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EDITOR'S LETTER

THE GULF OF FINLAND



From the time of Peter I the Gulf of Finland has been a 'window to Europe' for the Russian people. Gaining access to the Baltic Sea through the Gulf of Finland gave Russia many advantages. One of them was the creation of the Russian Navy.

At that time the state of Finland didn't exist, but there were so-called 'Finnish lands' which were an integral part of the Kingdom of Sweden. The Finns were under the Swedish rule from the twelfth century till the nineteenth century. In 1808, the Russian Empire took possession of Finland which remained an autonomous state within Russia right until the collapse of the Empire.

For some time Russians used to call the Gulf of Finland 'the Gulf of Kronstadt' because Russia had taken it

in 1703, long before the Finno-Ugric peoples gained their independence.

In the early twentieth century, during excavations conducted by Russian archaeologists, many ancient sites were discovered on its shores dated to up to 9,000 years old. Later prehistoric people and New Stone Age (Neolithic era) people inhabited the area in great numbers. The discoveries indicate that in spite of difficult weather conditions, these lands that now belong to Russia, Finland and Estonia were fit for human habitation.

The Gulf of Finland, which is sometimes jokingly called a 'pool' by Russian sailors, has always been of great strategic importance to Russia. The Soviet period saw the 'Finlandization' of Finland, which meant that the USSR controlled its foreign policy. It was not until 1995 that Finland finally joined the European Union (then Russia was going through hard times).

Finland is friendly with Russia. Unlike the Baltic States, it did not join the NATO and it is not aggressive toward Russia.

Let us hope that the Gulf of Finland will never become a bone of contention.

Victor Loupan

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HUMILIATED AND INSULTED

Out of the blue Macron became the notorious 'last straw'

VICTOR LOUPAN,
Head of the Editorial Board



The 'yellow vests' movement, that started as an exclusively provincial phenomenon on 17 November, 2018, has its beginning.

As fate has willed it, on that remarkable Saturday (and then Sunday) I was visiting my friends in a splendid seventeenth-century castle in Normandy. A pleasant company of highly educated and cultured people gathered in that real 'nest of gentlefolk' [an allusion to the novel by Ivan Turgenev with the same name] with their intelligent, well-mannered children who study at elite educational institutions of the USA and Western Europe. I delivered a lecture on the occasion of the publication of my new book (among the

guests were local residents). Then we listened to a marvelous concert of classical music, with a renowned French pianist and a famous Irish soprano performing. Meanwhile, the 'yellow vests', of whom then hardly anyone knew, were standing on the roads, motorways, at crossroads, under a cold, drizzly rain. Of course, we discussed this, washing down pâté de foie gras and truffles with the wonderful Sauternes wine. But, despite our high IQs, none of us could comprehend the true nature of what was going on.

On Sunday evening, on our way back to Paris, my wife and I were listening to radio news reports all the time and we learned that the first day

of the protest movement left several persons dead and many hundreds injured. At times groups of exhausted yet good-humored 'yellow vests', who were chilled to the bone, made us put on the brakes. I would beep at them as a sign of a favourable attitude, and they let us pass, clapping their hands and smiling.

The movement began because of a protest sparked by yet another increase in prices of diesel fuel – 'the fuel of the poor', who travel on second-hand cars. But soon it turned out that it was just 'the last straw that broke the camel's back'. The words of one man who was crying on the TV camera stuck in my memory: 'Enough

off that! I am sick and tired of this! I cannot stand it any more!' In my opinion, this 'cri de coeur' sums up the situation better than any speculations.

Some five years ago the French geographer and sociologist Christophe Guilluy published his small research study, entitled *La France Périphérique* ('The Peripheral France'). It said that globalist elites forgot and turned their backs on the majority of French population living in villages and small-size towns. Guilluy demonstrated that

very few have the courage to question the prophetic nature of this insightful, extraordinary researcher. If people had heeded his warning about the imminent revolt of 'the peripheral France', the 'yellow vests' wouldn't have taken to streets now. Those who think otherwise have never read Christophe Guilluy. For he clearly wrote about the inevitability of large-scale social conflicts between the globalist elite (which is out of touch with reality) and the abandoned masses.

and who is innocent. But that's not the point. The point is that violence is a language. A profound analysis of the language of violence was made by Walter Benjamin, a prominent German philosopher and cultural critic associated with the Frankfurt School, along with the outstanding French psycho-sociologist Jacques Salome, who holds that today the language of violence is the most common form of communication in the world regardless of race, culture or religion of those



President Macron's promises were regarded as 'crumbs from the master's table'

peripheral regions of France had no jobs, no access to culture, no good educational institutions. One cannot live there without a car due to lack of public transport, and all main facilities, such as kindergartens, schools, post-offices, shops or hospitals are far away. And the main problem is that nobody sees a way out of the existing situation. 'Social hopelessness leads to a sense of despair in the masses,' Guilluy concluded.

The official media and dominant liberal intellectuals slated him for his 'reactionary pessimism', attempted to ostracize him, 'kicked' the poor author permanently... but in vain. And today

It should be noted that Guilluy's discovery is not limited to French reality. It applies to absolutely all Western countries. The provincial England chose Brexit, the provincial America voted for Donald Trump, the provincial Italy supported its left and right populists, and the provincial Brazil arranged a plebiscite on Bolsonaro.

The first Saturday of the 'yellow vests' was purely provincial, but the second (and the first Paris) Saturday resulted in clashes, violence, bloody battles, and thousands of arrests. Violent actions were committed both by the protesters and the authorities. And it is hard to ascertain who is guilty

involved. That is not to say that people have a limited vocabulary; the reason is that people are no longer able to express their 'intimate feelings, real emotions, and underlying needs'. According to Salome, violence as a form of expression, as a language allows people (even if only temporarily) 'to evacuate frustrations, ignore misunderstanding, and minimise the pain of not being loved.'

In his sensational letter to President Macron, published as an article in the *Liberation* newspaper, the young National Assembly [French Parliament] Deputy Francois Ruffin repeats dozens of times: 'You are hated! You are

hated! You are hated!’ This is an unprecedented case. People hate Macron even more than they once hated King Louis XVIII and Queen Marie Antoinette, who was executed with him. It is hard to fathom the reason behind this furious hatred. After all, last year this young, thirty-nine-year-old president ‘ascended the throne’ as easily and gracefully as a film star. He is more intelligent and subtle than his recent predecessors (perhaps with the exception of Francois Mitterrand). He failed because of his excessive self-love which is never forgiven to true leaders. He began to make bad communication mistakes and do the things that are absolutely unacceptable to common people. In him selfish ideals prevailed over lofty ideals – something that French people longed for, weary of shameful presidencies of Sarkozy and Hollande. Out

eighty-five per cent of the country’s population), Macron remained silent for a long time. After almost a month of silence humourists branded him a ‘Elysee Palace’s taciturn man’. And

citizens’ expectations, promised an increase in the minimum wage by 100 euros a month, and said something to pensioners. And he spoke to the pompous La Marseillaise anthem...



when, on 10 December, Macron at last pulled himself together and addressed the nation, his speech lasted only thirteen minutes. During the address the president rebuked those who had re-

Macron mentioned in passing that he has been in power just for a year and a half, while the vehement protests are a result of forty years of ineffective, wrong policies. And here he told the truth. The naked, ugly truth because over the past forty years liberals, socialists, centrists, the right and the left were in power in France. Yet the policies were the same. The obvious question springs to mind: why vote? Why pretend that there is an alternative, whereas there is no alternative? As many as 23 million TV viewers watched Macron’s speech live, and some 10 million radio listeners listened to his address in their cars. For France, which is home to 65 mil-



of the blue macron became the notorious ‘last straw’.

Completely baffled by ‘working people’s hatred and contempt’ (and the ‘yellow vests’ are supported by

sorted to violence, expressed his regret (with no apologies!) at having offended people by some of his statements and actions, expressed his personal acceptance of the ‘normality’ of the

lion people, these are colossal figures. No observer expected or foresaw this. This indicates the historical essence (intrinsic nature) of what is going on. And nobody knows for certain what it

is. Is it a revolution? I don’t think so. A revolution aims to overthrow the government and to replace the existing constitutional order with another one. A revolution needs its ideology, organisation, vanguard, and leaders. The ‘yellow vests’ movement has nothing of this. The authorities made several attempts to enter into negotiation, but nobody showed up because the ‘yellow vests’ have neither leaders nor representatives. How can it be? I don’t know. Nobody knows. This grassroots movement is absolutely transparent. There are thousands of ‘yellow vests’ cells throughout France, which are communicating chiefly through Facebook. Nobody conceals anything from police or the authorities. They act openly and with lightning speed.

Thus, President Macron was immediately informed that his eloquent speech didn’t impress any active members of the ‘yellow vests’ at all. His promises were regarded as a ‘miserable pittance’, as ‘crumbs from the master’s table’.

Although Macron is inexperienced, he is a clever man. In my view, in his



Francois Ruffin

speech he addressed neither the ‘yellow vests’ nor the protest movement’s activists; he addressed the masses that backed them. He wanted to demonstrate his openness, his ability and willingness to make concessions. The future will show whether his actions prove the truth of his words or not.

What is going on in France is not only yet another manifestation of the revolutionary nature of the French nation (this is an irrefutable historical fact). The ‘yellow vests’ movement is super-modern rather than archaic. The systemic crisis of neoliberalism with its globalist ideology broke out due to its collision with reality principle. It has bluntly run against the civil resistance.



‘There is no such thing as society’, Margaret Thatcher proclaimed

I should remind the readers that neoliberalism denies the principle of society as such. ‘There is no such thing as society,’ Margaret Thatcher proclaimed. She also shouted: ‘There is no alternative!’ This ideological nonsense has ultimately brought the whole European Union to the brink of a catastrophic outcome. In outward appearance, French society still looks quite appealing and prosperous, not least to tourists and holiday-makers. But, at the same time, in the ‘peripheral France’ between 8 and 10 million people ‘huddle together’ below the poverty line. Officially, they make up twelve per cent of the population. In reality, there are much more of them. These poor people are still not seen anywhere. The ‘yellow vests’ are not from the lowest stratum. The poorest residents simply don’t have enough money to come to Paris and take part in a rally.

That’s the way things are going in France.

DISSENTING OPINION

THE WORLD IS ON THE THRESHOLD OF CRUCIAL EVENTS

They use all means possible to make other states recognise the supremacy of policy of collective West

VYACHESLAV KATAMIDZE,
a writer and historian



The USA and its NATO allies convinced themselves that their political system, their economic models, their values, rules of conduct in the international arena are exemplary and a model for other nations to follow.

They say that, according to ancient Sumerian and Assyrian calendars along with ancient astrologers, 2020 will allegedly be the year of decisions that will be crucial for the fate of mankind. I have no knowledge of Sumerian calendars and have never read the predictions of ancient astrologers. As I see it, the New Year 2019 must be the year of crucial decisions of major

world leaders. They will either prevent sliding toward the imminent world catastrophe or leave things as they are, observing this catastrophe befall the humanity in silence. And no matter when it is going to happen – in 2020 or two years later.

First of all, I would like to say that I don't want anybody to interpret my words as something apocalyptic, as

pessimistic notes. On the contrary, my belief in reason and logical thinking, which politicians of all world powers are supposed to have, remains unshakeable. However, the events that happened in the past decades in different parts of the world, alas, say otherwise. Most of Western countries, whose policies are largely determined by their 'flagship', the USA, were guid-

ed in their actions neither by logical conclusions nor by political rationality; they followed the myths, created by the pseudo-liberals and pseudo-Democrats who are responsible for these policies.

In effect, their course is nothing but a result of some political narcissism. The USA and its NATO allies convinced themselves that their political system, their economic models, their values, rules of conduct in the international arena are exemplary and a model for other nations to follow. But if any other countries fail to accept their way of thinking and way of life, then they use all means possible – both in compliance and at variance with international law – in order to make these states recognise the supremacy of policy of the collective West, or the NATO Bloc, though these are essentially the same thing.

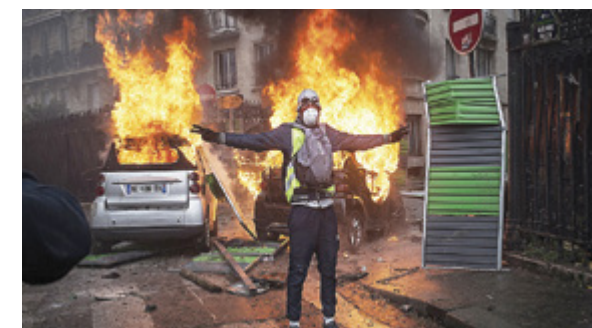
Meanwhile, if we look back at events of the past few decades, the real picture is very different from what the West has been trying to represent to world public. The destruction of Libya, the barbaric invasion of Iraq, the illegal intervention in Syria and backing of the armed opposition (the allies of terrorists) there – all of this indicates that NATO politicians lack common sense. In addition, if we take into account the USA's sabre-rattling at North Korea, its support of Saudi Arabia and the UAE which are reducing Yemen to a lake of blood, and its unprecedented pressure on Iran, we will see even a gloomier picture. Policies that cause aftereffects like these are called 'erratic' in political science – that is, leading to extremely negative consequences.

But the economy of the NATO and EU countries indicates that there has been no reasonable, balanced and logical approach to the existing problems. For example, let us take Poland. Both the EU leaders and the Polish Government have claimed more than once that Poland is developing steadily and its population is growing rapidly. It is a barefaced lie in both cases. Today Poland's industrial output makes up

about twenty-four percent of that in the period of the Warsaw Pact. The country still 'has got its head above water' only thanks to pouring of huge amounts of money into its economy by the USA and the European Union.

As for its alleged population growth, it is just a beautiful myth. The UK alone is home to 1.2 million Poles. Approximately the same number of Poles reside in other EU countries and the USA. True, this year the population of Poland has slightly increased (by about 7,000!), but only because the outflow of population is compensated for by mass-exodus of Ukrainian refugees to Poland. The rural populations of Romania and Bulgaria are growing poor – they account for a bulk of emigrants from these countries to other EU states. As for the Baltic States, their industrial output, according to estimates of European experts, makes up less than ten per cent of the 1985 level. This is what their 'economic achievements' are like!

The current events in France are an illustrative example of the bankruptcy of the European economic model. The massive influx of immigrants from Eastern Europe and especially North Africa, coupled with the pressure from the European Parliament and the European Commission that demand greater contributions to the EU budget, forced the French Government to take extremely unpopular measures, namely a rise in fuel prices and taxes. It resulted in mass rallies and strikes, which led to the deaths of several protesters



The current events in France are an illustrative example of the bankruptcy of the European economic model

and arrests of 1,700 rioters. Now the 'lamentation' of Western media in connection of the detention of 103 members of the unauthorized opposition rally in Moscow is absolutely meaningless! That was a gathering of 'pique waistcoats' as compared with what is going on in France...

We cannot help but pay attention to the fact that for dispersing the crowds of demonstrators the French authorities widely used tear gas and rubber mullets and, from some moment, even armoured vehicles. And at the second defensive line thousands of police officers, armed with submachine guns, were deployed, ready to suppress the protesters. While the authorities promised the demonstrators to suspend the unpopular fuel tax rise, they proved unable to stop the strikers and make the protesters renounce their political demands and calls for Macron Government's resignation. In my view, France is yet to make a sober assessment of the true scale of its economic issues and the incredible scale of the protests.

The mentioned demands for the resignation of Macron have once again reminded Europeans that the majority of the puppet leaders of Western European countries, appointed with the approval and support of politicians in Washington, to all appearance fail to accomplish their mission of leaders of sovereign countries. Macron, who has been nicknamed 'micron', cannot part with his role as Washington's minion, whereas he sometimes says such things that Washington has to pull him up.

Frau Merkel, who has been in office longer than any other modern leader in Europe, had to step down as head of her Christian Democratic Union, having hardly retained her post as German Chancellor. This leaves her little room for political manoeuvres.

If we compare Merkel and Macron

with such heads of state as President de Gaulle and Chancellor Adenauer, the former two look like pale images, even caricatures of their famous fellow-countrymen.

As for the UK Prime Minister Theresa May, she seems to have set both Parliament and the majority of the British citizens against herself. She was given by some a witty nickname 'the Pushmi-Pullyu': she was unable to secure for the UK withdrawal from the EU on acceptable terms, while insisting that the country has no other alternative than agreeing on unacceptable terms. Historians have reminded her that 100 years ago Britain had another inefficient Prime Minister, David Lloyd George. He tried to come to an agreement with Russia's Provisional Government, but when it fell from power he

resolutely opposed the idea of offering the Imperial Family sanctuary in England. During the First World War Lloyd George ordered to place the British forces under the French command, and as a result the UK suffered horrendous losses in that war. It was under Lloyd George that the British shot dead protesters in Cairo (which triggered the revolution in Egypt) and in Amritsar (India), where up to 1,000 people were killed...

Events like these happen when politicians prove unable to properly assess situations and make correct decisions.

The funny thing is that today Western leaders blame Russia for their own failures and inability to pursue appropriate policies. The USA immediately explained Hillary Clinton's presidential race loss in 2016 (which in fact was explained by the emptiness of the political platform of the Democrats) by Russia's interference. France (thanks to the Ukrainian propagandist media's fashion) has now explained the cur-

rent protest movement as a result of 'Russian propaganda', too. And in 2016 the Labour Party claimed that Russia interfered in the Brexit referendum; and now the Establishment is trying to blame Russia for Theresa May's inability to convince UK residents that they have no other alternative than

pendent foreign policy, withstanding the pressure from the liberals, 'Hawks' and Russophobes, over the past ten months he has clearly been dependent on the notorious 'Washington swamp'. His vulnerability is evident.

Secondly, Trump is surrounded by politicians and military men who ei-



to accept the 'enslaving' terms for the deal with the EU. Attempts are made to convince the peoples of Europe that the 'Russian bear' is to be blamed for all of their misfortunes.

Likewise, the USA, the 'flagship' of the Western world, seems to have difficulty 'keeping afloat' in the 'rough sea' of world politics. There are many reasons for this, but we will speak about two the most important ones. Firstly, the USA President Donald Trump during his election campaign promised his people to 'drain the swamp in Washington'. Now, two years later, we have to state the fact that not only did Trump fail to 'drain the swamp in Washington', the swamp itself is sucking him up! Over his two-year fight with the Democrats, who intend to prevent him from running for the presidency in 2020 or even to impeach him this year, Donald Trump has been gradually yielding to their pressure. While at the beginning of his tenure he attempted to carry on inde-

ther persuade him to make false steps or distort facts, so the President has no alternative but to choose the proposed course. By the way, Trump was more than once convinced that those in whom he trusted deceived him and deliberately played a double game. Consequently, he repeatedly had to fire one or another aide, but the appointment of new aides did him little good. In effect, in domestic policy Trump is still using the 'trial-and-error method'. In any case, Trump has disappointed not only the ordinary Americans who believed that he was innately intelligent and adhered to some principles, but also sober-minded politicians from the Republican Party. Now even they are turning away from him.

For several years the Fox News host Tucker Carlson was one of the most consistent supporters of the Republicans. He sincerely hoped that Trump would be able to significantly change the situation in the country. But today he is criticising Trump. According to

Carlson, he believed wholeheartedly that Trump was the extraordinary president who would be able to achieve mutual understanding with Congress, but this didn't happen. Trump has not kept any of the chief promises he gave to his people: to build a wall along the US-Mexico border, to defund the Planned Parenthood project, and to repeal Obamacare (the Affordable Care Act), enacted by his predecessor Obama. In Carlson's view, Trump hardly understands the system (of the state machinery) and even his own agencies don't support the president. Carlson believes that Trump knows very little about the legislative process, knows very little about politics, and surrounded himself with people who can hardly do anything for the country. Such are his sad conclusions...

It should be noted that Carlson didn't say a word about Trump administration's foreign policy. And today it is explicitly anti-Russian and anti-Chinese. In the judgement of Trump and his associates, Russia and China are 'revisionist states' that impede the 'normal national policy' of the USA in

the world arena. I doubt that Trump held the same views when he was a big businessman: at one time he was open to capital investment and deals in both Russia and China. In other words, this 'adopted' position was imposed on Trump by the American Establishment, lobbyists from the military-industrial complex and 'Hawks' in the Pentagon. For the aggressive rhetoric is extremely important and useful to the American military-industrial complex: it enables them

to carry out American rearmament and encourage a new, unprecedented arms race. And this is despite the fact that generals from the Pentagon tell American people over and over again that Russia is a mere 'colossus

with feet of clay', that Russia's accomplishments in the development of armament industry and the creation of fundamentally new Types of weapons are nothing but 'computer graphics' and 'fake missiles'...

Do they know the true state of affairs? Definitely! Recently the American and Canadian Armed Forces were shocked when they saw Russian Akula-class ('Shark') nuclear submarines about 200 miles off their coast. These submarines are quiet and can swim at great depth, and Western watch facilities cannot monitor their movements. Each Akula submarine carries twenty-eight Granat missiles, which can fly up to 3,000 kilometres [c. 1,864 miles] and deliver 200-kiloton nuclear warheads to their targets. But even this type of submarines belongs to the past of Russia's submarine fleet. Recently the new Severodvinsk attack submarine cruiser was put on alert – It can reach depths of around 600 metres underwater and move at the speed of 60 metres per hour. It is said to be armed with lethal Zircon hypersonic cruise missiles. It overcomes any an-



Theresa May seems to have set both Parliament and the majority of the British citizens against herself

ti-ballistic missile system. America is aware of the new arsenal of Russia's advanced military technology, and it seems that logic suggests that to continue a policy of confrontation against a country with such a gigantic military

power would be absurd and silly. But it reiterates that 'we are stronger!'

We should mention the Ukraine here. Recently hotheads in this country declared that the Ukraine desperately needs its own nuclear weapons because its military-industrial capacity allegedly allows them to develop this kind of weapons. It should be stressed that the USA – a country that has always consistently stood for non-proliferation of nuclear arms – made no comment this time. No wonder, given that the modern Ukraine is the NATO's anti-Russian project.

Many years ago there was a very popular movie about Austin Powers, an excellent British spy, who thrives to thwart Dr Evil's (an inventor's) plans to destroy the world. The villain is so narcissistic that he creates a tiny copy of himself, a dwarf, and calls it 'Mini-Me'. So today's Ukraine is the 'Mini-Me' of the United States! Not only is it repeating the anti-Russian rhetoric of the American neocons all the time, it is also reinforcing this rhetoric by every way possible, thus provoking Russia into actions, which it [the Ukraine] presents as 'aggressive' to world public opinion (above all, to the NATO countries). However, Petro Poroshenko is far from being Donald Trump's 'Mini-Me'. Unlike his Ukrainian counterpart, Trump has never stooped to low-down tricks and bloodshed.

Returning to the movie, 'Mini-Me' meets a tragic end: this character is killed. But if we look back at history, it is often sad in reality. Ion Antonescu, Hitler's 'Mini-Me' and a notorious Romanian dictator, after the end of the war was convicted of war crimes and executed. Another 'Mini-Me', the French Marshall Petain, was executed by firing squad after the war. Romania under Antonescu joined the invasion of the Soviet Union by the Nazis, which diminished its population by 1.3 million. Another dictator, the Hungarian Marshall Horti, caused the deaths of about 1.5 million his fellow-citizens. What advice can we give to European peoples? Beware of new 'Mini-Mes'!

FINLAND AND RUSSIA IN THE HISTORY OF SECURITY POLICY

ARTO LUUKKANEN,

associate professor for Russian and East European Studies, University of Helsinki

Fate and geography decreed that Finland and Russia would be close neighbours. In many respects we can figuratively be called cousins who speak different languages. We share the same history of the north which saw periods of war and happy periods of peace alike. This situation can be compared with a common house where a cat is kept. Ideally it is a fine example of successful coexistence.

Alexander I as a far-sighted 'appeaser' of Finland

In 1808–1809 Finland became a part of the Russian Empire, but Tsar Alexander I, under the influence of State Secretary Mikhail Speransky, decided to test a new model of administration in which the old Finnish laws and social system would remain unaltered. This policy of Alexander I was wise because he conquered Finland while 'patting it on the back', as if it were a cat. You can cherish, feed and caress this mysterious creature all your life, yet it remains an incorrigible individualist and at times may be very aggressive defending itself.

The small Finnish army and elite were excited about the new opportunities that being a part of Russia offered them. The clergy (which played a significant role in the life of the society as they were widely supported by peasantry) became convinced that the Lutheran faith would be tolerated in Russia.

The Finnish Army was disbanded after the war and the officers continued to receive pay. Alexander I promised that if he was to levy the army again, he would do it only in order to protect Finland. Private soldiers were allowed to retain their barrack huts. University teachers and scholars were easily 'bought' by declaring new vacancies.

The emperor supplemented his good measures by a 'rain' of honorary awards and the decision to use the country's tax revenues for its domestic needs. Finnish nobles became aware of their privileges and sent their sons to serve in the Russian Royal Army and the state machinery.

The loyalty of Finns to whom much kindness was shown

Alexander I's policy in Finland was very effective. After little resistance Finnish people became absolutely loyal to the Russian Crown. Previously, while under Swedish rule, Finland had to fight endless wars, and Finnish men were killed in great numbers over centuries for Swedish national interests. On top of that, Finland obediently paid taxes to Sweden over 500 years. The new Russian authorities offered peace and prosperity.

The most touching manifestation of loyalty was the Star Boys Christmas Procession (Tiernapojat), which is sung to this day. This tradition, which originated in the middle ages, contains Biblical episodes. In the nineteenth century

a verse was added into the singing procession, which praises 'Tsar Alexander who overpowered the tyrant and will vanquish all hostile forces.' In Finnish nursery rhymes 'Turkey and Tataria' were represented as the worst enemies of Finland and the fatherland (Russia).

The Finnish Finland grew at Russia's elbow

The loyalty of the Grand Duchy of Finland continued right till the

late nineteenth century, when Tsar Nicholas II ventured to create even closer ties between Finland and the Russian Empire. It was a tragic mistake. Nicholas II proved unable to 'pat the Finns on the back'. Instead of winning over a portion of Finland's population he alienated the Finns from Russia.

The rapprochement between Finland and Russia took place for reasons of military necessity, yet political factors were not taken into account. The development of Finland

seemed too rapid for many Russians. Prior to 1899, the Duchy enjoyed self-government in many respects: it had its own parliament, customs office, post, army and even currency. Under Russian rule Finnish eventually became Finland's official language. The notion of a Finland which would speak and think in Finnish was born. Meanwhile, industry was rapidly developing, and Finnish merchant navy in one historical period became the largest in Europe.

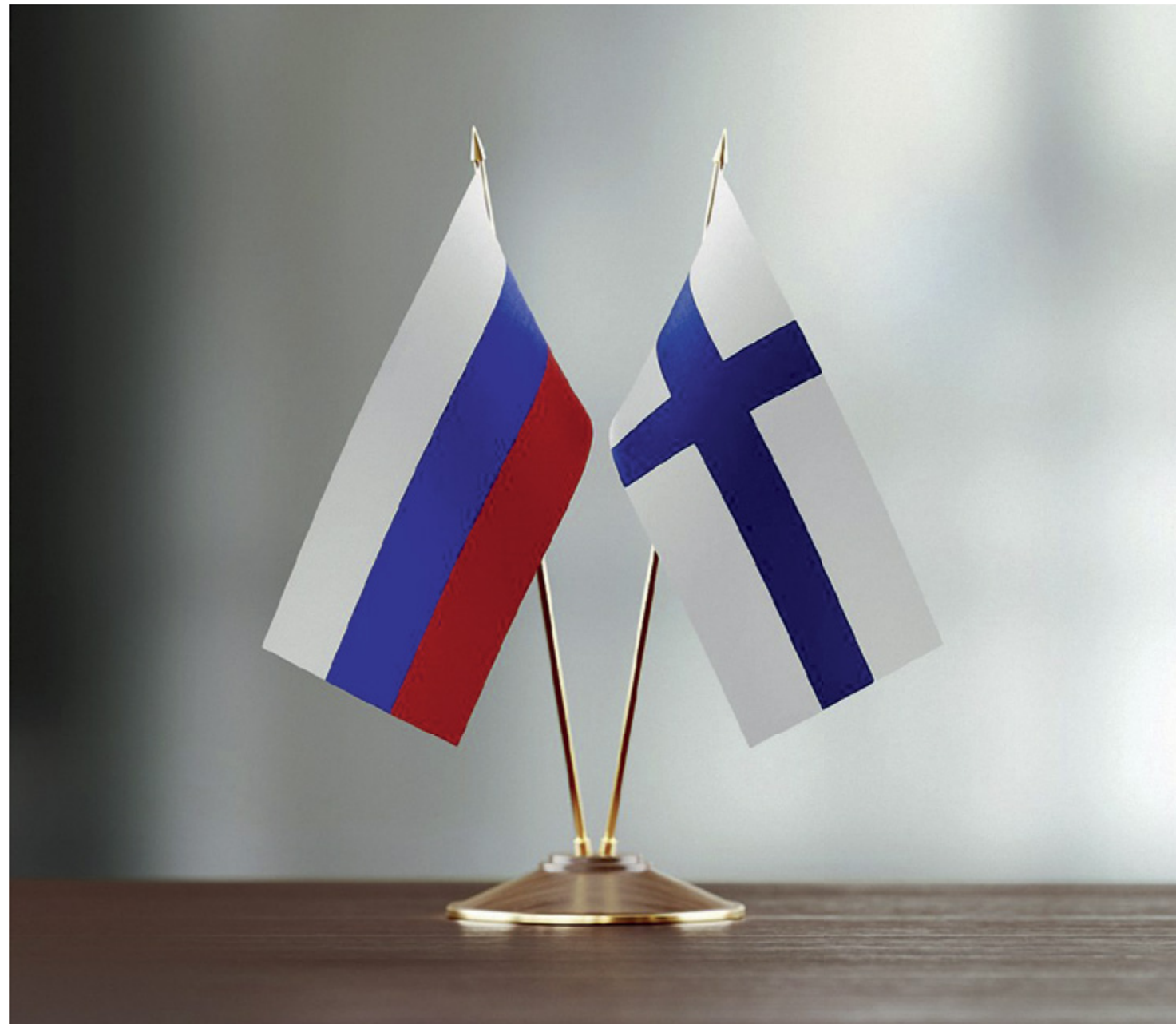
Under Alexander III there were attempts to strengthen the Finnish-Russian ties, but the emperor refused to undermine this one-hundred percent loyalty. The expressly loyal behaviour of Finns, coupled with the emperor's desire to maintain 'family' comfort, may have played its part. An example of this idyll is the fact that Alexander III used to spend summer holidays on the Kymijoki River at the Langinkoski Rapids, where the Grand Duchy of Finland built a fishing lodge especially for the tsar and his family.

The havoc of the Revolution

The Russian Revolution of 1917 was a great shock to Finnish people. The lynch law practised by the Baltic Fleet sailors scared them and caused their disapproval. The post-revolutionary 'liberty' and anarchy of sailors instilled terror into the conservative society. The incredibly loose discipline in the army demonstrated what awaited Russia. Ordinary people were especially indignant that sailors would get drunk and flirt with Finnish girls.

This sentiment gave rise to the idea of independence. The society needed order, but since there was no longer a tsar to ensure order, Finnish Senate had to assume power. The White Finland Set itself the task of getting out of the abyss of the revolution and preventing the sailors and the Finnish Red Brigades (that caused havoc) from seizing power.

The cat lives in a family but walks by itself.



TRADITIONS

A GUIDE TO FINNISH CUSTOMS AND MANNERS

Professor OLLI ALHO, Illustrations: MIKA LAUNIS

Finland is an easy country to visit. Finnish customs and manners are clearly European, with only a few national variations, and attitudes are liberal. There is very little chance of a visitor committing fundamental social gaffes or breaches of etiquette that would fatally damage relations between himself and his hosts. Such breaches are viewed by Finns with equanimity if committed by their own countrymen and with understanding or amusement if committed by foreigners. Codes of behaviour are fairly relaxed, and reputations – good or bad – are built up over time as the result of personal actions rather than conforming to norms or standards. It is difficult in Finland to make or break a reputation with a single social blunder.

Finland is a country where considerable weight is attached to the spoken word – words are chosen carefully and for the purpose of delivering a message. Indeed, there are very few other culture-specific considerations that visitors need be aware of. Finns place great value on words, which is reflected in the tendency to say little and avoid ‘unnecessary’ small talk. As the Chinese proverb puts it, “Your speech should be better than silence, if it is not, be silent.”

Identity

Finns have a very strong sense of national identity. This is rooted in the country’s history – particularly its honourable wartime achievements and significant sporting merits – and is today nurtured by pride in Finland’s high-tech expertise. Being realists, Finns do not expect foreigners to know a lot about their country and its prominent people, past or present,



things written about them abroad, and visitors should not feel uncomfortable being asked repeatedly what they think of Finland. However, although Finns are ready enough to criticize their own country, they do not necessarily wish to hear visitors doing so.

Religion

As far as religion is concerned, there are very few dangers for visitors to Finland, even on subjects that in other cultures might be particularly sensitive. Most Finns belong formally to the Evangelical-Lutheran Church (about 83%), while 1.1% belong to the Finnish Orthodox Church; but people in general are fairly secular in their views. Despite this, the Church and its ministers are held in high esteem, and personal religious views are respected. It is difficult to observe differences between believers and everyone else in everyday life, except perhaps that the former lead more abstemious lives.

The number of immigrants in Finland is growing, and increasing contacts with other religions in recent years have increased the Finns’ knowledge of them, although there is still much to be desired in their tolerance for people with different religions and cultures.



Languages

A Finn’s mother tongue is either Finnish, Swedish (5.6% of the population

are Swedish speakers) or Saami (some 8,000 native speakers). Finnish belongs to the small Finno-Ugrian language group; outside Finland it is understood (and to some extent spoken) in Estonia. And in Sweden, too, Finnish is spoken among the large number of Finnish immigrants. Finns take care of their linguistic communication by maintaining a wide range of foreign languages in the school curriculum.

English is widely spoken in Finland and in the business community some companies use it as their house language. German is no longer widely taught but many Finns in their 50s or older learned it as their first foreign language at school. French, Spanish and Russian have grown in popularity both in schools and among adult learners. Membership of the European Union and the related practical and social demands have increased the need to study European languages, at least in the case of Finns who travel in Europe on business or are studying abroad.

Educated Finnish speakers, particularly those working in the public sector, speak Swedish to some degree whilst almost all Swedish-speaking Finns speak Finnish too. Only in some coastal areas and in the autonomous province of the Åland Islands is Swedish the dominant language, indeed in Åland it is the only official language. The status of Swedish as the joint official language of mainland Finland can be seen in the bilingual names of public institutions and in street signs, the latter case depending on the percentage of minority language speakers resident in a given municipality, and in the Swedish-language programmes on radio and TV. Swedish-speaking Finns

have a distinctive culture, and their social mores are influenced by Scandinavian traditions more so than amongst the Finnish-speaking majority.

Greeting

When greeting, the parties shake hands and make eye contact. A deep bow denotes special respect – in normal circumstances, a nod of the head is enough. A Finnish handshake is brief and firm, and involves

no supporting gestures such as touching the shoulder or upper arm. When greeting a married couple, the wife should be greeted first, except on a formal occasion where the hosts should first be greeted by the spouse to whom the invitation was addressed. Children are greeted by shaking hands too. Embracing people when greeting them is rare in Finland. A man greeting someone in the street should raise his hat; in the cold of winter, a touch of the hand to the brim of the hat is enough.

Finns can kiss as well as the next nation, but they rarely do so when

greeting. Hand-kissing is rare. Friends and acquaintances may hug when meeting, and kisses on the cheek are not entirely unknown, although this habit is not generally found in rural areas. There is no special etiquette regarding the number of kisses on the cheek; however, most Finns feel that three kisses is going a bit far. Men very rarely kiss each other in greeting, and never on the mouth in the manner of our eastern neighbours.

Festivals

Finns move to their vacation homes after Midsummer. One in four Finns

owns a “mökki”, a holiday cabin. Finns take a dip in the lake after sauna, and finish the bathing session with sausage and beer.

Finns like celebrations and Finland’s calendar of official festivals is not very different from that of other European countries. One major difference is that the Protestant Lutheran calendar does not accommodate all the feast days of Catholic tradition. Visitors may find it strange that Finns have calm and serious festivities on occasions that would be boisterous and joyful in continental Europe.

Christmas, and Christmas Eve in particular, is very much a family festival in Finland, usually spent at home or with relatives. Customs include lighting candles by the graves of deceased family members. Finns wish each other ‘Merry Christmas’, but equally often they say ‘Peaceful Christmas’. Christmas Day is generally a quiet day and Christmastide social life does not restart until Boxing Day.

December 6 is Independence Day, an occasion marked with solemn ceremonial observances. It is a day for remembering those who fell in the wars to protect Finland’s independence, which was achieved in 1917. In the evening, the President of the Republic hosts a reception for some 2,000 guests – including the diplomatic corps accredited to Finland – and watching this reception on TV has evolved into a favourite pastime for the entire nation.

In wintertime, Shrove Tuesday is just about the only festive occasion where public merrymaking can be observed, though even this is not even a pale reflection of the carnivals held in more southerly lands. Logically enough, the most flamboyant annual parties in Finland occur at a warmer time of year. May Day, internationally a festival day for workers and students, can with justification be described as a northern version of Mardi Gras, and Midsummer – the ‘night of no night’ – is an occasion for uninhibited rejoicing, as for most Finns it marks the beginning of summer holidays and a move to the summer dwelling in the countryside.

HISTORY

ROYAL HOLIDAYS IN FINLAND

The Russian Emperors Alexander III and Nicholas II regarded Finland as an unmatched holiday destination. Altogether, Alexander spent in Finland's archipelago 213 holiday days, and Nicholas – about 344 days.

If we take into account that both of them were rulers of a huge empire, then, of course, a holiday is a relative concept. Affairs of state never left them alone even while they were fishing. Despite this, during their stays in Finland the emperors would try to devote their time to their families, peace and quiet, and favourite hobbies. During holidays they could allow themselves to do such things as gathering firewood, cooking fish soup or outings to the forest without a large retinue.

A safe country and open people

Finland attracted both emperors by the sense of safety and security. At home, in Russia, they were targets of numerous assassination attempts of terrorists, who had earlier murdered Alexander II. In contrast to this, in Finland they could move with nothing to care about because residents of this part of the Great Empire sincerely loved their monarchs as long as there was no Russification of Finland.

During their summer sea tours Alexander III and his spouse Maria Feo-



Alexander III and Maria Feodorovna with children and entourage on the porch of their house at Langinkoski

dorovna, a native of Denmark, would visit fisheries and enjoy speaking with people. During their visit to the isle of Hegersan the royal couple met Finna Lindblad, a fisherman's wife, who later accompanied Alexander III in nine of his holiday tours as a fish industry specialist. The well-known fishing shack of the 'Imperial Finna' survives in Hegersan to this day, and the isle's quay is called 'the Emperor's Port'. There is the 'Royal Cave' recreation complex in the centre of the Finnish town of Naantali. A memorial stone on one of the cave walls says that His Majesty visited this town.

The Russian Emperor obeyed Finnish laws

During their holidays in Finland the emperors had to take into account

that their authority was not always recognised in the Grand Duchy. Once Alexander III with his family moored to a small islet on their boat – the kids started gathering flowers, but the irritated owner of the islet turned up and forbade them to do it. 'I am the tsar on my isle!' he said to the astonished emperor. Alexander III immediately took his children and left; soon he sent this man a golden watch as a token of gratitude for taking good care of his lands. Another Alexander III's run-in with the Finnish law took place when he was fishing for

crayfish during the period of ban. A local policeman stopped the illegal fishing and reprimanded His Majesty for his misbehaviour. The monarch obediently released the crayfish without arguing with an officer of the law.

The best kind of holiday with full board

As heir to the throne and then as Emperor, Alexander III holidayed in Finland a total of twenty-one times – usually for a fortnight each time. The monarch and his family travelled on a pleasure sailing vessel called Tsarevna ('Princess'). The holiday fleet also included two torpedo boats, two navigation ships along with service ships. In most cases comfort and safety of the Imperial Family were provided by about 500 people, including no few-

er than seventy courtiers. Before the beginning of holiday cruises Finnish pilots would make a careful study of the royal itinerary and renew navigational marks. During cruises a special steam-driven ship would transport mail between the mainland and the holiday fleet.

The best to music lovers

Alexander III was a connoisseur of high music and would often play the trombone himself. Finnish people were aware of this passion of the tsar as well. Throughout the royal holiday the yacht the Tsarevna was accompanied by a steamer with the Finnish brass band, providing a musical accompaniment at the dinner. Among frequent guests on board were members of Helsinki male choir, the Mimtra Musi-Kanter. By the way, this choir performed at the empress's name-day party in St Petersburg.

Fishing was one of the most favourite hobbies of Alexander III. In connection with this a log cabin was built for the emperor not far from Kotka on the bank of Langinkoski [a rapid on the Kymi River in Kotka]. There the tsar would relax, catching salmon and laying in supplies of wood for the winter. His tsarina would enjoy cooking, charging the household servants with wash-up.

The imperial fishing lodge in Langinkoski still exists, though today it is just a popular tourist attraction. The splendid furniture and interior of the log hut, which is fully equipped for a holiday, look as if this place were ready to receive the royal guests at any moment.

The beautiful gulf of Lähdelahdi near the town of Tammisaari was Empress Consort Maria Feodorovna's most favourite summer holiday location. This place is still known as Dagmar's spring.

The holiday paradise of Nicholas II

Nicholas II set off on his first holiday in Finland in 1905, the year of turbulence and the revolution. In letters to his mother the monarch complained that at his Peterhof Palace he felt he was a 'target for the terrorists'.

The emperor was out of danger in Finland's archipelago. In his correspondence and diaries he often mentioned that it was in Finland that he could truly relax.

The last Russian Emperor used to spend his summers in the Virolahti archipelago right in what is now the modern Finnish-Russian border. A recreation centre with tennis courts, roundabouts and swings was built on the island of Harppu especially for the royal court. Nicholas II would often go hunting, paddle the canoe, swim and go on long hikes on the islands. Occasionally local residents were invited to festive events. Food was always served with vodka and rum.

The longest holiday of Nicholas II in Virolahti lasted three months. At that time the huge empire was ruled from a little place on the Gulf of Finland. Ministers and military commanders had to travel there to meet with the monarch. In Virolahti Nicholas II had meetings with King Wilhelm II of



Nicholas II with family on a hunting trip. Finland. 1912

Germany and King Gustaf V of Sweden. The emperor inspected his navy's new ships there as well.

Nicholas II didn't like to conduct affairs of state while on holiday. Hav-

ing received his mail from St Petersburg, the tsar would shut himself up in the study of the imperial yacht the Standard and throw open envelopes out of the window to the sea with annoyance. By the number of envelopes thrown the courtiers could judge whether the emperor's working day was stressful or not.

Good communications were ensured between the capital and the tsar's holiday location. Three airfields were built in the archipelago, one of them – exclusively for the tsar's use. A liaison ship would leave for St Petersburg on a daily basis, and communications with the mainland were ensured by a Finnish mail steamer. Whatever significant events might happen, the tsar was immediately informed.

Extraordinary precautionary measures

The security system of Nicholas II left no room for accidents. The imperial sailing vessel was guarded by warships, and two torpedo boats would continuously be on patrol beyond the shielding wall. Ships which came too close were sent away and sometimes even fired on.

On land the monarch's security was ensured by invisible yet strong bodyguards. Sailors would post sentries along His Majesty's walking itineraries. Sometimes Nicholas II would strew golden coins on his way for the guard in reward for his safety.

To commemorate these holiday voyages a number of rocky isles and edges in the archipelago were named after the Russian Emperor. Besides, there are numerous stories and legends that testify to his meetings with local inhabitants.

The article is based on the work by the writer and scholar Jorma Tuomi-Nikula and the translator Päivi Tuomi-Nikula, Emperors on Holiday in Finland, published in September 2002.

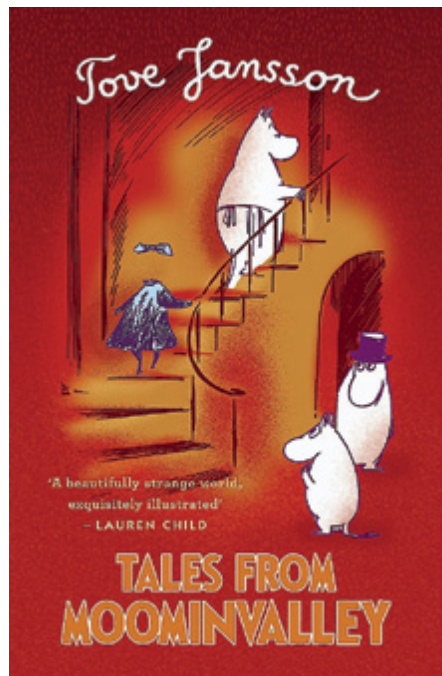
TOP 10 FINNISH BOOKS

RENÉ-PHILIPPE THOMAS

The Finns' active cultural life is especially evidenced by their literary vitality. Many Finnish literary works are translated into multiple languages for global audiences, and the reputation of Finnish writers is expanding worldwide.

Tove Jansson:
Tales from Moominvalley

A Swedish-speaking Finn, Tove Jansson (1914–2001) is primarily known as the creator of the imaginary Moomin characters, which she wrote about and illustrated in novels and comic strips. Books such as *Tales from Moominvalley* and *Comet in Moominland* continue to enjoy worldwide success among audiences of all ages. She also wrote novels and short stories for grown-up readers; many of these works have recently been re-released in English. In 2014 she becomes more



relevant than ever as Finland celebrates the centenary of her birth.

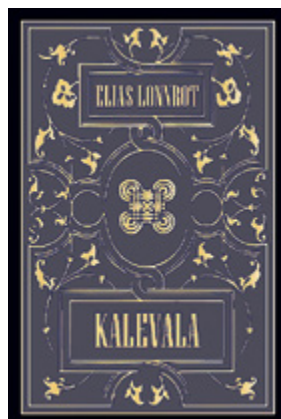
Elias Lönnrot:
Kalevala

Originally a rural physician, Elias Lönnrot (1802–1884) took advantage of time spent in Kainuu, North-Eastern Finland, by collecting Finnish poems sung in popular oral tradition. Impassioned by his discovery, he published the fruits of his labour under the title *Kalevala*. The vast mythological epic helped awaken and cement the Finnish national consciousness of the 19th century. The *Kalevala* themes, complemented by trips to Karelia, have influenced many Finnish artists, including the composer Jean Sibelius.

Mika Waltari:
The Egyptian

One of Finland's most renowned writers, Mika Waltari (1908–1979) created novels, poems, plays and screenplays. After the publication of his first novel, and inspired by a visit to Paris in the late 1920s, he published many thrillers. In the wake of the Second World War he produced what many consider his best work, a

historical novel called *The Egyptian*, noted for its faithful reconstruction of the lives of the Egyptian pharaohs.



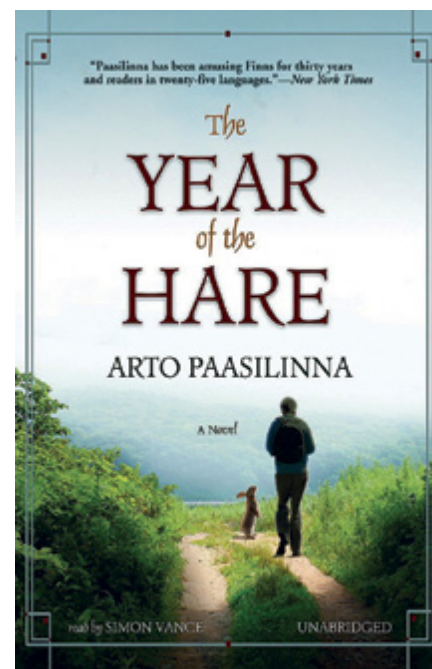
Sofi Oksanen:
Purge

Born in 1977, Sofi Oksanen became known in 2003 for the novel *Stalin's Cows*. In 2008 came *Purge*, which follows two different generations of women in Estonia during and after the Soviet occupation. The novel earned Oksanen international recognition, including the European Book Prize and the Prix Femina Étranger. Known for her feminist sensibilities, Oksanen regularly comments on social issues in the Finnish press. She is also a playwright.



Arto Paasilinna:
The Year of the Hare

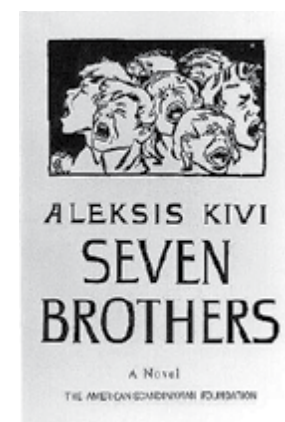
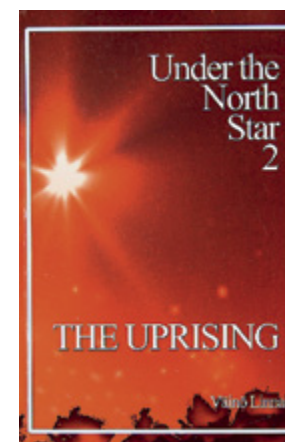
Arto Paasilinna (1942–2018) was born in Lapland. He found his place in literature after practising various trades. Author of numerous novels, he gained international praise for *The Year of the Hare*, a story of pastoral tribulations by a narrator who befriends a hare. Translated into over 20 languages, this novel became the first in a long



series of literary successes, particularly in France. Critics praised him for his use of sarcasm combined with an extraordinary sense of narration and farce, qualities that give his stories an unmistakable tone.

Väinö Linna:
Under the North Star

Väinö Linna (1920–1992) forms one of the most influential Finnish writers of the post-war era. Originally a worker from a simple background, he took part in the Finnish-Soviet wars of 1939–1944. This experience led him to write a realistic novel, *The Unknown Soldier*, that earned him great success. In another book, *Under the North Star*, he painted a historical portrait of a Finnish family across many generations attempting to describe the social reality in familiar settings. Many of Linna's novels have been adapted into films.



Riikka Pulkkinen:
True

Born in 1980, Riikka Pulkkinen caused a sensation with the 2006 release of her first novel, *The Border*, in which she featured characters struggling with violent internal conflict. The book also covered topics such as Alzheimer's disease and euthanasia. She later confirmed her literary talent with two more novels, including *True*, in which she continued to explore struggles of the human soul. Highly regarded as a novelist, she also regularly writes columns in the Finnish media.



Aleksis Kivi:
The Seven Brothers

Aleksis Kivi (1834–1872) began as a playwright. Of all his plays, *Heath Cobblers* continues to be the most popular. He spent ten years writing *The Seven Brothers*, which was published in 1870 to mixed reviews. It forms a scathing, yet truthful depiction of Finnish rural life. Exhausted by work and illness, Kivi passed away as a destitute man at the age of 38. Today he has been promoted to the rank of national writer, for he is reputed to have paved the way for Finnish-language literature (before him, the bulk of Finnish literature was written in Swedish). He also left behind many poems, some of which have been turned into songs.

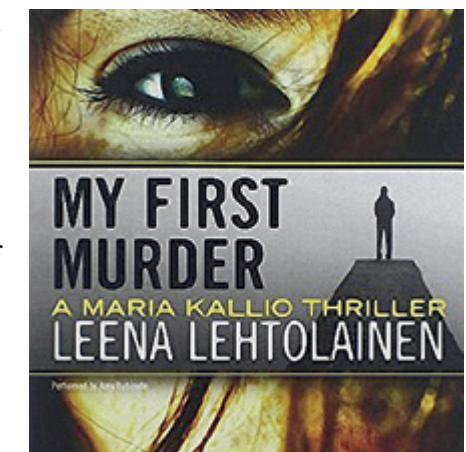
Hannu Mäkelä:
Mr Boo

Born in 1943, poet and novelist Hannu Mäkelä has had a particularly productive career. His works for children, based on the imaginary Mr Boo, a farcical character who appears to children at night, earned him much success and international recognition. Since 1973 Mäkelä has published a series of stories

based on this popular character. Mr. Boo's popularity has been amplified in the music of M.A. Numminen, a singer of unbridled imagination, who transcribed the adventures of this imaginary character into music, to the delight of young Finns.

Leena Lehtolainen:
My First Murder

Since her first novel was published at the age of 12, Leena Lehtolainen (born in 1964) has become known for her thrillers, such as *My first Murder*, *Her enemy* and *Copper Heart*, which feature police inspector Maria Kallio. Acclaimed for their well-crafted intrigue and captivating atmosphere, Lehtolainen's books have been translated into over 20 languages; some have been adapted for television and theatre.



TRADITIONAL FINNISH FOOD YOU MUST TRY IN FINLAND

Finns are passionate about their food and they know how to celebrate it. Finns are also fiercely loyal to their culinary roots.

filled with potatoes, rice or carrots. They are particularly delicious with an egg butter spread on top! These pastries originated in the eastern province

of Karelia. This is the mythical birthplace of Kalevala, the epic 19th century poem that has become an essential part of the Finnish national identity.



Although you can buy just about anything your heart desires in Finland these days, go native when you are here and you will be in for a treat.

In Finland, market stalls everywhere overflow with seasonal produce and local delicacies. Festivals mark the arrival of favourite foods throughout the year.

We've compiled a list of ten iconic foods that you SHOULD try – go on, don't be shy.

Karjalanpiirakka

Karjalanpiirakka or Karelian pies, as they are also known, fit into your hand and melt in your mouth. The crust was traditionally made with rye flour and



Kalakukko

People used to think of Kalakukkos as a packed lunch, the rye-dough pie containing everything you needed for a complete meal. Kalakukko are similar to Karjalanpiirakka, but bigger in size and made with fish. They are most commonly filled with Muikku, a small herring-like fish found in the Lake District of Eastern Finland.

Grillimakkara

Children grow up eating this snack food both at the summer cottage and during winter around a campfire or at



winter events such as Laskiainen. A Finnish summer is not complete without Grillimakkara. These big, fat sausages made for grilling are eaten with mustard and washed down with beer. Finns love them.

soups at lunch or as an evening snack. Ruisleipä – Rye Bread, made from sour dough, is a staple of the Finnish diet. There are many varieties but the most popular and widely available is reikä leipä, meaning a bread with a

Rye Bread

Rye Bread is dense and flat and very heavy, but Finns will have it sent through the post when they are living abroad. Never mind the cost. Näkkileipä is the cracker version of rye bread and there are also many kinds, including the internationally-sold Finn Crisp cracker. They are eaten at breakfast with butter, cheese and other spreads, with

hole. People used to hang their bread on poles from the rafters.

Korvapuusti

Usually eaten with a cup of coffee (Finns consume more coffee and perhaps more cinnamon buns than any other European nation), it is difficult



BLUEBERRY PIE

INGREDIENTS (8 PORTIONS)

Crust

- 100 g margarine
- 1/2 dl sugar
- 1 egg
- 1 dl wholemeal flour
- 1 dl wheat flour
- 1 tsp. baking powder

Filling

- 3 dl blueberries
- 200 g sour cream
- 1 egg
- 1/2 dl sugar
- 1 tsp. vanilla sugar

INSTRUCTIONS

Cream the margarine and sugar, whisk in the egg. Combine the dry ingredients and stir into the mixture. Press the crust into a pie tin with floured hands, covering the base and sides. Add the blueberries evenly. Mix the sour cream, egg, sugar and vanilla sugar. Pour the mixture on top of the blueberries. Bake for 30 minutes at 200 °C on the oven's lower rack. If the bottom is not fully baked, leave the pie on the oven for 5 minutes with the heat off.



to stop at just one. Or two. Korvapuusti translates into "slapped ears" in English but they are essentially cinnamon buns. And while Finland doesn't hold a patent on cinnamon buns, they might seriously make the best.

Summer Berries (and pies)

In July and August blueberries paint the Finnish forest. They are everywhere and could cause a sense of panic if you are not used to seeing them in such abundance. You will want to pick them all and freeze them for winter.

Which the Finns do but they are best enjoyed in the summer months, on their own or in homemade pies. The Lingon is a wild Finnish berry which is tart and often made into jams and juices. But by far the most exquisite of the berries is the Cloudberry, which grows in the north of the country.

Bright orange and sour, it is a delicacy whose appearance in the southern markets is fleeting and highly anticipated each summer.

Fresh Fish, Mati, New Potatoes and Chantrelle Sauce

New potatoes are about as close to religion as you can get in Finnish food. Finns can talk about new potatoes for

a long time, as the little spuds hold the promise of a summer still uncorked. They start to appear around midsummer and their harvest makes the local papers each year. 'New potatoes are superb with butter, dill and a little salt but with chanterelle sauce they are simply divine. Wild chanterelles are picked in the fall and form a sea of yellow in the forest when you find them. Fried in butter and mixed with cream, they are spectacular. But add a secret ingredient of browned baby carrots and you might actually die and go to heaven. This is a magic summer food combination. Salmon is often smoked in custom-made ovens that can be

everything from an empty oil drum to a more elaborate structure made of wood or brick. It is essential to use low heat, allowing the fish to cook slowly and infusing it with a pleasant wood smoke taste. Mäti is fish roe, a sought-after delicacy, from common fresh water fish such as Whitefish and Vendace. It is traditionally served on top of toast and mixed with Smetana, a type of sour cream.

AVOKUKKO

INGREDIENTS

Dough, part 1

100ml lukewarm water
Sour bread root (about 60g)
30g rye flour

Dough, part 2

300ml lukewarm water
0.5tbsp of salt
400g rye flour

Filling

700g vendace
2tsp salt
Rye flour
Butter

DIRECTIONS

1. Mix the ingredients listed in part 1 to form a smooth dough. Cover with plastic wrap and place in a warm place. Let it turn overnight or until it is bubbling. Add part two's salt and water into the mixture, and make sure the salt melts very well. Stir the flour into the mixture little by little. Knead the dough vigorously for at least 10 minutes by hand, or 5 minutes in a machine until smooth and solid dough. Cover and leave to rise, covered with two cloths for 3–6 hours, depending on the dough and place of warmth.

2. Salt the fish and let it stand for about an hour. Pat the dough into an oval shape, less than a cm thick. Lift the base onto a greased and floured baking sheet and pile the vendace on top. Turn the edges up and crinkle the edges. Bake for the first 10 minutes at 250 °C. If a lot of salt water appears from the fish, take your pie out of the oven and drain off the water. Bake for another 10 minutes at 200 °C. Finally, moisten the pie and fish with melted butter, and continue cooking at 200 °C for a further 5–10 minutes. Wrap in greaseproof paper and leave the pie to set for about an hour.



Crayfish

Crayfish parties or “kraftskiva”, were originally a Swedish tradition that the Finns adopted and celebrate with finesse each summer. These small fresh water lobsters are considered a gourmet treat and they are not cheap. Which is why they are feted in style. Elegant and elaborate parties are thrown in honour of the Crayfish season which runs typically between July 21st and early fall. Crayfish parties or “kraftskiva”, were originally a Swedish tradition that the Finns adopted and celebrate with finesse each summer. These small fresh water lobsters are considered a gourmet treat and they are not cheap. Which is why they are feted in style.

Reindeer Meat and Potato Mash

Reindeer are found in Finland's northern province of Lapland and their meat is one of the healthiest foods

you can put on your plate according to recent studies. It is high in B-12, omega-3, omega-6 and lean. And it is delicious! Served with mashed potatoes, this dish is eaten throughout the country, in all seasons.

Finland but there is nowhere better to sample the local fare than in someone's home. Known in English as “Finnish Squeaky Cheese” and also called Juustoleipä or “cheese bread”, this mild cheese is most often made from cow's milk but can also be made from reindeer or goat's milk. The milk is first curdled and then fried or baked in a pie tin and cut in wedges. It is most delicious with cloudberry jam!

Leipajuusto

You can find these iconic foods in the markets and restaurants across



10 BEST THINGS TO DO IN FINLAND

So, you're dreaming of coming to Finland for your holiday but not sure where to start planning. Don't worry, we're here to help!

First, you need to decide if you are going to come here during summer or winter – or somewhere in between. Whether you come in the winter or summer makes all the difference. The two main seasons are polar opposites: one is characterized by darkness, the other of extreme light.

Second, you need to choose where to go. Finland is a large country and to make the most of it, we recommend exploring only one or two of the four main regions: Helsinki area, Lakeland, Archipelago and Lapland. Unless, of course, you have all the time in the world.

To help you, we made a list of 10 different experiences. There is “something for all” as the list covers all of Finland and all seasons. The experiences are mainly nature-oriented. Why? Because that's what Finland is mostly about: beautiful forests, clean lakes and amazing sea-side. Culture, design, food and festivals can be found in other articles – why not see them next?

Sleep in a glass igloo

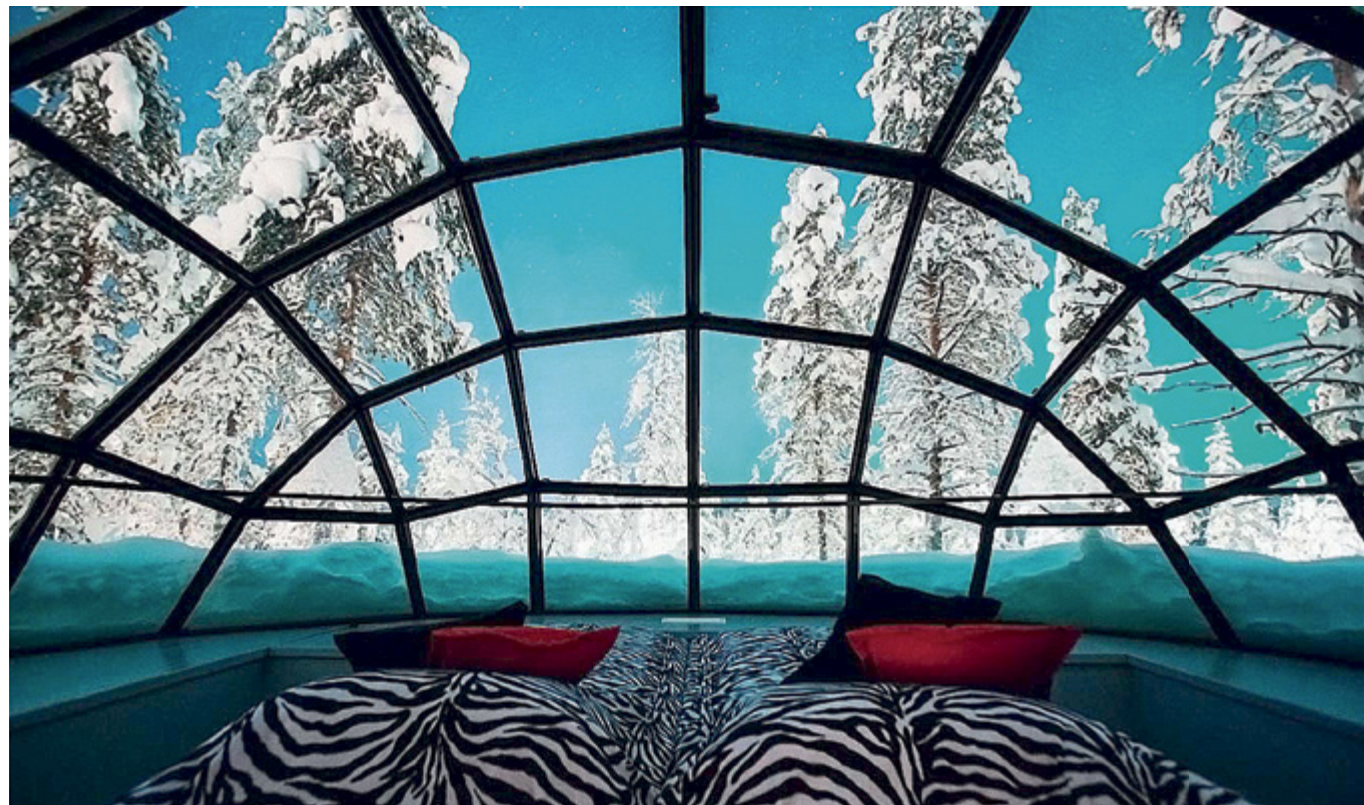
Finland is a land of stark contrasts. In the summer months, the sun does not set at all in the northernmost parts of the country – hence Finland's nickname “The Land of the Midnight Sun”.

In the winter, the opposite happens: the sun disappears for months. This time is called “kaamos”. During kaamos it is not completely dark, however. The bright snow, the moon and the stars, and, if you are lucky, the Northern Lights, create magical surroundings.

Perhaps the best way to experience these two extreme seasons is to sleep in a glass igloo or cottage, surrounded by nature.

Visit a lighthouse island

Finland's coast has the largest archipelago in the world. And when there are islands, there are lighthouses. And what kind of lighthouses they are!



Many are possible to visit during a day trip, some you can spend a night in.

Bengtskär on the west coast is majestic sight. It is the tallest lighthouse in the Nordic countries. It is situated on a beautiful island that is accessible by boat from beginning of June to end of August. If you wish to stay the night, the island has six lighthouse keeper's rooms to stay in. Book early to avoid disappointment.

For Helsinki daytrippers, Söderskär lighthouse is a must-see. It is possible to visit Söderskär by boat from Helsinki. The journey takes just over an hour and the visit itself is for two hours. Just

enough to climb the lighthouse and have a cup of coffee in the little lighthouse keeper's cottage next to it.

Stroll around an old wooden town

In the olden days all of Finland's houses were built of wood. Why, of course, over 70% of our land is covered by forest – that's more than any other country in Europe.



Today, it is still possible to see those wooden houses that date back hundred, even three hundred years. Such Helsinki districts as Käpylä and Vallila are good places to start. Old Porvoo, an hour's drive from the capital, is another easy stop. Beautiful wooden towns can be also be found in Rauma in the West and Loviisa in the South. All of these three offer beautiful little B&B's to stay in should you wish to stay longer.

Visit a UNESCO sites

Finland holds seven Unesco World Heritage sites of which six are cultural and one is natural. Perhaps the most well-known is the fortress island Suomenlinna in Helsinki.



Suomenlinna was added to the UNESCO World Heritage List in 1991 as a unique monument of military architecture. Comprising of seven islands, Suomenlinna is full of old fortresses and dungeons. Moreover, it is also an inhabited district of the city of Helsinki and a much-loved getaway for many helsinkians.

Suomenlinna is only 15 minutes ferry ride away from the central market square Kauppatori.

Hike in one of Finland's 40 national parks

There are 40 national parks in Finland. They are scattered around the country's archipelago, lakes, forests



wrapped tightly under a reindeer hide in a sled pulled by a pack of huskies or Santa's number one mode of transport – Rudolph the Reindeer?

Lapland's vast fells and guaranteed snow make it the best place to experience sledding. You can try riding with a pack of huskies from 15 minutes to excursions that last for days. Reindeer rides

are usually shorter and more suitable for small children. Both husky and reindeer rides are usually available from late October till late spring, even early summer.

Meet the real Santa

Everyone knows Santa – the one and only – comes from Finland.

What some people don't know, however, is that it is possible to meet him in person all year round. Santa's

and fells. In the winter, one can try snow shoeing or skiing and, in the summer, hiking.

Finland's "Everyman's rights" mean that you can venture just about anywhere in the parks as long as you respect the nature and clean after yourself.

Ride a reindeer or a husky sleigh

What better way to experience the white, cold wilderness than to be



official office, situated on the mysterious Arctic Circle, in the city of Rovaniemi is open each day of the year. There, children and adults can enjoy a private chat with him and revel in the enchanted atmosphere.

Pick berries and mushrooms in a forest

To truly experience the Finnish way of living and the closeness to nature that the Finns have, one should go berry or mushroom picking in the forest.

Bilberries, cloudberries and lingonberries are not called "superfood" for no reason. They are uniquely tasty and packed with high levels of vitamins and flavonoids, after ripening



under the white summer nights. Best berry-picking season lasts from end of July until September. Mushrooms can be picked from late summer until the snow comes.

Everyman's right in the country's forests guarantees that you are allowed to pick almost anything your heart and mouth desires. Forests are everywhere you go. In the Helsinki region, the best place to go ber-



ry and mushroom picking is in Nuukio national park. Nuukio is less than an hour's bus journey away. It is hard to believe such places exist so near the capital – you will feel out of this world.

Ski under the Northern Lights or the midnight sun

How is that possible, you may ask? In Finland, it can be.

In the northernmost parts of the country, seeing the Northern Lights is almost guaranteed every other winter night.



On the other hand, the days are so long by May that sometimes the fells are still covered in snow when the sun decides to stay up all night.

These conditions, especially in places like Kilpisjärvi, make it amazing to go cross-country skiing. Imagine skiing in the middle of the night but with the sun shining over you? Or, in the middle of the darkest day of the year but with the Northern Lights guiding your way?

Sweat in a sauna and hop into the lake

There are over three million saunas in Finland and around 188 000 lakes. The greatest past-time of the Finns is to go to the sauna – every week. Some go every day.

Finnish Lakeland is an area where there is most water, and most summer cottages. And perhaps the most saunas too. Winter does not prevent a Finn from jumping into a lake – on the contrary. We Finns love ice swimming. We simply make a hole in the ice and enjoy the cold. If there is no lake nearby, you can always go out of the sauna and roll in the snow. It works just as well!

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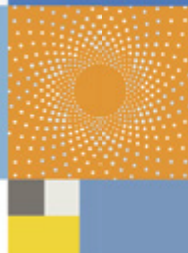


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LEGAL ADVICE

INVESTOR VISA SUSPENDED TO FIGHT MONEY LAUNDERING

EMIL MANASYAN

It has taken the UK government more than 3 years since the publication of the Transparency International's report, which criticized the apparent vulnerability of the UK's Tier 1 Investor visa route, and a serious political clash with the Russian government, to finally decide to look into the claim that substantial amounts of corrupt wealth stolen from Russia and China are being laundered through the UK investor visa route.

Tier 1 Investor visa allows applicants to settle permanently in the UK on the basis that they invest at least £2 million or more in the UK's government bonds, share capital or loan capital in active and trading UK registered companies. Depending on the amount of the investment, applicants may acquire indefinite leave to remain in the UK in either 5 years (£2m), 3 years (£5m) or 2 years (£10m).

It has long been argued that the Tier 1 scheme does not actually bring a major economic benefit to the UK, as applicants were effectively loaning the money, rather than actually investing in the UK.

In light of the above, the Immigration Minister Caroline Nokes, has announced that Tier 1 Investor route will be temporarily suspended.

Hence, from midnight 7th December 2018 until an application audit

process is introduced the scheme will be inactive

There has not yet been a formal notification from the Home Office to confirm the timeline for the suspension or the exact measures that will be introduced. However, the list below includes main changes that have been mentioned so far:

1. Applicants will now have to provide comprehensive audits of all their financial and business interests, which will need to be carried out by the UK regulated auditing firms.

2. Applicants will have to prove that they have had control of the investment for at least two years prior to making an application.

3. Certain investments, such as government bonds, will no longer be allowed, and investments will need

to be made in active and trading UK companies.

4. Pooled investments, which are supported by the Government, will need to back projects with a "clear economic benefit for the UK".

In the year ending September 2018, more than 1000 applications were granted under Tier 1 visa route. We strongly recommend that independent legal advice is sought in cases where an application under this route has recently been made or is under consideration.


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