



## **Editorial: Crises and Recoveries**

**Arja Turunen**

The year 2017 marked the 100th anniversary of Finland's independence, and the current year, 2018, has marked the 100th anniversary of the Armistice of the First World War. In Finland, we have commemorated the Finnish Civil War, which started in January 1918 and ended in May 1918. The multiplicity of events commemorating the past events as well as the flow of new studies and books studying and discussing the Civil War and Finland's history during, after and before the years 1917 and 1918 show the need to remember and re-examine the past as well the importance of the possibility to reconstruct it with new sources and perspectives.

The historical narrative of the history of Finland often focuses on the Second World War and the crisis experienced during and because of it. Also this volume of *Ethnologia Fennica*, under the theme "Crisis and Recoveries", discusses the Second World War and the immediate post-war years. The three articles published under the theme, however, approach the war and crisis from new perspectives: those of personal narratives and various groups of civil society such as children who have long been excluded from standard historical memory. They also concentrate on the recovery side of crisis: they ask how individual persons and communities have recovered from the crises caused by or related to the war, and how the crisis are commemorated and reinterpreted. Additionally, the articles pay attention to the experiences of the younger generations who have no personal memories of the events but whose lives have been affected by the war and especially by the silences and tension surrounding it.

In her article, Kirsi Laurén studies personal recollections and narratives of the Soviet partisan attacks in the Finnish borderlands during the war. In the post-war period, the actions of Soviet partisans in eastern Finnish villages were seen as a politically sensitive topic, and it was deemed inappropriate to speak publicly about what had occurred. Laurén's research material consists of narratives that were told today, over 70 years after the war, by civilians who have

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had personal, mostly traumatic experiences of the Soviet partisan actions, or who have heard about them since childhood. In her article, she studies how the partisan attacks have affected the local people and how they recovered from the painful and traumatic conflicts that took place in their home village.

Eerika Koskinen-Koivisto and Suzie Thomas approach the difficult and traumatic history of the Second World War by studying the meanings ascribed to material culture. They focus on the material war heritage in Finnish Lapland and discuss how the residents of a small Sámi village, Vuotso (Vuohčču in Northern Sámi), encounter and engage with it. The war left considerable material remains in Finnish Lapland, ranging from remnants of structures destroyed in the 1944–45 Lapland War through to small artefacts connected to soldiers, prisoners of war and civilians. In the post-war political context, the attitude towards the war and its public reminiscence was critical. Koskinen-Koivisto and Thomas's study shows that there are several ways, such as collecting militaria, treasure hunting and putting up memorials, that were and are used to resist forgetting the war and its consequences.

The third article by PhD Kirsi-Maria Hytönen and PhD Antti Malinen focuses on children who experienced poor upbringing, neglect and abuse in post-war Finland, and who had to deal with their experiences without social support from adults. By analysing oral and written reminiscences of adults recalling and looking back on their childhood, they study how difficult and bitter experiences related to childhood crises are remembered, reinterpreted and re-framed in later life and in contemporary Finland. They point out that besides the study of the difficult and painful aspects of the past and their causes, it is equally important to study resilience and the ways of coping.

This year's volume also includes other interesting texts. The themes of recalling and coping are also present in the fourth article by Tiina Suopajärvi, who studies how elderly city dwellers perceive the ideology of Oulu as a smart city. In smart cities, the main aim has been to design different technological solutions to support the satisfactory living conditions of all citizens. Suopajärvi's study points out that the current smart city is made for technology-savvy citizens and technology enthusiasts, and those city dwellers who do not fit into the idea of smart citizen have a sense of being marginalised. She explores how seniors experience everyday practices in the smart city of Oulu in northern Finland and how they perceive themselves as smart citizens.

The year 2019 will mark the 100th anniversary of professor Ilmar Talve's birth. In the final article of the volume, Hanneleena Hieta and Helena Ruotsala discuss Talve's academic career in ethnology at the University of Turku. The article also gives an interesting overview of the history of the discipline in Finland, which, as Ruotsala and Hieta point out, has not been extensively

studied. The international seminar on the scientific legacy of Talve in European ethnology that will be held in Turku in September 2019 will therefore offer an important opportunity for us ethnologists to discuss the present-day situation and to re-evaluate the history of our own discipline.

The closing section of this volume introduces new ethnological dissertations and other ethnologically noteworthy publications. Furthermore, this journal includes reports on the following conferences: the 10th Ethnology Days in Pori, Finland, the 15th Biannual Conference of the European Association of Social Anthropologists (EASA) in Stockholm, Sweden, and the 4th Biannual Conference of the Association of Critical Heritage Studies in Hangzhou, China.

### **AUTHOR**

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