

## "They call it Christmas" – An Ethnological Analysis of Alienation in Tove Jansson's Short Story *The Fir Tree*

Mamma, wake up, said Moomin anxiously. Something's on. They call it Christmas. (Jansson 1963, 163.)

When I was little, my mother often read aloud to my brother and me. Amongst our favourite stories were the Moomin books written by Tove Jansson and *Midsummer Madness*, *Moominland Midwinter*, *Comet in Moominland*, *Finn Family Moomintroll* and *Tales from Moomin Valley*<sup>1</sup> were read over and over again. As a child, I was only aware of the stories as tales about the Moomins who lived in a somewhat strange and exciting, but at the same time very secure world. When as an adult I returned to the Moomin books, several other levels and meanings opened themselves up to me. I now find myself appreciating, among other things, the anarchistic, freedom loving, and liberal aspects of the stories. Consequently with the knowledge and experience gained over the years my position as a reader has gradually changed.

Once (I recall that it was immediately after completing my degree in Ethnology) as I read the short story *The Fir Tree*<sup>2</sup>, it suddenly struck me that the story is an absolutely outstanding way of illustrating alienation as a method that is used within Ethnology. The preparations before Christmas described in the short story seem to be, at the very least, strange when one looks at them through Moomin eyes. Naturally, the externalisation in *The Fir Tree* is not true to life, even though Tove Jansson did combine fiction with fact in the story. Moreover, my own reading of the short story tends to make the distance techniques evident in a caricatured and exaggerated manner. However, despite

this I consider that the short story provides a good place to start in a discussion concerning alienation as a method.

In the following, I intend to examine the means by which distancing takes place in *The Fir Tree*, that is to say, the way in which the author lets her fictitious main characters in the story act. The intention is to map out how the rituals and traditions associated with Christmas are depicted in the story and to consider how these representations contribute to the distancing of a well-known cultural phenomenon. In connection with this, the concept of heterotopy is discussed as a site for alienation. As a third point, I briefly bring up the question of the encounter between the author, the literary work, and the reader and how this leaves its imprint in the reading of a work of fiction.

Within the discipline of Ethnology in Finland and the Nordic countries, the everyday cultural phenomena of one's own culture are often studied (in contrast to anthropology where the choice is often to investigate a foreign culture outside Europe). It is also common practice for ethnologists to choose a research topic that to some extent is close to their heart. It can be a subject that is related to the researcher's personal experiences and interests or to his/her social and cultural background. (Ehn 1996, 94.)

When studying the familiar one can come across the difficulty of not being able to create a sufficient distance from the subject. Previous knowledge and acquaintance with the subject can lead to a feeling of blindness in front of the customary, and that one cannot "see" the cultural phenomena. (Ehn

& Löfgren 1989, 11–12; Ehn & Löfgren 2001, 8.) In this situation it can be necessary to try to make oneself into a stranger in front of the phenomenon one is studying – to try to see the phenomenon from “the outside”. Distancing is therefore a technique that can be used in Ethnological research for obtaining an outside perspective on the well-known.

It is not particularly usual to use fiction as a source or starting point for an analysis in Ethnology, and naturally the fictional text has been created without a thought that an ethnologist would at some point use the work as source material. When employing fictional literature, the work should of course be treated as a story and as a manifestation of an opinion. Authors always take a stance concerning the matters which they write about. The events, the places, and occurrences that are described in fictional works are there because for the author they sustain the meaning that is essential to the idea of the work. (Garnert 1993, 30; Furuland 1991, 271.)

Within the Sociology of Literature, the direction of the research focuses on the relationship between fiction and society. From this perspective, analysis is made concerning how fiction describes society, and how literary works function as a means of developing opinions and as agents of ideas. The main interests lie in questions concerning the representation of society that is given by the fictional work, as well as how fiction depicts, re-interprets or re-constructs an external reality (Svedjedal 1997, 72–73). In accordance with this I analyse how Christmas as a cultural phenomenon is described in the *The Fir Tree*.

Tove Jansson (1914–2001) was a Finnish novelist, painter, illustrator, and comic strip author. She is most famous for her Moomin books, which appeared between 1945 and 1970. The setting for all the Moomin books is the Moomin valley. The main characters are Moomintroll and his parents, but the family is surrounded by a large group of friends, relatives, ancestors, neighbours and also frightening creatures. In the books, the Moomins generally meet with an adventure or disaster of some sort involving a journey and a return to the security of home. A strategy that Tove Jansson often employs in her stories is mitigating

the frightening with the comfortable and secure (Rehal-Johansson 2006, 119).

In Tove Jansson’s writing *home* and *family* are places of crucial importance. The core of the Moomin family is very reminiscent of Tove Jansson’s own artistic, creative and bohemian family. Her father was a sculptor and her mother a sketcher and illustrator. The Moomins are generally carefree, very tolerant to differences and lack any belief in authority.

The Moomin books are both children’s literature and adult books, which might explain their popularity. The books, originally written in Swedish, have been translated to more than thirty languages. The Moomins have also been used as the basis for many television series and films. The European-Japanese animated TV-series started a new Moomin boom in the 1990s both in Finland and abroad, but particularly in Japan.<sup>3</sup>

In the following I summarise the content of the short story, placing special attention on the rituals of Christmas and the Moomin’s actions and reactions as described in the story.

### **The Moomin family Christmas – outsidership and bewilderment**

It is winter and the Moomin family are asleep as they hibernate in winter. Suddenly their sleep is disturbed by the hemulen who has been sent to the Moomin’s house to wake the family up as it is Christmas. The Moomins, dazed by sleep, have no idea what Christmas is and they believe something has happened that is absolutely terrible; perhaps a flood has taken place? Confused they get up out of bed and climb out onto the roof of their house, where they are met with an unfamiliar landscape. The sky is the same but Moomin valley is full of white cotton wool and it is cold. Moreover, everyone is behaving very peculiarly.

The hemulen’s aunty passed by the house with a fir tree on her chair-sledge. “So, you’re awake at last,” she observed casually. “Better make sure you get a fir before dark”. “But why,” Moominpappa started to reply.” (Jansson 1963, 164.)

A fir tree before it gets dark? That must mean that the danger comes when it gets dark and perhaps it means that they should hide in the fir tree. Through Gaffsie, who also rushes by, they get to know that the tree should be "dressed". "We haven't anything large enough" said Moominmamma worriedly. "Whatever did she mean?" A frozen little woody who is invited in for tea tells them shyly that it should be decorated with beautiful things. The Moomins decorate the tree with all the beautiful things they can think of. On the branches they hang shells, crystals from the dining room chandeliers and Snork maiden's pearl necklace. On the top they place a red silk rose. Perhaps the tree and the beautiful things will *appease* the dangerous Christmas and the winter's incomprehensible power.

The hemulen's aunt comes past again a little while later on her chair-sledge, and in much haste. She still has to find time to prepare food for Christmas. "Food for Christmas?" Moomintroll repeated. "Does he eat?" The Moomin's amazement continues to grow. "Do you think Christmas is very hungry? Moominmamma wondered a little anxiously". Furthermore, the hemulen had said something about presents. These were obviously needed to *placate* Christmas and the Moomins choose the most precious and finest of their possessions and lay them out in the snow, "For Christmas". The food they also set out in small bowls around the fir tree.

The Moomins decide for safety's sake to gather together all the candles they can find in the house. They place them in the snow around the fir tree and light them to provide security and to placate the darkness and the dangerous Christmas. When everything is ready they sit in the snow beside the fir tree and wait for the catastrophe to happen. But nothing happens. Then the little woody arrives, bringing his family and whisper's shyly "Happy Christmas".

"You're the first to say such thing," said Moominpappa. "Aren't you at all afraid of what's going to happen when Christmas comes?" "This is it," the woody mumbled and sat down in the snow with his relations. (Jansson 1963, 172.)

The Moomins look at the small devotional woodies, who are looking so admiringly and longingly at the beautiful tree and all the food and presents. When the Moomins see the woodies strong yearning and admiration they decided to give them the Christmas. The Moomins are a little afraid that Christmas will be somewhat angry that they have left the celebration – one should show a certain respect and esteem before Christmas – and so they hide themselves under the table on the veranda. Except nothing terrible happens and moreover they begin to feel tired and so decide to go in again and continue sleeping.

"I'm really too tired to wonder about the meaning of all this. But it seems to have come off all right." "At least I am not afraid of Christmas any more," Moomintroll said. "I believe the hemulen and his aunt and Gaffsie must have misunderstood the whole thing." (Jansson 1963, 175.)

### **Heterotopias as alienating spaces: a Christmas celebration in Moomin valley**

When the Moomin family are woken up, and step outside the preparations for Christmas are well underway and Moomin valley is being transformed in to a place for a celebration. In her doctoral thesis, the literary specialist Sirke Happonen observes that in the Moomin books there is usually, at some point, a party or celebration of some kind. Sirke Happonen analyses several of the celebrations in different books but does not deal with the Christmas celebrations in *The Fir Tree*. In her analysis, Sirke Happonen makes use of Michel Foucault's concept of *heterotopia*.

A heterotopia is a place outside all other places, but in contrast to utopia, it is a place that really exists; it is a site which can be localised to a fixed place. Heterotopias are counter-sites where all the real places in a culture are exposed, questioned, and turned upside down. (Foucault 1967.)<sup>4</sup> Heterotopias often also include a temporal dimension. They first start functioning at full capacity when the participants have exceeded a certain breaking point in normal time. Foucault named

markets and festivals as examples of this type of temporary heterotopias. (Foucault 1967.)

A celebration can also be characterised as a temporary heterotopia. Celebrations are states that suspend time, and consist of a space that is built up and created especially for the occasion: in the Moomin books, the room is filled with tables and chairs in surprising places, paper lights, music, fireworks, and different activities that have meaning within the context of the celebration. The participants in their fine clothes give speeches, make toasts, dance, eat and drink. The celebration and the preparations before the celebrations thus change the normal room into a heterotopia. Happonen 2007, 123.)

The heterotopia as an illusory or abnormal site actualises the obvious in the normal space. In my interpretation of the concept, one can also with the help of heterotopias visualise and alienate the familiar in a normal space. In this way, one can see the Christmas celebration in the short story *The Fir tree* as a heterotopia with whose help our traditions and the rituals surrounding Christmas celebrations are made visual, problematised and questioned.

In every Moomin book, both the text and the illustrations acquaint the reader with different spectator positions, and also the visual angle of the celebration and the relationship between the people who are participating in the celebration. (Happonen 2007, 125.) In *Midsummer Madness* and *Finn Family Moomintroll*, for example, the Moomins are central figures during the parties. They take the initiative to having the party and are familiar with the rituals of the celebration. As active participants, they make speeches and toasts, and eat and drink. (See for example Westin 1988, 184–188, 232–233.)

In *The Fir tree* the Moomins, in contrast, are in the position of being total outsiders in relation to the celebration. They are requested to perform the rituals of Christmas without having any idea about what this thing called Christmas is. When one sees Christmas through the eyes of the Moomins, the rituals of Christmas (that the reader is very familiar with), become, to say the least, very odd and chaotic. A panic and stress is developed about trees that have to be decorated and food

and presents that have to be given to Christmas and everything has to be arranged in a great hurry – and nothing is ready! The stress and the panic before Christmas is also conveyed through the illustrations where the different figures are running around in a great hurry, falling over, and are carrying lots of parcels.<sup>5</sup> All the elements that are included in our Christmas celebrations are not, however, included in the Moomin valley Christmas. Among other things, Father Christmas and the different religious elements that are associated with Christmas are missing.

Another contribution to the Moomin's lack of understanding is also the fact that the idyllic Moomin valley has gone through a spatial metamorphosis. It is cold, and Tove Jansson has allowed snow to fall, so that the valley is covered in a thick white layer of snow. In this way Christmas in the tale has the perfect setting. (Searle-Chatterjee 2001, 185; Kuper 2001, 161.) However, the snow also functions in the story as an element of nature that lays bare the transformation of reality. For the Moomin family the cold and the snow means that they feel like strangers in their own home valley.

Faced with the unknown and the strange, the Moomins base their actions on their previous experiences. Moomins are creatures with a certain propensity towards catastrophe and the dramatic. (Westin 1988, 223.) That is presumably, why Moominmamma immediately sees to it that life-jackets, aspirins, and warm blankets are to hand. In addition, she also has, for safety's sake, moominpappa's old gun. The Moomins' interpretations and actions based on their lack of prior understanding results in them creating their own variation of the Christmas celebration.

The Moomins see Christmas as a creature – a creature that is a part of nature. In the personified guise of Christmas nature releases her bewitching and magical power. It is these powers that the Moomins must try to placate in order to cope with this imminent catastrophe. As small and insignificant creatures the Moomins understand that they must be polite and respectful towards this mystical power of nature (Jansson 1963, 162) and the reader takes part in the Moomin family's strategies and preparations as they face this incomprehensible and dangerous reality. By this means, the

concept of family is also an important theme in the short story.

In the story, the members of the Moomin family work together to meet the remarkable event that is about to happen. Everyone in the family tries mutually to come to terms with what all this abnormality really means, and to take part and help with the preparations. Togetherness is therefore also an important theme in the short story. Apart from the fact that the whole family is involved in the preparations for the coming celebration, the Moomin family's Christmas celebration also opens itself outwards and thereby a feeling of solidarity and hospitality is created. In Finland, and the other Nordic countries Christmas is a private family celebration that mainly takes place within the boundaries of the home and the participants are usually close family members and the nearest relations.<sup>6</sup> The Moomin family's Christmas is in comparison more public and open. A sign of this is that the small woodies are welcome to take part in the Christmas celebration the Moomins have arranged.

One can also possibly see the Moomin's fir tree as a symbol of the openness and public nature of the celebration. Admittedly, the Moomins interpreted the beautifully decorated fir tree as a means of placating the dangerous powers of nature and therefore set it up in front of the house. However, it is still interesting that Tove Jansson chose to place the tree outside the house. When she wrote the short story it was still very unusual in Finland, and it was not until the 1970s that Christmas trees began to be seen more generally outside private houses. (Jaakkola 1977, 184.) It is possible that Tove Jansson, with this public Christmas tree was hoping to tone down the private character of Christmas so as to add force to a message of togetherness and inclusion.

By their actions in the story, the Moomin family are presented as the somewhat unconventional and eccentric family that the reader has already met in the other Moomin stories. The fir tree outside the house that is decorated with objects that one would perhaps not normally find on a Christmas tree plus the Christmas food consisting of blueberry pie, yogurt, eggnog and other dishes that the family likes, exemplifies this. The hemulen,

Gaffsie and the other inhabitants of Moomin valley also have their image of the Moomins confirmed when they see the Moomin's Christmas:

"Look at our fir tree," Moomintroll called to her. "Dear me" said the hemulen's aunt. "*But then you've always been a bit unlike other people.*" (Jansson 1963, 168.) [my italics]

Apart from the fact that Christmas, similar to other customs, can create a welcome interruption and a high point in daily life, these rituals can also place a considerable demand at a social level on the members of a culture. To not take part would be understood as an expression of an opinion that questions the ritual and its significance. (See for instance Etzioni 2004, 10–15; Kuper 2001, 171–173.) Perhaps this is why the Moomins are woken up in the short story *The Fir Tree*. In any event, the hemulen's statement can be understood to imply that they should join in. He is very irritated that the Moomins just sleep and sleep while he is working himself ragged in preparation for Christmas. "Christmas's coming! I'm tired of you and your sleeping and now Christmas will be here almost any day!", shouts the hemulen when he comes to wake up the Moomin family. (Jansson 1963, 163.) However, it is also possible that the Moomin family is woken for a completely different reason. In the following an alternative reading of the short story is considered.

### **Tove Jansson's message: a text containing a protest?**

*The Fir Tree* was written already in 1956 when Tove Jansson promised to write a new Moomin story for the Christmas supplement in the Swedish newspaper Svenska Dagbladet. (Westin 2007, 310–311.) In 1962, *The Fir Tree* was published in a somewhat re-worked form in the short story collection *Tales from Moomin Valley*.

Since in my reading of *The Fir Tree*, I have taken the liberty of reading the story as an alienation of Christmas as a tradition and a cultural phenomenon, I regard it as justified to briefly raise the question of the relationship between the author

and the text. What did Tove Jansson have as her aim when she wrote the short story? What message did she want to convey? Asking this type of question is, however, somewhat risky and is based on the notion of the author that arose during the Romantic period. Admittedly this perspective remains strong even today, but it has received severe criticism. (Kaarto 2001, 164.)

According to this view concerning the notion of the author from the Romantic period, a work always contains a truthful content. This is the meaning of the work the author has given the text and it is the reader's task to try and find out what the author was trying to say with his/her text. (Kaarto 2001, 164–165.) In other words, this is a question of an author-centred perspective of literature, where the meaning in the work can only be found in the biographical details of the author's life. One of the people that directed the most severe criticism towards this notion of the author was Roland Barthes, who in 1968 proclaimed that "the author is dead". According to Barthes, the author's death was necessary so that the reader's role could find its rightful place in the creative process of a literary work. (Kaarto 2001, 166–167.)

The notion of the author put forward in the Romantic period also met with criticism from the Russian theoretician Mikhail Bakhtin. He did not require the author to die, but it is not the Romantic period's author that lives in Bakhtin's imagination. (Burkitt 1998, 163–164.) According to Bakhtin, the author creates a work of literature in a dialogue with his/her own time and with the past. By this means the author places his/her imprint on the work. However, the work is also recreated by contemporary and future readers. In this way, the contribution to creating the literary world of the book, is divided between the author who writes the text and the reader who participates in the text. (Bakhtin 2002a, 252–254.) Therefore, every encounter between the author, the work and the reader that takes place in another time, another geographical setting or a cultural space, creates a different version of the text.

In the process of its posthumous life, a work of literature can be enriched with new meanings. One can in fact say that the work then exceeds what it

was during its creation. According to Bakhtin different phenomena of meaning can exist in a hidden form, or be potential in the work, and these first come to light in the more favourable contexts of a later cultural era. (Bakhtin 2002b, 4–5.)<sup>7</sup> When I met Tove Jansson's words and statements as a reader some years ago, *The Fir Tree* was for me a text concerning outsiders and misunderstanding and that functioned as a means of making visible the traditions surrounding Christmas celebrations. It does not necessarily require, however, that Tove Jansson had any such idea in her thoughts when she wrote the story.

A radio programme from the 22nd December 1968<sup>8</sup> suggests that Tove Jansson had something completely different on her mind when she wrote the story. In the programme, Tove Jansson directs some sharp criticism at people who "let Christmas become a time of panic". She misses the childhood magic of Christmas and criticises all the exaggerated stress before the holiday.

Tove Jansson also describes with insight the stress that surrounds the present Christmas: tired people rushing around and nearly ready to burst into tears crowd into shops and try to arrange everything they have forgotten. The people have lists and notes everywhere of things that have to be done and they cross out everything that has been done. These are lists where every crossing out is filled with relief, and Tove Jansson laments the fact that in this day and age a line through a fir tree can bring a sensation of relief to a person. These lists with all the things that have to be done can also be found as an element in the story *The Fir Tree*. "Don't disturb me" the hemulen replied sullenly, looking through a long list in which nearly every line seemed to be crossed out." (Jansson 1963, 170.)

Tove Jansson further questions what we should do to make Christmas once again into a gift – so that it is a respite from everything that has to do with duty, coercion and work, and not something that one just has to get through. Tove Jansson requests the listeners to refrain from everything that is not necessary and instead try and take pleasure and find peace and meaning in the celebration of Christmas. "It is terrible to make a pleasure into a duty", exclaims Tove Jansson. This state-

ment should be understood within the frame work of the struggle between pleasure and duty, desire and coercion that Tove Jansson conducted during the whole of her career as an artist. (Westin 2007, 20–21.)

Tove Jansson also further emphasises that it should also be sufficient with a fir tree, lighted candles and those one holds dear. Christmas should be a time for rest and celebration in the darkest time of the year. Perhaps one could then according to Tove Jansson, find the strength to create a new desire, a new tradition: to “make Christmas real” for someone else who does not have this possibility. The same message she also presents in *The Fir Tree*, when the Moomin family decides to give Christmas to the little woodies. Here one can find an indication of the charity, social conscience and care that also constitute an element of the celebration of Christmas. (Swahn 1993, 283–285; Kuper 2001, 167–168.)

The woody didn't believe his ears at first. It stepped cautiously nearer to the fir tree, followed by all the relations and friends with devoutly quivering whiskers. *They had never had a Christmas of their own before.* (Jansson 1963, 172.) [my italics]

### **Alienation of the normal and familiar**

If one begins from the point of view of the radio programme, *The Fir Tree*, can well be read as a text protesting against the stress created before Christmas. Perhaps this is the reason the Moomins were woken up for Christmas. Tove Jansson could use the ignorance of the Moomins and the form of the story to direct criticism at this cultural phenomenon that according to her had been spoiled, and she was not, at this time, alone in her thoughts. Towards the end of the 60s many voices were raised in protest against the consumer mania that proceeded Christmas. (Lönnqvist 2005, 124–125.)

However, as we have seen, it is also possible to read the story as an alienation of a very familiar cultural phenomenon. In *The Fir Tree* Tove Jansson has placed a real tradition in a story-book world where the hemulen, Gaffsie and the aunt repre-

sent reality – they act like normal people before Christmas. The Moomins on the other hand act as outsiders and strangers. The Moomins observe, interpret and act on their own understanding of the situation. Even though the Moomins try to perform the Christmas rituals they remain outsiders and never completely understand what Christmas is all about. They do not, in other words, enter into the Christmas heterotopia. Foucault believes that the individual always has to subject him/herself to a certain type of behaviour and certain requirements in order to become part of heterotopias. (Foucault 1967.) The Moomins function in the story as the perplexed spectators that nevertheless through their activities finally manage to create their own version of Christmas.

In *The Fir Tree* Tove Jansson describes and problematises cultural behaviour and a cultural phenomenon. The heterotopia of celebration exposes the strange and weird, and thereby illustrates the story's technique of distancing as a method of avoiding becoming blind to the defects in one's own culture. It can almost be said that Tove Jansson has given the Moomins the role of anthropologists, who meet an unfamiliar group of people and an unfamiliar culture or perhaps even a role as beings from Mars who have landed on earth in the middle of something called Christmas.

In a literary theory essay from 1917/1925 Viktor Šklovskij presents the thought that the task of art is to make things strange. Literature should not allow “automatisation” which is a state that so easily affects our daily understanding of reality. The language of Art should be a language that arouses surprise and teaches us to really see things again. (Svedjedal 1997, 68.)<sup>9</sup> In this article, I have shown how a work of literature can make visible ritual behaviour in our culture. Similar to the Moomins, we ethnologists should place ourselves before various everyday phenomena in our culture and observe them with amazement. To be surprised and astonished can increase our ability to place our attention on the obvious and help us see the unexpected.<sup>10</sup>

However, the philosopher Peter Winch took a stance that could be considered a caution against distancing as a method. He believes that aliena-

tion can certainly be of benefit if one wants to place attention on a phenomenon that seems familiar and self-evident, but at the same time he warns of the danger that those using externalising can fall into, namely that it becomes a more real method of confirming a phenomena than that of the normal methods. (Winch 1994, 110–111.) Baring this in mind, alienation can function as a tool for finding new perspectives and contribute to a creative way of thinking.

The ethnologists Billy Ehn och Orvar Löfgren suggest that apart from alienation there are also several other work techniques or strategies that one can use when pursuing cultural analysis and having difficulty in finding connections and *seeing*

the culture. They speak among other things about “reckless thinking”, about contrasting, dramatising, and putting into perspective, which can provide a possibility of noticing a phenomenon either in contemporary time or in the past, that might otherwise risk being passed over, without closer reflection. However, this free thought often needs to be supplemented with theoretical concepts, with the help of which one can also create a distance to the subject. By uniting a culturally analytical imagination with a deep knowledge concerning the phenomenon that is being studied, it is possible to arrive at innovative and creative interpretations that sees the familiar with a fresh vision. (Ehn & Löfgren 2001, 145–170.)



## NOTES

- 1 In Swedish: Farlig midsommar, Trollvinter, Kometen kommer, Trollkarlens hatt och Det osynliga barnet.
- 2 The short story *The Fir Tree* was first published in 1956 in the Swedish newspaper Svenska Dagbladet. In 1962, it was published, somewhat re-worked, in the short story collection *Tales from Moomin valley*. (Rantanen 2002, 165; Westin 2007, 310–311)
- 3 For more information in English about Tove Jansson and the Moomin books, see for instance <http://www.kansallisbiografia.fi/english/?id=1395>
- 4 Foucault 1967. The implication of the concept of heterotopia can lead to deliberations on other theories regarding transformation and alteration of status. Mikhail Bakhtin's carnivalism, and the transitional rites in Van Gennep, Victor Turner och Edmund Leach can be considered in this context. Among these different theories, I detect a certain difference in their emphasis. In the question of heterotopias, the focus is especially placed on the aspect of the space or the transformation of space. In carnivals, people and actors have the most prominent position, whilst time is the most important aspect in transitional rites.
- 5 For a more detailed discussion concerning motion in the Moomin books, see Happonen 2007.
- 6 For a more detailed discussion concerning this, see Kuper 157–173; Beijar in his forthcoming article.
- 7 Bakhtin 2002b, 4–5. Here one can also envisage that a literary work might also lose something by the fact that a future reader would not have sufficient historical and cultural competence in order for the work to also attain the same meaning that was current when the work was written.
- 8 This programme segment is in the archives of YLE Arenan. YLE Arenan is the Internet-tv and -radio of Finland's Rundradio. Via YLE Arenan it is possible to listen and watch many of Rundradion's programmes on a personal computer. Past programmes are available from the Arkivet. Tove Jansson About Christmas, July 22.12.1968 (length: 4.57 min), <http://www.yle.fi/elavaarkisto/?s=s&g=7&ag=69&t=430&a=3683,15.7.200810:04>.
- 9 Svedjedal 1997, 68. Svedjedal reference Viktor Šklovskijs article “Konsten som grepp” (first published 1917).
- 10 For a more detailed discussion concerning wonder and astonishment, see Ehn 2005.



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