded into a people in this Promised Land. Also, the cyclical rhetoric of suffering and ascent features strong biblical elements in style and content. The amalgamation of religious, historical, and nationalistic argumentation was typical in wartime Finland; Lutheran military chaplains, for instance, had the double role of taking care of religious worship as well as the patriotic spirit of the troops.⁸¹

'Does the world really present itself to perception in the form of well-made stories, with central subjects, proper beginnings, middles, and ends, and a coherence that permits to see "the end" in every beginning?' asks Hayden White.⁸² The obvious answer is no. However, applying White's criteria to the narrative histories we have studied seems also

to give a negative answer, since practically none of the studied accounts seems to match the requirements of 'a well-made story' despite their strongly moralizing tones. They represent only 'weak narrativity',⁸³ since they exhibit a lot of repetition and chronicle and get absorbed in detail rather than write a powerful plot for the reader to follow. Departing from prototypical narratives, these accounts typically display a cyclical chronology of crisis after crisis instead of a clear progression of events,⁸⁴ distinct turning points, or changes of fortune. The narrative histories thus have a paradoxical feature: they are not particularly well-made narratives themselves, but they provide a repetitive script for the history of the people. However, this observation is in accord with the recent understanding of master narratives, which can be framed as abstractions of several repeated, partly different but ideologically consistent empirical narratives.⁸⁵ The historians' accounts of the history of the 'Finnish people' offers a case where the master narrative is purposefully built and propagated under official auspices.

The weakly narrative historical accounts we have studied include anecdotes and exempla with deeper experientiality. What we have, furthermore, is the whole Finnish people as an experiencing subject that suffers, feels, and engages in intentional action. In contrast to White's thinking, we did not derive the fictionality of the accounts from the narrative form itself but instead questioned the particular narrative choices leading to fictionality. One typical method of incorporating fictionality was to recount the inner thoughts and emotions of the Finnish people in anecdotal form. The imaginary projection of a unitary Finnish people and Finnish tribes can also be seen as a fictionalizing strategy.

In contrast to the easily recognizable narratives of today's films or social media, Finnish historians in 1939–44 resorted to a different strategy. The historical texts we have analysed are really not in search of dramatic turns, catchy feelings, first-person contemplations, or individual heroics; instead, they underline the inevitable continuity and teleology of Finnish history. This is done by constructing a historical context spanning a vast period into which the hardships of the present moment are planted like trees in a forest. Furthermore, historical narrative is used to build bridges over uncertain times with numerous analogies instead of the clear progression of the story. These techniques of historical 'zooming out' and bridging do not bring individual experiences to the fore, but vice versa, hide them from sight by embedding them into a much bigger picture. Interestingly, the rhetoric of downplaying individual hardships and suffering as contrasted to the survival of the nation was mainstream in wartime Finland – and also in the aftermath of the war, when the collective task of reconstruction was seen to require self-denial and stoic toil.⁸⁶

So, as history provided a master narrative to frame individual experiences and give them collective meaning, this did not really operate through identifiable first-person stories or a continuous grand narrative with a clear progression. Rather, it occurred through repeating crucial past images and analogues, which reserved the main role of sufferer and experiencer for the Finnish people. From this perspective, the relation of experience and narrative would not be understood as a psychological question of 'feeling' and 'embracing' a particular story, but as a cultural and social question of recognizing the historically narrated, teleological context for one's life events – and connecting to the nation and the people through this recognition. This is the reason why many of the history texts above seem to be so alien and out of place to today's reader. With their constant use of the sublime register, detailed chronicling, and biblical references, they do not correlate

with our models of a good story but tell of a historically different culture of narratives – and of a different culture of historical narratives. We consider this notion a step forward from the now commonplace refrain that all history is narrative.

For the cultural history of war, in Finland like elsewhere, we have shown the applicability of narratology for the analysis of those cultural practices that are used to mobilize people in the war effort, uphold the national consensus, control public opinion, and embed the war experience with collective ideological meanings. These remain core issues for the study of any nation at war. While the ‘cultural’ or ‘linguistic’ turn has affected the historical scholarship of war already for several decades – in the Finnish case, for at least about 15 years⁸⁷ – the use of narratological methods has been quite rare. We argue that the cooperation of historians and narratologists in studying actual empirical sources and historical cases is a way forward from the lingering theoretical discussions of the fictional and/or discursive nature of history writing.

Notes

1. See Kvernbekk & Bøe-Hansen, ‘How to win wars’; van der Vlies, ‘Multidirectional war narratives’.
2. For overviews, see Stenius, Österberg & Östling, *Nordic Narratives*; Kinnunen & Jokisipilä, ‘Shifting Images’; Kivimäki, ‘Three Wars’.
3. This general development of Finnish war propaganda is well-established in research from different perspectives, see e.g. Salminen, *Propaganda rintamajoukoissa*; Julkunen, ‘Toiveiden ja todellisuuden’; Jutikkala, *Valtion Tiedoituslaitoksen*; Kempainen, *Isänmaan uhrit*; Tilli, *Continuation War*.
4. Manninen, *Suur-Suomen*, 48–52, 63–4, 107–16; Ahtiainen & Tervonen, *Menneisyyden tutkijat*, 81–3; Herlin, ‘Linjoilla ja linjojen takana’; Sulkunen & Kinnunen, ‘Suomen Historiallinen Seura’, 97–8; Karonen, ‘Historiantutkijat’, 508–12.
5. Most importantly Jaakkola, *Suomen historian ääriiviivat*; and Juva, *Suomen taistelu itää vastaan*; see also Tommila, *Suomen historiankirjoitus*, 199.
6. See e.g. Kulha, *Tarkoituksellista tiedotustoimintaa*; Perko, *TK-miehet jatkosodassa*; Luostarinen, *Perivihollinen*; Wunsch, *Punainen uhka*; Kempainen, *Isänmaan uhrit*; Pilke, *Omat haukkuivat politrukeiksi*.
7. On the concept of ‘curated stories’, see Fernandes, *Curated Stories*.
8. The importance of history lessons is noted in Esko Salminen’s and Helena Pilke’s works on propaganda for the frontline troops in 1941–44, but not analysed more in depth; Salminen, *Propaganda rintamajoukoissa*, 25, 48–50, 115, 139, 158; Pilke, *Omat haukkuivat politrukeiksi*, 14, 54, 110–12, 153. Otherwise, the topic is discussed in detail in Petteri Mäkinen’s MA thesis but not elsewhere, as far as we know; Mäkinen, *Historian punaiset langat*.
9. For a similar approach, see Haapala, ‘Lived Historiography’.
10. White, *Tropics of Discourse*, 14.
11. Paul, *Hayden White*, 4.
12. Cohn, *The Distinction of Fiction*; Hatavara & Mildorf, ‘Fictionality, Narrative Models’.
13. Nielsen et al., ‘Ten theses’.
14. Fludernik, *Towards a ‘Natural’ Narratology*, 24–5. She points out ‘the essential experience of the events which the necessarily human agents undergo in fictional texts and which is lacking for historical agents in historical discourse’, p. 24. Note below the experiencing agents in the few anecdotal stories.
15. The plot-and-closure focused narrative theory was based on reading Aristotle’s normative claims as empirical. See Abbott, *Introduction*, 52–60.
16. Ricoeur, *Memory, History, Forgetting*, 137–45.
17. Schank & Abelson, *Scripts, Plans, Goals*.

18. Bruner, *Acts of Meaning*.
19. See also Herman, *Basic Elements of Narrative*; Hyvärinen, 'Expectations and Experientiality'.
20. Bamberg, 'Considering Counter Narratives', 360.
21. Buschmann & Carl, 'Zugänge zur Erfahrungsgeschichte'; Buschmann & Reimann, 'Konstruktion historischer Erfahrung'; Reimann, *Der große Krieg*, 10–13.
22. Cf. e.g. Kaljundi, Laanes & Pikkanen, 'Introduction', 31–43; Pikkanen, 'The Dangers'; Haapala, 'Writing Our History', 36–8.
23. For the work of educational officers (*valistusupseeri*), see Salminen, *Propaganda rintamajoukoissa*; Pilke, *Omat haukkuivat politrukeiksi*.
24. See 'Uudet tehtävät', in *Murtaja* 1/1940, 1–2. Both *Valistusaineistoa* and *Murtaja* are to be found in the collections of the National Library of Finland in Helsinki.
25. National Archives of Finland (NAF), Collection of the Finnish Army High Command's Information Department (PM Ttus), T 10601/13, Martti Santavuori, 'Katsaus Suomen sotilaspoliittisen ja -maantieteellisen aseman kehitykseen', attached to Captain Timo Tiitola's brief to Major Rautavaara, 10 May 1944.
26. NAF, PM Ttus, T 10601/20, Einar W. Juva, 'Suomen kansan kohtalonyhteys', *Tiedoitusaineistoa* 9/1944, 18 October 1944.
27. Our original intention was to do research at the National Archives of Finland in order to gather a similarly coherent source basis for 1944 as we have on the Winter War. For this purpose, we were planning to read through all the army's 'Information Material' leaflets printed in 1944 and apparently preserved at the archive collection of the Finnish Army High Command's Information Department. Unfortunately, the Covid-19 pandemic ruined this plan, as the National Archives of Finland closed its doors on 1 December 2020. We have therefore resorted to materials that we already had in our hands.
28. Salminen, *Propaganda rintamajoukoissa*, 25. This had its roots in the earlier development in the 1930s, when the 'fatherland's history' rose to a central role in the army's civil education for conscripts; Mäkinen, *Historian punaiset langat*, 13–17; see also Ahlbäck, *Manhood*, Ch. 4.
29. Anon., 'Suomen historian isä', *Valistusaineistoa* 1/1939, 3–4.
30. Anon., 'Suomen geopolitiittinen asema', *Valistusaineistoa* 1/1939, 4–5.
31. Peltonen, *Muistin paikat*; for an English overview, see Tepora & Roselius, *The Finnish Civil War 1918*.
32. Anon., 'Yksimielinen Suomi v. 1495', *Valistusaineistoa* 1/1939, 5.
33. Anon., 'Tasan 40 vuotta sitten', *Valistusaineistoa* 1/1939, 6; cf. Erkkilä, 'Jalmari Jaakkola', 364–6.
34. Fludernik, *Towards a 'Natural' Narratology*, 82–91, discusses anecdote and exemplum as inherited, oral story types. Their form is similar – a very detailed story about a moment – but while the anecdote invests in amusing, the exemplum aims at giving a moral teaching.
35. 'Tasan 40 vuotta sitten', 6.
36. Fludernik, *Towards a 'Natural' Narratology*, 91.
37. Eggins, *Introduction*, 26: '[...] the register describes the immediate situational context in which the text was produced'.
38. White, *Content of the Form*, 25.
39. Anon., 'Poimintoja Suomen sodan 1808–1809 historiasta', *Valistusaineistoa* 2/1939, 1–4.
40. Herman, *Basic Elements of Narrative*, 14.
41. According to Martin & Rose, *Genre Relations*, 52, the anecdote follows the model 'remarkable event – reaction – affect', whereas the exemplum has the structure 'incident – interpretation – judgment'.
42. 'Poimintoja Suomen sodan 1808–1809 historiasta', 3.
43. *Ibidem*.
44. See Pikkanen, *Casting the Ideal Past*, 48.
45. 'Poimintoja Suomen sodan 1808–1809 historiasta', 4.
46. Anon., 'Venäjän laajentumispolitiikka, sen päämäärät ja menettelytavat', *Valistusaineistoa* 3/1939, 2–5; anon., 'Narvan taistelu', *Valistusaineistoa* 3/1939, 5–7.
47. Tommila, *Suomen historiankirjoitus*, 186–7.

48. Jalmari Jaakkola, 'Suomen kansan kasvu itää kohti', *Murtaja* 2/1940, 2–3; see also Tilli, 'The Idea of Mission'; for the politics and nationalism of Jaakkola's thinking, see Erkkilä, 'Jalmari Jaakkola'.
49. Cf. also anon., 'Muistakoon Stalin Xerxeen kohtalon!', *Murtaja* 2/1940, 4–5.
50. For an analysis of religious language in Finnish military chaplains' speeches, see Tilli, *Continuation War*.
51. Ilmari Salomies, 'Kansamme kärsimysten ja voittojen tie', *Murtaja* 2/1940, 12–13.
52. Jalmari Jaakkola's expression in his 'Suomen kansan kasvu itää kohti', 3.
53. Cf. Tommila, *Suomen historiankirjoitus*, 177.
54. See above 35., 6.
55. Anon., 'Kulku Beltien yli v. 1658', *Murtaja* 3/1940, 14. The author of the text even notes that the story of 1658 highlights the importance of coastal defences – hardly an encouraging message for the Finnish defenders at the Bay of Vyborg, fighting in their fully unprepared positions.
56. Hatavara, 'Composing Finnish National History'.
57. For the only exception, see map illustration, 'Kahdeksan Suomen ja Venäjän rauhaa kautta vuosisatojen', *Murtaja* 4/1940, 3.
58. Cited in English in Meinander, 'Finland and the Great Powers', 72.
59. Tilli, *Continuation War*, 57–66; see also Luostarinen, *Perivihollinen*, 207–22.
60. Julkunen, 'Toiveiden ja todellisuuden', 235–40; Luostarinen, *Perivihollinen*, 286–9, 350–6; Kivimäki & Tepora, 'Meaningless Death', 254–5.
61. NAF, PM Ttus, T 10601/13, Martti Santavuori, 'Katsaus Suomen sotilaspoliittisen ja -maantieteellisen aseman kehitykseen', attached to Captain Timo Tiitola's brief to Major Rautavaara, 10 May 1944.
62. Santavuori, 'Katsaus Suomen', 1.
63. Jaakkola, *Die Ostfrage Finnlands*; Auer & Jutikkala, *Finnlands Lebensraum*.
64. Heikura, *Rintamajoukkojen mieliala*, 91–105.
65. See above 62., 1.
66. NAF, PM Ttus, T 10601/13, anon., 'Tuska ja sisu – historiamme valtapiiirteet', attached to Captain Timo Tiitola's brief to Major Rautavaara, 10 May 1944.
67. Salminen, *Propaganda rintamajoukoissa*, 165–6; Mäkinen, *Historian punaiset langat*, 29–30.
68. Auvinen, Holmila & Lehtimäki, 'Epävarma itsenäisyys', 218–23; Holmila & Mikkonen, *Suomi sodan jälkeen*, 37–40.
69. NAF, PM Ttus, T 10601/20, Einar W. Juva, 'Suomen kansan kohtalonyhteys', *Tiedoitusaineistoa* 9/1944, 18 October 1944.
70. Tommila, *Suomen historiankirjoitus*, 183.
71. Hudal, *Grundlagen des Nationalsozialismus*.
72. Cf. Stenius, 'Kansalainen', 318–19.
73. Juva, 'Suomen kansan kohtalonyhteys', 8.
74. *Ibidem*, 9.
75. See Cohn, *Distinction of Fiction*; Hatavara & Mildorf, 'Fictionality, Narrative Models'.
76. Juva, 'Suomen kansan kohtalonyhteys', 9–10.
77. For similar references, see Auvinen, Holmila & Lehtimäki, 'Epävarma itsenäisyys', 215.
78. Juva, 'Suomen kansan kohtalonyhteys', 10–11.
79. For this historical storyline in the autumn of 1944, see also Aulis J. Alanen, 'Kuitenkin korjaa aika ja uusi sukupolvi isoimmatkin vammat', *Suomen Kuvalehti* 40/1944, 1136–7.
80. The army propaganda remained, in general, more bound to the victorious and unanimous spirit of 1941, while the home front propaganda had to cope with the diverse and partly conflicting interests of the civilian population; see Julkunen, 'Toiveiden ja todellisuuden', 236–7.
81. Kempainen, *Isänmaan uhrit*, 219–26; Tilli, *Continuation War*, passim.
82. See above 38., 24.
83. Tammi, 'Against Narrative'; McHale, 'Weak Narrativity'.
84. On narrative progression, see Phelan, *Experiencing Fiction*.

85. Hyvärinen, 'Toward a Theory'; more widely, see Lueg & Lundholt, *Routledge Handbook*.
86. Holmila & Mikkonen, *Suomi sodan jälkeen*, 45–8; Kirves, 'Elämä omiin käsiin'; Kivimäki, 'Uusi Suomi', 286–7.
87. See e.g. Kinnunen & Kivimäki, 'Sota sosiaalisena ja kulttuurisena'.

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