“Alte kameraden”

Memories of the wartime Relationship with Germany in post-war Finland

Eemeli Sutinen

Master’s Thesis

Department of History and Ethnology

University of Jyväskylä

8.6.2023

JYVÄSKYLÄN YLIOPISTO

Tiedekunta – Faculty Humanities and Social Sciences	Laitos – Department History and Ethnology
Tekijä – Author Eemeli Sutinen	
Työn nimi – Title Alte Kameraden: Memories of the wartime relationship with Germany in post-war Finland	
Oppiaine – Subject History	Työn laji – Level Master's Thesis
Aika – Month and year June 2023	Sivumäärä – Number of pages 49

Tiivistelmä – Abstract

Tässä pro gradu -tutkimuksessa keskitytään tarkastelemaan suomalaisten sotilaiden muistoja saksalaisista sotilaista 2. maailmansodan aikana. Päälähteenä tutkimuksessa käytän *Kansa taisteli – miehet kertovat* lehteä, jota julkaistiin vuosien 1957-1986 välisenä aikana. Tämän päälähteen lisäksi käytän myös rajattuna tarkastelunäkökulmana saksalaisia muistelmia, sekä mm. Irja Wendischin toimittamaa teosta, johon hän on koonnut saksalaisen lääkärin, Emil Conzelmannin, kirjeenvaihtoa hänen vaimolleen 2. maailmansodan aikana, kun tämä toimi Saksan armeijan lääkärinä Suomen lapissa. Sodanjälkeisinä vuosikymmeninä veteraanien kyky tuoda esille omia kokemuksiaan sodasta oli hankalaa. *Kansa taisteli*-lehti oli eräs pääkeinoista, jota veteraanit pystyivät käyttämään ilmaisemaan omia muistojaan. Sodanjälkeisinä vuosikymmeninä akateemisessa sotahistorian tutkimuksessa pääpaino oli ns. ajopuu- ja erillissotateoriassa. Sodanjälkeisinä vuosikymmeninä julkaistu fiktiivinen sotakirjallisuus keskittyi mm. pasifistiseen tapaan ilmaista sotaa. Nämä kaksi em. asiaa luovat tutkimukseen ns. julkisen muistelun, jota sodanjälkeisinä vuosikymmeninä harjoitettiin, ja joka oli osittain kontrolloiva narratiivi. *Kansa taisteli*-lehdessä julkaistut sotatarinat veteraaneilta, sekä saksalaisten sotilaiden muistitieto muodostavat tähän tutkimukseen ns. yksityisen muistelun, jossa sotaa tarkastellaan yksilön näkökulmasta. Tästä aineistosta muodostuu teemoja, joiden tarkastelun ympärille tutkimus rakentuu.

Asiasanat – Keywords War time, Continuation War, Lapland War, history of memory, memoirs, Kansa taisteli-magazine
Säilytyspaikka – Depository University of Jyväskylä
Muita tietoja – Additional information

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1. Introduction

On 27 April 1945 the last German forces left Finland. This would mark the end of the Lapland War and the Second World War in Finland. Most of the 20th Mountain Army[1] that had been in Finland and fought with the Finnish forces for three years against the Soviet Union, would eventually end their war in Norway, where they would become prisoners of war for the Western allies. Eleven days later, on 8 May Germany would surrender unconditionally.

Especially in Europe the day of German surrender is remembered and celebrated as the "VE day" (Victory in Europe) or the "Liberation Day". In Finland 8 May is not a holiday; instead, 27 April is the National Veteran's Day. The remembrance of the Second World War is still present in many countries and in many families. The wide national remembering can be seen through these commemoration days, memorials that are scattered especially all-around Europe or through cultural products[2]. With these national, or sometimes international remembering, or collective remembering, comes also private or individual memories.

In Finland the remembering of the Second World War still lives strongly. The view of the war, and especially the view of the veterans, has changed in the decades following the war. During the Cold War the official state level remembering needed to be silenced, so that the relations towards the Soviet Union could be established.[3] In this situation, private remembering was important. Subsequently, remembering and valuing the sacrifices that were made during the war has gained much popularity in Finland, especially from the 1990's onward. The change in memory culture, especially during the 1990's is called the neo-patriotic turn. The change originated from the reform programs launched in the Soviet Union during the late 1980's. The reforms and the eventual fall of the Soviet Union affected Finland and the memory culture of the war. War became idealized and romanticized, gaining much popularity.[4] But there is another

[1] For example, the 6th SS-Mountain Division from the 20th Mountain Army took part in operation "Nordwind" in early 1945.
[2] Kinnunen 109-110.
[3] Kinnunen 2017, 109.
[4] Kinnunen, Kivimäki 2012, 450-451.

darker side to Finland's military history during World War II. This is the wartime relationship with Germany and its many aspects.

The relationship of Finland and Germany during the Second World war[5] can be considered one of the most researched areas in Finnish military history. This intriguing narrative has also caught the eye of many non-Finnish researchers especially those from the USA and Germany. But still this topic seems to produce new research. Ville Kivimäki writes in his article in *Lappi palaa sodasta. Mielen hiljainen jälleenrakennus* (2018) that at least once a decade the conversation about the relationship between Finland and Germany re-emerges.[6] Markku Jokisipilä writes in his doctoral thesis *Aseveljiä vai liittolaisia? Suomi, Hitlerin Saksan liittosopimusvaatimukset ja Rytin-Ribbentropin sopimus* (2004) that one of the most notable Finnish military historian Mauno Jokipii had stated already in 1995 that "Hitler's Germany has been pondered well enough".[7]

It is true that the history of the Finnish-German relationship in World War II has been covered by many. The focus of this thesis is mainly between the years of 1957 to 1986, when the Finnish *Kansa Taisteli-Miehet kertovat*-magazine was published and how German soldiers were remembered during the war years in the magazine. The publication years of the magazine fall in the time frame of the Cold War. It has been mentioned by many historians how in these years the old "brothers in arms" relationship to Germany was seen as troublesome in the post-world war situation."[8]

In this master's thesis the focus is not on the reasons for how this peculiar alliance or co-belligerence started or why and how it ended. Instead, the focus lies on how this time has been remembered and why certain themes have dominated while others have not. The memories from individual soldiers gives a more grassroots level of perspective compared to the official state-level and academic approach to the memories of the war. The thesis explores how the memories of the soldiers might differ from the more official memory of this time and how and why are these memory cultures different from each other.

[5] Including the changing nature of the relations between 1939-1945.
[6] Kivimäki 2018, 49.
[7] Jokisipilä 2004, 22.
[8] Hentilä 2003, 10-11.

Kansa Taisteli-magazine was one of the ways that the wartime generations could remember and bring up their experiences of the Second World War in the post-war decades. The interesting factor to this is the use of the letters in *Kansa Taisteli*-magazine which was published during "time of official silence"[9], when there started to be a generational gap and different kind of approach to remembering the wartime between the generation that experienced the war and the generation that came after it.[10] The remembering that the *Kansa Taisteli*-magazine enabled is an interesting narrative that was in many ways divided from the public memory of the time.

1.1.Background of the Finnish-German relationship

On 22 September 1940 the first German troops arrived in Finland.[11] This would mark the beginning of a long campaign for the "Army of Norway", which was eventually to fight against Finland in the Lapland war. The arriving forces which joined with the Finnish army would take part in operation Barbarossa. In the following years from the summer of 1941 to the early autumn of 1944 the most northern German forces and the Finnish army would fight on the same side. The reasons behind this co-belligerency, alliance or brothers-in-arms relationship remains even to this day one of the most argued topics in Finnish military history.[12] In the following section the goal is to describe how this relationship started, and what were the reasons behind it.

1.2.Why Germany?

After the Winter War Finland was desperately searching for a possible alliance or support from Europe. In the twenties and thirties this same search did not lead to any sustained support from foreign countries. The situation was even gloomier during the spring and summer of 1940. The threat of another war against the Soviet Union was almost certain. On 9 April 1940 Germany launched its attack against Norway and

[9] Kinnunen, Kivimäki 2012, 445.
[10] Kinnunen, Kivimäki 2012, 446.
[11] Junila 2000, 44-45.
[12] See: " Tutkijoiden erillissota : Suomalaisten historiantutkijoiden erillissotakeskustelu 2000-luvulla" Kainulainen, 2013.

Denmark (Operation Weserübung). The operation was a success, and the campaign was over by the 10 June 1940.

During the summer of 1940 trade between of Finland and Germany increased greatly. The German occupation of Norway had cut off Finnish trade routes that were established after the Winter War, especially with Britain. With that, Germany became the most important trade partner for Finland.[13] The trade consisted mainly of wood, but also some metals: including ore and nickel that were vital for the German war effort.[14]

In Autumn 1940 a transit agreement was signed between Finland and Germany.[15] On 18 August 1940 Joseph Veltjens, Herman Göring's personal emissary met with Marshall Mannerheim and asked for permission for German troops (at first mostly Luftwaffe personnel) to transit through Finnish territory. In return Finland could again buy weapons from Germany. An official binding agreement between Finland and Germany was signed only when the transit of the troops began 22 September 1940.[16] The agreement did not go unnoticed from other nations. For example, Britain wanted an explanation from Finland on why German troops were transiting through Finnish territory, although it did not receive one.[17]

During the autumn of 1940 there was also plans for a possible union between Finland and Sweden. The proposed possibilities were either just a military alliance and a joint foreign policy, or even a union between the states. These plans did not receive support from Germany, where they were seen as needlessly annoying the Russians, or from the Soviet Union, which rejected them as a violation of the Moscow treaty that had ended the Winter War. After these responses the idea was forgotten.[18]

In early 1941 the nickel mines in the Petsamo region, which at that point was Finland's only way to the Atlantic, received much attention. The time period is called the *"nickel crisis".* During the crisis the chief of the Finnish General Staff, lieutenant general Erich Heinrichs visited Franz Halder, the chief of the General Staff of the German Army (OKH=Oberkommando des Heeres), in Berlin. There the Finnish side received its first information about Germany's plans on attacking the Soviet Union, although details of

[13] Jokipii 1987, 56-57.
[14] Jokipii 1987, 58.
[15] The transit through Finnish territory by the German forces in Norway. Jokipii 1987, 115-116.
[16] Jokipii 1987, 114-116; Häikiö 2007 18-19.
[17] Junila 2000 43.
[18] Jokipii 1987, 125-127.

the plan were kept secret.[19] The crisis, which in simplified form refers to the Soviet and German interest in the region economically and militarily, can be also considered a very important phase in the formation of the Finnish-German relationship as Finland took a conscious step towards Germany. Even so, Finnish president Risto Ryti and the Finnish Foreign Ministry tried to keep up the appearance of neutrality to the West.[20]

In April 1941 the secret recruitment of Finnish volunteers to Waffen-SS started. Although, the recruitment was kept more or less as a quiet affair, President Ryti and Marshall Mannerheim knew about it early on. On 29 March the Finnish Foreign Minister Rolf Witting met with Wipert von Blücher, the German ambassador to Finland, and told him that the Finnish Foreign Ministry did not "officially" know anything about this matter.[21] The recruitment did not go unnoticed by foreign countries. The British Ambassador, Gordon Vereker, stated that if Finland was neutral the recruitment must be stopped. On 16 June England cancelled all ship travel to Petsamo and closed Finnish trade routes to West.[22] Eventually, around 1400 Finnish soldiers served in the Waffen-SS from 1941 to 1943, fighting mainly in the southern part of the Eastern Front.

The uncertain situation that Finland faced after the Winter War, the pressure from the Soviet Union and uncertain trade and possible defence relationships with the west eventually drove the Finnish decision towards Germany. In early 1941 the Finnish government knew about operation Barbarossa. In late spring negotiation were held between high-ranking Finnish and German officers where, for example Finnish objectives for a possible war were discussed.[23]

On 22 June1941 Operation Barbarossa was launched. This would be the largest military campaign in history. In the North the Army of Norway launched operation Renntier (aiming at the occupation of Petsamo). Between 22 and 25 June 1941 Finland was "neutral", but ready for war. On 25 June Soviet Union launched an air attack against Finland which started the Continuation War.

[19] Häikiö 2007, 22.
[20] Jokipii 1987, 164, 176, 239.
[21] Jokipii 1987, 194.
[22] Jokipii 1987, 204-205.
[23] Jokipii 1987, 300-301.

Next, I will go through my methodological approaches and primary sources. After that I will move on to describe the context of the sources, explaining the "atmosphere" of the decades when *Kansa Taisteli*-magazine was published and how the decades affected the environment of the remembering. The wartime relationship of Finland and Germany has been one of the most researched areas of military history, so it is also very important to go through the historiography of it and explain the view of Finnish scholars over the years and how the viewpoint of the war has changed. With this it is also important to place the Finnish historiography to a wider context. This means the use of previous research from outside of Finland.

1.3.Methods

My methods to "unravel the ball of thread" that is my source material are the history of memory and a thematic approach. These two methodological approaches can be considered suitable for my source material that is mainly the *Kansa taisteli*-magazine and its letters from the people who experienced the wartime first hand. I am also using memoirs of German soldiers who belonged to the 20th Mountain Army.

An example of research with a similar topic and a methodological approach would be Marianne Junila's doctoral thesis "*Kotirintaman aseveljeyttä.Suomalainen siviiliväestö ja saksalaisen sotaväen rinnakkainelo Pohjois-Suomessa 1941-1944"* (2000). Junila describes how she used her information that was gathered by interviewing residents from Lapland who had memories of the German troops. Junila writes that the problems of interviewing these people was that "*all oral history's encumbrance is the limitation of human memory's restrictions and unreliability*". Junila also adds how independent factors from the interviewers can affect the reliability of the source: "*the expertise and the stance of the interviewer in an interview situation and also the aptitude to form the questions, the equipment to take notes and the way of recording the source."*[24] In the interviews that Junila conducted she had in pre-prepared questions for the people of northern-Finland and a questionnaire for the German soldiers that she could find through contact requests.[25]

[24] Junila 2000, 26.
[25] Junila 2000, 25-26.

Bringing up Junila's methodological approach is valuable, because it gives good examples of choosing what to remember. The choice then forms almost an ethical dilemma for the person expressing his or her memories and creates the problem of trusting and properly understanding the valuable information. In case of military history, the very extensive research that has been done on the subject gives much help in tying the primary source material to the overall situation and events.

Through Junila's approach a discussion can be held of what *is* and what is *not* remembered. As mentioned earlier the capacity of one's memory is a very important part of the history of memory, but also a case for the actual "situation" of remembering can be made. In Junila's case one of the methods of gathering the source material was interviews. Junila mentions how most of the Finnish interviewees used old letters or photographs in helping to recall experiences and memories.[26]

Writing and thoroughly going through one's experiences and memories can maybe even give a better and more coherent picture of the instance that the person wants to remember, but again it has to be kept in mind, that the source contains what the person writing it wants to remember. Also, the time that has passed since the actual events naturally affects one's memory, but in some instances the writer has used a wartime diary to help in remembering the experiences (as mentioned also by Junila)[27].

1.4.Public and private memory

In my thesis, remembering is roughly divided in to two different point of views. The first and dominant of view is "private" remembering or private memory. The second one is the official remembering, or "public" memory. These two ways of approaching my research are combined with one another. Pirjo Korkiakangas points out in her article in the book *"Muistitietotutkimus. Metodologisia kysymyksiä"* (2006) how "reality that is experienced is inevitably bound to collective and social--".[28] The letters that I examine naturally connect to the time of the Continuation War and the Lapland War. Interesting points that arise from the remembering of that time in the letters is the time period in

[26] Junila 2000, 26.
[27] Junila 2000, 27.
[28] Korkiakangas 2006, 126.

which they were published and how these stories from an individual may differ from the public narrative of the war.

By private remembering I mean the use of the letters from the *Kansa Taisteli*-magazine's readers and for example the letters of Emil Conzelmann (a German army doctor stationed in Lapland) to his wife during his period in Lapland. These letters were gathered by Irja Wendisch and published as a book.[29] From these sources certain themes come up. For example, the use of alcohol or the incompetence of the German troops in Lapland's rough terrain. These themes are part of the private remembering in my thesis, but they are also in a way part of the public and social remembering. This means that the experienced past is at the same time individual and collective. Although, there is a collective experience, the memory itself is always personal.[30] In this thesis the focus is on public and private remembering.

Public remembering is an interesting and maybe even more complex way of trying to understand the source material, than the the private remembering. Early in my research I noticed how, quite often, the chief editor of *Kansa Taisteli*, Karl Lennart Oesch's[31], in an editorial or article that deals with the war's events, brings up the reasons why Finland sided with Germany and how there was no other choice. These articles I consider to be on the public memory side, enforcing the separate war thesis that was popular during that time period. For example, Oesch's review of Arvi Korhonen's "*Barbarossa-suunnitelma ja Suomi"* gets a favourable review from Oesch. In the same review, Oesch brought up Leonhard Lundin's book *"Finland in the Second World War"* and described it as a "distorted" and "non-historic presentation"[32] when discussing the difference between Korhonen's and Lundin's interpretation of the reasons why Finland fought alongside with Germany. Lundin's main argument was that Finland had been actively seeking a possible ally and eventually chose Germany. Korhonen's view was that Finland had been led to war by Germany.[33] Oesch's articles are used in my research quite often, the reasons being that Oesch very vocal about many things and that he often wrote about different topics, such as in the previous example about foreign researchers

[29] Conzelmann's letters were written during the Continuation War and Lapland War, so they are not remembrance of the time in Finland after the war, but they do give an interesting point of view from a German perspective.
[30] Olsen 2012, 292; Lowenthal 1999, 194-195.
[31] Chief editor for KT; 1964-1974. Lieutenant General during the Second World War.
[32] KT 11/1961, K. L. Oesch, "Suomen joutuminen jatkosotaan".
[33] Soikkanen 2007, 109-111.

trying to define Finnish military history. Often Oesch also reminded his readers of how Finland needed to respect the Finno-Soviet treaty of 1948 and be prepared to defend its own territory against Germany or its allies.

1.5.Thematic approach

With a thematic approach I mean the use of different themes that surfaces from my source material. Because my research focuses on the years from 1957 to 1986, presenting all my source material in my master's thesis in a chronological way would probably be the wrong way to go.

With a thematic approach it is easier to make sense of the source material by bringing up key themes from the published letters and then comparing them against public memory. For example, in *Kansa Taisteli* there are hundreds of stories about the Germans. These stories vary in how Germans are described, but still, they address certain themes. These themes vary from negative to positive descriptions and memories.

I will include the use of close reading to this thematic approach. Going through the letters and memoirs needs close reading. This helps in the analysis and understanding of the remembering itself and of what can be inferred from the materials. Ilona Pirkkanen describes close reading in her doctoral thesis as "— *a complicated mosaic of narrative and rhetorical means,"*[34]. Pirkkanen describes her use of close reading through folklorist Jukka Pöysä's procedure. This procedure includes reading the text multiple times and then forming notes from the text. With the notes, a deeper understanding of the text's details and rhetoric elements is achieved.[35] Gathering the necessary information from the letters and the memoirs and forming notes from them gives a way to a deeper analysis of the narrative and language of the text.

Kansa Taisteli-magazine and its vast material of stories actually makes "reading between the lines" a bit easier. By going through all the stories, a clear thematic structure can be formed. Almost every one of the stories from my source material goes in one of these themes that are founded in the source material. These themes and variations of them can also be found from the previous research that I have used. For

[34] Pikkanen 2012, 21.
[35] Pikkanen 2012, 21.

example, Marianne Junila has, emphasized the use of alcohol between Finnish and German soldiers and the presumption that both sides had against each other.

The three main themes that I analyse are: the presumptions that the soldiers had against each other, the use of alcohol and other free time activities, and the bitterness that both sides felt when the Lapland war started. With the first theme I explain what the presumptions were and how they change when the war progressed. This matter is actually explained in one of the articles in *Kansa Taisteli.* A liaison officer points out how the presumptions that the Finns had were exaggerated. A very common presumption was the incompetence of the German troops and how they were unable to fight in the harsh conditions of Lapland.

The second theme is about "free time", and mainly about the use of alcohol at the front. The army of Norway had brought along huge amounts of alcohol. The alcohol was valued highly within the Finnish forces. For example, the Finnish troops would construct houses, build casemates and hunt for the Germans in exchange of alcohol. This theme maybe differs from the others. As it will be noted later, that the use of alcohol during the wartime was seen as a taboo subject. For example, Jonna Pulkkinen and Mika Wist write in their book: *Viinalla terästetty sota. Alkoholi sotavuosina 1939-1944 (*2017) how many of the veterans did not want to be interviewed after the war, "because they did not want to bring up this aspect of the life at the front".[36] This also has to be remembered when using the letters in *Kansa taisteli*-magazine; what the writer tells and what has been left out.[37]

The third theme that can be clearly noticed from the letters is the end of the Continuation war and the change in attitudes between Finnish and German soldiers. This theme, alongside that of alcohol use, will be interesting when it is placed in the context of when the letter was published. In many of these letters in which the person remembers the start of the Lapland war and the end of the Finnish-German relationship, the writer mentions how enough time has passed to forget the painful end of the relationship, as Ale Rivinoja explains in his article in 1975 of the start of the Lapland

[36] Pulkkinen; Wist, 2017, 14.
[37] In this matter I see the use of unpublished letters and the depictions in them about the use of alcohol as a comparison point.

War: "'*We can hardly look back on those last days with more bitterness now, for time has smoothed and licked the wounds.* "[38]

An Example of the start of the actual fighting in the Lapland War is described by S. A. Ropponen in 1976: *"I have deliberately told you things in a petty way to give you an idea of the mental difficulties of suddenly turning from a brother in arms into an enemy. It was not easy for either side at first, if it was not easy later. After all, war is always war. But once the game was opened, friendship became a most merciless struggle, in which no mercy was asked for or given."*[39]

Again, even when it was mentioned that when the fighting between Finns and Germans in Lapland started, the attitudes changed these writers still brought up the difficulties in turning their weapons against their former allies.

1.6.Previous research

As stated in the introduction this area of history does not suffer from a lack of research. In many cases the previous research focuses on more general descriptions of the war; large-scale attacks, strategic movements and the actions done by officers in headquarters. The previous research that I use is a mix of studies that focus on the war itself and on post-war Finland.

The previous research that is valuable for me in creating the context is mainly focused on the post-war period. The situation with veterans and their memories and the reactions and attitudes towards veterans changed in the time period that I am focusing on. As mentioned earlier, there was a period of official silence and Finlandization when remembering the war, especially its Finnish-German relations, was not seen as desirable.

For creating the context, I have been mainly using articles and edited books by Ville Kivimäki and Tiina Kinnunen, including *"Ihminen sodassa. Suomalaisten kokemuksia talvi- ja jatkosodasta"* (2006), "*Finland in World War II: History, Memory, Interpretations* (2012) and, to a certain extent, *Continued Violence and Troublesome Pasts. Post-war Europe between the victors after the Second World War* (2017) edited

[38] I will use abbreviation "KT" in the footnotes. KT 1975 no.2, Ale Rivinoja *"Aseveljeys eli ja kuoli"*
[39] KT 1976, no.11, S. A. Ropponen: *"Lapin sodan alku Ranuan-Rovaniemen suunnalla 2."*

by Kivimäki and Petri Karonen. These books have been the main help for the context creation, as they primarily focus on remembering of the war, in both the perspective of an individual and that of, the broader public sphere. They also give a clear explanation on how the attitudes towards the generation that experienced the war evolved, mainly in how the veterans and their experiences were treated. "*Finland in World War II"* is also useful for its historiographical overview of how the writing of Finnish history for the years 1939-1945 has changed over time.

The previously mentioned Mauno Jokipii's *Jatkosodan synty* has also been a valuable source when describing and explaining the start of the Finnish-German relationship. As the main focus of this thesis is the history of the memory of the war, it is also important to use "pure" military history as a way to contextualise the events. The main source for military history is *Jatkosodan pikkujättiläinen* (2007), which gives an overall view of the Continuation War and its battles. From the German perspective the two main sources used are Bob Carruthers' *Hitlerin pohjoinen rintama. Saksan armeijan operaatiot Norjassa ja Suomessa 1939-1945* (2013) and Wolf T. Zoepf's *Seven Days in January with the 6th SS-Mountain Division in Operation Nordwind* (2001). The former gives an overview of the German forces and their movements and battles in the Arctic and the latter, as the title suggests, provides a more in-depth view of the 6th SS-Mountain Division.

Marianne Junila's previously mentioned doctoral thesis is also used as previous research, as it has a similar baseline in research as in this thesis. Especially the material that Junila has gathered from the German perspective, is a very useful source. Junila's thesis focuses on Finnish civilians and German soldiers during the Continuation War, where as this thesis focuses on Finnish and German soldiers during the Continuation War and Lapland War. Exploring the nature of attitudes towards German soldiers from the perspective of Finnish soldiers.

1.7. Primary sources

As previously mentioned, the main primary source of my master's thesis is the *Kansa taisteli*-magazine. It provides a vast amount of material, there are also additional German sources that I use as supplementary primary material.

1.8. Kansa taisteli

Kansa Taisteli (hereafter KT) was published between the years of 1957 and 1986. The magazine is fully digitized and available online. The digitizing was done by The Association for Military History in Finland. The site contains all the published KT magazines and also the unpublished letters that the magazine and its editorial staff received.

The magazine served as a platform for the people that had experienced the war at the military front or the homefront. The letters, that formed the backbone of the magazine were written by soldiers, officers, women from the Lotta Svärd organization or even people who were children at the time but had an interesting story to tell. Along with the letters, there was usually an article by a higher-ranking officer (usually Oesch) that could describe different types of warfare or technological advances, or, as mentioned earlier, a review of a book of historical research or of a war themed novel.

During the years of KT's publication 347 magazines were published, and that number consists of 3400 writings. The number of writings that the magazine published over the years is large, but the editorial staff received so many letters that not all of them could be published.[40] However, that was not the only reason why some writings did not make it to the actual magazines. The editorial staff of KT consisted mainly of high-ranking officers, such as K. L. Oesch, Valo Nihtilä and Aarne Blick. They would inspect the letters and decide whether they would be published or not. The reasons for a letter not being published could vary. For example, some letters had historical inaccuracies, or they were poorly written, which would cause the letters to be rejected.

Although there is a disclaimer in every KT magazine that the story that is sent must be absolutely true, I have used *Sotapolku* website as a backup to check the information available on the writer. The site offers a search bar where you type in the full name of the person you are looking for, and if possible, some additional information (e.g date of birth, war-time unit or military rank). The data on the website is not complete, but the searches that have proved to be successful, have matched with the information that the story can offer. The letters chosen for this thesis give a more in-depth overview on the

[40] http://kansataisteli.sshs.fi/ 13.4.2021

Germans. Germans are mentioned quite frequently in KT, but because of the large number of mentions not every letter qualify.

1.9. German sources

The main German sources are Toni Wiesbauer's *In Eis und Tundra* (1963) and Johann Voss's *Black Edelweis a memoir of combat and conscience by a soldier of the Waffen-SS* (2002)[41]. In addition to these two memoirs there is also material that can be classed as more "second hand" information. Irja Wendisch has gathered letters that Emil Conzelmann, a German doctor in the Army of Norway, sent to his wife during his time in Finland, these letters were published by Wendisch in a book titled *"Tohtori Conzelmannin sotavuodet Lapissa"* (2002). Gustav Keller has written a book of his father's war journey titled: *"Vaters Eismeer Kriegsjahre im hohe Norden* (2017). Keller's book consists mainly of the stories that his father told him about the war in the Arctic with the 6th Mountain Division. In support of the stories, Keller has used military history sources. The book gives an insight especially to the haunting memories that his father had of the war.

Of the German sources Voss's book and Conzelmann's letters give a more in-depth account of Finnish-German relations. Keller's and Wiesbauer's books are more general depictions of life at the front. Voss volunteered in the Waffen-SS in early 1943 as a seventeen-year-old. He served in the SS-Mountain Infantry Regiment 11 "Reinhard Heydrich". Voss would end his war on the Western Front, captured by the Americans. During his imprisonment he started writing notes on his war experience. From these notes the book was formed.

Conzelmann often describes his time with the Finns, and as a doctor he often treated also Finnish civilians and formed emotional connections to them. These emotions towards the Finnish civilians showed even when the Lapland War started, although later, when the actual fighting started, Conzelmann's opinions changed. For example, in a letter dated 8 October 1944 Conzelmann describes: *"here fights a nation side by side with its centuries old enemy against its only decent friend"*[42]. Conzelmann's letters are

[41] In the editor's introduction it is said that Voss is a pen name and that most of the names in the book are changed.
[42] Conzelmann 8.10.1944.

an interesting source of remembering from a point of view of a single German who was stationed in northern-Finland. Although only from a perspective of one man, Conzelmann still manages to make interesting observations of his surroundings, the Finnish civilians he meets and the Finnish soldiers he comes across.

The first analysis chapter of this thesis offers brief look at post-war Finland on the subject and examples of war literature that was published, drawing on previous research. In the post-war decades the situation that the Finnish veterans faced was difficult.

During the post-war decades an academic debate about the reasons of Finland's involvement in the war was also being held. This academic debate is a part of the public remembering as well. It offers a look on what were the main reasons behind the debate that controlled Finnish military history research during the post-war decades.

2. Post-war Finland

After the war had ended, rebuilding and recovery in Finland started. In the years that followed, the Finnish historiography started to form a narrative and explanations of the war. The main theme that emerged from this was the separate war thesis: a way to explain the Finnish participation and the reasons why Finland was involved in the war, and how Finland was more or less an independent factor in the whole World War Two narrative.

In much of the post-1945 period, especially in the 1960s and 1970s, the war was seen as something not to be discussed. This time period left the veterans embittered. Although freedom of speech was not denied, the veterans still felt that remembering the war was not approved. Especially the extreme left, and young university students wanted to challenge the wartime generation and its values.[43] The veterans themselves practised a form of self-censorship after the first post-war decades (excluding *Kansa Taisteli*). This was probably because of an unwillingness to remember the lost war and a desire to keep unity in the veteran community.[44] As mentioned earlier, the 1980's was a time of openness, when the appreciation towards the veterans started to rise. One of the most notable examples was the National Veterans Day which was first celebrated in 1987.

Ville Kivimäki explains this narrative which formed the dominant argument in Finnish historiography for decades, quite successfully in the book: *Finland and World War Two II*. Kivimäki brings up that the first academic study that openly discussed the differences in the academic research and the different sides of opinions was Antti Laine's study that was published in 1982: *Suur-Suomen kahdet kasvot: Itä-Karjalan siviiliväestö suomalaisessa miehityshallinnossa 1941-1944".* In this research Finnish occupation policies in Eastern Karelia were brought through social history. Kivimäki explains how this time period saw widening of the perspective of the war in e.g. Laine's study but also how the dominant narratives had been, up to that point controlled by the separate war thesis and military history itself that was written by professional soldiers.[45]

[43] Sulamaa 2006, 301, 305-306.
[44] Sulamaa 2006, 303.
[45] Kivimäki 2012, 17.

This dominant narrative of the history of Finland and its participation in the Second World War can then, in a way, be seen as the public memory. The books published about the war consisted mainly of telling the history from a grand point of view, the strategic manoeuvres of armies, political decisions and of course the main argument of Finland's separate war. This then left out the perspective of the individual; veterans felt that their experiences in the war were forgotten.[46] However, they were not completely left in the shadows. Väinö Linna's novel *Tuntematon Sotilas* was published in 1954 and a year later the first filmization of it was released. At its release the novel gained much publicity. Linna's view of the war was not accepted by everyone at the beginning as it "contested the national romantic visions of the war, --"[47] . Interestingly, the novel can be interpreted from remarkably different perspectives and has then withstood the changing political climate.[48] Still, Linna's book, and the three film versions of it, are deeply rooted in the Finnish society and remembering of the war.

War literature in general has been a major part of Finnish literature, especially after the Second World War, and it still is one of the most popular genres of literature. Usually, it has been divided between non-fiction and fiction, with the first category consisting of general depictions of war, diaries and memoirs. For the first few decades after the war, the literature about it was usually written by high-ranking officers. The officers of almost every country at war published these kinds of books also including Finnish officers.

For example, in 1955 the former Wehrmacht Field Marshall Erich von Manstein published his memoirs *Lost Victories*, the title of the book explaining most of it. Bernard Montgomery, the British Field Marshall, published his memoirs in 1958. In Finland the previously mentioned Karl L. Oesch and Aksel Airo published their depictions of the war. Oesch's book, entitled *Suomen kohtalon ratkaisu Kannaksella v.1944* (1947) describes, as the title suggests, the fateful events of the summer of 1944 on the Karelian Isthmus, when Oesch was the commander of the troops fighting against the Russian "Karelian offensive"[49] (Vyborg-Petrozavodsk offensive). Airo's book entitled *Liikekannallepanosalaliitto* (1947), focuses on the aftermath of the

[46] Kinnunen; Jokisipilä 2012, 442.
[47] Kinnunen, Jokisipilä, 2012, 443.
[48] Kinnunen, Jokisipilä, 2012, 444.
[49] Kannaksen suurhyökkäys.

Continuation War and the weapon cache case[50] that was primarily planned, organized, and executed during the summer and autumn of 1944. He also criticised the Finnish government quite harshly, which led to the book being censored. Probably the most notable of the war time leaders memoirs in Finland was Marshall Mannerheim's two-volume memoir, published between 1951 and 1952.

Literature about the war can also be pacifistic and condemnatory of war. Probably the most notable examples of this kind of literature are *All quiet on the Western Front* (1928), *The Thin Red Line* (1962), or in Finnish literature, Pentti Haanpää's book *Yhdeksän miehen saappaat* (1945)[51]. Although, all of the previously mentioned books were written by a veteran, they are not strictly just memoirs and diaries. They have a deeper and more meaningful theme about war in general.

As previously noted the dominant narrative of Finnish war literature has been the *Unknown Soldier.* Despite this, there is a vast catalogue of books that use the narrative of Finnish and German relationship as the frame for their stories. The first example of the literature that differs from the style of the *Unknown Soldier,* or in some cases the general pacifistic tone, can be found in the works of Niilo Lauttamus.

Niilo Lauttamus (1924-1977) wrote 22 books after the Second World War. Usually, with a few exceptions his books were mainly about a Finnish soldier in the Waffen-SS, or a Finnish-born soldier in the Wehrmacht[52]. The connecting factors in the main characters in these books are homesickness and confrontations between Finnish and German soldiers, usually present during battles or when authority is questioned.

Lauttamus was a former Finnish volunteer in the Waffen-SS, so he had first-hand experience of combat on the Eastern Front, and his books have some real-life experiences in them. Nevertheless, Lauttamus' books almost always follow the same story arch, when the story itself is about a Finn in Germany. The stories themselves can be almost compared to the *Commando Comics*, famous for their extravagant storytelling.

As previously mentioned, the prevailing feeling of the protagonist is the yearning feeling to get back to Finland. The other dominant narrative line is the exceptionalism

[50] "Asekätkentäjuttu."
[51] https://tieteentermipankki.fi/wiki/Kirjallisuudentutkimus:sotakirjallisuus 8.6.2023.
[52] For example, in the novel *Kujanjuoksu* (1960).

of Finnish troops in battle, present many of the books, for example in *Panssarikiila* (1976).

The novel tells the story of two Finnish soldiers who are fighting in the Waffen-SS, surprisingly on the Western Front against American troops during the Battle of the Bulge[53]. The two soldiers question the fight against the Americans and would rather fight the Soviet Union in the east. Eventually they decide to escape Germany altogether. Before their eventual escape, the two main characters, Juho Rautakoski and Akseli Karmela must attack an American force. In this battle the two Finns prove to be an effective fighting force. After the battle the two men have a conversation with their sergeant major.

"Scharnhost looked at the Finns in amazement. It seemed strange that those visitors had come back to continue a battle that seemed hopeless. -- The Finns drove us out of Lapland, Scharnhorst said accusingly. "We were brothers in arms, but you betrayed the Führer. Why did you leave Germany? -- I felt like continuing the fight with the Russians after I got out of the war hospital, Karmela announced frankly. It's just a pity we got caught on the wrong front. I have nothing against the Americans." -- After the Armistice, we SS men were not particularly liked in Finland, Rautkoski said quietly. There was always the fear of being imprisoned as a war criminal."[54]

Although his stories were a bit repetitive from time to time, his first book *Vieraan kypärän alla* (1957) was quite successful. Lauttamus's books are written from point of view of a frontline soldier, and the confrontations between Finnish and German soldiers are always present. The books not have deep and meaningful thought about the nature of the relationship between German and Finnish troops. The main argument, or purpose of the confrontation, is a "we are better than you" mentality.

Tiina Kinnunen and Markku Jokisipilä bring up Lauttamus as one of the examples of post-war literature in their article "*Shifting images of "our wars" Finnish memory culture of World War II"* (2012). Although never a best-sellers, the books themselves sold more copies than any scholarly study of the war.[55] Lauttamus's literary works then

[53] The German offense in the Ardennes in December 1944.
[54] Lauttamus, 1976.
[55] With this they also used Onni Palaste and Reino Lehväslaiho as examples. Kinnunen, Jokisipilä 444, 2012.

differ from the more "mainstream" works during the post-war decades, which were more pacifist in their tone.

For this chapter, I have chosen two writers from the post-war time period that have in their books dealt with the Finnish-German relationship. The first and probably more notable of these two is Paavo Rintala, a Finnish writer whose literary work has been praised, but also criticized. Kinnunen and Jokisipilä bring up Rintala's novel *Sissiluutnantti* (1963) as an example of a literary work with a major impact to the post war Finnish society and a book that started a literary war in Finland. In this "war", the generation of wartime children challenged the patriotic heritage of their parents.[56]

From Rintala's production his book *Napapiirin äänet* (1969) is more interesting for this study. It may not have had the same kind of impact as *Sissiluutnantti*, but still is an interesting story with a mix fiction and non-fiction. The main narrative of the book comes from a conversation that the writer had with his Russian colleague in Leningrad after the war. This Russian writer had served on the Finnish front during the Second World War. During this time, he had been given a stack of papers that had belonged to a German soldier who was shot during a small firefight near Kiestinki. These pieces of paper had song lyrics written on them. The lyrics were modified versions of the German Lili Marleen song. In these papers were also song lyrics for a song called, *The Song of the Lapland Division:*

"We will never return home. Who would ever believe we are human... We can no longer be recognized as human…"

These modified versions were bitter songs from the soldiers of the Norway Army. From these lyrics and few other papers[57] Rintala formed the basis for the story in *Napapiirin äänet (1969).* Although the story itself is fictional, Rintala used these lyrics and the story his Russian colleague had told him, to form a narrative about a German soldier named Paul.

[56] Kinnunen, Jokisipilä 446, 2012.

[57] These papers include a small notebook with the original version of the song, number of the soldier's rifle and the dog tag number, that his Russian colleague had written down. Rintala 16, 1969.

The second writer, Erkki Eklund, is a less known writer in the field of war literature in Finland. Even so, his novel *Alppikengistä jäljet jää* (1963), is an interesting take about a German soldier in Finland, much like Rintala's. I have chosen this book for my analysis because of its publication date, and narrative.[58]

The main narrative of the story is about a German soldier, Dieter Kölbing who has had enough of the war and decides to desert during the Lapland War. During his journey he remembers his time in Finland and the Finnish people. Again, like Conzelmann Kölbing feels great empathy towards the Finnish people as he wanders through the wilderness, trying to get to the border of Sweden. The most notable scenes that depict this is when he is captured by a German patrol.

"And you don't even want to go to the Lappish houses further up the river. For he had received orders to burn every dwelling on the road. It was a bitter business, having made the acquaintance of these immediately friendly people of nature. -- a rather odious business, considering that he had lived here for a couple of years, fished from their boats, drunk the milk of their cattle, and become more than well acquainted with them. And then... Well, a soldier's a soldier, and keeps quiet even when he's wronged. It's a nasty business anyway. It's not our fault, it's Rendulic's. Or not him either, but the Finns themselves for betraying us. But the people do not decide their own affairs. The people only suffer."[59]

Again, as with Rintala, Eklund's story is about a German soldier in Lapland. The feeling of anger and betrayal that the German soldiers felt is clearly shown. In a review of the book in 1963, the reviewer wrote how the language of the German soldiers is very accurately depicted and it "unveils the face of the war"[60]. To draw a line between Rintala's and Eklund's stories, it can be noted how the feeling of hopelessness is quite central in these two stories. In Eklund's story Kölbing notes how he wanted to escape the moment he was sent to the Arctic Ocean to get fat.[61] The depressing feelings of the German forces in Lapland, as depicted in these two books, could be reinforced later. For example, Jonathan Voss wrote almost the same way, when he is describing the feelings that, he had during the retreat from Finland.

[58] In 1973 the book was also made into a TV series, directed by the Finnish director Åke Lindman.
[59] Eklund 1963, 41, 44.
[60] Arvosteleva kirjaluettelo Junnila, 9/1963.
[61] Eklund 1963, 48.

The purpose of these previous examples is to give a view of the post war literature in Finland, from the point of view of a former soldier who wrote fiction based on his own experiences and examples from the younger, post war generation, which did not fight in the war[62], but had grown up during it. As Kinnunen and Jokisipilä write in their article this post war generation grew up to challenge the more patriotic view of the previous generation.[63]

The two latter examples from Rintala and Eklund focuses on the pacifistic view of the war. In Rintala's case the examples of the bitter songs about home sickness and the madness of war are the main focus. In Eklund's book the main narrative forms around the main character's tiredness of the war that eventually leads him to escape. The books also show that Germans in Finland, or Finns in Germany, was a narrative that was not forgotten.

Although my main focus in this chapter was to bring up examples of remembering through literature, and to show how the rising voice of the more pacifist view in it gained ground, it does not mean that this was the controlling narrative from the 1960's onwards. Lauttamus can be considered a more "traditional" voice in this literacy field, publishing until the late 1970's. Of course, his background of being a soldier was, and an SS-soldier at that, is the driving force in his works and views.

[62] Rintala and Eklund were both born in 1930.
[63] Kinnunen, Jokisipilä 446–447, 2012.

3. Post-war academic debate

In this chapter I am going to delve into at debate that took mainly place in Finland from the end of the Second World War to the end of the 1960's. Although the driftwood debate is no longer topical in modern Finnish history writing, it still is an important context creator for the rest of this thesis. In KT the driftwood theory is often the official explanation of Finnish wartime history, used mainly by Oesch. This then represents the sphere of public remembering. The following chapter is an overview of the post-war academic debate. Towards the end of this chapter, I am going to take a closer look at what Oesch's view about the debate was on the pages of *Kansa Taisteli.*

3.1. The driftwood theory and debate

After the war there was a need to explain Finland's participation in it. The post-war decades saw the rise of different theories in trying to explain why Finland sided with Germany and how there were supposedly no other options. The first book on the matter was published in the United States by the name *Finland and World War II* (1948). It was mainly written by the leading Finnish military historian Arvi Korhonen,[64] although the original book only had its editors name on the cover: John H. Wuorinen[65]. The main focus of the book was to explain what happened; why Finland had fought against a common enemy with Germany while still fighting its own separate war: *"Proofs that the Finnish government as well as the Finnish people really did consider their war a separate war were so many that to mention them often seemed almost a mechanical repetition of the obvious, and the Government had to play them down a bit in its news service because they directly caused, in many instances, difficulties in the relations with Germany"*[66] The rush to get the book published was that in the worst-case scenario Finnish history and the defence of it would be forgotten.[67]

The next significant study that took on the duty to explain Finland's involvement in the war was by American Charles L. Lundin: *Finland in the Second World War* (1957). Lundin's book took an approach that was highly criticised mainly by Korhonen, but

[64] Hentilä points out that the script was probably checked by the former Finnish president Risto Ryti and Väinö Tanner. Hentilä, 2019, 531.
[65] Wuorinen was a Finnish born professor of history at Columbia University.
[66] Wuorinen 1948, 114-115.
[67] Hentilä, 2019, 529.

also by Oesch. Oesch described the book as "non-historic" and "distorted"[68] presentation of Finnish participation in the Second World War. In response to Lundin's work, Korhonen wrote his own book that would set the view of Finnish historiography for decades to come: "*Barbarossa-suunnitelma ja Suomi"* (1961). In this book the driftwood theory got its name. Korhonen cited the German war time ambassador of Finland, Wipert von Blücher; "- -*Finland got caught up in the whirlpool of big politics like a flowing Finnish river sweeps away driftwood".*[69] Korhonen's and Oesch's criticism were not entirely just patriotic defensiveness. Lundin's book did have some critical mistakes, for example his understanding of Finnish politics in the 1930s.[70]

Although Korhonen's book was seen as the official truth the discussion and the debate did not stop. British Anthony F. Upton and American Hans Peter Krosby published their books in the late 1960s. The Finnish academic point of view was seen as strange and defensive. The nationalistic point of view about Finland's role in the war was in some ways understandable, as mentioned earlier. It is also important to remember Finland's relationship with the Soviet Union after the war. Directly agreeing that Finland had multiple options during the interim peace would not necessarily have been wise. Even so, the view, especially from Krosby, was a more objective one than from any Finnish historian at the time. Krosby's research results proved that Finland had options, it just happened to make the wrong ones. Krosby's view was then "quietly accepted" in the Finnish academia and the driftwood theory was proved to be wrong, although it did not disappear from academic discussion in the following decades.[71]

In the 1970s Finnish foreign policy, especially with the Soviet Union and the overall more leftist political views controlled the decade. Finland's political decision making of the 1930s was seen as the primary reason for the war against the Soviet Union. The driftwood theory was seen as a deterministic way of explaining Finland's involvement in the war on the German side.

At the end of the decade two prominent Finnish historians, Mauno Jokipii and Ohto Manninen, had an academic debate in *Historiallinen Aikakausikirja* between 1977-78. In short, the debate concluded that Finland and its leaders were not just drifting between

[68] KT no. 11, 1961, K. L. Oesch, *"Suomen joutuminen jatkosotaan".*
[69] Hentilä, 2019, 534-535.
[70] Soikkanen 2007, 109.
[71] Hentilä 2019, 537

the great powers but could and did make decisions. The two historians had different views of how Finland eventually joined with the Germans. Jokipii's opinion was that the pressure that Finland faced after the Winter War was so strong that it forced a decision. Manninen's response was that Finland did not turn towards the Germans: Finland had waited for support from the Germans, and when it was finally received in late 1940 and early 1941, Germany had placed itself politically in line with Finland.[72]

In 1987 Jokipii published his research on how and why the Continuation War started (*Jatkosodan synty)*. The release of this book proved to be a moment of consensus on the reasons behind the start of the Finnish-German relationship and the Continuation War.[73] Its indicated something of a high-water mark in the unity in opinion. The following decade saw the collapse of the Soviet Union and the opening of the Soviet archives[74]. Even though the 1970's was a time of Finlandization, this did not have that much of an impact in Finnish military history writing, but the relations with the Soviet Union and Finnish domestic politics made war-related issues highly politicized. The beginning of the 1990's is usually depicted as a "neo-patriotic" turn in the remembrance of the Second World War in Finland. Effects of the "neo-patriotic turn" were notable in e.g., popular culture and in the appreciation of the generations that had experienced the war. The Winter War and the defensive battles of 1944 saw a vast increase in interest and interpretations. The more opened atmosphere also saw new kind of military history being produced, in which more sensitive subjects were brought up.[75]

Lastly, in this chapter there is a small segment of Oesch's view on the debate surrounding the Finnish-German wartime relationship. The quote summarizes Oesch's view on this topic. During the years, when Oesch was actively involved with the magazine (as the editor-in-chief or otherwise), he frequently took part in the discussion about Finland's involvement in the war. The frequency of Oesch's writings can be seen as a duty for him, to confirm that the main points of the driftwood theory were the official truth, and that any other interpretation was false.

[72] Soikkanen 2007, 116-117.
[73] Kivimäki 2012, 16; Soikkanen 2007, 121.
[74] E.g. Ohto Manninen published *Molotovin cocktail-Hitlerin sateenvarjo* (1994) that made use of the newly opened Soviet archives.
[75] Kivimäki 2012, 20-28.

3.2. Oesch's view

" What offends me most is the deliberate distortion of history, the denial of clear truths for reasons of political expediency. Even obvious realities are deliberately ignored, if this serves the aims of the new 'science'. Recently, I have been particularly annoyed by the fact that the driftwood debate has completely forgotten the supply situation in our country during the inter-peace and the Continuation War - for example, the country only had less than a quarter of the minimum requirement for bread wheat. The rest had to come from somewhere or else we would have starved to death! The dependency ratio was self-evident when we remember that the country was completely surrounded and 3/4 of our imports, which at that time consisted only of essentials, came from Germany. There was little room for political speculation in such circumstances!"[76]

The quote above was part of an interview conducted on the occasion of Oesch's 85th birthday. After Oesch's departure from his active role in the magazine's editorial staff in 1974, texts about Finland's history writing and interpretations about the war were significantly reduced. Oesch can be seen as the main voice of the discussion about the topic.

In the next three chapters the analysis draws from the letters of KT and also on the previously mentioned German sources. As the focus of this thesis is on the history of memory, the following chapters will focus on the key themes that emerge from the source material. The goal is not to tell the history of the operations, battles or other military history of the Finnish and German forces, although for contextualization those is in some instances needed.

[76] KT 8/1977, interview: *"Kärkimiehemmä täytti vuosia".*

4. "If only these guys were Finns" – Descriptions of the incompetence of the Germans

As described in the method section reading through the source material and taking notes are only the first steps, when analysing primary sources. From these notes it is easier to form a clear picture of what kind of remembering the stories include.

From these notes a selection of different themes arises. Of course, not every story that includes Germans can be grouped in to one of these themes, but still it can be said that certain similarities can be found from the stories. Also, these themes do not occur in isolation, meaning that no story is solely about alcohol use or the incompetence of the Germans.

The first notable theme that is chosen for this thesis one that is also described by Junila is the incompetence of German troops. In Finnish military history it is almost a constant to describe the archetypal Finnish soldier as an experienced woodsman whose actions speaks for themselves. This kind of patriotic ideal can be seen from the stories in KT. Germans are described to be arrogant and self-confident soldiers that may have been victorious elsewhere in Europe but cannot cope with the harsh terrain of Lapland. Examples of this kind of arrogance during first encounters are described by V. Arrela in the second issue of KT in 1957:

"*Here I had to deal with a German lieutenant in charge of the raft. He was very scornful of our armament as well as the rest of our equipment. Also, the ferrymen inspected our rifles and pointed with their thumbs towards the bottom of Kemijärvi, that was where they should be thrown. They won't help, but we will! The spirit of Greater Germany!"*[77]

Of course, with time the German did cope with the terrain and could fight as an able combat troop, as e.g. Leevi Mikkola, a Finnish soldier in the Lapland War, writes when describing fighting the Germans. Mikkola writes how the Germans, who had been stationed in Lapland for a long time have had some extra training and showed that they were capable of fighting in forest terrain.[78]

[77] KT 2/1957 V. Arrela: "Lasikantinen sanakirja".
[78] KT 10/1984 Leevi Mikkola: "Ivaloon on päästävä ennen venäläisiä".

Viljo Vikanti brings up an interesting view of the Germans before and during an attack in Kollaa. He describes the arrival of the 310th regiment;

"I well remember the early morning when well-dressed German officers arrived at our station and with our battalion commander binoculared enemy stations, saying the whole "rigmarole" was over in four hours."[79]

Again, the writer notes the clean uniforms of the Germans and how the Germans looked down on the Finnish soldiers for their torn and dirty clothes.[80] Vikanti continues by describing how glad everyone was to hearing that the attack would be so short. Later in the story it is realized that the attack would not be over fast. Vikanti writes how the Finnish casualties were actually quite small, but the casualties of the Germans were in the hundreds. Vikanti brings up that the reason was that the Germans did not know how to use cover, a statement that is commonly used when describing the Germans in Finland. Vikanti also adds that towards the end of the battle the German artillery started bombarding the Finnish soldiers, because they thought they were Russians. It is interesting how Vikanti mentions the quite fatal errors that the Germans made and in contrast remembers how well-dressed and over-confident they were.

This is not the only example of the attitudes between the Germans and the Finnish troops. Junila points out from her sources how in the view of German military history the encounter with the Finnish wilderness was more memorable than the encounter with the Finnish troops.[81] Still, Junila mentions how the welcoming of the German troops was friendly, but they found it hard to interpret the unassuming and quiet Finns.[82] Conzelman also mentions that the reception between the brothers in arms was friendly on both sides. Later on, he even writes, that he is in love with Finland, even though it is a very lonely country. For his wife Conzelmann sends a reindeer hide.[83] Even though Junila's focus is on the relationship between the Finnish civilians and the German soldiers, she also mentions how at the start of this relationship between the soldiers of the two countries there were some preconceptions, and she notes that the Germans did not really believe in the Finnish soldiers, based on the appearance of the Finns.[84]

[79] KT 5/1961, Viljo Vikanti: "Näätäoja osa II"
[80] KT 5/1961, Viljo Vikanti: "Näätäoja osa II"
[81] Junila 2004, 102.
[82] Junila 2004, 103. Rüf 1957, 19, 47.
[83] Wendisch 2002, 15-16, 29.
[84] Junila 2004, 104-105.

Not only was the fighting in the harsh terrain tough, but the conditions of the North were also a major trouble for the Germans. Gustav Keller mentions this in his book about his father. He tells how the Finns advised the Germans about the winter, whereas Ferdinand Schrörner, at the time commander of Keller's father's division, had in his daily command's first sentence denied the winter: *"Arktis ist nicht"* (Arctic is not).[85]

4.1."We have been deceived—we have been totally sold - we're lost - you'll never see me again.,." The Battle for Salla

For the incompetence and difficulties that the German forces faced in Finland, the battle for Salla is emphasized in many descriptions of the attacking phase during the summer of 1941. The battle for Salla was part of the Finnish-German operation Polarfuchs (Polar Fox). In later studies especially the failure of the 6th SS-Mountain Division Nord is highlighted. Wolf T. Zoepf's prelude chapter of the book "Seven Days in January" explains that there were many reasons for the failure that Division Nord faced in Salla. The most notable reason was, in Zoepf's words: "Lack of adequate reconnaissance, so crucial for success in any attack, effectively blinded leaders at all levels."[86]

For a closer description of the battle itself and the following mayhem that caused the division to retreat there is an example in KT. Boris Saarmaa, lieutenant and a Finnish liaison officer, has described the battle that he himself went to watch at the frontline of Division Nord, with the commander of the Finnish liaison officer staff in XXXVI Army corps Lieutenant Colonel Ilmari Rytkönen. They were sent to the frontline under a direct command from Cavalry General Hans Feige, and: "with Finnish eyes" find out the reason for Nord's inability to attack."[87] At the front Rytkönen was not pleased with the German "offensive", or the lack of it. According to Saarmaa, the German troops had, for some reason brought even a field kitchen to the front, which the Soviets shot with their antitank guns. Later a Soviet armor attack precipitated panic in the German troops which caused the overall retreat towards west.[88] Later Saarmaa was met with two

[85] Keller 2017, 27.
[86] Zoepf 2001, 15.
[87] KT 7/1985, Boris Saarmaa: "Läpimurto Sallassa 1941".
[88] Korpi 2007, 261.

German officers who informed him, that Division Nord was a political military organization and not part of the German army.

Interestingly, the battle of Salla is mentioned by Johann Voss in his memoir. In early December 1943 he and his comrades were singing songs in their dugout. Their gun section leader, who was nicknamed Der Alte (the Old One), the 25-year-old veteran of the group, suddenly stopped the "party". The quick change of mood was explained to Voss.

""Well," he said, "seems he can't stand these kitchen songs; they get him down." And then he told me the story of Salla and the Alte's role in it.—The Alte was with the combat group that had been the predecessor of our division. – As a motorized unit. entirely unprepared for combat in the woods, their first mission was to take some hills in the wilderness between the Finnish-Russian border and the hamlet of Salla. It was terrain that should have been identified as the stronghold it actually was, if there had been proper reconnaissance, but to safeguard the operation's surprise, none had been allowed.—Our men were pinned down under the enemy's fire. In no time, the dry forest began to burn. - - Before long, they panicked and retreated. The Alte, aware he might burn to death himself, left his comrades behind, either wounded or dead. After Salla had been taken, the dead were recovered, hundreds of them. The Alte was still haunted by his buddies' cries for help in the burning wood."[89]

Even gloomier examples of the utter failure that the division faced can be found in the last magazine of KT in 1985. Erik Ekholm wrote an article of the failure at Salla titled: "*Mistä johtui Sallan katastrofi 1941?"*[90]. Although Zoepf, among others, does mention the poor training, Ekholm brings up in his article that the whole division was not in any way ready for battle, as the non-commissioned officers and the rank and file did not, with few exceptions, have any military training.

The men themselves knew their shortcomings. Examples can be found from the letters the men wrote before the attack: "*You should not mourn my fate at all. It is not possible that we should be sent to the front. We have not been trained at all*."[91] After the battle, more letters were found from the pockets of fallen soldiers. In these letters the reality of the future was much darker as Ekholm's example shows: "*We have been betrayed - we have been horribly sold - we're lost - you'll never see me again..."*[92]

[89] Voss 2001, 86.
[90] Ekholm mentions that the main source for the article was material gathered by Raine Panula, mainly from *Der Freiwillige*-magazine, which was meant for former SS-men. KT 12/1985, Erik Ekholm: "Mistä johtui Sallan katastrofi 1941?"
[91] KT 12/1985, Erik Ekholm: "Mistä johtui Sallan katastrofi 1941?"
[92] KT 12/1985, Erik Ekholm: "Mistä johtui Sallan katastrofi 1941?"

The failure of Division *Nord* is an example of extreme German failure on the Finnish front. Later, the previously mentioned Feige wanted the division to be pulled out from the front so it could get trained properly. This was denied personally by Hitler.,[93] although, after Salla was captured, some of *Nord's* forces were attached to Finnish forces.[94]

This first theme introduced is quite a common when remembering the Finnish-German relationship and it does not differ from the more public and official memory of the time. In KT this is proven by Oesch in one of his articles, that deals with forest warfare. In this article Oesch describes how in 1941 a Finnish division successfully used forest terrain as it was attacking. After this example Oesch gives another one that includes the Germans and their unsuccessful use of forest terrain.

"-- *which describes the helplessness of an unaccustomed to the forest and the prompt and clever action of a group accustomed to the forest. In northern Finland, Finnish and German troops had to work side by side in many places during the Continuation War, and in close co-operation with each other. At the beginning of the war, a German unit wanted to show the Finns exemplary offensive activities in the forest terrain. The front battalion of this group crossed the border and got into battle with the Russians. It was soon announced that the Russians had put a German battalion in motti."*[95]

Oesch's article goes on to describe how in the end Finnish troops went to help and eventually saved the German unit. It is also interesting to note how Oesch writes that the Finnish and German troops "had to" work together during the Continuation War and how the Germans were unaccustomed to forest terrain. In many of Oesch's articles he brings up reasons why Finland was on the side of Germany and how Finland did not have any other choice.

4.2. Different interpretations

In these stories the incompetence is clearly shown, but there is still quite a lot of admiration towards the German military machinery. In a few of the stories the German dive bomber "Stuka" gets a mention. A story where the sight of Stukas eased the mind of Finnish troops can be found in Veikko Jokela's story in the sixth issue of 1959. Jokela describes how the sound of approaching airplanes after a heavy bombardment

[93] Carruthers 2013, 143.
[94] Zoepf 2001, 17.
[95] KT 6/1961, K. L. Oesch: "Metsätaisteluista 2. osa"

was faced with terror; *"The planes came — they were German stukas — our minds brightened a little".* Although the Stukas eased their minds, that was soon changed when the Stukas accidentally dropped some of their bombs on the Finns: *"but at the same time the situation became even gloomier, because wave after wave they unloaded some of their cargo on our necks.".* [96] The story does not say if the dive-bombers were piloted by the Germans or by the Finns, but the region where Jokela describes they were, was in close proximity to the Germans, so they might have been piloted by the Germans. In some instances, Stukas were even missed after seeing their destructive firepower, as Voitto Mikkola mentiones in issue seven in 1985, when first time seeing them: "*I didn't saw them after that and didn't see them during the war. Many times afterwards, and especially in the last matches, they would have been much more welcome than in the wilderness of Nenäpalo..."*[97]

An interesting contrast to this is lies in the six stories that Pentti S. Heikkinen sent in 1971. Heikkinen was a liaison officer, and he kept a diary during the war. He gives a different view of the Germans and of how some Finnish soldiers tended to generalize about the Germans as being helpless in the woods. Heikkinen's stories are quite analytical, and he accurately describes the Germans and their opinions about the Finnish. Contrary to the previous examples that I brought up, and the various others, Heikkinen writes: "*The bullet was found to be equally deadly, whether it came from a Finnish, German or Russian weapon."*[98]. Heikkinen brings up how Finnish soldiers tended to be even self-righteous when dealing with the Germans. This image of the Germans did however change when the war continued.

In these stories it is clear how the writer wants to especially bring up the failures of the Germans in an attack, for example. In some stories there is even a will to "show off" about how a Finnish soldier fights. This is shown in another story by Heikkinen where he is leading a patrol hunting some Soviet soldiers. Heikkinen's patrol gets lost, but he does not want to tell the Germans that he does not know where to head. Heikkinen takes a rough direction from his compass, and they continue to walk through the night. Heikkinen describes how the Germans and he himself were extremely tired, but Heikkinen did not want to show his exhaustion; "*If only these guys were Finns so you*

[96] KT 6/1959, Veikko Jokela: "Oulangalta Vuorikylän tielle."
[97] KT 7/1985, Voitto Mikkola: "Stukat koukkivat Nenäpalossa."
[98] KT 6/1971, Pentti S. Heikkinen: "Suomalaisen yhteysupseerin kokemuksia. 3. osa".

could say that now I can't take it anymore. That I could dare to say to my own"[99]. Although Heikkinen had written earlier how there had been some generalizations regarding the Germans, he still brought up this point about how he had to show to the Germans that, as a Finn, he did not give up and was not tired or lost. In the end Heikkinen's patrol did find its way back to their own lines. This was a great amazement for the Germans. Heikkinen describes in his story how, after the march, the Germans said*:*

" *Think about it: Right in the sack-dark, sleet, in an unknown wilderness, after five hours of continuous marching, these Finns come to the place where they had announced their arrival. To be able to do that, one must have an innate instinct that the Germans lacked."*[100]

Of course, there is no way of knowing if the Germans had actually said that, it might have come as an amazement that they got to their own lines in the first place. Once again when dealing with these letters it is important to remember how and what the writers want to remember.

It is clear from these examples and from other stories in KT that it was quite a common theme to explain how the Germans did not have the skills or the know-how to fight and survive in Lapland. However, it is important to keep in mind that these accounts were written by Finnish soldiers, and Junila also explains how most of the Germans arriving in Finland did not know much about the country or the environment in which they were about to fight.[101] But as Heikkinen has analysed, the image of the Germans being helpless in the woods may have been exaggerated; and it has stayed well in to the post war period.

[99] KT 5/1971, Pentti S. Heikkinen: "Suomalaisen yhteysupseerin kokemuksia. 2. osa".
[100] KT 5/1971, Pentti S. Heikkinen: "Suomalaisen yhteysupseerin kokemuksia. 2. osa".
[101] Junila 2004, 98–99.

5. "Haben Sie Konjak?" – Soldiers and alcohol

The previous chapter described through some examples how the Finnish-German relationship was seen on the battlefield and how the theme of the incompetence of the Germans was often mentioned. Another reoccurring theme was alcohol. Alcohol and its use during wartime is quite a common narrative. It is also a part of the narrative of Finnish military history. In the novel *Unknown Soldier* there is a scene which includes heavy use of alcohol among the troops during Mannerheim's birthday. So it can be said that from very early on this theme has had some kind of a place in the narrative of the Continuation War, although it was not a favourable thing to bring up during the time when veterans and their remembering were not in a favourable light. In the "public" narrative in KT articles, as opposed to the stories sent by readers, there is almost no mention of any use of alcohol during wartime, which is interesting when in many of the readers' stories the use of alcohol is depicted. For example, Jonna Pulkkinen and Mika Wist write in their book: *"Viinalla terästetty sota. Alkoholi sotavuosina 1939-1944"* (2017) how many of the veterans did not want to be interviewed, "because they did not want to bring up this aspect of the life at the front"[102].

If alcohol use in the trenches was seen more or less as a taboo subject after the war, the same can be also said about high-ranking officers. Lasse Laaksonen brings up the post-war reluctance to write about the negative sides of Finnish generals. From especially the 1970s onwards biographies of wartime generals were mainly written by former subordinates or amateur military historians, where problems were left unmentioned and alcohol use was almost defended in some cases.[103]

Maybe one of the most well-known cases of alcohol abuse at the front that involves the Germans as well, is the so called "*Tornion taikayö".* After the Lapland war had begun Finnish forces conducted a landing operation to the city of Tornio. During the battle Finnish forces from the 11th infantry regiment, found the alcohol storage, that the Germans had left behind and took advantage of it. The extreme abuse of alcohol severely weakened the attack and the possibility to continue it and to improve the advance.[104]

[102] Pulkkinen, Wist 2017, 14.
[103] Laaksonen 2017, 11-12.
[104] Kulju 2014, 122-125.

As mentioned, the use of alcohol has its place in the Finnish historiography of the Second World War. With the Germans, alcohol, as the upcoming examples show, was used as a form of currency, and as a means to get to know each other or to relax and to forget the situation that was always present.

In many of the stories it is mentioned how Finnish soldiers would buy alcohol from the Germans and how the Germans often fooled the Finns by watering down the alcohol or even offering just tee as cognac. In response to this, the Finnish soldiers would then sell crows or even skinned cats as game birds. One example of this kind behaviour can be found in the second issue of magazine in 1969.

"*One time they asked Finnish soldiers to get them a rabbit for a bottle of cognac. The deal was arranged and so the boys went to look for the rabbits. However, when none were not found that time, they shot an old collie cat. It was skinned, the tailbone was cut off and the creature was taken to the client. It was then cooked and eaten by the brothers in arms as a rabbit. After receiving and opening the bottle of cognac, the Finns found it very diluted with water. The "Niksmanns" again, after eating the cat, suspected themselves deceived. When the "trade threads" met, the Germans said: Miu mau, to which the Finns replied: Pul pul!*[105]

Although these situations are often depicted as jokes in KT, there probably was a truth to them, as these kinds of stories occur in the magazine frequently. The structure of these jokes is also interesting: the Germans as the target of the joke who cannot hunt and the Finns who do these jobs for the Germans in exchange for a bottle of alcohol. And in the end both sides are fooled.

In the second KT magazine that was ever published the first story is named *"The dictionary with glass covers*", the title referring to a bottle of alcohol which was used as a help in communication between a German officer and the writer. The story also describes how Finnish soldiers would do different jobs for the Germans e.g., construction work, and how the payment would be cognac.[106]

Of course, alcohol is not a controlling theme that overrides everything in these stories. It mentioned as a sidenote in a way, and the appearance of alcohol has almost always something to do with the Germans (them giving/selling it or the Finnish soldiers stealing it).

[105] KT 2/1969, unknown "Pettivät toisiaan".
[106] KT 2/1957, V. Arrela "Lasikantinen sanakirja".

Again, Junila also brings up the use of alcohol, but in her research alcohol and its use are analysed in a context that involves Finnish civilians and Germans soldiers and mainly the black market. But, in KT alcohol, as mentioned earlier, was also part of the Finnish-German narrative. In some cases, as in the previously mentioned joke(s), alcohol was a currency and even a way to get to know one another.*" We were very interested in our new brothers in arms, and many pairs of gloves and fur hats changed to "Kyper" or "Rotwein."*. The writer of the story, Heikki Laulajainen then continues to describe how many nights were spent with the Germans, drinking wine, and talking about politics. Although this might sound a somewhat milder description of what may have actually happened, Laulajainen still points out how he discovered that, the private opinions of a German soldier varied from the official national propaganda.[107]

Buying alcohol or consuming it can be found in many of the stories that include the Germans and the Finns, but it is mostly depicted in the ways shown in the previous examples. There are almost never mentions of its negative side. Fighting or over-consumption is not mentioned: rather alcohol is discussed as a gift or as currency. This probably has been intentional from the perspective of the writers, who probably did not want to mention these negative sides. Also, the editorial staff had probably been quite eager to reject these kinds of stories.

A quite extreme example of a rejected letter that involves alcohol and descriptions of the Germans was a story named: *"Kajjaanin viinakaupan valloitus".* In this story the writer tells how he, or some of the soldiers from the same unit robbed a liquor store when their unit was resting in Kajaani. The story also includes a description of how one of these soldiers did not like the Germans, although they had awarded him with the Iron Cross: "*--because he thought these plowed Europe with too big a plow. They forgot their brothers in arms and wanted to get all the women,"*[108]. The robbery of a liquor store and consuming the alcohol was probably the main reason why the story was rejected. But is also interesting to note, how the Germans are depicted as women stealers and world conquers. In the envelope there is a note from the editorial staff saying that the letter must be rejected. These mentions cannot be found in the published KT letters. The affairs of Finnish women and German soldiers and the possible birth of

[107] KT 9/1963, Heikki Laulajainen: "Jyväskylän Jussi – Sumiaisista. 2. osa".
[108] KT 3153, Erkki Kerojärvi: Kajjaanin viinakaupan valloitus". (Unpublished letter)

children from these affairs were not a favourable thing to bring up in post-war Finland.[109]

As can be imagined alcohol can be a way to relax under the pressure that war brings. The darkness during the winter months in the North had a depressing effect. At Christmas, alcohol and smoking brought joy, as Keller describes. His father also mentioned the Northern Lights which he saw when going out for a smoke. As a New Year's wish, he hoped to stay alive and to have a chance for a home leave.[110]

For Voss an impactful moment was experienced in the midst of war in early summer of 1944 during his 19th birthday. Having a 24-hour leave and drinking multiple schnapps with his comrades Voss describes his feelings as he is heading to the *Soldatentheim*:

"*I don't know whether it was the drink or the glorious weather or both, but I marched along our supply trail with a bounce in my step. – Again I was amazed by the Nordic sky, an immense blue arch, decorated with white cumulus clouds. – More and more the tension, which had constantly racked and worn down our nerves in the front line, was evaporating and giving way to a feeling of utter release. –All of a sudden, I was struck by the pure, sincere beauty of the land, a feeling so intense and overwhelming that the anxiety, sorrow, and fear of death of the past months melted into great joy. I sat down on a rock, yielding to the spell of the moment and wanting to embrace it all. Deep inside, I knew that I had come to love this land. Alone, I let the tears roll down my cheeks. In my romantic mind, I even went so far as to think that if I was to die in this war it would be good if it were here in the great tranquillity of this land"*[111]

To close this chapter, it is also wort mentioning alcohol and its use after the "brothers in arms" relationship had ended. The previously mentioned Pentti S. Heikkinen describes how after the official diplomatic relationships had been cut off between Finland and Germany the soldiers in the command post would still greet each other the same way as before; "Haben Sie Konjak?". Heikkinen also adds how large amounts of alcohol was consumed with the Germans, even though the official diplomatic relations were cut off.[112]

[109] Junila, 2000 244, 258-259.
[110] Keller, 2017 52-53.
[111] Voss, 2001 113-114.
[112] KT 9/1971 Pentti S. Heikkinen: "Suomalaisen yhteysupseerin kokemuksia osa 6.".

6. "The situation has escalated" – The end of the Finnish-German relationship

As the Continuation War had ended and peace terms were negotiated, it meant that the German troops in Finland needed to be removed. The Soviet peace terms demanded that all German forces had to be disarmed and handed to the Soviets.[113] For Finland options were scarce. If the armistice was not respected, it would have grave consequences for Finland's future.[114] Although at first the "war" and the German retreat was arranged in co-operation between the two fighting forces, it would eventually develop into a full conflict.[115]

The last theme that I will address is the way in which the end of the "brothers-in arms" relationship was seen in the letters in KT. As a theme, this differs from the previous two, as it is more clearly a part of the actual narrative of the war, a result of politics and the changes that occurred at the fronts and in the grand schemes of the war. The Lapland War is a very common storyline in KT, especially in the magazines of 1965, 1975, 1985, when there was a round-number anniversary of the end of the war. For my research, the interesting storylines are the one's that deal with the start of the Lapland War and how it was a surprise to some of the soldiers. For the Finns fighting against the Germans was at some instances seen as a difficult task, but attitudes quickly changed when facing burned down houses or hearing rumours about the atrocities done by the Germans in Lapland[116].

Again, a few articles from Oesch deal with the Lapland War, emphasizing the fact that it was the only way for Finland to get out of the war. This also brings up the differences in how this time period has been described in many memoirs and studies. The narratives in these have mainly focused on the grand schemes of things, the official history of the time period. Again, the stories in KT gives an interesting frog's-eye view of the situation, when peace was reached with the Soviet Union and the first military actions against Germans started.

In Emil Conzelmann's letters there is a clear feeling of disbelief that Finland and Germany would be fighting against each other. Conzelmann believes that northern-Finland will remain under German control and that it is a possibility that the remaining

[113] Käkelä 2007, 1118-1119.
[114] Ahto 1980, 14.
[115] Ahto 1980, 116-117; Käkelä, 1123.
[116] Kivimäki 2015, 90.

part of Finland will be occupied by the Soviet Union. Conzelmann also believes that the Finns do not even want to fight against them, and if they do, there would be same kind of mess that happened in Romania and in the end the Germans would occupy all of Finland. With the threat of war against Finland approaching, Conzelmann shows pity towards the Finnish civilians. Conzelmann as a doctor also treated a lot of Finnish civilians, so he had formed emotional connections towards them. Even in a letter dated 17 September 1944, Conzelmann still does not believe that actual fighting would occur, even though the battle of Suursaari-Island had already taken place. However, the news of it, if there was any, probably did not reach Northern-Finland that quickly.[117] As soon as the actual fighting did start in Lapland, the tone in Conzelmann's letters chanced immediately.

"*After all, the Finns have acquired their weapons from Germany - and now they are fighting us with our own bombs. "I have also heard about similar hostilities from Finns in other areas as well. The situation has escalated."* [118]

Conzelmann continues in a letter dated 8 October 1944: "Is there no longer loyalty, the permanence of actions?".[119] It can be seen how betrayed Conzelmann felt after the fighting had started. Conzelmann had stayed in Finland for a few years then and, as mentioned earlier, it can be seen from his letters that he actually cared for the Finnish civilians. By the end of October Conzelmann was in Norway and one of his last mentions of Finland in a letter dated 22 October 1944 stated: "Lapland can no longer be inhabited for years in the same style as before" [120]. This can be interpreted as a sign of remorse from Conzelmann, but there are no other mentions of the destruction of Lapland in his letters.

In Keller's text, it is brought up how the situation was difficult. As in some examples in KT as well, it was seen as strange how just a moment ago the two nations were brothers in arms and they get on very well, but now they were enemies. Keller mentions that the biggest fear for the German troops was to be captured by the Soviets.[121] Toni Wiesbauer describes the situation on 3 September 1944[122], as German troops were listening to the

[117] Conzelmann 17.9.1944
[118] Conzelmann 4.10.1944
[119] Conzelmann 8.10.1944
[120] Conzelmann 22.10.1944
[121] Keller 2017, 88.
[122] Wiesbauer claims that the capitulation of Finland happened on 3 September, when actually the ceasefire between Finland and the Soviet Union started 5 September.

radio reports of the ceasefire between Finland and the Soviet Union. Jean Sibelius's *Finlandia* was playing from the Finmark radio station and Wiesbauer describes how " It seemed then as if something serious - big was reaching for us, on the outcome of which depended on the fate of each of us."[123] Wiesbauer adds that only later did they feel the far-reaching consequences of the Finnish surrender.

In the stories of KT, the narratives of the end of the "bothers in arms" relationship and the start of the Lapland War are usually surprisingly similar. The writers often bring up the confused feeling that they had when they first heard that they would be now fighting against the Germans. Kivimäki also mentions this point in his article *Hämärä horisontti, avautuvat tulevaisuudet* (2015), in which he writes about how quickly the attitudes of Finnish soldiers changed when the news broke that they would now fight against the Germans in the north. This quick change in attitudes was mainly caused by rumours of what the Germans had done to Finnish women.[124] Wiesbauer's, Keller's, or Voss's memoirs do not include these kinds of memories. Although the destruction of bridges and other infrastructure is mentioned, they attempt to justify it as a part of military tactics.[125] Voss explains the destruction as follows: "In the course of our withdrawal, as in the course of *any* military retreat operation, it was only natural that we would destroy any of our installations that could be of use to the Russians, particularly lodges, cabins, and bunkers that had enabled us to survive in winter. We knew that."[126]

Wiesbauer, Keller and Voss points out that Finland was unable to continue the war on Germany's side and that surrender to the Soviets was its only option. This forced the Finnish forces to fight against Germany.[127] Voss analyses the end of the brothers-in-arms relationship as follows:

"We have to withdraw from a country that we helped defend against Bolshevism, our common enemy. Finland's eastern border stretches over more than a thousand kilometers. It couldn't have been defended without us. Against all odds, dictated by climate and geography and unequal human resources, we have prevailed. And if the Finns are to continue to exist as a free nation, they will do so because of our joint efforts over the past three years. So, although we are withdrawing, we are leaving this country not in disgrace but with pride in what we have accomplished."[128]

[123] Wiesbauer 1963, 159.
[124] Kivimäki 2006, 191.
[125] Kulju 2014, 268.
[126] Voss 2001, 144.
[127] Wiesbauer 1963, 160.
[128] Voss 2001, 150.

For Voss the shared fight against bolshevism was the main uniting factor between Finnish and German soldiers. Voss stated that friendly feelings towards the Finns remained almost unchanged, and so did the respect. He mentions the Winter War and the Finnish decision to fight than to submit to the Soviet rule.[129] Although Finland had an option to end its own war, Voss notes that they did not have any other change than to fight.[130]

In KT many of the writers bring up that they did not even want to fight against the Germans. As for example Pentti O. Kelavirta who describes the situation in issue 10 1963: "Should we now raise our weapons against our personal friends?"[131] The different stances towards the Germans are possibly explained by if the writer had been in a unit that had fought alongside the Germans or had had any other dealings with them during the war. From this it can be then determinate that units that did not have earlier dealings with the Germans could then more easily fight against them. From the notes gathered from KT, there are surprisingly few that do not mention the confusion or unwillingness to fight against the Germans. But this does not mean that the feelings were similar when the actual fighting started and the destruction of Lapland was seen.

The previous example shows that the writer had doubts when the Lapland War started, but he does mention how the unit to which he belonged had been subordinated to an Austrian mountain jaeger company. In this case the writer had been in contact with the Germans during the Continuation War, so this had influenced his memories of that time period and the attitudes towards the Germans. The same kind of feelings are shown in V. Arrela's story from 1957, in which he describes how in his mind it was unwise to send his division against the Germans, because they had fought alongside the Germans previously. Arrela also mentions that the unmarried Finnish men (especially the officers) thought that they would be useful elsewhere and not in the uncertain climate in Finland. It could be deduced from the writer's story that there was some kind of willingness to defect to the German side. Arrela's story concludes that soldiers minds were turn when they were ordered to read their oaths from their military passports.[132]

[129] Voss 2001, 140.
[130] Voss 2001, 144.
[131] KT 10/1963 Pentti O. Kelavirta "Aseveljeys päättyi Olhavan sillalla".
[132] KT 4/1957 V. Arrela "Lukekaa sotilaspassista valan kaava".

Although this confusion is strongly present in many of the stories, considering this time period, the second key theme is usually just bitterness. This bitterness is often shown through sarcastic remarks about the "brothers in arms" relationship, for example by Olli Kestilä in 1966 in issue 11: ""After getting a little further away from the German camp, we stopped with Sergeant Loponen to hear what the" old friends" were really up to."[133]. The term "old friends" occur extremely often. The past "brothers in arms" relationship had now ended, and the feeling of betrayal was on both sides, especially with the Germans. This sense of betrayal can be seen from e.g., Conzelmann's letters. There is also an interesting story from J. H. Palokangas, in which he describes the situation when he was captured by German Mountain Jaegers during the Lapland War.

"--*we were Finns, but that is not what we should have said. "Now the continuation war began. There were a few punches everywhere. - Ho-hoo, Alte Kameraden - ha-haa!"*[134]

Later Palokangas finds out that these Germans were actually just sent from Norway and did not recognise the Finnish uniforms at first. As in the previous examples, Palokangas too was confused about the new situation, now fighting against the Germans, and by the immediate hostilities when captured by the Germans. Palokangas' story did continue towards in the future. After imprisonment he actually joined the German forces to avoid a long march to Norway, to a POW camp.

As battle descriptions, the stories about the Lapland war do not wildly differ from the ones that address the Winter War- or the Continuation War. The only main difference in these stories is that there is usually a short description of the Germans and the broken "brothers in arms" relationship. Also, Oesch mentions this in his article from 1967 in issue 5.

"In the final phase from the Continuation War to peace, the Finnish troops had to turn their weapons against their former brothers-in-arms of three years against the Germans, in accordance with the armistice. One might well ask whether such a sharp change of attitude would have been successful for anyone other than Mannerheim. What is certain is that the Finnish Marshal was the only man who could order the Finnish

[133] KT 11/1966 Olli Kestilä: "Viimeinen partio".
[134] KT 2/1965 J. H. Palokangas: "Kohtalokkailla retkillä. 2. osa".

army into this war. This order - bitter as it may have seemed - was obeyed because the Finnish soldier trusted his commander-in-chief to the last."[135]

The article in KT was made in honour of the 100th year anniversary of the birth of Mannerheim, and it does include more stories of that sort. But still, it is interesting that Oesch does mention the bitterness of Finnish troops at the star of the Lapland War.

The final push for the Finnish army was the Lapland War. As mentioned in the previous examples it was difficult at first for both sides, but in the end German forces were driven out from Lapland. From the examples given, a sense of uncertainty, distrust and, in some cases, betrayal can be sensed. In the Finnish examples in the stories of KT, descriptions of the Lapland War usually start with noting the broken brothers-in-arms relationship. In some cases, the writer has a retrospective view on the matter. This is exemplified by Ale Rivinoja and his statement:

"Although the old brotherhood of arms between Finns and Germans eventually disappeared completely, and there may have been some bitterness in the beginning, time has already made up for past wrongs. It was known that the "higher authorities" led the general direction and ordered what was to be done, and the line fighters were not responsible for it. A certain compassion and sympathy also extended to that opponent, who was retreating with his life and was already partly desperate."[136]

Rivinoja continues his reminiscences by referring to how he had met with some of these old "brothers in arms" when they were burying the remains of German soldiers to a military graveyard on the shore of Norvajärvi lake. Rivinoja tells how they remembered the old times, not so boisterously as before, "but in a kind of wistfulness, noting the changeable nature of the world."[137]

In the case of Wiesbauer, Conzelmann or Keller, there is not as much remembering of these times. Only Voss analysed the situation the from post-war perspective, while he was a prisoner of war. Voss described the sadness he felt while watching the city of Muonio burn. With this he also recalled the breach of loyalty from the Finnish side, but he admitted that if Finland had not followed the armistice and had continued the war with the Germans, it would have meant the destruction of Finland and disloyalty towards their own country. Voss, as an SS-man, brought up the aspect of loyalty

[135] KT 6/1967 K. L. Oesch: "Mannerheim ylipäällikkö, joka nautti luottamusta".
[136] KT 2/1975 Ale Rivinoja: "Aseveljeys eli ja kuoli".
[137] KT 2/1975 Ale Rivinoja: "Aseveljeys eli ja kuoli".

multiple times, but here he showed that he eventually accepted what had happened with Finland.

7. Conclusion

People live their lives through their previous experiences.[138] In the case of KT, as was stated, it enabled Finnish veterans to tell their stories and to state what they wanted to say. In this thesis, the focus was on how the Germans were remembered, what themes were in the narratives that involved the Germans. The goal was not to write a full coverage of the actual war itself, but to pay attention to the post-war narratives. In some cases, the memories were only fragments of the actual story itself. Still, the fragments show that it was seen as important enough to write down and to be remembered.

Although war is a collective experience on the national level, it is built around the memories of individuals. The three themes analysed here were present in many ways in the source material. From the Finnish source material, the incompetence of the Germans is in many ways a narrative that repeats itself. The use of alcohol is present in much of the source material, but in some instances maybe not everything is being told. The end of the brothers-in-arms relationship, the start of the Lapland War, was seen as a time of uncertainty. In KT it is mentioned in many cases how attitudes changed and the old relationship with the Germans was seen to have perished. In the German sources, it is the same. Conzelmann's letters show how his friendliness towards the Finns ended when the Lapland War started. Wiesbauer, Keller and Voss seem to have in a retrospective way understood the situation that Finland faced, and in a way accepted it. Fighting in the Arctic did leave its mark in the memories of the soldiers. Gustav Keller tells how, until his father's death, the time in the Arctic did have an effect. He mentions an instance when one time in the morning his father was covered in sweat and his mother asked: "*Willi, was war heute Nacht?"*. His father reply was: "*Ich war am Eismeer."*[139] His father continued to recollect things that were not directly about the war, such as the tundra, Northern Lights and the people he encountered. His father's wish was to see the Arctic once more, but it did not happen.

Even though in the post-war decades Finnish academic research of the brothers-in-arms relationship mainly focused on explaining it and, in some instances, on defending the separate war thesis, it can be seen from KT that the individual level of remembering did not see as its duty to defend anything. Instead, it was seen important reminisce about

[138] Kivimäki 2019, 9.
[139] Keller 2017, 108-109.

what happened and how. The following generation challenged their parents, and a pacifist movement was present in many ways, for example in war literature during the post-war years. Academic debates were being held on the reasons why Finland sided with Germany. The public memory did not want to include individuals and their memories of the war and about the Germans. KT offered Finnish veterans a way to express their memories that they wanted to tell.

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