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AWAKENINGS: WOMEN WRITERS, RELIGIOUS FAITH, AND WOMEN'S AGENCY IN NINETEENTH-CENTURY FINLAND

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ABSTRACT

In our article, we tackle nineteenth-century Finnish women writers' stance towards religious faith, considering both organized religion, and their personal search for spirituality. This century marks the birth of Finnish literature, first in Swedish, then in Finnish. It is the period of "national awakening" that culminated around the turn of the twentieth century, when various social movements entered into dialogue with the national project. Like in all national, social and women's movements around Europe, religion played an important role. We address this issue with cases from different decades, mapping the historical and political contexts, as well as various literary genres and poetics.

The selected writers represent certain milestones in the history of women's writing in Finland: they begin with Finland's first women novelists, Charlotta Falkman (1795–1882) and Wendla Randelin (1823–1906), who both wrote in Swedish. Our next case study is Minna Canth (1844–1897), representing the first generation of authors writing in Finnish. Finally, we briefly discuss the socialist politician and writer Hilja Pärssinen (1876–1935). We focus on women writers' discourses of faith in the process of creating female subjectivity, and opportunities for women's agency, amidst the rising national movement and women's emancipation.

KEYWORDS Nineteenth-century women's writing; women writers in Finland; nationalism; Lutheranism; revivalist movements; awakening

Introduction

"The novel and the poem were women's only instruments of social action in the early nineteenth century: literature was their pulpit, tribune, academy, commission, and parliament all in one."[1] This is how Ellen Moers characterizes the importance of literature for early women writers. The word "pulpit" stands out in this quotation: at that time, women had no access to university to study theology and become pastors; instead, literature was their pulpit.

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Especially that rapidly developing and popular genre, the novel, but also drama with its immediate impact on the audience offered nineteenth-century women writers the opportunity to enter the public sphere and express their views – not only on issues such as the family and the position of women, but also on religion and spirituality.[2]

Women writers in nineteenth-century Finland seized this opportunity with great enthusiasm. Even though women in Finland have only held the same positions as men in the official Lutheran religion for a relatively short time, long before that women were "making religion" on the margins of religious institutions.[3] These margins included literature: religion and religious faith played a crucial role in works written by women in Finland during the nineteenth century. Here, it is important to note that we use the word "Finland" and the adjective "Finnish" to refer to the area of contemporary Finland before the birth of the independent Finnish republic in 1917, acknowledging that the borders have changed in history.

In this article, we will tackle nineteenth-century Finnish women writers' stance toward religious institutions and new formations with the Lutheran church, considering both traditional, organized religion, and their search for their own, personal ways to spirituality. The nineteenth century marks the birth of what we can call Finnish literature and culture proper, the time when the first novels originate on the territory of what is today Finland, first in Swedish, then in Finnish. It is the period of "national awakening" that culminated around the turn of the twentieth century, when various social movements, including the women's movement, entered into dialogue with the national project. Obviously, like in all national and women's movements around Europe, religion played an important role. We address this issue with a few cases from different decades, mapping historical and political contexts, as well as various literary genres and poetics.

We include authors whose deep interest in social issues, emancipation, or even revolution, did not exclude religious faith or engagement with spirituality. At the same time, the selected writers represent certain milestones in the history of women's writing in Finland: they begin with Finland's first women authors of novels, Charlotta Falkman and Wendla Randelin, who both wrote in Swedish. Our next case study is Minna Canth, representing the first generation of authors writing in Finnish, who introduced Realism into Finnish literature. Canth can be called the first Finnish-language feminist writer[4] and she fought for women's rights. At the end of our article, we briefly discuss the socialist politician and writer Hilja Pärssinen, whose oeuvre extends beyond the nineteenth century. We focus on women writers' use of ideas, discourses of religion and faith in the process of creating female subjectivity, and, most of all, in creating opportunities for women's agency, against the backdrop of the rising national movement and women's emancipation. We understand

agency as the ability to take action; for female characters, it means being able to make one's own decisions that affect one's life.

The intersection of gender and religion has been researched in various disciplines during the last few decades;[5] substantial attention has been dedicated to the issue of women and esotericism, especially by the team of scholars around the research project *Uuden etsijät* (Seekers of the New).[6] Recent research has included studies on literary women,[7] but very few of these take the approach of literary criticism. One aim of our article is to contribute to the debate on women, religion, and faith within the discipline of literary studies, since we concur that "exploring the intersectionality of gender, religion, and spirituality is for a variety of reasons not only desirable but also necessary."[8]

When discussing women writers' take on religious issues, it is necessary to engage with both their understanding of religious faith and the effects of religion on the society in question. In Finland, as in other Nordic countries, Lutheran Protestantism was the principal denomination since the sixteenth-century Lutheran Reformation. Finland did not exist as a separate nation state before the second decade of the twentieth century, having been part of the Swedish realm from ca. 1150 till 1809, then a Grand Duchy within the Russian Empire for the following century, and becoming an independent republic in 1917. In the nineteenth century, Lutheranism was taken as one of the foundations of national identity.[9] As historical research has shown, Finland belonged to countries where religion, cultural Lutheranism in particular,[10] was associated with national identity during the period of the intense nation-building.[11] According to some historians, Lutheranism is "probably one of the most characteristic elements of the Nordic identity from a historical point of view."[12]

The religious situation considerably affected the position of Finnish women, including writers. Within nationalist discourse, Lutheran virtue was contrasted with Orthodoxy, which was influential in the eastern part of Finland and often associated with Russians, who were perceived as the "other within."[13] A different kind of otherness was attached to Catholicism, which was constructed as foreign to contrast the Nordic countries as morally superior to those of the European South.

Within the discourse of the nineteenth-century nationalist movement, the prototypical writer was a man, just like the prototype of the Finnish citizen. The principal features of the citizen, created as a part of Finnish national mythology throughout the nineteenth century, were modesty, diligence, perseverance, and proximity to nature, virtues promoted by the Lutheran religion.[14] In case of women, these features were strongly gendered, mostly attached to the figure of woman as mother. The emphasis on the triad "home, religion and homeland" became the essence of patriotic gendered values.

Religious Revivalism and the "False" Femininity

Finnish national identity began to take shape during the first decades of the nineteenth century. The ideas of J. G. Herder, German Romanticism and neo-humanism came to Finland, culminating in the 1840s, which has been called "the cradle of modern Finnish culture."[15] This decade witnessed the national "awakening" as well as the rise of the novel, several newspapers, and publishers.

The 1840s also saw the rise of the female novelists who entered the literary field in Finland and wrote in Swedish. Women played a crucial role in the development of the novel in Finland,[16] as in many other countries. One of the early women novelists in Finland was Charlotta Falkman (1795–1882), whose four novels dealt with the role of women, the importance of the family and the upbringing of children. In relation to these themes, she began to use the novel as her "pulpit" and express her views on religion through this developing genre.[17] Her novels deal with the relationship between Lutheranism and the national ideal of the woman as the center of the family, freethought, Freemasonry and revivalist movements. In her novel *Leonna, en skildring ur lifvet* (1854, Leonna, a description of life), Falkman chose the figurative language of the Bible to express her views on the ideal relations between family members:

> Such a relationship within the family is a service to God. In such a case, home is heaven for the child. The father represents divinity. […] The mother is love, reconciliation. A smiling child is sleeping on her chest. […] Love for truth is the spirit which governs all the members of the house, and it shall proceed from the Father and the Mother. In this case, all three of them are one.[18]

This quotation from Falkman's pedagogical, sentimental, social novel,[19] a story about two civilized and decent middle-class girls who end up in romantic marriages, serves as an example of the Bible as a powerful intertext in novels written by women, as shown below. It also serves as an example of how the Lutheran religion was used as part of national propaganda and to inculcate women into their role as mothers and wives. Falkman uses the metaphor of the Christian doctrine of the Trinity to explain the relationships between child, mother, and father in an ideal, middle-class family: the mother is love and reconciliation, the father is divinity. Falkman aligns with Finland's Hegelian philosopher J. V. Snellman (1806–1881), who spoke in favor of women's education and even of their literary activities, although his relationship to women writers remained somewhat ambivalent. Snellman expressed his reservations about signs of any "excesses" in women's public and artistic activities or, as we might put it, in their feminism.[20] Moreover, mid-nineteenth century women writers did not form a constitutive part of Snellman's "program of literary politics" as Heidi Grönstrand and Kati Launis have

shown,[21] and, this "advancement" of (patriotic) women had its own strict rules: Finnish women were not supposed to refrain from the sacred vocation of motherhood. As Falkman shows critically in her novel, in her days there were no alternatives in women's lives: "A woman is so dependent that she seldom, if ever, has a free choice."[22]

While the ideal woman in Falkman's *Leonna* is an educated mother and wife, the "wrong kind" of womanhood consists of features such as being uncivilized, melancholic and tearful, playing cards, failing as a mother and wife, avoiding housework, and drinking alcohol. A part of this "wrong" femininity is religious revivalism. In *Leonna*, there is a secondary character, Maria Smitt (Maria "Infection"), who belongs to the large gallery of "unworthy" women created by Falkman in her novels. E. M. Forster (1981/1927) concocted the well-known theory that many of these secondary figures are "flat," one-dimensional characters who play an important role in thematization of ideal femininity. Maria had a bad upbringing. She is weepy and tired, neglects her motherly duties, and is unhappily married to a gambling-obsessed Petter, who eventually commits suicide. To make matters worse, Maria begins to attend revivalist meetings; as we will show in the next section, Lutheran revivalist movements had their origins in German Pietism and were developing in Finland from the eighteenth century.[23] Leonna's husband claims that the revivalist meetings "make the heads of all women in the area spin." According to the narrator, Maria's religious sisters have no inner or outer sophistication, and they speak with a slurred voice.

In *Leonna*, Falkman comments on the revivalist movements, but in her debut novel *En prestgård i N-d, af en finsk medborgarinna* (1847, A parsonage in N-d, by a Finnish citizen), published seven years before *Leonna,* she criticizes free thinking. *En prestgård* is the story of Walter, the "vagabond," who is the tutor at the vicarage and also a freethinker who hesitates to become a pastor. Walter has been introduced to freethought by "a man from Stockholm," who claims that a person should trust only themselves. According to this man, belief in one's own infallibility replaces faith in God and the resurrection. The opening words of the novel, "Doubt is the first step to madness," suggest to the reader that Walter's future madness is precisely caused by unbelief. Falkman's attitude to freethought in her novel is sharply judgmental. It is shown to be a destructive tendency – as was the revivalist movement in her novel *Leonna*.

Female Adultery and the Pietist Awakening

A year after Falkman's debut novel, Wendla Randelin (1823–1906, Figure 1) published her adultery novel *Den Fallna, en berättelse af Wendela* (1848, The Fallen, a story by Wendela). It tells the story of a bourgeois wife and mother, Elisabeth, and her passionate, romantic love for her husband's best friend

Figure 1. Wendla Randelin (1823–1906), pen name Wendela, was one of the first women novelists in Finland. The Uusikaupunki Museum. Public domain. https://www.finna.fi/Record/tmk.165216958538000?sid=5005106675&lng=en-gb

Rudolph. In the center of this adultery novel – or "novel of female adultery," as Bill Overton suggests[24] – is Elisabeth's personal relationship with God. What makes the novel particularly interesting is that it does not focus on

Lutheranism, but on a revivalist movement: the concept of faith presented in Randelin's novel is close to Evangelicalism, which was very influential in the author's home region of Uusikaupunki in Southwest Finland. Evangelicalism, as presented in the novel, strongly emphasizes living faith and the continuous omnipresence of mercy and forgiveness. The expression "living faith" used in the novel was part of the Evangelical vocabulary.[25]

Revivalist movements "awakened" and shook the Finnish intelligentsia in the mid-nineteenth century. This was a simultaneous phenomenon with another "awakening," that of nationalism. The phrase "national awakening" has been criticized for implying the idea of an existing but sleeping identity from which people are roused, while contemporary scholars discuss national identity as a narrative construct produced within the idea of nationhood.[26]

The revivalist connection links Randelin's novel to the contemporary heated debate on this religious movement, presenting a view that differs radically from the opinions of the well-known poet J. L. Runeberg and the aforementioned philosopher Snellman, who shaped the essence of the emerging Finnish national identity. Unlike these influential male intellectuals, or Falkman in her novels, Randelin – herself a pastor's daughter – expressed a very positive view of the Evangelical movement in the pages of her novel. Randelin linked her novel with the debate on revivalism by creating the character of a pastor called Ferdinand, who has undergone a Pietist awakening. She uses references to *Siionin virret* (the "Hymns of Zion" used by the revivalist movement), and phrases such as "mother church" and "living faith." The narrator of the novel also comments on Pietist ideas in a very positive tone. The idea of personal faith and the huge power of forgiveness is also represented in the structure of the novel, where Elisabeth's spiritual awakening is given its own chapter entitled "Den sanna trösten" (True faith). According to the conventions of the novel of the female adultery,[27] Elisabeth, "the fallen one," has lost her two children and is sitting beside their grave. She hears a hymn that kindles hope in her heart. Elizabeth's conversion is described as a bright moment of enlightenment, the opening of her soul's eyes:

> All Ferdinand's words, all the holy books she had read, even those that had been dark and incomprehensible to her mind, were suddenly clear to her; it was as if the eye of her soul had been suddenly opened. In a radiant light she saw and understood every word, and grasped and felt the fervent hope that they implied.[28]

"It was as if the eye of her soul had been suddenly opened": conversion has been seen as a process of change that involves not only the individual but also their relationship with the community. As a figure undergoing transformation and awakening, Elisabeth is a modern subject; a woman facing her God alone. Indeed, the revivalist movements have been regarded as the earliest initiators of the modernization of Finnish society and women preachers

played a key role in their creation.[29] The modernity of revivalism was manifested precisely in the emphasis on the personal relationship between the individual and God, the inner sense of Christ; that was something quite new in Finland, which had been dominated by Old Lutheran ecclesiasticism.[30] It is this modern subjectivity, or individualization, that Randelin deals with in her novel. The modern subject that she constructs and represents in her novel is, above all, a woman.

Randelin uses the *Bible* as the most important intertext. A *Bible* verse, John 8:7 – in which Jesus responds to the accusers of the adulterous woman that whoever is without sin may cast the first stone – serves as the motto and final sentence of *Den Fallna*. The novel can be read as a retelling of a biblical story transposed to a different environment and era. What these two stories of female adultery have in common is a religious message of forgiveness, propounded in the novel by a pastor who has undergone a Pietist awakening. Both the biblical story and Randelin's novel side with the adulteress against the "stone-throwers," the judgmental people. At the end of the novel, Elisabeth, the "fallen," returns to her family, but as a changed woman – on the level of the plot, this means that she does not meet the usual fate of an adulteress, in other words, she does not die.

Instead of Elisabeth, it is Virginie – an ideal, melodramatically unselfish and self-sacrificing secondary female character – who dies, peaceful and happy, because she is certain to meet her beloved "in the halls of heaven." Virginie is one of the many "dying roses" in works by women novelists in Finland from the 1840s to the 1860s, following the typical die-or-marry plots so popular when narrating women's lives in nineteenth-century novels.[31] Elisabeth is not one of these dying roses. Religious faith and awakening have given her a change to make a new start in a new life: Elisabeth, her husband and their daughter leave Finland and travel "far, far away across the sea" – probably to Brazil, where her husband had lived earlier.

Realism and Feminism: Against the Church Institutions, towards Personal Faith

As shown above, in Finland in the first half of the nineteenth century, women writers could advance within certain limits. Like other key (male) protagonists of European national movements, some Finnish patriots increasingly emphasized the active role of women in the national awakening. They drew attention to the advanced position of women in their own country, including in creating a national literature, as a proof of superiority of their nation vis-à-vis the European nations with long histories and rich cultural traditions, whose women were purportedly less advanced. However, the sacred vocation of motherhood remained the ideal for women: if not

biological, then at least as "social."[32] The concept of "social motherhood"[33] was also advocated by the mainstream Finnish women's movement, the Finnish Women's Association (Suomen Naisyhdistys, founded 1884), most of whose members were Lutherans and patriots. This "maternal citizenship" can be seen as a counterpart to the prototype of the Finnish masculine ideal citizen: in other words, Finnish women were not excluded from the public arena, but included on a specific basis.[34]

In Finland, apart from the national project, women's activities, artistic and otherwise, were also intertwined with religious issues and could go hand in hand with them.[35] The Finnish historian Maija Rajainen observed that the first women's rights activists advocated that the women's emancipation was a blessing for humankind only if it followed the principles of Christianity.[36] However, for a long time, "[h]istories of women's rights movements in Nordic countries have shown more limited interest towards the religious ideas of emancipation," than in the economic factors behind women's rights, as Pirjo Markkola has argued.[37]

In 1863, Finnish language was put on equal footing with Swedish. The first Finnish-language works which have gained significant place in the history of Finnish literature were published in the 1870s, and the literature in Finnish began to develop more broadly in the 1880s, when the generation of writers influenced by Realist aesthetics entered the scene. This generation gave the Finnish-language literature its first renowned woman author, canonized and respected by literary historians ever since: Minna Canth (1844–1897, Figure 2). After Aleksis Kivi, the pioneer of the Finnish-language drama and novel, Canth developed playwriting in Finnish, producing radical and socially critical Realist plays and establishing the strong tradition of drama written by women in Finnish literature. She advocated social justice, workers' and women's rights, adopting what we would call today a firmly feminist stance.

Like most Realists, Canth was very critical of institutionalized religion; this stance caused friction with clerics such as Gustaf Johansson, the Bishop of Kuopio, the town she lived in; Johansson "was the most prominent opponent of women's attempts to expand their fields of activity."[38] However, Canth was never an atheist; she was very interested in spiritual issues and personal faith, and tried to reconcile her radical views with Christian ideals. Especially later in her life, she was religious in the Tolstoyan spirit. Canth was interested in many ideas that were circulating during her lifetime: from natural sciences to pacifism and socialism, but also mysticism endowed with strong religious and spiritual emotions.

Canth's take on spiritual and religious issues has been discussed in various contexts, characterized as "anticlerical religious liberalism."[39] Canth scholar Minna Maijala dedicated a whole chapter to the issue in her biography of Canth, aptly calling her "a pious doubter."[40] The scope for studying patterns

Figure 2. Minna Canth (1894). Kuopio Cultural History Museum. License: CC BY-NC-SA. https://www.flickr.com/photos/kuhmu/36556887546/in/photostream/

in which the role, subjectivity and agency of women, moral and social issues, as well as the various philosophical trends, ideologies, and scientific thoughts intertwine and clash in Canth's oeuvre and ego documents seems to be inexhaustible.

For Canth, women's agency had many aspects; like many nineteenth-century writers interested in the women's "question", Canth was an ardent critic of girls' education. She opposed the lack of formal education offered

to girls as well as girls' indoctrination by the conservative religious formation, which stressed humility and passivity.[41] Passive endurance of all suffering as an ideal stance toward life was something Canth opposed for both women and other underprivileged groups, from the poorest to ethnic minorities living on the margins of society. Canth criticized religious education and explanation of all wrongs in society as punishment for sins, i.e. as an instrument of power keeping women and other "underdogs" in their place. Her play *Työmiehen vaimo* (1885, *The Worker's Wife*) is the first Nordic drama about the life of urban proletariat. It features Johanna, the wife of a city workman, and Kerttu, a young half-Romani woman who is a hybrid figure with a depreciative nickname, Homsantuu. Her Romani mother wanted to take the baby Kerttu with her when leaving her abusive alcoholic husband, but her daughter was taken away from her.

Homsantuu is one of the most powerful female figures in the history of Finnish drama by women. She is an outcast everywhere, abandoned by a white man, the villain of the play called Risto (ironically, the name is derived from Christ), who is also Johanna's husband. Risto embodies the hypocrisy of the majority population, who are harshly criticized in the play. Homsantuu searches for her roots among the Roma, and gets acquainted more closely with her maternal grandmother Helka, who accuses the majority population, "the Christians," of hypocrisy:

> Helka: […] You Christians, what a people you are. Hypocritical, sanctimonious, nothing else. You're certainly pious enough when you sit in church on Sundays and listen to the priest's dull sermon; but as soon as you leave your pews, then the wolf steps out of the lamb's clothing. You miserable sinners preach one thing, and live another, that is true as true. And "gypsy" as I am, I will say only this: you people disgust me.[42]

Helka's name alludes to the ancient pre-Christian festival, once associated with rites to ensure fertility, later invested with Christian significance and performed around Whitsun. Homsantuu was raised Christian in the majority society, but she can never get rid of her "pagan" label. This label is rather ironical, since many Finnish Roma have been Christians (belonging to Lutheran, but also Pentecostal Church and other nonconformist Christian denominations), though often also maintaining their own traditions and beliefs. What is important is that though she never identifies with the Roma, the "pagan" label deprives Homsantuu of the protection by the law. After Homsantuu tries to shoot Risto at the end of the play, he calls her "a heathen": "A wise heathen? Alone in her rage, slandering high justice. She's not a gypsy for nothing. She deserves to be punished, for threatening our laws and justice." Risto alludes to Homsantuu's famous last words she keeps repeating while being taken away: "Your laws and justice, ha ha ha – […] That's what I meant to shoot."[43] The figure of Homsantuu is the

most radical of all Canth's female characters. Unwilling to put up with her circumstances, she takes desperate action and rebels against the whole societal structure, which means she cannot survive within that society.[44]

The protagonist also meets a tragic fate; Risto's submissive wife Johanna dies before the end of the play. She prays to God in vain and is constantly rebuked by older women, who describe their God as cruel and punishing. It is typical of the "pious doubter" Canth that in *Työmiehen vaimo*, she created another female character, called Vappu. Vappu does not rebel as radically and desperately as Homsantuu, but is most critical about the prevailing law, justice, and religious hypocrisy. Yet Vappu does not renounce God and faith either; she talks about religious righteousness and the God who will, one day, pronounce sentence over Risto and others like him.

Similar to Johanna in *Työmiehen vaimo,* in Canth's novel *Köyhää kansaa* (1886, Poor folk), the suffering characters believe firmly in God and pray ardently and passionately. They ponder over God's will and purpose. With more and more suffering in their lives, they begin to lose their faith, unable to believe that the almighty could allow such injustice. Suffering was an issue that interested Canth deeply. While opposing the view that God punishes people with suffering and highlighting the issue of social injustice, she remained very interested in a deeper idea of what suffering could mean, especially in the sense of the personal growth of a human being, namely a woman.

In Canth's work, suffering often channels into passions and (religious) ecstasy, which were issues that fascinated Canth throughout her whole career.[45] Some of Canth's characters have been described as hysterical, and though in certain contexts, a woman's hysteria can be read as a powerful expression of protest, Canth's heroines often end up powerless. Women are placed in the role of a child, devoid of legal and social rights to determine the course of their lives. Yet, an adult woman is considered fully responsible for her fate, which leads to tragedies. As Eva Buchwald puts it, "where women try to exist (through acts of despair), they are banished from society in death, madness or prison";[46] these acts often appear tragic and useless. Canth did not view excessive emotions positively and she was suspicious of the Awakening movement. Some of Canth's contemporaries said that this religious movement was causing mass hysteria.[47] Interestingly, Canth did not condemn the movement completely, admitting that there are "quiet, serious and decent people" among its members;[48] these words resonate with some women writers' earlier take on religious revival.

"Pious Doubts," Esotericism and Socialist Religion

Hence strong emotions acquire an ambivalent role in Canth's work and ego-documents. This is seen in her interest in the famous *Life of Jesus* (1863) by

Ernst Renan, which presents Jesus as entirely human. The work, which had also influenced other Finnish writers, raised controversy due to its emphasis on feelings and emotions, which was precisely what interested Canth. Her interest in the figure of Jesus is confirmed by what she considered to be the most important book in her life: the *Imitation of Christ* by the fifteenth-century canon regular Thomas à Kempis.[49]

The figure of Jesus was discussed also in *Wapaita Aatteita* (Free thoughts), "the first Finnish magazine which reasonably can be seen to be a part of the freethought tradition,"[50] that Canth edited together with the journalist August Bernhard Mäkelä, who also took part in the meetings of Canth's literary salon. The magazine "did not question the historicity of Jesus but took him as a noble figure of history."[51] Most interestingly, Canth had a vision of a "female Jesus" ("naiskristus"), about which she told the Finnish feminist and her first biographer Lucina Hagman.[52] Canth was interested in Jesus mainly from the human and social point of view and since she considered women morally superior to men, she saw women as more capable of saving humankind and freeing people from the social wrongs.[53]

One of the main goals of *Wapaita Aatteita* was to criticize dogmatic Christianity, religious instruction, traditional Christianity, the state-church institution, and the clergy. According to Kimmo Sundström, "dogmatic Christianity and its idealistic-romantic interpretation by Leo Tolstoy were often placed against each other […]. Tolstoy was taken to be 'perhaps the only serious preacher of Christianity in our time' […]."[54] Tolstoy was important for Minna Canth, as evident in her play *Sylvi* (1893) and, most of all, in her last theater piece *Anna Liisa* (1895), which has been traditionally called her most Tolstoyan work.[55]

Anna Liisa is a country girl who was seduced by her father's farmhand Mikko at the age of fifteen. When Mikko left the farm, Anna Liisa discovered she was pregnant and killed the newborn baby, helped by Mikko's mother. The play is set four years later, when Anna Liisa is engaged to Johannes, whom she loves, but cannot bear the weight of her guilt. She wants to confess her crime, but is dissuaded to do so by the people surrounding her. Finally, she confesses everything to the local minister and is taken away to prison. Only then does she feel relieved and "free," having found true faith and been liberated from her guilty conscience. The play has been traditionally interpreted as a mark of Canth's reconciliation, but we claim this is a superficial reading. As Eva Buchwald has pointed out,

> Anna Liisa is silenced by the responsibility of maintaining the illusion about herself, in order to maintain the illusory sense of propriety which serves as protection for the community. When her crime is discovered, just as she was forced to take sole responsibility for the fate of the child, she is forced to bear the sole burden of guilt. Canth not only blames the absent man who

> escapes any legal redress, but impugns the whole structure of social custom and official justice which fails to inform women and fails to hear them. […] Repressing her voice allows woman to enjoy social integration.[56]

The play interrogates the responsibility for Anna Liisa's crime while also examining the disregards for her oppression as she integrates into society under false pretenses, contrasting sharply with her sense of freedom as an outsider.[57] In *Anna Liisa*, the issue of female agency is shown in a new light. As always, with Canth, the interpretation is not either/or: highlighting social criticism does not exclude the moment of individual, personal responsibility, and guilt, which were equally important for Canth.

Canth was interested in Theosophy and spiritualism. Though Finnish women writers' engagement with spiritualism culminated later in the work of Helmi Krohn in the 1930s,[58] women writers at the turn of the twentieth century were actively engaging with it. These issues were discussed in Canth's literary salon[59] and she saw the potential of spiritualist tendencies for women, though in her literary works she treated the topic with humor (cf. her 1894 play *Spiritistinen istunto,* Spiritualist séance, with the subtitle "Ilveily yhdessä näytöksessä," Buffoonery in one act). Vis-à-vis spiritualism, Canth retained her tendency to doubt, without taking a strong stance for or against.[60] Spiritualism was even more important to Canth's younger colleagues, women engaging with the workers' movement, some of whom found their own ways to connect esotericism and even Christian religion with socialism. One key figure in this respect was the Finnish writer, journalist, and teacher Hilja Pärssinen (1836–1935), daughter of a Lutheran pastor, the leader of the Women Workers' Union in Finland and an MP. Pärssinen was one of the most international and influential figures of the Finnish social democratic women's movement.[61]

Similar to Canth, Pärssinen opposed institutionalized religion, but she belonged to those who sought to unite Christianity directly with socialism. She emphasized the human need for the spiritual dimension, highlighting the importance of religion for the moral backbone of every person. She believed that the socialist revolution aimed at similar goals as Jesus's teachings, and that socialism was perfectly compatible with the "true" Christianity.[62] In her poems, Pärssinen constructs images of holy (virgin) motherhood set, however, in a working-class milieu.[63] Pärssinen's rhetorical strategy to wake up her working-class sisters can be read in the same vein that Beata Agrell has taken to read texts by Swedish working-class writers at the beginning of the twentieth century: the labor movement becomes a secular form of revivalism. The Bible, Christian imagery and religious discourses are used to make sense of one's own life;[64] here, they also provide an incentive to rebel, to stimulate women into action and struggle for their own agency.

There are various strands in Pärssinen's thought and writing: the theosophical ideal of equality and universal fraternity was very close to her views of solidarity between social classes and nations, which did not lack didactic aspects.[65] Pärssinen's role models included the Swedish writers Ellen Key and Kata Dalström, a Christian communist who was also a socialist agitator. Dalström was interested in Theosophy and Buddhism, following Tolstoy's teachings. As Mikko Kemppainen has observed, Finnish historiography has long emphasized a view of early twentieth-century socialist and communist leaders as atheist or anti-religious.[66] When reading Pärssinen's texts, one quickly notices that she rejected the atheism of socialists and communists, opposing opinions that not only criticize religion as an institution, but also faith and spirituality in general.

Conclusion

In several case studies, we have tried to show some trends in how nineteenth-century women writers in Finland dealt with the topic of female subjectivity and agency vis-à-vis the role of religion, faith, and spirituality. From the first novels written on the territory of Finland in Swedish (in our examples, sentimental social novels and adultery novels) to the Realist and Naturalist period, women used literature as their "pulpit," taking various stances toward the (Lutheran) church, its revivalist movements and their relation to the national cause. The religious revivalist movements are seen both as detrimental to female subjectivity and as an option for agency, and we find similarly varied views on freethought.

With the arrival of the Finnish-language generation of Realist writers and Minna Canth as its main protagonist, the emphasis on religious and national "awakening" is replaced with the urge to "awaken" women and girls, with other marginal groups, and let them take action for liberation. Female voices in literature become more radical and rebellious, not least due to the Realist program and poetics. At the same time, we see various ways of "feminizing" faith and religion. The women writers' take on motherhood in conjunction with religious themes conceptualizes various versions of the idea of "holy (virgin) motherhood," including Hilja Pärssinen's way of bringing it together with class struggle. Similarly, the figure of the human – and female – Christ is reconciled with the demand for social justice.

At the end of the nineteenth century, Theosophy and other forms of esotericism become more and more popular, and the spectrum of spiritual inspirations grow larger, including Tolstoy's ideas. The fin de siècle "search for the new" offered literary women in Finland, as elsewhere, new kinds of agency,[67] but perennial themes like motherhood remained at the very core of women writers' encounters with faith and spirituality.

Notes

1. Ellen Moers, *Literary Women: The Great Writers* (New York: Oxford University Press, 1976/1985), p. 20.
2. The authors would like to thank Päivi Lappalainen for her comments and insightful suggestions. Thanks go also to the editors of the issue and the anonymous reviewers.
3. Terhi Utriainen, Päivi Salmesvuori, and Helena Kupari, "Introduction," *Finnish Women Making Religion: Between Ancestors and Angels,* ed. Terhi Utriainen and Päivi Salmesvuori (NY: Palgrave Macmillan, 2014), pp. 1–20.
4. Before Canth, Marie Linder (a Russian author writing in Swedish) advocated ideas we could call feminist today. See Kati Launis, "The Vision of an Equal Nation: Russian-Finnish Author and Feminist Marie Linder (1840–1870)," *Women Telling Nations: Women Writers in History 1*, ed. Amelia Sanz and Suzan Van Dijk (Amsterdam and New York: Rodopi, 2014), pp. 207–26.
5. E.g., Pirjo Markkola, ed., *Gender and Vocation: Women, Religion and Social Change in the Nordic Countries 1830–1940* (Helsinki: SKS, 2000); Utriainen and Salmesvuori, *Finnish Women Making Religion.*
6. See the project website: https://uudenetsijat.com/english/.
7. See, e.g., Tiina Mahlamäki, "A Relation of Swedenborgianism and Anthroposophy: The Case of the Finnish Author Kersti Bergroth and her novel *The Living and the Dead", Approaching Religion,* 8.1 (2018): 69–78, https://doi.org/10.30664/ar.66723.
8. Blanka Knotková-Čapková, Tereza Jiroutová-Kynčlová, and Ivy Helman, "Gender Dimensions in the Study of Religions and Spiritualities", *Gender a výzkum/Gender and Research* 24, no. 2 (2023): 14–25, https://genderonline.cz/en/pdfs/gav/2023/02/01.pdf
9. See, e.g., Kaius Sinnemäki, Robert H. Nelson, Anneli Portman, and Jouni Tilli, "The Legacy of Lutheranism in a Secular Nordic Society: An Introduction", *On the Legacy of Lutheranism in Finland: Societal Perspectives,* eds. Kaius Sinnemäki, Anneli Portman, Jouni Tilli, and Robert H. Nelson (Helsinki: Finnish Literature Society, 2019), p. 9; Matti Klinge, *Let Us Be Finns* (Helsinki: Otava, 1990); Markkola, *Gender and Vocation*. For recent research on the role of Lutheranism and nationalism in Finland, see esp. Liisa Sulkunen, *Liisa Eerikintytär ja hurmosliikkeet 1700–1800 -luvulla* (Helsinki: Gaudeamus, 1999), pp. 134–7; Sinnemäki et al., eds., *On the Legacy of Lutheranism in Finland*.
10. Sinnemäki et al., "The Legacy of Lutheranism", p. 23.
11. See, e.g. Miroslav Hroch, "National Movements with and without Religion: The Nation and Religion in a Historical Perspective", *Studies in Religion/Sciences Religieuses* 50.2 (March 2021), https://doi.org/10.1177/00084298209 78970.
12. Klinge, *Let Us Be Finns*, p. 10.
13. On a more general level, the "other within" can point to people who both do and do not belong to a certain group in society. In cultural studies, it has been often connected to the essay on Jewish identity and otherness by Jonathan Boyarin, "The other within and the other without", in *The Other in Jewish Thought and History,* ed. Laurence Silberstein (New York: NYU Press, 1994), pp. 424–52.
14. Klinge, *Let Us Be Finns*, esp. 7–20.

15. Pertti Karkama, "1840-luku suomalaisen nykykulttuurin kohtuna", in *Kaksi tietä nykyisyyteen. Tutkimuksia kirjallisuuden, kansallisuuden ja kansallisten liikkeiden suhteista Suomessa ja Virossa*, ed. Tero Koistinen et al. (Helsinki: SKS, 1999), pp. 84–105.
16. Heidi Grönstrand, *Naiskirjailija, romaani ja kirjallisuuden merkitys 1840-luvulla* (Helsinki: SKS , 2005); Kati Launis, *Kerrotut naiset. Suomen ensimmäiset naisten kirjoittamat romaanit naiseuden määrittelijöinä* (Helsinki: SKS, 2005).
17. Falkman wrote four novels and hoped to earn a living by writing but had to work as a seamstress in Helsinki – the capital of Finland since 1812 – to support herself. Grönstrand, *Naiskirjailija, romaani ja kirjallisuuden merkitys 1840-luvulla*, p. 48; Armas Gräsbeck, "Mystiken kring Ulrika Charlotta Falkman författarinnan till romanen 'Frimurarens fosterson,'" in *Människor och minnen. Personliga hågkomster och släkthistoriska skildringar*, ed. Paul Nyberg and Victor Hoving (Helsinki: Söderströms, 1952), pp. 7–19; Egidius Ginström, "Hufvudstadsbladet under 50 år 1864–1914" (Helsinki: Hufvudstadsbladet, 1964), p. 39; Pia Forssell, "Charlotta Falkmans förbisedda författarskap. En berättelse om dygd, bildning och försörjning", *Historiska och litteraturhistoriska studier* 74, ed. Pia Forssell and John Strömberg (Helsingfors: Svenska litteratursällskapet i Finland, 1999), pp. 61–84. Falkman's novels are digitized by the National Library of Finland: *En Prestgård i N-d, af en finsk medborgarinna* (1847, https://urn.fi/URN:NBN:fi-fd2015-00008945). *Nyårsafton. Original af U–a* (1848, https://urn.fi/URN:NBN:fi-fd2015-00009268). *Leonna, en skildring ur lifvet* (1854, https://urn.fi/URN:NBN:fi-fd2015-00009285). *Frimurarens Fosterson. En tidsbild från 18:e seklet* (1864; https://urn.fi/URN:NBN:fi-fd2015-00009283).
18. "Ett sådant förhållande inom familjen är Gudstjenst. H e m m e t ä r h ä r b a r n e t s h i m m e l. F a d r e n representerar gudomen. […] M o d r e n är kärleken, försoningen. Vid hennes bröst inslumrar det leende barnet. […] S a n n i n g s k ä r l e k e n är den ande, som styr alla husets medlemmar, och den skall utgå från Fader och Moder. D å ä r o d e t r e ä f v e n e t t." Falkman, *Leonna*, pp. 441–2, spacing in the text for emphasis is original, trans. by the authors.
19. Kati Launis, "Sentimentaalista, opettavaista yhteiskunnallisuutta: Charlotta Falkmanin kirjailijapoetiikkaa", in *Kirjailijapoetiikat. Poetiikan näkökulmia kirjailijoiden tuotantoihin*, ed. Saija Isomaa, Samuli Björninen, Mari Hatavara, and Nanny Jolma (Helsinki: SKS, 2024), pp. 55–82. On the sentimental social novel see Margaret Cohen, "Women and fiction in the nineteenth century", *The Cambridge Companion to the French Novel from 1800 to the present*, ed. Timothy Unwin (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1997), pp. 54–72.
20. See, e.g., Pertti Karkama, *J.V. Snellmanin kirjallisuuspolitiikka* (Helsinki: SKS, 1989), p. 228; Eva Buchwald, *Ideals of Womanhood in the Literature of Finland and Russia 1894–1914* (PhD thesis, University of London, 1990), p. 29.
21. Grönstrand, *Naiskirjailija, romaani ja kirjallisuuden merkitys 1840-luvulla*, p. 35; Launis, *Kerrotut naiset*, esp. 334; cf. Liisi Huhtala, "Kalpeita kukkasia? Naisnäkökulmainen kirjallisuudentutkimus ja Suomen 1800-luvun naiskirjallisuus", *Tulen kesyttäjät. Suomalaista naistutkimusta. Helsingin akateemisten naisten 60-vuotisjuhlakirja* (Porvoo & Helsinki & Juva: WSOY, 1987), pp. 91–111. Karkama, *J.V. Snellmanin kirjallisuuspolitiikka*, 196–7; p. 24.

22. "Qvinnan är ju utomdess så beroende, att hon sällan eller aldrig äger ett fritt val." Falkman, *Leonna*, 28; see Launis, *Kerrotut naiset,* pp. 70–1.
23. Revivalist movements developed within the Finnish Lutheran church from the eighteenth century. Nowadays, the oldest active revival movements in Finland are The Awakening or Awakened Movement; The Prayer Movement; The Laestadian Movement and The (Lutheran) Evangelical Movement. Women had an important role in the early revivalist movements. See, e.g., Hanna Salomäki, "Herätysliikkeet suomalaisessa yhteiskunnassa", *Monien uskomusten ja katsomusten Suomi. Kirkon tutkimuskeskuksen verkkojulkaisuja*, 48, eds. Ruth Illman, Kimmo Ketola, Riitta Latvio, and Jussi Sohlberg (Tampere: Kirkon tutkimuskeskus, 2017), pp. 65–75, https://evl.fi/plus/wp-content/uploads/sites/3/2024/03/Ktk-Monien-uskontojen-ja-katsomusten-Suomi.pdf. Esa Mangeloja, "Religious Revival Movements and the Development of the Twentieth-century Welfare-state in Finland", in Sinnemäki et al., *On the Legacy of Lutheranism in Finland,* pp. 220–36, esp. 226–7.
24. Bill Overton, *The Novel of Female Adultery: Love and Gender in Continental European Fiction, 1830–1900* (London: Macmillan, USA: St. Martin's Press, 1996).
25. See Lauri Takala*, Suomen evankelisen liikkeen historia I. Esihistoria* (Helsinki: Suomen Luterialainen Evankeliumiyhdistys, 1929), p. 327, 412–4.
26. See Tuija Pulkkinen, "Naiset, kansalaiset, kansakunnat", *Historian alku. Historianfilosofia. Aatehistoria. Maailmanhistoria*, ed. Tuomas Seppä et al. (Helsinki: Tutkijaliitto, 1993).
27. Overton, *The Novel of Female Adultery*, pp. 56–60.
28. "Alla Ferdinands ord, alla de heliga böcker, hon sjelf läst, men de der varit mörka och obegripliga för hennes förstånd, blefvo nu på engång klara för henne, det var som om hennes själs öga hastigt blifvit öppnadt. I strålande ljus såg och förstod hon nu hvarje ord och fattade och kände den innerliga förhoppning, de inneburo." Wendla Randelin, *Den Fallna, berättelse af Wendela* (Åbo: J.W. Lilljas förlag, 1848), pp. 180–1. Trans. by the authors.
29. Markku Ihonen, "Vaikenevat naiset. Keskustelua naisen paikasta 1800-luvun lestadiolaisuudessa", *Historiallinen aikakauskirja*, 99 (2001), 3, 276–92; Sulkunen, *Liisa Eerikintytär*, p. 95.
30. Juha Siltala, *Suomalainen ahdistus. Huoli sielun pelastumisesta* (Helsinki: Otava, 1992), pp. 145–50.
31. Nancy K. Miller, *The Heroine's Text: Readings in the French and English Novel, 1722–1782* (New York: Columbia University Press, 1980); Rachel Blau DuPlessis, *Writing Beyond the Ending: Narrative Strategies of Twentieth Century Women Writers* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 1985).
32. See Päivi Lappalainen, "'Äiti-ilon himo.' Naiset ja kansakunnan rakentuminen 1800-luvulla", *Kaksi tietä nykyisyyteen. Tutkimuksia kirjallisuuden, kansallisuuden ja kansallisten liikkeiden suhteessa Suomessa ja Virossa*, ed. Tero Koistinen, Piret Kruuspere, Erkki Sevänen, and Risto Turunen (Helsinki: SKS, 1999), p. 112; Kati Launis, *Kerrotut naiset*, p. 80.
33. See, e.g., Kai Häggman, *Perheen vuosisata. Perheen ihanne ja sivistyneistön elämäntapa 1800-luvun Suomessa*. Historiallisia tutkimuksia 179 (Helsinki: Suomen Historiallinen Seura, 1994), p. 179; Anne Ollila, "Naisliike, nationalismi ja kansanvalistus: Miksi Marttayhdistys halusi riveihinsä "kaikkien kansanluokkien naiset?", *Naisten hyvinvointivaltio*, ed. A. Anttonen, L. Henriksson, and R. Nätkin (Tampere: Vastapaino, 1994), pp. 53–72; Tutta Palin, "Ruumis", in

Avainsanat. 10 askelta feministiseen tutkimukseen, ed. Anu Koivunen and Marianne Liljeström (Tampere: Vastapaino, 1996), pp. 225–44.

34. Lappalainen, "'Äiti-ilon himo,'" esp. 109–13.
35. Pirjo Markkola, "Introduction", *Gender and Vocation. Women, Religion and Social Change in the Nordic Countries, 1830–1940*. Studia Historica 64, ed. Pirjo Markkola (Helsinki: SKS, 2000), p. 18.
36. Maija Rajainen, *Naisliike ja sukupuolimoraali. Keskustelua ja toimintaa 1800-luvulla ja nykyisen vuosisadan alkupuolella noin vuoteen 1918 saakka.* Suomen kirkkohistoriallisen seuran toimituksia 91 (Helsinki: Suomen kirkkohistoriallinen seura, 1973).
37. Markkola, "Introduction", p. 18. Cf. Markkola, *Synti ja siveys. Naiset, uskonto ja sosiaalinen työ Suomessa 1860–1920* (Helsinki: SKS, 2002).
38. Markkola, "The Calling of Women: Gender, Religion and Social Reform in Finland, 1860–1920", in *Gender and Vocation*, pp. 113–45, quotation on p. 131.
39. Tellervo Krogerus, "Canth, Minna (1844–1897)." Trans. by Fletcher Roderick. National Biography of Finland, https://kansallisbiografia.fi/english/person/2816.
40. Maijala, *Herkkä, hellä, hehkuvainen* (Helsinki: Otava, 2014), pp. 307–28.
41. See Kati Launis, "The Birth of the Modern Child in Finnish Literary Realism", *Childhood, Literature and Science: Fragile Subjects*, ed. Jutta Ahlbeck, Päivi Lappalainen, Kati Launis, and Kirsi Tuohela (Routledge, 2018), pp. 61–72.
42. Translation by Minna Jeffery (223jeffery2023phdfinal02.pdf). See Minna Jeffery, "Strategies for Feminist Theatre Translation: Minna Canth's The Worker's Wife from Finnish to English" (PhD thesis, University of Kent, 2023), https://doi.org/10.22024/UniKent/01.02.102301. "Helka: […] Voi, teitä kristityitä, minkälaisia te olette. Ulkokullatuita, tekopyhiä, ei muuta. Kyllä ovat hurskaita olevinaan, kun pyhäisin istuvat kirkossa ja kuuntelevat pappinsa ikävää saarnaa, mutta annas, kun selkänsä kirkkoon kääntävät, niin kohta susi astuu esiin lampaan nahasta. Toisin ne kurjat opettavat, toisin ne elävät, se on totinen tosi. Ja olen minä niin mustalainen kuin olenkin, mutta sen vaan sanon: minua nuo ihmiset inhottavat." Minna Canth, *Työmiehen vaimo,* in *Valitut teokset* (Helsinki, WSOY 1965), p. 103. Minna Canth's *Työmiehen vaimo* is available at https://www.doria.fi/handle/10024/100898.
43. Translation by Minna Jeffery. "Risto: […] Rikkiviisas pakana. Ähmissään vain herjaa yksin korkeata oikeuttakin. Suottakos hän mustalainen olisi. Se muuten sopii panna rotakollaan, että hän on uhannut lakia ja oikeutta." "Teidän lakinne ja oikeutenne, ha, ha, ha, ha, – […] Niitähän minun pitikin ampua." Minna Canth, *Työmiehen vaimo* (1885/1965), p. 141.
44. On the figure of Homsantuu, see Viola Parente-Čapková, "A Domestic Other: The Role of the Roma Literary Characters in the Process of Constructing Finnishness", *Multiethnica,* 33 (2011): 8–20; Viola Parente-Čapková, "Kotimainen toinen: romanit suomalaisuuden kirjallisena rakennusaineena", *Kulttuurintutkimus*, 28 (2011): 2, 3–18.
45. See esp. Minna Maijala, *Passion vallassa. Hermostunut aika* Minna *Canthin teoksissa* (Helsinki: SKS, 2008); Minna Maijala, *Herkkä, hellä, hehkuvainen.*
46. Eva Buchwald, *Ideals of Womanhood,* p. 56.
47. See Maijala, *Herkkä, hellä, hehkuvainen*, p. 311.

48. Ibid., p. 312. The quote is from Canth's letter to her friend Lilli Leinberg from April 1880.
49. The translator of the book, Canth's acquaintance Elias Erkko, introduced the work to the Finnish readers as "philosophy of emotion", in which emotion appears as a "living power." Erkko, Elias, "Loppuun liitetty johdatus", *Kristuksen seuraamisesta*, ed. Tuomas Kempiläinen (Wiipuri: J. C. Lagerspezin kirjakauppa, 1887), p. 217.
50. Kimmo Sundström, "Finnish Freethought Press – The Early Years", *The American Atheist* (December 1984), p. 24. The magazine *Wapaita aatteita* was published only for about a year and a half (1889–1890) and was terminated due to clashes with censorship under the growing pressure of Russification. Tolstoy was a model for various Finnish writers and thinkers, who mirrored their master's disillusion with the Orthodox Church into their own with respect to the Lutheran Church.
51. Ibid.
52. Lucina Hagman, *Minna Canthin elämäkerta. Toinen osa* (Helsinki: Otava, 1911), pp. 92–3.
53. Marja Kaikkonen, "*Vapautta naiselle! Toiminnan vapautta, ajatuksen vapautta!" Minna Canthin käsityksiä kristinuskosta naiskysymyksen näkökulmasta* (Tampere: Tampereen yliopisto, 2002), p. 112.
54. Sundström, "Finnish Freethought Press", p. 24.
55. See, e.g., Annamari Sarajas, *Tunnuskuvia. Suomen ja Venäjän kirjallisen realismin kosketuskohtia* (Helsinki: WSOY, 1968); Ben Hellman, "Aikalaisten näkemyksiä Leo Tolstoista", in *Henkinen muuri. Suomalaisvenäläiset kirjallisuussuhteet 1800–1930,* ed. Tomi Huttunen (Helsinki: SKS, 2024), pp. 205–17, esp. 213.
56. Buchwald, *Ideals of Womanhood*, pp. 152–4.
57. Ibid., p. 211.
58. See Maarit Leskelä-Kärki, *Kirjoittaen maailmassa - Krohnin sisaret ja kirjallinen elämä* (Helsinki: SKS, 2006); Marjut Hjelt, Maarit Leskelä-Kärki, and Hilkka Oksama-Valtonen, *Helmi Krohnin ihmeellinen elämä* (Helsinki: Into Kustannus, 2021).
59. See Antti Harmainen, Juuso Järvenpää, and Mikko Kemppainen, "1900-luvun alun luokkatietoinen esoteria: Matti Kurikasta Hilja Pärssiseen ja Yrjö Kalliseen", in *Uuden etsijät. Salatieteiden ja okkultismin suomalainen kulttuurihistoria 1880–1930*, ed. Maarit Leskelä-Kärki and Antti Harmainen (Helsinki: Teos, 2021), 139; cf. Marjo Kaartinen, *Spiritistinen istunto* (Helsinki: SKS, 2020).
60. See, e.g., Kaartinen, *Spiritistinen istunto*, p. 204.
61. See Mikko Kemppainen, *Sosialismin, uskonnon ja sukupuolen dynamiikkaa. 1900-luvun alun työväenliikkeen naiskirjailijat aatteen määrittelijöinä* (Helsinki: Työväen historian ja perinteen tutkimuksen seura, 2020).
62. Mikko Kemppainen, "Sopusoinnussa väärentämättömän Jeesuksen Kristuksen opin kanssa: sosialismin ja kristinuskon suhde runoilija- poliitikko Hilja Pärssisen jumalanpilkkasyytteiden kautta tarkasteltuna", *J@rgonia*, 14.28 (2016): 67–83, http://urn.fi/URN:NBN:fi:jyu-2016012095005, p. 67.
63. Launis, "The Making of the Finnish Working Class", pp. 24–25.
64. Beata Agrell, "Gömma det lästa i sitt inre: Fromhet och klasskamp i tidig svensk arbetarprosa", *Ord & Bild,* 4 (2003): 66–77.
65. Harmainen et al., "1900-luvun alun luokkatietoinen esoteria."

66. Mikko Kemppainen, "Sopusoinnussa väärentämättömän Jeesuksen Kristuksen opin kanssa", p. 67. Cf. Mikko Kemppainen, "Hilja Pärssinen and the Religious Grounds for Socialist Welfare in Early Twentieth-century Finland", *Women's History Review* (2024), https://doi.org/10.1080/09612025.2024.2412877.
67. See e.g., Maarit Leskelä-Kärki and Antti Harmainen, eds., *Uuden etsijät. Salatieteiden ja okkultismin suomalainen kulttuurihistoria 1880–1930* (Helsinki: Teos, 2021); Viola Parente-Čapková, "Gendering Seekers and Upstarts in early twentieth-century Finnish literature", *Approaching Religion*, 11.1 (2021): 28–44, https://doi.org/10.30664/ar.98282.

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No potential conflict of interest was reported by the author(s).

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