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Vasilis Papageorgiou: THE ART OF RESEARCHING • 4

Articles:

Päivi Kosonen: CREATIVE AUTOBIOGRAPHY, FROM
SELF-KNOWLEDGE TO THE TEACHING OF WRITING
• 14

Martin Štoll: THE PRECONDITION OF CREATIVE
WORK • 46

Amir Or: ON EDITING AND FEEDBACK IN THE
POETRY WORKSHOP • 63

Johanna Pentikäinen: ELOKUVAT LUOKKA JA
FREEDOM WRITERS KIRJOITTAMISEN KUVAUKSINA
JA REFLEKTION OSANA • 82

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Vasilis Papageorgiou

The Art of Researching

There is this Greek word, *cosmos*, that takes us both to the world as an entity and, at the same time, to the way this same world, this entity, is arranged, to its modus of being, to its cosmetics. Just for the sake of argument, and for the time being, let us consider these two versions or sides of the same world as facilitating our curiosity and pleasure in understanding, exploring and broadening this world, as well as our curiosity and pleasure in depicting and broadening this same world artistically, aesthetically.

And let us try to trace our position today within this world, the place where we stand in relation, or rather interrelation, to nature, humanity, identity and language, especially through the critical and expressive achievements in classical Greece, the Renaissance, the age of Enlightenment, the modernist era, and in our times, in which thought and art, in the most radical way ever, approach what we have come to recognise as the other, the ways we picture the other, the ways we have the obligation to affirm otherness, philosophically, morally and aesthetically.

It is this critical and affirming approach to the other that, among many other but not unrelated things of course, has given us a number of new academic disciplines, such as post-colonial studies, gender studies, sexual diversity studies, animal studies. It is the approach that has criticised *logos* and the vari-

ous forms of power that this logos assumes when it establishes structures of influence and violence. This critique of logos has been and always is important in discussing the forms and functions of knowledge, art, democracy, society, justice, metaphysics and truth.

The other has enabled us to question, deconstruct and open up polarities, limits and any closed discourse on substantiality in order to pass from the negative to the affirmative, to that which does not presuppose a metaphysical truth at its origin, to enter an unconditional territory that is accessible by a logos without logos.

It is within this unconditional territory that I would like to re-examine the still new, for us, polarity of scientific versus artistic research. And it is here that I would like now to turn to a number of well known questions: What is research? What is art? What is knowledge? What is form and what is content? Why do we need artistic research? What can artistic research offer that conventional research does not? Could artistic research be done by someone who is not an artist? If yes, why do we need artistic education at all or why should this research be part of an artistic education? When is the artistic research done, before or after the completion of the artwork? Who is doing the research or for whom is it important, the artist who gives or the one who receives the art work? When does the artistic research transgress its limits (such as those set by the Swedish Research Council or a book like *Konst, forskning, makt: En bok om konstnären som forskare* by Efva Lilja, that the Swedish Government Offices, Regeringskansliet, has published) and become scientific research instead? Should our universities insist on such limits both within its various disciplines, structures and rules, and in its interactions with society? Is not all art

already a kind of actualised research, in both its form and its content? Is not the artwork a document as well, one that is generated by and generates knowledge, awareness about its coming into being, arguments about itself and its context within society and the cosmos?

Of course all these questions are inseparable from the ones that pertain to the role of the university, of humanities within the university and of art either as a part of the field of humanities or, as at Linnaeus University, alongside the humanities (“Faculty of Art and Humanities”). They have always been crucial questions, but maybe even more so in our times when the pressures for restructuring, financing and evaluating our academic fields and work have been bewildering and shaking the very reasons for which many of us teach, do research, write and publish.

What then is artistic research? How is to be done and published and by whom? Must the artist produce a document that discusses her or his artwork? This is the position that many in Sweden support, although in fact the law is more inclusive, leaving open the possibility of either avoiding producing such a paper or encompassing, on equal terms, what is called “konstnärligt utvecklingsarbete”, artistic development or growth. Producing a paper then becomes the position that decides how artistic research will be evaluated and funded. The academic art teachers, according to this position, are expected to do a double job: They must produce both artworks and papers or various discourses about these artworks. I believe no one within our academic world has ever demanded officially that a scientist, a mathematician or geographer, apart from the scientific research which results in a paper or a dissertation, should also produce a piece of art as an illustration, as an artistic gesture or perfor-

mance of her or his scientific arguments and research results. And it is a well-known topic that scientific thinking, along with the way it is presented, demonstrates its own aesthetic language, its individual, personal way of forming the knowledge it generates (Jacques Derrida's and Peter Eisenman's *Choral Works* gives us an example, while Arthur I. Miller's *Colliding Worlds: How Cutting-Edge Science is Redefining Contemporary Art* is a good source for more).

Could it then be that form, the aesthetic aspect of our thinking, is secondary to the thinking itself? That cosmos matters more as a being and less as a mode, an arrangement of this being? That there is a truth, a language, that is independent of the way this truth is expressed or the language used? Or that what we know is more important than what we feel or sense? It seems that there must be a number of strong metaphysical arguments behind such a kind of prioritising, behind the decision to expect, indeed to demand, from an artist to analyse, discuss or contextualise his or her work within our newly established fields of artistic research in order to qualify as an academic.

If not in a paper, then where could the research that the artist has done be expressed or present itself? Could it be invested within the artwork itself, within the procedure that leads to its development and realisation? Indeed, yes. And this has been the case ever since art was produced as such and discussed as such. That an artwork is both a result of knowledge and bears knowledge, that it challenges or breaks the limits of this knowledge, is also a well studied and documented fact (it brings to mind the field of the philosophy of art and the philology of texts, Euripides as a stage philosopher, Plato as both a philosopher and a dramatist, Baudelaire's study of evil in his poetry, Rimbaud's representation of what Ashbery has described as the

“simultaneity of all life”, conceptual poetry, Derrida as a poet and prose writer in works like *Glas* or *The Post Card*, Simon Critchley’s *Things Merely Are: Philosophy in the Poetry of Wallace Stevens*, W. G. Sebald’s merging of the factual and fictional in the same text – and countless other examples). Why then is this not enough? Why should the artist, unlike the scientist, work twice as much in order to produce, apart from the works of art, a complementary work as well – even though this in itself could be very important, at times even considered more important than the artwork itself, and even though the artist should have both the freedom and the possibility, if she or he wishes, to do so?

One should be justified in thinking that artists living in a democracy should have the freedom to do research through and within their artwork; and that they should equally have the freedom to produce a paper about this work as well. But should this be a demand, one that will decide one’s working terms and academic growth? Is this not the kind of demand that reintroduces the prioritising polarities that otherness has succeeded during the last five decades or so in undermining? Is it not a sort of eugenics that aims at purifying the work of the thinking artist (an expression that is an unthoughtful pleonasm or a trivial truism) and suspending or removing whatever the controlling logos cannot recognise, define, categorise and systematise? Works that are both philosophical and artistic at the same time, or arguments that are expressed in a very personal idiom, or art that demonstrates arguments about intellectual problems, have for years now opened the way we perceive the world, think and create today. Research in a specific work of art or a body of works of art is an intrinsic part of this artwork whether the artist intends it or not.

There is, then, following this line of argument, a certain risk that the departments of fine arts at some universities will produce more artistic research than art, more documents about art rather than art that is also a form of research with no need of a meta-text or a meta-work to express what it carries within itself. This entails another danger, another aspect at least, which is worth discussing: Are documenting artists going to be considered more important in the university than those who do not write about or contextualise their work? Could or even should the separate research document of an artist become better, more valuable in different ways, than the artwork it is based on? And, as a result of this, is quantity, the number and length and distribution of papers, going to matter more than the quality of the artwork?

At a time when boundaries have been criticised, lifted and crossed, and the exchanging of methods, knowledge and creative resources has been generously beneficial for the freedom of the probing mind and the curious, self-exploring body, when the critique of artificial division into disciplines has generated interdisciplinary studies or new transgressing research fields, it becomes apparent that this return to polarising and categorising pushes us back to an uncritical state that threatens to do violence not only to the university but also to the democracy that sustains it. It is, thus, not only the polarity within the expression “artistic research” (whether it privileges art over research or research over art) that casts a dark shadow over the freedom necessary for studying and creating within the university, it is also the appearance of various centres of research and the insistence upon excellence in research and of categorising this research. Instead of opening boundaries, removing restrictions, creating possibilities and freeing access

to knowledge and experience and the ways this knowledge and experience can be challenged or enriched, new restrictions are imposed and in such a way that they promote a certain eugenic thinking and a certain eugenic activity. It is a remarkable paradox that at our institute at Linnaeus University we have a postcolonial field of studies, which is called a centre while, at the same time, it is supposed to criticise the very idea and the various functions of the centre as a form of colonialism. This centre moreover is an excellent one, in contrast, one presumes, to the periphery within the same institute and the research done there, a territory of lesser importance that the centre could colonise, if need be, and exploit its resources, human and economic. The philosophical, ethical and simply logical implications pertaining to the structure and use of this excellence, like those of the centre, remain of course unchallenged. Equally unchallenged remains the position that the university in its entirety cannot, indeed it should not, be a place of a de facto and de jure unconditional excellence, especially one that is based in the gains of humanistic and post-humanistic research.

Yet another example of colonial privileging and purifying is the field of intermedial studies within the department of comparative literature of our university, this one too pushing what should be an open study of literature to an even farther periphery. Was the creating and studying of literature ever separate from the visual, the acoustic or the tactile arts and their study (Greek poetry and tragedy for instance)? Have years of critical theory not questioned the confines enforced by a blind humanism, in order to allow our creative, intellectual or sensual faculties to inseminate and nourish each other more freely than ever?

And as if all this restraining activity within the heart of our profession was not enough, we are now under the enforcement of a policy to privilege even more this artificial and violent system in its negative zeal to reduce and divide: We categorise research in a way that does not take into account any discussion of what quality is and the ways this quality matters. What and who decides, for instance, what “high” quality research and publishing is? Why should research that has fewer chances to be funded be considered less important by the evaluating system that is applied in our university? Why should the international aspect of our research, and soon I guess artistic work too, add value in comparison to research that for various reasons (philological scholarship for instance) does not reach other countries, making national research less important or valuable than international research? And is this not the kind of hierarchy that we ought to question both in itself and for its implications? Is it meant, for instance, that international is what is published in English mainly, and within the English-speaking world? Is publishing in English in Sweden or Greece going to be considered international? Is there a time perspective involved here? Does the demand for internationality consider the fact that it often takes time for research or an artistic opus to become known nationally as well as internationally? (The case of Walter Benjamin comes easily to mind, the fate of his doctoral thesis and the time it took for his theories to reach the status they have today.)

I would like to return now to the fact that it is the term “researcher” that is the deciding one in the new assessing hierarchy at our university that I mentioned above. The terms “artist” and “artistic development” are not mentioned, and I am not at all sure that they are taken under consideration, just as is the case

with the Research Council. Is this approach to research, artistic or scientific, the beginning of an effort to totally control the ways we think? To exercise power and the violence it produces rather than safeguard the freedom of thinking and feeling and of expressing this thinking and feeling? I am a professor of creative writing but others are telling me what research is and how I will conduct it. These others are dictating their restrictive demands on me; they enforce them upon me. As a direct result of these new hierarchies, of this approach, our application for the master's degree in creative writing has not been approved by government administrators (a very surprising decision, as the two appointed experts had evaluated it positively), my own university considers me a second-class (in the best case) professor and administrators are forcing a university, which ought to be autonomous and thus free to establish its own kind of research and affirm the openness of artistic and scientific fields, to comply with new autocratic rules.

For all these reasons it is important to keep as open as possible the discussion about the relation that the work of art has to itself, to its form and content, to its methods of operation and its intentions, to what makes its birth and functions imperative not only to society but even to the way we relate ourselves to the world, to the way we discover new worlds, to the way science, consciousness and awareness become as much art as they, at the same time, become knowledge.

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Päivi Kosonen

Creative Autobiography

FROM SELF-KNOWLEDGE TO
THE TEACHING OF WRITING

Autobiographical writing has a long history. Many of the forms of autobiographical writing known nowadays were already cultivated in the ancient world.¹ Digital forms, blog-writing, Facebook-updates or digital autobiography augment an old type of narrative.² Autobiographical literature is by no means tied to paper and print,³ but burgeoned on all sorts of surfaces: stone, bronze plates, papyrus, pieces of pot, rolls of parchment, paper, magnetic tape and nowadays on all possible digital media. In different periods autobiographical writing has been cultivated for numerous different purposes – for self-knowledge, expression and artistic-aesthetic reasons, for analysing reality and one's own course of life, and for consolation and taking care of oneself.

1 Kosonen 2007, 11–12; Abbs 1998. Compare Misch 1907/1950ab; Gusdorf 1956/1980 and 1991ab; Bakhtin 1975/1979; Baslez et al. 1993.

2 On late modern autobiographical writing, see e.g. Lejeune 2005; Kujan-sivu & Saarenmaa 2007; Smith & Watson 2012. – On digital autobiography, see e.g. Lejeune 2000; Paasonen 2007; Juppi 2012.

3 E.g. Cope & Phillips 2006; Smith & Watson 2012.

In this article I first examine the idea and the phenomenon of autobiography. I consider what benefit can be accrued from a knowledge of the cultural history of autobiography writing for the teaching of creative writing. I then create a theoretical basis for the method I called creative autobiographical writing and present a closely comparable programme of British fictional autobiography. I move widely in the humanities: autobiographical and literature research, anthropology, cultural research, creative writing research and psychotherapeutic creativeness and writing research. Finally, I examine the conception that two European writers, Georges Perec (1936–1982) and W.G. Sebald (1944–2001), have of their own autobiographical writing.

THE DIVERSITY OF AUTOBIOGRAPHICAL WRITING

In Europe both ancient and modern autobiographical writing⁴ has flourished in many different forms: diaries, notes and letters, poetry and essays, memoirs, confessions and autobiographies and the spiritual exercises of mystics – to mention but a few of the more well-known. Writing may be intended for

4 I use “autobiographical writing” in the wide cultural-anthropological meaning of Georg Misch (1907/1950ab). Misch’s concept covers a wider field than the “autobiography” of literary science (see Lejeune 1971/1998, 10; Lejeune 1975, 14; compare Kosonen 2009). – Other wide concepts are Foucault’s (1983) “writing about the self” (*écriture de soi*), Didier’s (1998) “writing about me” (*écriture de moi*), “personal writing” (e.g. Latvala, Peltonen & Saresma 2004). In a certain sense this could also be referred to as “self-sourced writing” or “writing in one’s own voice”, even “autofiction”, if it is loosely understood as “enriching” a literary text from the basis of one’s own experience (Doubrovsky 1988; compare Hunt 2000).

personal use (a personal diary or journal) or drafted with the intention of publication (confessions, memoirs, autobiography). Semi-public autobiographical forms of writing (for instance, letters) have often given rise to arguments and scandals and through them created new literary topoi (for instance, the lost letter topos). In modern autobiographical writing too, fuss linked to autobiographical writing belongs to the semi-public arena, in which the boundaries between private and public do not prevail in the general public understanding (autobiographical novel, text-message disputes, e-mail messages, Facebook and Twitter entries).

In different eras different sides of autobiographical writing have been emphasized. For example, in ancient and medieval Europe a many-sided culture of autobiographical writing that emphasized taking care of oneself and self-knowledge dominated. It did not, however, focus on individual or the genre of modern autobiography, which was unknown in antiquity.⁵ The modern autobiography tied to narrative and a realistic framework is in fact a late type of autobiographical writing, which came to the fore in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries with individual expression and a modern culture that emphasized historical development.⁶ The new literary form – known as autobiography – was quickly loaded with expectations of reaching an understanding of individual self-knowledge, a person's behaviour, and even society's history.

However, the early practitioners of autobiography collided with a phenomenon that Heraclitus had already written about: the flow of time. A barrier to the achievement of total under-

5 Stock 2001, 8–23; Kosonen 2007.

6 Gusdorf 1956/1980; Lejeune 1975.

standing is the simple fact that the object under scrutiny (one-self, one's own past) does not stay in one place, but shifts and changes according to the situation. The pioneer of the genre, Jean-Jacques Rousseau, noticed already when writing *Les Confessions* (published 1782–1789) that the idea of reaching a history of one's own soul (l'histoire de l'âme) was no more than a beautiful theory. He realized that the writing of one's own autobiography meant 'only' continuous verbal striving to give expression to one's own unique self, which, however, flees this striving. For Rousseau it was difficult to accept the logical conclusion of the intellectual journey he had taken: autobiographical remembering is a lifelong process, to which only death can bring an end.⁷

From another point of view, however, intellect signifies the possibility to recreate the self by autobiographical writing. Rousseau was able to understand this concept, as the Neuchâtel -preface demonstrates. There he opens his mind to the polyphony of autobiography and the creative expressionism of autobiographical writing:

I will tell each thing as I feel it, as I see it, without refinement, without bother, without troubling myself about motley. By abandoning myself at the same time to both the remembrance of the received impression and to the present feeling, I will depict the state of my soul doubly, namely at the moment when the event happened to me and at the moment when I described it; my uneven and natural style, sometimes sharp, sometimes diffuse, sometimes

7 Rousseau describes his new understanding alternatively in terms of nostalgia and bitterness in the last part of his autobiographical writings, *The reveries of a lonely traveller* (2010 [1782]). – The same idea has created in the minds of some writers amusing parodies like *Tristram Shandy* and *Kater Murr*.

wise and sometimes foolish, sometimes serious and sometimes gay, will itself form a part of my story.⁸

Rousseau gives us to understand that the precise moment of writing and feelings of the moment influence the writing of autobiography and also the way in which he handles the past. There is no one unambiguous life truth, but there are always at the very least two truths, “depicted doubly”. On the one hand there are the events of a life history and on the other the shade or style at a given time. Rousseau was one of the first who understood that the striving for self-knowledge involved in the writing of autobiography was knotted together with self-expression.

Our own contemporary culture stresses quite similar expression in autobiographical writing and aspects of experience.⁹ For instance, in Finland, as elsewhere, the practice of writing one’s own life story in life-history and reminiscence groups has been popular for some time. Writing and development groups concentrating on the writing of autobiography have also been shown to have therapeutic value.¹⁰

8 Rousseau 1995, 589.

9 Eskola 1998; Eskola & Peltonen 1997; Saresma 2004, 2007.

10 In developmental therapy work autobiographical writing has its own meaning (e.g. Hynes & Hynes-Berry 1986, 186–188; Ihanus 2005; Linnainmaa 2009, 56–57). On life history groups in which creative writing and therapeutic aspects are combined see e.g. Enwald & Vainikkala-Kejonen & Vähäaho 2003; Reinikainen 2007; Hulmi 2010.

AUTOBIOGRAPHY IN CREATIVE WRITING

In the teaching of creative writing autobiography is present in many ways. The discussion that is now under way in this field is in itself an understanding that the writing of autobiography can also have more to give to the teaching of writing.

In Finland, for a long time the teaching of creative writing stressed mastery of the literary art in quality and the writing process. Emphasis on the autobiographical and the therapeutic in writing is something we have traditionally avoided.¹¹ Nowadays it is true that in creative writing guide- and textbooks a more accepting attitude is taken to a writer's own experiences. The importance of confronting the writer's internal world can also receive emphasis.¹² However, often the writer's own experiences are understood as forming only raw material or material the good writer must sooner or later learn to master in order to refine them into fiction, whether short or long.

Method writing, writing as training, writing of diaries and writing down dreams are all recommended for use in writing guides as practice in getting to know one's internal self. In the

- 11 According to Liisa Enwald (1991, 39), at the beginning of the 1990s Finnish creative writing culture was dominated by an aesthetic-formalist set of values, in which an unenthusiastic attitude was taken to autobiographical writing and its therapeutic value: "The more therapeutic a text was, the more tightly and intimately it was seen to be bound up with the writer's subjective pain and crises, whose direct reporting would not hold the interest of readers."
- 12 Indeed, methods of guiding and textbooks now answer different requirements. For general presentations of creative writing in which the own voice is emphasized, see e.g. Jääskeläinen 2002; Vainonen 2003; Tuominen 2013. Others examine the self and the own voice from a quite different perspective: e.g. Cameron 1996/1999; Suurla 1998; Svinhufvud 2007 – they too have their own methods.

teaching of creative writing, autobiographical writing is not, however, especially encouraged. It is hoped that sooner or later the writer will grow out of his or her self expression sphere and move in the direction of fiction. The ideal is a text in which we find and get the feel of the writer's own voice, the personal touch – as long as it is not an autobiographical text. As if writing autobiography has no other purpose than therapy.

In spring 2012 I got a living reminder of these conceptions when I held in Turku Open University a course that gathered together the results of creative writing basic studies, in which the students assessed the development of their own skill in writing.¹³ I could not help noticing the almost unanimous and ambivalent idea of autobiographical writing among students of various ages. Many students considered autobiographical writing an intermediate stage. They still envisioned that at some stage they would progress from this to real writing: perhaps fiction or fantasy with real creativity, or then non-fiction, facts. When outlining their dreams of the future, almost all of them said that they wanted to continue with their creative writing: not on any account, however, did they want to *settle* for autobiographical writing, but rather to *progress* to fiction. Side by side with this rather disparaging opinion existed a deep subjective understanding of the value of autobiographical writing as a basic quality stage and way of writing. Almost all of them had themselves experienced the writing of their own feelings and thoughts as an important part of their writing process, one which they explained that they would continue with later. It

13 I choose this course as an example of the dominating ambivalent attitude to autobiography in our culture. In question was a very good, open and thoughtful group, whose members I have subsequently been able to stay in contact with.

simply didn't occur to them that this was "autobiographical writing".

Autobiography is also more widely seen in our culture as a form of writing that has a lesser value than novel-writing.¹⁴ We think of autobiographical writing as writing about our own life directly, in which the memory presents the only problem and challenge – that is all. Many of us, however, know that no-one can mechanically reproduce his or her reality and memory. According to the modern understanding there is no cellar where we place our memories on tidy shelves in carefully arranged storage files, from which an assiduous servant can fetch the memory that we ask for at any time. We know that a lived past event is not there and will never return as such. According to the modern understanding, the current moment of remembering stamps in its entirety the lived and remembered. We remember what has happened from our present self, as a real feeling, thinking bodily person who lives and experiences in this moment of remembering.¹⁵ It is just this that makes change possible.

Creativity is at the root of autobiographical writing too. An autobiographical text is the outcome of a creative process just as a novel is. As noted, already for Rousseau autobiographical writing was a linguistic manifestation of his own individual and unique self and through that a continuous recreation of himself. Thus the writing of one's own autobiography is not simply a matter of imitating reality. Autobiography is a project both impossible and possible at the same time. I am always different,

14 It is precisely for this reason that Celia Hunt (2010, 234) refers to her own method as "fictive autobiography" writing.

15 Määttänen 1996.

and memories and the reality of life can never be reached in their entirety. But just because I am different at every moment, every time I write memoirs a new unknown side of myself can appear and through it I can create myself again.

One writer after another has understood precisely this possibility and written it down in his text.¹⁶ And increasing value from the self-knowledge of autobiographical writing is founded on just this possibility of creating oneself again. It can be used in different environments – in general when writing, in the teaching of autobiographical writing and, for example, in therapeutic writing therapy work.¹⁷

THE THEORETICAL BASIS: THE CREATION OF A KNOWING AND FEELING SELF IN WRITING

In recent decades there have been theoretical discussions that concern autobiographical culture in many ways and which appear in theorized handling of creative writing and its teaching. At the heart of the discussion have been such ideas as "subject", "identity" and "change".¹⁸ New human theories have postulated the existence of a feeling, thinking subject, living in a continuously changing stream of life - a subject that understands pre-linguistic and linguistic dimension and whose consciousness and identity are maintained by a sense of the self

16 For example, Maria Peura says that she has used writing in many ways to construct herself. Incomplete devotion (*Antamuksella keskeneräinen*, 2012) even gave rise to the impression of cultivating an ascetic self.

17 Hunt & Sampson 1998, 201; Hunt 2010.

18 László 2008, 116–128; Bertolini 2010, 160–167.

and the continuity of self. This sense of continuity is kept up, for instance, according to Antonio Damasio's neurophysiological understanding, by the autobiographical memory, a person's gradually growing understanding of past events and sensations and the feelings associated with them. Through autobiographical memory our identities or autobiographical selves can be sustained.¹⁹ On this basis a person can tell narratives of him- or herself and his or her life, and write his or her autobiography.

The philosopher and psychologist Kirsti Määttänen has also written about the continuity of feeling on the basis of ourselves. According to her, writing autobiography is a central element in creating a feeling of continuity and constructing our identities: "By telling their life-stories writers create a wholeness and a feeling of continuity in themselves and about themselves. Not only in order to turn backwards, but to outline their internal world from the perspective of its future that they are encountering in the stage of life at the point of time when they are writing".²⁰ Määttänen has researched identity and the experiencing of a feeling of continuity from a semiotic perspective that is based on both the dialogic baby dance theory and practice that she has developed and Charles Peirce's pragmatic philosophy.²¹

Both Damasio's and Määttänen's ideas of the self are processual, and both theories include a concept of identity that is relatively stable or permanent. Our memory cannot guarantee a permanent identity, but the guarantee of identity can instead

19 Damasio 2000, 195–233.

20 Määttänen 1993, 162.

21 See BDM Baby Dance Method * e.g. Määttänen 1993, 1996, 2002, 2003.

be a process of remembering, in the life of a living person *a repeatedly experienced and tested feeling of continuity*. It is no surprise that writing of autobiography – in the sense of both everyday personal narratives and written autobiography – has an essential role in the theories of these two writers. According to them it is precisely through autobiographical narratives that it is possible to tune and by so doing recreate our identities. In everyday exchanges we reinforce our feeling of continuity by relating narratives about ourselves and our deeds to ourselves and others. In the writing of, for example, Facebook posts about our own lives, we embark upon a more intense cultivation of a feeling of continuity. In the writing of autobiography we are already at the core of the problem of continuity: in our attempts to combine the experiences of our life into one coherent narrative, that narrative then appears to the readers as a integrated narrative, a string of pearls, or as individual fragments.²²

The processual self-understanding which covers both the concept of sense of core identity recurring in our body and the concept of the linguistic self – make a reasonable serviceable understanding of the writing self possible from the perspective of creative writing, which is experienced as abiding and continual, but which is constantly subject to change.

Autobiographical literature can provide a logical basis for new theories. So, some earlier autobiography writers already knew that our identities are not a fixed, certain and lasting block of self on which recollection is built, but rather a brittle living organism that changes with time. For example, in his autobiography Stendhal compared his identity to the peeling pieces of a crumbling fresco, on the basis of which his au-

22 Kosonen 2000.

toportrait was almost impossible to discern.²³ However, when cultivating his own autobiographical writing Stendhal showed that he understood the significance of autobiographical writing and reminiscence – for the self, for one’s own vivacity and continuity.

From today’s perspective one could say that when we are writing we are connected with our living and feeling self: it is precisely this remembering, for instance, autobiographical writing, that keeps us lively and vivid – in a feeling of living continuity. Everything lives and flows, as Kirsti Määttänen puts it: “Remembering, in a certain sense, is being alive: a living being. Although it is of course possible to set out purposefully to remember, this is a special case. In reality everyone is remembering all the time and unceasingly, whether they want to or not.”²⁴ Unchangeability and remaining in one place are nothing but illusions of the mind.

ONE’S OWN VOICE – SELF-INVESTIGATION AND THE ART OF WRITING

An interesting and productive process theory in the field of autobiographical writing is that of the British researcher into creative writing and writing instructor, Celia Hunt, emeritus reader in continuing education in creative writing at the University of Sussex. In her books and articles she has developed a

23 Stendhal 1890/1973, 187. For interpretation of this idea see Kosonen 2000, 21–22.

24 Määttänen 1996, 19.

theory of the writing self and the writing voice.²⁵ In her book *Therapeutic Dimensions of Autobiography in Creative Writing* (2000) she has assembled theory and practices into a teaching program intended to help students of creative writing in finding their own style. Hunt's exercises are intended for the teaching of creative writing, but in my opinion they can also serve the personal needs of students more generally.²⁶ In her book Celia Hunt describes case-specifically the internal growth of some of her writing students and their development with the writing exercises.

According to Hunt, training of writers is ultimately a question of teaching two skills: the art of writing and the ability to find one's own voice. Matters linked to techniques of writing, mastering the process and receiving criticism are usually understood well in teaching, but the teaching of skills linked to the development of one's own voice and style, according to her, is still in its infancy in Britain.²⁷ Speaking about the concept of "own voice", Celia Hunt refers to the writer's own feeling of self:

When a writer says that she has 'found her voice', it seems to me she is saying that she has developed a deep connection in her writing between her inner life and the words she places on the page. When the writing is working well, she is able to access her own rich, emotional material and to use it imaginatively on the page. The term 'writing voice', then, in this internal sense, is a metaphor for a style of writing which contains the author's sense of self.²⁸

25 See e.g. Hunt 2000; Hunt & Sampson 1998,21; Hunt 2013 (which I have read later, after having finished this article).

26 cf. Hunt 2013.

27 Hunt 2000, 16.

28 Hunt 2000, 16–17.

In itself the idea is not new. In Hunt's assessment echo the voices of researchers into the style of past times.²⁹ In addition many modern creative writing guides and textbooks handle the concept of one's own voice and its meaning in a similar holistic spirit. For instance, as I understand it, the Finnish writer and facilitator of writing Jyrki Vainonen follows a similar line in one of his articles, where he writes of the teacher's duty to direct the student back towards her- or himself, to the place where "the writer's own voice persistently echoes" as soon as the writer begins to hear it.³⁰ Vainonen considers this "ethics of presence" one of the long-established criteria and values of literary art.

The significance of Hunt's program is in her ability to create a practical wholeness on the basis of a prevailing theoretical understanding, which students and teachers of creative writing can test and experiment with. With Hunt's exercises the student has the opportunity to step inside his or her experiences and learn to present his/her internal experiences and feelings with sensitivity. The more realistic and harmonious link the writer is able to make with him or herself and his/her own emotional landscape, the better he or she is able to reach the internal world of the characters and narrative situations he or she has created. While increasing self-knowledge, the writer can

29 For example, Jean Starobinski's (1971/1980) understanding of style can be considered an image of a hand moved by the writer's internal spirit. Starobinski's idea is reminiscent of George Louis Buffon's and Jean Jacques Rousseau's understanding of style. According to Buffon's holistic "style is the person himself"-understanding, style does not merely "touch the ear" and "give work for the eye", but "moves the soul and the heart" by talking to the mind. Rousseau's understanding has already been mentioned in this article. See also Kosonen 2004, 348–349.

30 Vainonen 2003, 29.

create more moving fictional prose, in which characters can freely and credibly appear themselves “with their own voice”.³¹ Listening to one’s own inner self and searching for one’s voice (without necessarily finding it!) can open up a fresh possibility for the writer to write fiction.

The creating and conveying of an authentic lived and experienced emotional world is not easy. According to Celia Hunt the first step is to help the student writer to access his or her own emotions, to access feelings below the text surface and reach an understanding of the link between them. The idea is that in a safe enough group the student can progress to listening to and lyricising others’ emotions too. By opening a route and a link to his/her own mind and the mind and feelings of his/her created characters the writer can create touching and effective fiction. It can offer the reader a way into the character’s mind and give him or her the possibility to experience the characters’ feelings, just as if they were real people.³²

It is essential to understand that writing in one’s own voice is not a question of monophony: rather, the ‘own voice’ can and must resonate polyphonically.³³ At the same time the writer’s feeling of his/her own voice chosen from the many voices of the text is significant, as the Nobel-poet Seamus Heaney has written: “Finding a voice means that your words have the feel of you about them.”³⁴ Taking a Bakhtinesque approach, one could say that creative autobiographical writing can open the

31 Hunt 2000, 50–96. Compare Hunt & Sampson 1998, 21–34.

32 Hunt 2000, 17–18. Compare Marshall 1995.

33 Compare Kosonen 2009, 290.

34 Heaney 1980, 43; quotation Hunt 2000, 17; compare Hunt & Sampson 2006, 37.

way to dialogic or polyphonic writing. If, on the other hand, the link to the self and the internal self is missing from the writer, real dialogic tuning, not to mention the writing of good dialogue, is not possible.³⁵

The logical core of Hunt's autobiographical training programme is free and creative fiction. She herself assesses her writing programme as "fictive autobiography". It is a question of practice, in which the writer can lean on his or her own memories, but without being restricted to facts. Fictional autobiography diverges from the straightforward autobiographical account, which is dependent on relating and in which people and events are described or explained from the outside. In fictional autobiographical writing it is not enough simply to relate, but things and events and people are shown from the inside: "Thus, in a fictional rendering, instead of standing outside of a situation and relating it from a distance, the writer is required *to enter into the experience* and to represent it from the inside and *with feeling*."³⁶

In my understanding it is not possible to take quite such a black and white position between straight and fictional au-

35 Hunt 2000, 16–18. The cornerstone of this dialogue theory of Mikhail Bakhtin can be considered an understanding of the 'living word' created on the basis of Dostoyevsky's work, according to which meanings are constructed and received as a communal voice. In every word and phrase there is always a strange voice present, a hidden element. Only a dialogic participating attitude enables the identification of the strange voice and is able to come close to it as a meaningful position, as another point of view: "Only when it is internally dialogically tuned is my word able to associate closely with the strange word, but not, however, to merge into it, nor to swallow it, nor to diminish its meaning, but to preserve it as an independent word." (Bakhtin 1929/1991, 100). This position is also used in writing therapy work. (see Linnainmaa 2009, 61–67)

36 Hunt 2000, 92. Compare Hunt 2010, 233–235.

tobiographical literature. Celia Hunt wants to emphasise “fictional autobiographical literature” as a possibility to approach one’s internal self, but she does not say that all autobiography is *also* or already fictional precisely because autobiographical writing, like all other writing, is based on a creative process of signification. Nor is it ultimately a question in Hunt’s programme of crafting one’s own life, but of arriving into the self and the narrative, or of the art of creating oneself in a way that is comparable to the understanding of the pioneers of modern autobiography, Rousseau and Goethe, of creating life and one’s own identity in the process of reminiscence writing.³⁷

Nevertheless, emphasising fictiveness has its advantage. Fiction – more than autobiography that favours real events – allows the writer a safe distance from himself and his own life. Under the protection of fiction the writer can examine himself and his life, as well as safely externalizing problems linked to his own writing on paper, thus situating things and creatures in a place outside himself.

GEORGES PEREC – NOVELIST AND AUTOBIOGRAPHER

Literature history is full of autobiographical writers, people who toy with ideas and examine themselves and their lives obliquely or diagonally, playing with fact and fiction, experimenting with the real and the imaginary. One teaser is the French master of experimental writing, George Perec (1936–1982), whose autobiographical strategies I endeavoured to unmask in my PhD

37 Compare Eakin 1985.

thesis “Lives in words” (*Elämät sanoissa*, 2000). The French autobiography researcher Philippe Lejeune has dedicated a book to Perec’s indirectness:

The oblique. The deviation. The change of direction. The ruse. These are the genre of words employed by Georges Perec when speaking of his memory or his autobiographical writing. Impossible for him to take the well-worn route of the classic narratives, to set out with a reassuring “I am born”. But equally impossible not to take the route towards his own origin. It is ultimately reached by many side roads. It is a network, a labyrinth of displaced autobiographies: fantasies and childhood recollections, dreams, genealogical quests, memory exercises, everyday inventories, descriptions of places, explorations in collective memory, all coalescing in “attempts at description” of the indescribable and the “almost forgotten.”³⁸

According to Lejeune, George Perec’s image and identity as a writer were formed from an indirect or oblique view of himself and his own internal identity. There were certainly reasons for the avoidance of directness and keeping a distance. Georges Perec’s childhood was tragic. He became an orphan after losing his parents in the Second World War, his mother in the death camp of Auschwitz and his father who was accidentally shot on the last day of the war. During the war years the Jewish boy went into hiding with his relatives in a small mountain village on the Franco-Swiss border:

What marks this period especially is the absence of landmarks: these memories are scraps of life snatched from the void. No mooring. Nothing to anchor them or hold them down. Almost no way of ratifying them. No sequence in time, except as I have recon-

38 Lejeune 1991, text from the back cover.

structured it arbitrarily over the years: time went by. There were seasons. There was skiing and haymaking. No beginning, no end. There was no past, and for very many years there was no future either; things simply went on. You were there. It happened somewhere. [--] One time it was an aunt, next time it was another aunt. Or a grandmother. [--] The only thing you do know is that it went for years and then one day it stopped.³⁹

From his traumatic childhood experience George Perec fashioned – at the same time as he underwent psychoanalysis at the turn of the 1960s and ‘70s – his autobiography *W, or the Memory of Childhood* (*W ou le souvenir d'enfance*, 1975), in which he presented his life story as a narrative montage. In question are two different tales, the fictional tale depicting sport-mad W island and autobiographical chapters which overlap each other increasingly tightly as the book progresses without ever forming an indisputably continuous life story with a beginning, turning point and end.

When playing with words and meanings, dreams and memory, Perec builds from his literary product a creative network or [allotment] of autobiographical writing, in which he examines himself, his writing and his life as a writer:

I compare myself to a farm worker who cultivates several plots of land. In one he plants beet, in another alfalfa, in a third maize. Thus my book combines four different fields, four ways of questioning, in which, perhaps, the same question is ultimately posed, but posed from four different points of view, which always correspond to a different form of working with writing.⁴⁰

39 Perec 1975/2011, 68–69.

40 Perec 1985, 9–12. For an exploration of this picture, see Kosonen 2000, 223.

He succeeded in creating impressive literature, which people can read without knowing anything of the writer's life.

WRITING AUTOBIOGRAPHY W.G. SEBALD'S WAY

W.G. Sebald's essay-novel *Vertigo* (*Schwindel. Gefühle*, 1990) includes an episode in which the first person narrator describes a journey in autumn 1980. He had left nursing the hope that it would help him to get over a "difficult stage."⁴¹ Having arrived in Venice the narrator has his beard cut with a knife, wanders the streets of the labyrinthine city and drives a vaporetto. Later he sits in a bar on a promenade, reads newspapers, writes notes and leafs through Grillparzer's⁴² travel diary, whose descriptions of Venice's insignificant and dreadful Doge's palace suit his own negative feelings. The mood created by remembering the Palazzo leads the narrator to Casanova's autobiography⁴³ and he spends a while imagining Casanova's imprisonment in a burning hot cell under a lead roof, from which he managed to make an amazing escape. The strange coincidence – of the sort that Sebald likes describing – is that the narrator notices that he is sitting in a bar near the doge's palace on the last day of October, exactly the day of Casanova's escape.

41 In my section on *Vertigo* I make use of my own review of the book. (Kosonen 2012).

42 Franz Grillparzer (1791–1872) was an Austrian playwright known for his embittered withdrawal from literary circles.

43 The famous adventurer Giacomo Casanova (1725–1798) is known from his memoirs. Unfortunately, the only available Finnish translation was made from an incomplete and garbled manuscript.

It soon becomes clear that the Venice visit is beginning to remind the narrator of earlier recovery journeys and that with his pondering he is in serious danger of committing suicide. Having felt the special “white silence” of the Venice morning while lying in bed, dark imaginings and memories flood the narrator’s mind, to the extent that he stiffened as if he was dying. The situation is not helped by the fact that it is Halloween, All Saints’ Day, and finally the narrator sinks into total apathy. Then something begins to happen. As the body lies like a corpse on a mortuary slab the narrator’s mind begins to stir. He begins to imagine. Little by little his mind is filled with images of the nearby Venice cemetery island. They lead him to other places and other states of mind. From these Sebald draws inspiration for *Vertigo*:

On that first day of November in 1980, preoccupied as I was with my notes and the ever widening and contracting circles of my thoughts, I became enveloped by a sense of utter emptiness and never left my room. It seemed to me then that one could well end one’s life simply through thinking and retreating into one’s mind, for, although I had closed the windows and the room was warm, my limbs were growing progressively colder and stiffer with my lack of movement, so that when at length the waiter arrived with the red wine and sandwiches I had ordered, I felt as if I had already been interred or laid out for burial, silently grateful for the proffered libation, but no longer capable of consuming it. I imagined how it would be if I crossed the grey lagoon to the island of the departed, to Murano or further still to San Erasmo or to the Isola San Francesco del Deserto, among the marshes of St Catherine.⁴⁴

44 Sebald 2011, 63–64; [tr into Finnish by Oili Suominen].

One thing seems clear: when writing of the narrator's paralysis, of his sleeping on the mortuary slab, Sebald writes of imagination and creativity, thus opening up the present moment of emptiness, when it is possible to hear even the quietest voices and echoes that reverberate in that fleeting moment.

Many writers, from Virgil and Dante onwards, have described stopping as if going to their grave and the silence of the cemetery as a condition and prerequisite of their own imagining. Nor can modern writers escape it. Margaret Atwood too, in her essay "Negotating with the Dead" (2002) has depicted her writing as descending into the underworld. Only after venturing to descend among the dead has Atwood, according to her own words, the possibility to hear the voices of "the otherworld". These she can then bring into this world and arrange for us, the readers, the inhabitants of this world, who interpret the voices and play their music – each within the boundaries of our own possibilities.

In this so-called space between this and that other world Margaret Atwood writes in a way that corresponds to Sebald's, who does not write of melancholy or depression, those generally known states of mind, but what he calls vertigo (*Schwindel*), going through a unique experienced bodily feeling (*Gefühle*). When writing, Sebald allows his unconscious mind – his memories and experiences of Venice and other events he has lived through in the past — to wander in the guise of an essay writer side by side with the conscious self, the writer.

So, should we call the creator of this essay-novel who writes of living and being and through vertigo a novelist or a writer of autobiography? The question may influence the literary hair-splitter, as Sebald is unanimously regarded as a quality writer, in other words a novelist, who draws on his creative mind and imagination – not from his own life. And if he happens to

use material from his own life, as all writers understandably do to some extent, it can nevertheless be seen that he has the basic skill of a real writer: the ability to take a word out of its everyday vortex. He is the Writer, the Novelist, he has an imagination, he is an accomplished writer of fiction. Assessing Sebald as an autobiographical author feels wrong, naive and one-dimensional. Nor can his lively narrative in any way return to one voice – a suffering and melancholic self.

Sebald does not write about his life stage by stage in the fashion of the modern autobiographers. Nonetheless, the text full of experience and life, the autobiographical writing in the "spirit of truth",⁴⁵ makes it possible to include *Vertigo* among autobiographical works. The question is one of describing a difficult phase of life and the emotions associated with it through a way of writing that cannot resonate in the reader's mind without the words having a foundation in authentic and lived experience.⁴⁶ It is not a question of autobiography, but an autobiographical novel, or perhaps essay-novel.

It may be unarguable that Sebald uses his personal prose in his self-expression and artistic endeavours. For us, the readers, he makes art of the experiences of a certain stage of his life. The memories of Venice are there somewhere – who knows? – but while writing he has the ability and the daring to compose himself to listen to the voices of the past, put the critical and analytical mind of the professor of European literature aside for a moment and surrender to the voice of his creative and subconscious mind. After that he can return to the conscious

45 Lejeune 2005, 31. See also Kosonen, 2009, 288.

46 In his book *Everyone Can Write* (2000), Peter Elbow uses the term "felt sense" for this embodied knowledge, which is recognisable from the text as revealing the author's authentic, lived and experienced understanding.

and questioning mind to write again, to cultivate and give the finishing touches to publish the text and make it ready for reading, that is Vertigo, from whose pages I myself can recognize something of my own giddy feelings of existence.

THE FUTURE OF AUTOBIOGRAPHICAL WRITING

Autobiographical writing has much to offer in the teaching of creative writing. All the sides of autobiographical writing that I have mentioned in this article and numerous others besides can be used in teaching and guidance. A condition is a feeling for autobiographical writing and a real desire and ability to select its gems for modern language and the needs of current studies.

History should not be forgotten. The cultural history of autobiographical writing can proffer a great deal to the teaching of creative writing. The British researcher and defender of "deep autobiography", Peter Abbs, who has been dedicated to the subject, writes:

Most of us who now write autobiography, who keep introspective journals and diaries or who generally develop a deeply reflective disposition towards our own experience, belong to this tradition [= of western autobiographical culture]. It has forged the very language we use. We are part of its development, even if we turn critically on its methods and many of its assumptions. We can only deepen our reflective practices by envisaging our individual lives as a part of the same adventure, of that always unfinished project for human understanding and fulfilment, however broken and uncertain it may now seem.⁴⁷

47 Abbs 1998, 128.

In Finland creative writing studies have given an important promise of cultivating a culture of autobiography, in which autobiographical writing is encouraged and in which it is researched and taught. In many educational establishments, universities and polytechnics autobiographical writing has been adopted as a taught subject. In the Universities of Turku and of Jyväskylä it is an integral part of the teaching of writing.⁴⁸ The challenge of autobiographical writing has also been taken up by art colleges, technical art colleges and Drama schools, in which research and activity linked to autobiography is fairly eagerly practised.

My own hope is that autobiographical writing would become an accepted academic discipline for us too: a path to self-knowledge acknowledged by every student and teacher and a recognised source of all writing.

Translated by Philip Line

48 I also think the lively autobiography of Jyväskylä is based on the research projects lead by Emeritus Professor Katarina Eskola in the Modern Culture Centre, projects which are linked to autobiography. In the Narrative of a Writing teacher (*Kirjoittamisen opettajan kertomus*, 2011), the PhD of Nora Ekström, autobiography is linked to a constructive concept of teaching that offers a challenge in the teaching of creative writing. Knowledge cannot be bestowed from above, but things are achieved through practice, things are understood and the best way is to find a personal way of expressing and writing.

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Martin Štoll

The Precondition of Creative Work

There is suddenly something where there was nothing before. The process of this change from conception to birth is a process of searching and groping about, trials and errors. It is accompanied with both, immense torment as well as flames of joy. It is the miracle of creation present in all spheres of life – in nature, forming of relationships as well as in all fields of creativity: film, literature, painting, architecture and art in general. How much originality, genuineness, sincerity, empathy, sensitivity, but also art, craft, life experience and suiting material conditions is needed for (at least) something to become out of nothing. And is it enough?

The following text offers a reflection on the cumulation of energy which is essential for the creative process and which is mostly present in debuts or in a mature work of an author. Attention will be drawn to the almost forgotten magical dimension of creative work and its influence on identity play. Last but not least, the precondition of creative writing will be defined.

DISPOSITIONS AND TALENTS

The classic of psychology and aesthetics, Herbert Read, with reference to Martin Buber, points to the fact that “there exists

in all men a distinct impulse to make things, an instinct which cannot be explained by theories of libido or will to power” (Buber 1926 and Read 1958/1974, 285).

The creative impulse may differ in strength, the degree to which it is developed or subdued and in the way its intensity is transformed in relation to acquired experience and age. And as each of the creative kinds has its particularities, not everyone can be equally creative in all of them. It is natural that a person is a complex of different kinds of abilities, endowments, dispositions and talents. Each and every person is original and as Read points out “uniqueness, because it is something not possessed by anyone else, will be of value for the society” (Read 1958/1974, 5). Discovering the strongest point of one’s own creative tendency and greatest endowment tends to be the hardest task in the pursuit of happiness in life.

Ethnographic research has shown that in tribal societies the variety of endowments can even contribute to socializing transformations of the whole, to the so called democratization of society by creative work. These processes are also subjects of the interdisciplinary research of cultural anthropology, whose results have proven as immensely valuable also for the study of creative work and creativity. The link between abilities, definition of roles and plays with identity in the process of masking and rituals (i.e. the rituals of creative work) have inspired anthropologists in defining different personification figures. (Erban 2010, 154). Historian Peter Burke gives the following example:

the craftsman or singer hunts, fishes or tills the soil like other members of the community, and they too carve or sing, even if they do it less frequently and less well. In the Nigerian tribe Tivy

if a man carving a stick is called away, a bystander may pick up the knife and carry on the work (Burke 2009, 49).

In our “civilized” society which passed through the melting pot of post-Enlightenment and is characterized by narrow specialisations dependent on sophisticated technologies, this model can hardly assert itself.

THE MAGICAL DIMENSION

Confined by the cultural industry in all our discussions of output, grants and craft we often forget about the fact that creative work has got its magical dimension¹. Its recollection represents one of the main messages in Theodor Adorno’s and Max Horkheimer’s thesis about the period of Enlightenment as the turning point from which and in whose name humanity deliberately began to give up that dimension; the time when the process of “disenchantment of the world” began. With the uncontrollable growth of consumerism and the inevitable mass transformation of art into articles these ideas have yet again become particularly relevant. (Adorno–Horkheimer 1945/2006.) The process of change from nothing to something can occur on the spiritual level; through communication with something beyond us or in us, communication with the order or communication with the whole which is ungraspable by reason. I believe

1 I share the basic thesis of Adorno and Horkheimer about the period of Enlightenment being the turning point from which and in whose name humanity deliberately began to give up the magical dimension; the time when the process of “disenchantment of the world” began. For more see Adorno–Horkheimer 1945/2006.

that in the rational and post-postmodern era we live in, faith and creative work remain among the few ways of touching the whole about which we have already forgotten.

The Argentinian poet and essayist Ernesto Sábato rightly claims:

art, like dream, invades the archaic terrains of human race and therefore can be and is being the instrument for recovering the integration of which reality and fantasy, science and magic, poetry and pure thought form an inseparable part (Sábato 2002, 140).

Thinking of the magic dimension was taken even further by Czech art and architecture theoretician Václav Vilém Štech, who defined creative work (not necessarily artistic) as the struggle for renewing the moment of the first contact in which a person is penetrated by the world” (Štech 1946, 79).

Creative work, or transformation of form, can also be seen as balancing chaos with order or on the contrary, as disturbing the order by chaos. Creative work causes asymmetry as it upsets the current situation; thus, each asymmetry brings energy to lethargy and reclusiveness. All in all, this is happening each and every second in our body where our cells grow or die or, let us suppose, each and every second in space, which, according to the scientist, was created by the very same process.

A work of art which completes this struggle and succeeds in keeping and revealing the moment will be able to connect with not just the present, but also the coming generations of recipients. In receiving such works of art we tend to feel their effect physiologically, no matter whether in the good or bad way, as Sábato noted:

Nietzsche's reservations towards Wagner are of a physiological kind. He could not breathe, he felt weak in his knees and his stomach protested just as his heart, blood circulation and entrails (Sábato 2002, 146).

Picasso's Rooster in the Pinakothek can be just as intense as the Altamira cave paintings. In both cases, we can only guess the context; however, we recognize the animal in the tangled lines, we perceive the artistic code and through the intensity of the message and its simplicity we let ourselves be immersed in such a state in which we do not recognize ourselves.

Strictly speaking, a dialogical principle is involved. Tuning in is dependent not only on the author's skills, mentioned contexts, but also on the viewer's, or reader's, intimacy with experiencing spirituality and authenticity or openness towards the multiplicity of layers. The power of sincerity or genuineness is usually the main gate to emotional acceptance or refusal of a work of art. We feel that we understand it, trust it. By intricate work with emotions the mass media can evoke the feeling of authenticity in the recipient. They build on the assumption that the evoked emotions are authentic; that the recipients, believing in the reactions they experience, neglect to realize that they have been manipulated. As Umberto Eco puts it, a kitsch is nothing else than the marketing of an effect; it is an "imposition of an effect to be enjoyed by the consumer", offering the "ready-made, ready-to-use and commented emotion". Thus, the mass media spread the "aesthetic lie", as, by betting on the so called lowest denominator, they fail to bring the recipient to his/her own experience. (Eco 1964, 76, 78.)²

2 This is widely used by the mass media, which focus directly on this so called lowest common denominator.

CUMULATION OF ENERGY

During our lives, numberless authors and numberless works court our favour. Alongside those which were made for direct consumption and have a short expiry date, those which we basically flounder through, we can find those which talk to us more substantially.³ The impression they make, the atmosphere or a concrete situation stay in our heads and hearts, keep coming back and reminding themselves and sometimes they even come up in important or decisive moments of our lives.

How is it possible, though, that some works communicate with us more and some less? Even within the oeuvre of one author? Why is, pardon the personal selection, short story *Vieras mies tuli taloon* [*A Stranger Came to the Farm*] (1937) by Mika Waltari far more intensive than his grand historical novels (with the exception of *Sinuhe the Egyptian*, of course)? Why do Miloš Forman's *One Flew Over the Cuckoo's Nest* (1975) and *Amadeus* (1984) draw us in more than other films from his filmography? Why can't we drive away our experience from reading such diverse works as the bitter Jewish absurdity from the time of Prague flooding *Sidra Noah* (2010) by David Jan Novotný, the magical detective search for women with special shamanic skills *Žitkovské bohyně* [*The Žitkov Godesses*] (2012) by Kateřina Tučková or *Harmonia caelestis* (2000) by Péter Esterházy? What can the above mentioned works possibly have

3 For me such initiation experience took place in a Prague film club in the 1980's watching the apocalyptic fresco about life in the countries of the so called Third World *Powaqqatsi* (1988) by Godfrey Reggio, with the fascinating camera of Graham Berry and Leonidas Zourdomis, and music composed by Philip Glass.

in common? What distinguishes them from the rest of the authors' production?

There may be a situation in the life of each artist when s/he is able to invest in his/her work more than just the essentials. Just as nature endowed us with endorphins and sexual desire, without which humanity would have died out a long time ago, we were also endowed with the urge for our own creative torment. Each author is actually a masochist, that is, if s/he takes their work seriously.

One of the greatest virtues of an author is the ability to part from his/her ideas, characters, best takings, whole works and manuscripts; the ability to fall into despair and then find the way out, overcome desperation with immense energy, fervour and longing. For this, a strong motivation is needed – like unfulfilled erotic desire, the desire to overcome oneself, to cope with something or even the natural desire to come to the fore and succeed. In the filmography of each filmmaker, in the catalogue of each visual artist or in the collected works of each writer we can find works which thus transcend their author.

One of the preconditions for something like that to happen is the author's unintentionality.⁴ As Czech painter Jan Zrzavý used to say: "The best things have always somehow done themselves" (Třeštková 1976).

Consequently, a suitable constellation of skill, talent, diligence, fervour, objective circumstances and experience can occur; in other words, the energy assembles. It spouts into the creative process, the search for adequate means to express the

4 However, I have been alerted by the literary theoretician Daniel Soukup to the fact that we need to distinguish more creative types; Goethe, for example, being aware of his genius "intentionally created masterpieces". In personal correspondence from 15 March, 2015.

idea, capture reality, convey or evoke a feeling, the realization. The jet of energy is drawn by the work of art as a magnet, it soaks it like a sponge and keeps it.

TWO PEAKS IN AN ARTIST'S CAREER

Debuts

The publication of a debut, let us say the first published or the first mature work represents the moment of initiation for an author. It is the first time for the person-author to come out of himself/herself, mostly with the most original and best which s/he has gathered during the first decades of life. (Only few people wait that long before they produce their second work.) In a certain virginal relationship to craft and the whole process one may be amazed by what is going on and the effort to communicate with the whole may seem naively sincere.

Josef Škvorecký's novel *Zbabělci* [*The Cowards*] (1958) about one week in a small town at the end of World War II occupies a specific place not only in the context of Czechoslovak literature and the political context of the period⁵, but also within the oeuvre of the very author. We can hardly find another work which would be so characteristic for Škvorecký and his world. Neither does any other of his works display such autobiographic treatment of the plot.

5 Written in 1948 it was banned by censorship – its first edition was shredded and was not published until ten years later in an adapted version.

*Vest Pocket Revue*⁶ (1927), the first performance of the phenomenal Czech avant-garde Osvobozené divadlo [Liberated Theatre]⁷ which took place between the wars is unique not only for its originality in the period context, but also because of the fact that it was created quite spontaneously, on an amateur basis and it was the enthusiasm of its audiences which catapulted it to the structures of official culture.

A debut in the sense of author's creative manifesto was Václav Havel's *Zahradní slavnost* [*The Garden Party*] (1963) – which is basically the prototype of Havel's absurd world, whose sharp originality is not only inspired but also inspiring.

The stylized documentary *Moravská Hellas* [*Moravian Hellas*] (1964) by Karel Vachek, criticizing the artificiality of folklore, provoked passionate debates at the time of its creation; however, as to the method of shooting, philosophical approach and choice of topics, there is no other work which would be more typical of Vachek than his debut.

By the same token, there is Jan Svěrák and his provocative ecological film *Ropáci* [*Oil Gobblers*] (1988) about a non-existent car exhaust loving creature, for which they were awarded the American “Student” Oscar. Getting an Oscar for your debut is a pat on the back but also a heavy blow. The standard is set high, the ideal and potential target conquered. What to do next? Svěrák, in my opinion, was never more authentic than in his above mentioned debut.

6 The title is a play on words west and vest.

7 Liberated Theatre was a platform of Czech avant-garde theatre officially existing (with a few breaks) from 1926 until the Communist coup in 1948. Its main protagonists and authors were Jiří Voskovec and Jan Werich, together with composer and pianist Jaroslav Ježek.

Most debuts originate out of desire. Nevertheless, the delusion of their success lies in the author's succumbing to the erroneous feeling that s/he knows it all, s/he got to the root of it and starts to expect that his/her work will go on in this spirit and on the same high level. That is why the second works share a sad destiny – a whole study could be devoted to this issue.

Masterpieces

Eventually, it may (and also may not) happen that the author once again creates such work of energy and magic. After s/he has overcome the resuscitating stages, gathered enough experience in life and work, freed himself/herself from thinking of craft and has mastered it perfectly, when s/he has the energy and motivation and recalls his/her original ritual of communication with the wholeness which transcends him/her. Only then can a work of art astonish again, this time as a mature fruit. As is the case of the above mentioned Forman's *Amadeus*.

František Vlácil's historical film ballad from the 13th century *Marketa Lazarová*⁸ (1967) was claimed by Czech critics as the most important work of Czech cinematography ever. That is the film made with great labour, effort and maybe even tears. Vlácil comments its birth:

After all those months – what am I saying – years, I think that the film about Marketa Lazarová was a job of its own. It is a relief that

8 It is an adaptation of Vladislav Vančura's novel from 1931.

the work is done. Before Marketa – you see, I divide my life into “before” and “after” – I used to make films with joy. Marketa was a purgatory for me. You struggle with things which are hard to master, they do not yield. (Nostalghia 2015)

Furthermore, one masterpiece the avant-garde film poem *Zem spieva* [*Earth in Song*] (1933) by ethnographer Karel Plicka, which combines the rich photographic and ethnographic experience of the author with youthful courage of Alexander Hackenschmied in editing. By the shift from scientific accuracy to associative editing and rhythmic editing, the film gained a whole new, poetic dimension which was great appraised at the Venice Film Festival. It is also one of the few non-fiction Czechoslovak films listed in world film encyclopaedias. This congenial and exceptional work can be seen as such also in the context of Plicka’s other, previous and later, movies. Heavens opened and this film was created. The power of expression and thought, multiplied by energy and experience, became so intense in these masterworks, that it surpassed the very authors.

INNER NEED OF CREATION: ME AND NOT-ME

Such intensity could not have been reached only by the interplay of all the above mentioned constellations and elements without a unifying principle. Something that urges us to create. An engine which heats the creative cauldron. Fuel which makes us sing during field work, write a passionate and moving love letter, make a drawing perfect in its simplicity, convey a gripping account of inner strength from a concentration camp,

shoot an amateur film, stage an amateur theatre performance etc. Creative work, as was said above, or the ecstatic experience of creative work can be given to each person. “A savage will not produce tasteless things because he cannot – he has nothing to choose from and thus complicate his work”, writes Štech (1941, 46).

It is not merely Read’s *creative tendency*, it is something more. Desire, passion. The essential *need of game as such and at the same time desire for ecstatic experience in communication with the whole*. The desire to touch it, be it by means of the craft’s tools or through experience and reincarnation to other lives, stories and identities. Štech defined this need in an art historian’s perspective:

Art is the creation of new nature; artistic expression is conditioned by the inherent (artistic) instinct which is as substantial as hunger, truculence or love. Out of the creative balancing of a person’s inner tension with the surrounding nature new things are created, independent on the existing world. (Štech 1946, 65)

Yet again does cultural anthropology enter the scene; this time by providing the most apt and inspiring proofs of this longing in its research of the principles of games and rituals. Both form the essence of creative work, and vice versa – games and rituals are forms of creative work.

In his study of the principle of masking (not only with indigenous peoples but also in theatre) Czech anthropologist Vít Erban (2010, 144) analysis and develops the so called Continuum of Performative Modes by John Emigh. He shows that on the scale of the different functions of a mask and changes of (social and actor’s) identity, the first stage of the total transfor-

mation from “me” to “not-me” there is also the so called mode of visitation/possession, trance and ecstasy⁹.

	PERFORMANCE	ACTING IN	
	IN EVERY DAY	CHARACTER	
ME	<□.....□.....□.....□..... >		NOT-ME
	PRETENDING	VISITATION/POSSESION	

(Emigh 1996, 22)

Actors can confirm that this situation is their bread and butter depending only on the condition in which they enter the play, their determination and openness towards the process of transformation, or the constellation of the participants at the ritual of the theatre performance (contact with audience etc.) Likewise, writers, filmmakers, musicians or visual artists can fall into this kind of trance. Czech painter Josef Jíra said:

You get this kind of chill in your hand while painting and you don't know what it is or who it is. And it's more beautiful than making love. And this happens to you once or twice in your life. And it is enough! (Štoll 1997)

We have shown that if creative work comes out of the desire to express the world by creative means there is hope that the author's energy will be focused with more precision than ever on the creative process itself and that his/her sincere effort to

9 Emigh uses the word visitation meaning the visitation by spirit, which is in the anthropological sense closer to the perception of indigenous peoples. However, the term also signifies total captivation, e.g. by creative work, which can in a certain intensity transcend to the magical dimension. See more in Emigh 1996, 22.

touch the magic can bear juicy fruit – at least in the debut or also, for the better, in other creative periods to come.

Let us propose a thesis at this point that the fundamental need for creative activities bordering on obsession is the basic and most substantial precondition of creative work.

It is the beginning of everything and without it there is nothing. Without the burning desire there can hardly be something worth “throwing” at the audiences, something that endures.

STERILIZATION OF DESIRE

In conclusion, let us make a slightly provocative practical excursion. What effect does education in arts have on this desire? And on subsequent professional life?

Since the time of the first academies of fine arts in Vienna, since the time of artists’ individualization and their coming out of anonymity or the shadow of their master there has been an ongoing discord. Let us ask ourselves sincerely: What is the real goal of education? Deepening the knowledge of the magical ritual and instigating desire or professionalization and high numbers of graduates successful on the labour market? Unfortunately, it is usually the latter.

Doesn’t the gradual consecration to the mysteries of their craft and revealing the principles of cultural life make the pedagogues guilty of causing the professional blindness of their students? Doesn’t the gradual loss of illusions dull the principal urge for creative work? One of the few possibilities for the pedagogue is to set an example, to burn with desire and cherish the hope that a spark jumps onto their students. Also, to put emphasis on deepening their individuality, pay attention to the

educational role of games and do everything to fulfil at least the first precondition of education according to Martin Buber: liberation of creative powers. “Liberation of creative powers (...) is a precondition of education” (Buber 1926/Read 1958/1974, 286).

I consider myself incredibly lucky that my pedagogue filmmaker Jan Špáta made it very clear that it is crucial to realize (it was in my 3rd year at the film academy) that I “can never be the second Špáta” and there “is nothing left to do” but be myself. From what I know, many of my colleagues didn't have the chance to realize that. The most difficult task for teachers is to realize whether their work cultivates, rather than liquidates their students.

Finally, what happens to the natural desire when the artist becomes a professional? Is getting one's first fee the key moment in life? This is true only partly, as there are more varieties of getting feedback than just in terms of money. The real breaking point comes in the moment when the artist begins to repeat the creative process in order to achieve similar effect and other reward. Thus, s/he can become the murderer of the precondition of creative work. Sábato says:

If we get money for our writing, that's fine. But to write with the purpose of making money is a disgrace. This disgrace is accounted for by the figment which emerges this way (Sábato, 2002, 91).

At this point one can easily end up producing, so to say, one book a year.

Translation Michaela Konárková

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Amir Or

On Editing and Feedback in the Poetry Workshop

CAN POETRY BE TAUGHT?

- THE PRELIMINARY AGREEMENT

No one has ever questioned the benefit of studies for the visual artist, the actor or the musician. Why then has our era accepted at times the notion that poetry needn't be studied? It is true that talent cannot be learned – in any field – but as we know, in Ancient Greece, in the *aiodoi* tradition in Homeric Ionia (8th-9th cent. BC), in Lesbos (7th cent. BC) or in Hellenistic Alexandria (3rd cent BC), in the various meistersinger, troubadour and other European traditions, through the Middle Ages and well into the Renaissance, there used to be schools for poetry. Homer, Sappho or Callimachus stand in the tradition of a school, as do Kalidassa in India or Basho in Japan; in just the same way as there are schools for dance and fine arts today. Broadening a poets' horizons, familiarizing them with various styles and techniques of writing as well as with the writings of different cultures and eras, can only enrich their poetic "tool-box".

However, a student at a poetry class has already answered the question *Can Poetry be Taught?* in the affirmative, in the very act of joining the learning framework. He comes to the school

in order to improve his technical ability and develop his poetic outlook. He has, in effect, signed an unwritten credo, in which he declares that he sees poetry as something that converses: art for the sake of dialogue.

This credo states that self-expression is not sufficient condition for writing poetry. "Art for art's sake" is a hobby like keeping diaries, but in fact it is not art at all. Poetry as art is a commitment to a kind of dialogue, to speech that takes place with an Other. This perhaps seems obvious, as the moments you take your poems out of the locked drawer, the moment you show them to even one other person, you are in a dialogue. In every act of human speech we aim at communication, but in "art for art's sake" it is ostensibly enough to have expressed ourselves. So, okay, no one can forbid you to write "cat cheeseburger caught to kitchen Kate" and to publish it as a poem, but only with an extravagant and far-fetched interpretive effort will anyone find any meaning in it. Of course, a poem is not only discourse with somebody else, and communication too is not a sufficient condition for writing poems. The means here are no less important than the content, and in fact create content. But this is not the point: it is possible to argue about to what extent the manner and the technical quality of a poem should come at the expense of the transmission of the message in it – but such a debate will be in the context of an unwritten agreement about a reasonable level of communicative comprehensibility, about art for the sake of dialogue. Without this, there is no teacher and there is no learner, there are no standards and there are no criteria.

EDITING AND FEEDBACK - TO WHAT END?

The combination of the notions of Romanticism and the modern injunction to "Make it New!" has created an idealized image of the born poet, who opens his mouth and speaks poetry just as the lark opens her mouth and bursts into song. Of course, in no case and at no time has this been the situation. There is a talent for language, but language is something that is acquired; there is a talent for poetry, but poetry too is something to be learned. As in any profession or human endeavor, poets have always learned on their own and from others.

An experienced poet's feedback on the work of a novice poet can be given from two different perspectives: as a model – and as a guide.

A veteran poet who sets himself up as a model for imitation does not teach his students to develop their own voice, but rather in most cases produces clones of himself. When the experienced poet has a strong poetic personality, the students identify what is correct and incorrect in their work not according to universal poetic criteria but rather in accordance with how close their own poems come to the style of the veteran poet who is offering himself as a model.

A poet who wishes to serve as a guide to his students will try to develop their personal voice; he will also protect them from themselves and repulse their attempts at imitation. As a guide, he will evaluate their work in its own right and not in comparison to his own poetry.

Consciously or unconsciously, the instructor-guide can give his students feedback in two different ways: as an editor or as a teacher. These two ways are not necessarily contradictory or mutually exclusive; on the contrary, they are complementary.

In their capacities as editors, veteran poets often transmit their own tastes, understandings and views in a decided way, but in one that is neither considered nor methodical; they make use of various considerations and standards, but do not necessarily pass these on. The capacity of teacher, however, demands of the instructor practical and empirical guidance that entails the conscious transmission of poetic standards and systems of considerations.

In this kind of guidance, it is expected that resistance will arise: the forces of creativity also erupt in the soul of the person who is inexperienced in expressing himself and every poem, no matter how good it is, has in the eyes of its creator enlarged significance from the very fact that it is the concentrated expression of his inner world that has been brought out into the world. This is something that is truly valuable, and any critical dealing with the results of the creative process is, in the nature of things, something that is extremely sensitive.

Often, no one has given responsive guidance to the young poet previously, and no one has shown him how to learn the craft of making poetry. No one has told him that this craft requires practice and professional knowledge that has been consciously acquired. All this is new to him, and sometimes quite shocking. Editors know from experience how difficult work with beginning and inexperienced poets can be. While the editor sees himself as a "master-reader," and as a skilled advisor on their poetry, novice poets do not know how to evaluate his contribution and are liable to feel threatened and even insulted by the very fact of the intervention in the most sacred thing of all, their poems.

A teacher of editing does not "give feedback" in the sense of grading a poem or determining its value. As in every field, the

aim of instruction is to make instruction unnecessary – that is, to give the beginning poet the tools for editing his own work in a satisfactory way. In order to succeed in this, the teacher’s role – both professional and psychological – demands a lot more than this: he is the Reader, with a capital “R,” the Other who hears fully and precisely the poetic message in its contents and its way of going about things – and who communicates his insights to the student. He does this so that the student can nurture the “Other” inside himself, the interlocutor with whom he communicates as the “Not-I’ within the self; so that he will be able to create within himself an inner reader to whom he speaks. As this inner reader becomes more skilled and sensitive, the poet’s technical ability will increase and will not constitute an obstacle when he comes to express himself in his poetry. A skilled “inner reader” is an internal editor who applies poetic considerations. The more the inner editor is imprinted on the poet’s creative and expressive imagination, the more he becomes an integral part of the very act of writing.

METHOD

1. Feedback and Editing

The work of self-editing demands of the participant, often for the first time, a discipline of dialogue. As strange as this may sound, it demands of you to listen carefully to your own ideas and to demand of yourself that you express them in a committed way. In short, a beginning poet is required here to give an accounting of himself – to himself. If you have written “a cucumber as green as grass,” you are required to think again about

the value and the aim of the connection that you have created between "cucumber" and "grass."

If you have written "a cucumber as green as the hope of an autumn morning in an apartment in North Tel Aviv, 2015," you are required to think about what there is in this that communicates your experience to your reader in an accessible way, and what in this is private code. Perhaps it suffices for the cucumber to be "as green as morning hope?" Is what is detailed in "an apartment in North Tel Aviv, 2015" important at all? And if so, perhaps the matter demands a more communicative detailing, to make it clear what the connection is between you and that apartment. And so on and so forth. In the end, it is possible to arrive at a more comprehensive understanding of the idiosyncratic, about the strategy of metaphors and, more deeply, about what in fact is important for us to communicate in a poem.

In order to reach the student in this kind of work and also in order to give him something in a way that he can accept, it demands a considerable amount of empathy. You are required to identify with him, to take upon yourself for a moment his emotions and his ideas as if they were your own, and at the same time to be his "Other" in an uncompromising way.

The approach that I have developed over the years is the approach of "the common reader." I realized that in order to point out a problem of any sort, I must not be any wiser than the poem. On the one hand, I must not express positive or negative evaluations of the poem. Even if I do not detract from the value of the poem but rather praise it without an explanation of what works in it and why – I am not contributing anything to the writer's ability to evaluate his work on his own. On the other hand, I must not "interpret" the work and I must not

suggest additions or explanations that are based on my own experience. No! By doing so, I would be giving the poet discounts and covering up for the weaknesses in the poem.

On the contrary. I must ask in all innocence what that small apartment in North Tel Aviv, 2015, is all about. What does it have to do with the cucumber or even with hope? Ah-ha! – it was then and there that you decided to give up drinking and gambling and become religious?! And who knows this, apart from you yourself? What do you think – will readers understand this, or not? Or—What an idea: the cucumber and its green color are fresh like the hope at the beginning of a new day! Do I understand this correctly? Great! But does it matter whether this hope happens in that small apartment or on the banks of the Amazon? What do you think that this adds here for us?

This way of speaking is not just friendly tactics: these questions are themselves the very system of considerations that is the real aim of the instruction. The poem itself is incidental – today this poem is being edited, and tomorrow another – but the system of considerations remains, for better or for worse. These questions are in effect a description of the movement of critical thought, which is what – more than any specific correction at hand – is what you want to instill in the student.

Through the repetition and the learning of this process of examination, standards are created in a way that is experiential and not abstract. After several instances of spending time on it, you know, for example, what a metaphor can carry on its back and what it cannot. You know that if you expand the vehicle of the metaphor too far you will turn it into an image or a new tenor of a different metaphor that will weigh heavily on the clarity and comprehensibility and will put to strain on

the metaphorical structure that you have built. You generalize rules from your particular experience, from your own poems, and after a while you can see how these work in poems written by other people as well.

You also acquire technical acuity: let's say that "cucumber" chimes with "November. Is this sufficient reason to put in a time element here or not? Even if the poem is built on patterns of sound, would the coupling of "green" and "morning" not be sufficient here? In the end, perhaps you will change a word, or maybe you will decide to put in the time element only for the possible rhyme – but the real difference is that suddenly you are reading the poem not as a mere outburst of creativity, but rather in a discriminating reading in depth.

This is not to say that everything is acquired easily. There is a psychological aspect to writing instruction, which sometimes borders on therapeutic work, and the responsibility that is demanded of the instructor can be extremely weighty. This aspect is entirely dependent on the personality of the poet who is receiving instruction and therefore I shall not go into this issue here.

Rather, I will now discuss two examples of fairly predictable and common problems that are inherently connected to the process itself.

Often a poet whom you have instructed comes back to you after a while and says to you in barely restrained panic that because of all those questions he can no longer think poetry spontaneously. Again and again you are required to take in his crises and his difficulties and to continue to illuminate the uphill road that for him is still in the dark. You have to point out to him what he has already learned, even the smallest thing, and to explain to him how every skill and proficiency is yours only

when it becomes an inner habit, almost like the way we have learned to ride a bicycle or drive a car. This phase, during which the writer paralyzes himself with an excess of self control, can also be made easier for him by means of various techniques: the practice of "free writing," for example, can release him to a considerable extent from the inner censorship that he is applying.

For the sake of those who may not be familiar with the technique of free writing, a brief explanation is in order: the student is asked to stop all other activities and cut himself off entirely for a period of twenty minutes every morning, for time in which he will try to write without pause and put his thoughts down on paper without censorship, filtering, planning or shaping. He does not need to share this with anyone, nor need he go over these materials unless he chooses to do so.

Another challenge is connected to the assignments that are given during the course of this instruction. It is important that the student makes some use of the insights, the considerations and the criteria that he has discovered, and apply them to the poems that were discussed at that particular meeting. Here too there is a reluctance to re-work the same poems, and sometimes there is a tendency to give up on them entirely. It is important for a beginning poet to arrive at achievements in the treatment of his poems in real time. Going back into a poem that has already been completed has a great deal of value that embraces more than just the revision of the poem.

Part of what is learned during the course of the class is how to put into our consciousness various "Others" as needed and by conscious decision – for example, how to be the tree about which we are writing, or alternatively – the carpenter who has built a chair from it. The student learns to see every figure in the poem in his imagination to the extent that he could de-

scribe it in detail if he wanted to. He learns how to don moods, places and times as accessible realities.

In the same way, he is required to learn how to enter himself, and this in fact is far more difficult, but also worth the effort. He must go back inside the poem that was written, say, a year and a half ago. This is a move that requires guidance. A move like this demands flexibility and that you agree to be both here and there at one and the same time. You go into the poem again with an "I" that is different to one extent or another from the "I" that wrote the poem back then. Let us say that this is the poem we have spoken about, with the green cucumber of hope, but now that hope seems completely illusory or, contrariwise, it has already come true. This is perfectly alright, of course. It is possible to go back inside the poem from a new mental place, and it is completely legitimate that in the re-editing of the poem new nuances will enter it that were not there before. This still requires a certain amount of discipline: if because of a sense of disappointment that the poet is feeling today, that cucumber's green color will turn violently pickled and vinegary and it will be an entirely different poem; however, if we remember that the hope is an integral part of the disappointment or of the sense of achievement that we have today, it will make it easier for us to see that place again in the context of today.

In instruction on editing, technical issues also come up quite frequently, with regard to which you need do no more than point out a faulty meter or a limping rhyme, and return to the material that has been studied. This is no less important.

When the aim is teaching and not only editing, the threshold is not simply publication quality, but rather far more than this. There is no reason to let go of relatively "small" problems, or to say that you would publish the poem by virtue of what

there is in it, or that it is worthy of publication *despite* this or that problem that remains in it. The aim is learning, and therefore, if there is not a time limitation, it is desirable and worth it to spend time on every issue, large or small, that arises from reading the poem.

2. *Group Work and Individual Work*

Throughout the years I have given sessions on feedback and editing in two frameworks: a group framework during class meetings and individual sessions during editorial meetings.

GROUP WORK takes place at class sessions, when the discussion is conducted on the basis of this same strategy of questioning and probing, but the system of considerations and the criteria are instilled through group dialogue. As group ethics and methods, the participants first learn to refrain from evaluations and to stick to pointing out problems or achievements in a reasoned and considered way. In other words, I make it clear to them that here we don't say "I loved this" or "This doesn't speak to me." Everyone is invited to express an opinion, but you must explain specifically what you think works or does not work in the poem, why, and how.

I also refrain from any dictation or preference with respect to style. The poem is judged by the stylistic criteria that it takes upon itself and not according to any preferred model. If, for example, the poem under discussion is a sonnet, it must deal with or confront the demands of the sonnet genre. If the poem is a list of factual descriptions, it must be effective in this way. If it is figurative, it must create the figure and transmit it to the reader in an effective and vivid way.

In the group we relate to the poems of a number of participants at each meeting. The poems are selected in accordance with the topic that is the overall theme of the course, which is discussed in a poetics class and later on practiced in the writing exercises and the workshop on principles of translation, which are all part of my courses' curriculum. If the theme, for example, the line break and the stanza, which is treated at the first course, we look at poems by the students through this particular lens. If the theme is figurative language, then the poems that are discussed illustrate the treatment of metaphors, similes, metonyms etc. If the theme is closed forms, we may look at haikus and sonnets, and so on.

The treatment of the poems is less intensive and revealing than in the individual work, and sticks close to the issues that are related to the general focus of the session so that the entire group can benefit from the scrutiny of them. This is not the place to go into why "a cucumber as green as the hope of an autumn morning in an apartment in North Tel Aviv, 2015" is a phrase that covers up the real statement that hasn't been made, and what it is exactly that the writer has decided to conceal here. In the group it suffices simply to point out the phenomenon as food for thought. Often the place where the writer's fear lies is where the power resides, but not every environment is suitable for directing a writer to this transformation.

Group instruction is also a source of questioning, argument and consultations in the framework of a dialogue among the participants themselves, and affords them reciprocal feedback and open discourse about issues that in all likelihood they had not previously seen as subjects for legitimate discourse and had never discussed with anyone before. In addition, in guided feedback of this sort, in which poems written by your fellow

group members are discussed, you yourself are less threatened and it is easier for you to arrive at discriminations and formulate them for yourself. In this way the participants acquire editing skills, and the feedback that they give not only helps them to absorb poetic standards, but also affords them a language of feedback that they can also give others. Quite a number of my class groups have gone on after completing the program to hold meetings among themselves, and have used –and are using – the editing tools they acquired in order to give group feedback to new poems by their fellow group-members. In the case of a few of the groups, this practice of mutual feedback has continued for years as a fruitful dialogue.

INDIVIDUAL WORK is best begun only after some group meetings; although in the group work there is also an element of social anxiety, in the end the process is also liberating. It gives the participants a view of the work process from the inside and from the outside, creates proper proportions and work habits and lowers the threshold of vulnerability prior to the individual work. There are conclusions that arise from observing feedback on the work of others and taking part in it, and there are advantages to learning in the graduated and less intensive steps of the method of working before beginning the stage of individual meetings.

The individual meetings follow the method of feedback that I have described, without constraints or additional aims. At the end of each individual meeting the student is asked to apply what he has understood, in his writing, so that the principles will not remain abstract. As in the end we are not dealing with theory but rather with poems written by poets, it is important to understand that the process of internalization really begins with the praxis, when the considerations are applied in the re-

editing of previous poems. The more the student internalizes this system of considerations, the more it is also expressed in the writing of his new poems.

After two or three individual meetings with the assignments between times, the method is sufficiently well-understood for additional work by E-mail. Using this method, I work with the students not only on their own poems, but also on the editing of their translations from English.

EXAMINATION OF RESULTS

The creative process as well as the processes of internalizing and applying vary from poet to poet. This is a matter of personality, and with experience, it is often possible to predict its implications. Over the years it has become fairly clear to me that a distinction must be made between short-term results and long-term results. Roughly, I would say that there are poets for whom a poetry class stimulates an outburst of creativity during the course of the class itself, and others who retreat a bit – to a defensive position, and who are sometimes overwhelmed by all the interaction, the wealth of information and the implicit or explicit competition in the group. There is no guarantee that a poet of the "creative outburst" type will continue to write, whereas the "retreating" types are not more likely to stop writing. It would seem that will-power and the choice of poetry as a way of life are what decide this. It often happens that an outburst of writing floods the "retreaters" only after the program is over, and it also happens that some of the "creative outburst" types are unable to continue without the intensity and the dynamics of the class. And of course it happens that sometimes

a class consists of particularly talented people, and sometimes less so.

Apparently, then, the test of the result of the quality of the poems is not sufficient here.

Then where have we succeeded and where not? Well, a comparison of a participant's poems before the program and after it is the basic measure that every instructor will adopt for himself intuitively after he has completed his work with the participants. I do not wish to say that this is a flawed or deficient measure. On the contrary, such an examination will mostly reveal encouraging results and considerable achievements, and it is very valuable.

However, if we recall the previous distinction between the "creative outburst" types and the "retreating" types, we might well hesitate to rely entirely on a comparative evaluation of this sort upon the completion of the program. What I would like to say is that the problem lies in written "proofs" and not in our knowledge of the process itself. It is not always that a significant turning point can be discerned in the work of those who wrote little during the course of the program, but in fact you do know whether the reason for this is that the writer has not internalized anything, or whether what he has internalized has not yet been expressed in his writing.

Towards the end of the program, often code questions – "Is there a tenor here?" "What's the situation?" or "What does this line-break do?" – suffice to enable the writer to see the problem for himself and suggest solutions. In this close and continuing dialogue it is quite clear in the end what you have succeeded in transmitting and what not.

But this is not yet all.

Guidance in self-editing does not rely on editing questions

like these and their successful solution. It seems to me that the very fact of teaching editing makes certain assumptions and refutes others. With all the encouragement that is given in the class to every style and way of writing poetry, we nevertheless do have one basic and compulsory assumption. To put it simply: art is quality of communication.

CONCLUSION

Refining the capabilities of his "inner editor" is the life's work of every poet. Although often his self-learning in this area becomes conscious and articulated in the learning that we offer – if we have really succeeded, this is only a beginning. The discussion that embraces the manner and the contents of the poetical work comes down in the end to a re-examination of the commitment to writing that you take upon yourself, towards the work, towards the reader and towards yourself.

It seems to me that the insights in this matter that a poet takes from a creative writing workshop are no less important than the textual skills he acquires, and perhaps even more important.

To sum up, I would like to formulate for myself these basic insights that I am trying to transmit onwards from the work of instruction:

1. Art without training and skill is a creative outburst, but it is not yet a way.
It is skill that allows the artist freedom of expression. Without it, any artistic achievement, however brilliant it may be, is a climax with no foundation.

2. Limited control of the poetic tool is liable to become a "style" that will exhaust itself after some time. It is training that enables effortless movement of thought given to expression in and of itself; control of poetic tools enables the free use of form and enables development and growth that are not bound by a style.
3. Learning to control the tools of poetry is skill in the use of form and manner; training the poetic muscles is the skill of the movement of thought.
4. Pass it on.

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Or gave readings and lectured in dozens of festivals and conferences worldwide. He is the recipient of Israeli and international poetry awards, including the Pleiades tribute (SPE 2000) for having made "a significant contribution to modern world poetry", the Fulbright Award for Writers, the Bernstein Prize, the Levi Eshkol Prime Minister's Poetry Prize, the Oeneumi literary prize 2010 of the Tetovo Poetry Festival, the Wine Poetry prize 2013 of the Struga Poetry Evenings and the 'Stefan Mitrov Ljubisa' international literary Award 2014 of The Budva City Theater. He was also awarded several poetry fellowships, among them fellowships from Iowa University; the University of Oxford; the Literarische Colloquium, Berlin; the Heinrich Böll Foundation, Ireland; and the Hawthornden Castle, Scotland.

He translated into Hebrew eight prose and poetry books, including The Gospel of Thomas; Stories from the Mahabharata; and Limb Loosening Desire, an anthology of Greek erotic poetry. For his translations from ancient Greek he was awarded the Culture Minister Prize.

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Johanna Pentikäinen

Elokuvat *Luokka* ja *Freedom Writers* kirjoittamisen kuvauksina ja reflektion osana

JOHDANTO

Kirjoittaminen on usein yhteydessä oman position rakentamiseen, mielipiteen muodostamiseen ja vallankäyttöön. Tämä tulee esille myös tutkimukseni kehyksenä olevissa elokuvissa *Luokka* (2007, *Entre les murs*, ohj. Laurent Cantent) sekä *Freedom Writers* (2008, ohj. Richard LaGravenese). Valitsin nämä esseet tutkimukseeni, koska kummassakin elokuvassa ympäristönä on koulu yhteiskunnassa, jossa monikulttuurisuuteen liittyvää keskustelua on käyty historiallisista syistä paljon pidempään kuin Suomessa ja jossa yhteiskunnan valtakielen hallinta on edellytys täysivaltaiselle toimijuudelle. Kummankin elokuvan päähenkilönä on keskiluokkainen, valtaväestöstä tuleva opettaja, joka näyttäytyy eräänlaisena muutoksen agenttina monikulttuurisessa ja monenlaisten vaikeuksien kanssa kamppailevassa oppilasryhmässään. Molemmissa elokuvissa opettaja päättää johdattaa oppilaansa kertomaan ja kirjoittamaan henkilökohtaisia tarinoitaan siinä vaiheessa, kun hän huomaa, ettei muunlainen pedagogiikka toimi luokassa. Opettaja siis valtauttaa oppilaitaan kielen ja erityisesti

kirjoittamisen avulla antamalla heille tilaisuuden oman äänen muodostamiseen.

Vaikka elokuvat jo itsessäänkin tarjoavat paljon pohdintaa kirjoittamisen näkökulmasta, tutkimukseni toisena aineistona ovat lisäksi elokuvien pohjalta kirjoitetut reflektiiviset esseet. Niiden kirjoittajat ovat äidinkielen ja kirjallisuuden opettajaksi tai suomi toisena kielenä -opettajaksi opiskelevia, ja he kirjoittivat esseen osana opettajaopintoihin kuuluvaa reflektion opintojaksoa. Vapaamuotoisten, mutta ohjeistettujen esseen tarkoituksena oli pohtia elokuvan herättämiä ajatuksia ja kokemuksia oman opettajaidentiteetin rakentamisessa. Reflektio on ilmiönä monitahoinen, mutta yleisesti ottaen sillä tarkoitetaan oman toiminnan, tietämysten, uskomusten ja oletusten tarkastelua sekä tavoitteellista työstämistä, tavoitteena esimerkiksi oman oppimisen omistajuus ja ammatillisuuden vahvistaminen. Yleensä reflektio kuvataan toimintana, jossa reflektioja tietoisesti käsitteellistää kokemustaan ja toimintaperiaatteitaan, ja tuloksena on muuttunut käsitys ja laadullisesti erilainen ymmärrys (Brockbank & McGill 1998). Käsitteeksi on, että taideteoksen vastaanottamisella on erityispiirteitä, jotka tekevät taiteesta varsin sopivan reflektion välineen, sillä taideteoksen yhtenä tehtävänä on houkutella vastaanottajaa keskustelemaan, analysoimaan ja tulkitsemaan suhteeseen kanssaan ja reseptiteorian mukaan suhteuttamaan taideteosta reaalielämää koskeviin käsityksiinsä (Jauss 1974, 18). Tutkimusasetelmani taustalla on käsitys taiteen keinoista synnyttää samaistumiskokemuksia tai muita voimakkaita immerssiivisiä kokemuksia (jälkimmäisistä ks. esim. Visch 2010), ja oletukseksi on, että niiden jäsentäminen kirjoittamalla tuottaa muuttunutta ymmärrystä myös reaali maailmasta ja valtauttaa ammatillisesti ja toimijana.

Tutkimukseni analyysi rakentuu kaksikerroksisena: tarkastelen ensinnäkin elokuvia kirjoittamisen kuvauksina ja reflektion kehyksenä ja toiseksi elokuvien katselukokemuksesta kirjoittamista reflektion toteutumisen näkökulmasta. Siinä missä elokuvissa oppilaat työstävät omaa positiotaan kirjoittamalla, myös elokuvista kirjoittavat opettajaopiskelijat rakentavat kirjoittaen omaa opettajuuttaan. Tutkin siis oikeastaan kirjoittamista: sitä, kuinka kirjoittaen voidaan antaa muoto sekä ottaa institutionaalinen tila täysivaltaisena oppilaana tai ammattilaisena jossain yhteisössä. Kirjoittaminen näyttäytyy tekona, jonka avulla päästään tavoitteeseen, tässä yhteydessä muuttuneeseen itseymmärrykseen ja sosiaaliseen asemaan.

REFLEKTIO JA KIRJOITTAMINEN

Reflektio on keskeinen käsite nykyisessä oppimiseen, opettamiseen ja ammatillisuuden kehittymiseen liittyvässä, oppijan omaa toimintaa painottavassa keskustelussa (Ks. esim. Levander 2007). Se tarkoittaa omien kokemusten tavoitteellista pohtimista, käsitteellistämistä ja toimintamallien rakentamista. Reflektion tavoitteena on ohjata oppijaa oman oppimisen omistajuuteen ja ammatilliseen valtautumiseen, mikä parhaimmillaan johtaa elinikäiseen oppimiseen. Taustalla vaikuttaa konstruktivistinen oppimiskäsitys, jonka mukaan oppiminen on sosiaalista, tilanteista ja oppijan mielessä tapahtuvaa tietorakenteiden järjestymistä uudeksi. (ks. esim. Tynjälä 2004.)

Reflektiolla on eri tasoja, ja tyypillisesti ne luokitellaan kolmijaon mukaisesti analyttiseen tai tekniseen, arvioivaan eli praktiseen ja kriittiseen eli emansipatoriseen tasoon Habermasin tiedonintressiteoriaa (1971) mukailten (Kemmis 1985,

141—145, ks. myös esim. Levander 2007). Analyyttisellä tasolla kirjoittaja jäsentää kokemusta kuvaillen ja luokitellen. Esimerkiksi kirjan tai elokuvan teemojen nimeäminen on analyttistä käsittelyä. Se jäsentää kirjoittajan hankkimaa tietoa mutta ei vielä kuvaa sitä, mitä kirjoittaja itse on oppinut aiheesta ja miten hän soveltaisi oppimaansa. Arvioiva reflektio toteutuu, kun kirjoittaja pohtii omaa tai toisen toimintaa, oletusten paikkansapitävyyttä, liittyy uutta ainesta vanhaan ja soveltaa. Arvioiva reflektio lisää ymmärrystä toimintatavoista ja tilanteen ja toiminnan vuorovaikutuksesta, ja se voi tuottaa laadullisesti uudenlaista toimintaa. Se on käytännön toimintaa kehittävää, perusteltua ja usein menetelmiä kehittävää tietoa.

Reflektion kolmas ulottuvuus eli kriittinen reflektio on otteeltaan arvolähtöistä. Siinä kirjoittaja tulee tietoiseksi omista peruseriaateistaan ja toimintatavoistaan sekä uskomuksistaan ja arvoistaan ja pohtii sitä, kuinka ne vaikuttavat hänen toimintaansa. Hän on valmis muokkaamaan periaatteitaan ja muuttamaan niiden perusteella toimintaansa. Hän on myös tietoinen siitä, kuinka hänen toimintansa vaikuttaa ympäristöönsä. Usein kriittinen reflektio näkyy mm. siinä, että kirjoittaja johtaa pohdinnastaan omia opetuksen ohjeistuksiaan ja periaatteitaan, Donald Schönin termein asiantuntijan intuitiivista käyttöteoriaa (Schön 1987).

Aikuisten oppimista tutkineen Leena Levanderin mukaan ”reflektiivisen työskentelyn tärkeimmät välineet ovat puhe ja kirjoittaminen eri muodoissaan eli toisin sanoen ajattelun kiteyttäminen visualisoimalla tai verbalisoimalla” (2007, 461). Kielen käyttämisen tapaan reflektio on aina sosiaalinen prosessi, eli havaintoja jäsennetään suhteessa johonkin yhteisöön, joko todelliseen tai kuviteltuun. Kemmisin mukaan reflektio on aina tilanteista, ja onnistuessaan se tuottaa tietoa paitsi yk-

silöstä ja hänen toiminnastaan, myös vuorovaikutuksesta ja laajemminkin ilmiöiden yhteiskunnallisista vaikutuksista, ohjaahan se tarkastelemaan myös mm. arvoperustaa. Reflektion tuotteena tavoitteena on siis tietoinen ja sitoutunut toiminta, joka on sosiaalisesti ja yhteiskunnallisesti merkityksellistä. (Kemmis 1985.)

Koska reflektion ytimessä on kokemusten jäsentäminen ja sanoittaminen, se rinnastuu muodonantamisen pyrkimyksiinsään henkilökohtaiseen kirjoittamiseen (Maurel-Indart 2014). Kirjoittamisen voimauttavaa vaikutusta taas on selitetty sillä, että se on perimmältään hiljaisuuden muuntamista ääneksi, ennen havaitsemattomien, vaiettujen ja jopa häpeällisten ilmiöiden tai mitättömyyksiä pidettyjen seikkojen sanoittamista ja jakamista kielessä, joka on luonteeltaan aina sosiaalista (Teleky 2001). Reflektion näkökulmasta kirjoittaminen mahdollistaa kokemusten jäsentämisen mielekkääksi kokonaisuudeksi ja niiden merkityksellistämisen.

Onnistuneena prosessina reflektio tuottaa Kemmisin (1985) kuvaamien tasojen mukaisesti monenlaista tietoa: sisältöihin ja menetelmiin liittyvää teknistä tietoa, käytännön toimintaa uusintavaa tietoa sekä kokonaiskehityksen tukemiseksi soveltuvaa ammatillista toimintaa ja persoonallisuutta koskevaa tietoa. Tutkimukseni kannalta reflektion kriittinen taso on kiinnostavin, sillä se tarkoittaa koetun suhteuttamista omaan arvomaailmaan ja käsityksiin ihmisestä, opettajuudesta ja opetettavasta aineesta. Oletan tutkimuksessani, että elokuvista kirjoittaminen – varsinkin kun elokuvat itsessäänkin kertovat koululuokissa tapahtuvasta kirjoittamisesta ja reflektiosta - mahdollistaa reflektion monille tasoille ulottuvan pohdinnan.

ELOKUVAT KIRJOITTAMISEN KUVAUKSINA JA REFLEKTION KEHYKSINÄ

Otetaan yksi opettaja, välinpitämätön koulun hallinto, epäpätevät ja mitänsanomattomat kollegat sekä joukko oppilaita, joita kaikki muut pitävät toivottomina tapauksina. Ilman sanottavaa apua ja kovin kummoisia opetusmenetelmiä opettaja voittaa vaikeudet ja saa luokassa aikaan muutokset. Usein opettajasta, jolla ei ole juurikaan henkilökohtaista elämää, tulee eräänlainen kulttihahmo ja hän alkaa ratkoa oppilaittensa henkilökohtaisia ongelmia. Samanaikaisesti hän uhkaa itseään ylempänä olevia ja on vaarassa menettää työnsä. Oppilaat tietysti yhdistävät voimansa puolustaakseen opettajaansa, onhan hän muuttanut heidän elämänsä loppuiäkseen. Loppu. (Farhi 1999, 157, suom. kirjoittajan)

Tutkija Adam Farhi esittää opettajuutta kuvaavien valtavirtaelokuvien juonikaavan, jossa ympäröivä yhteiskunta instituutioineen tarjoaa vastustajan, oppilaat valtautuvat ja opettaja kerrotaan heidän sankarinaan. Tässä artikkelissa esseiden kirjoittajien aineistona olevat elokuvat hyödyntävät Farhin kuvaamaa valtavirtaelokuvien asetelmaa ja rakennetta, *Freedom Writers* vielä *Luokkaa* enemmän. Amerikkalaiseen länsirannikon ympäristöön sijoittuva *Freedom Writers* (2007) kuvaa luokahuoneen tapahtumien myös päähenkilönä toimivan opettaja Erin Gruwellin varsin keskiluokkaista, sosiaalisten suhteiden ylläpitoon keskittyvää elämämpiiriä ja toimintaelokuvan piirtein oppilaiden väkivaltaista ja uhkien täyttämää ympäristöä. Oppilaat ovat etniseltä taustaltaan afrikkalais-amerikkalaisia, aasialaisia ja latinoja, lisäksi joukossa on yksi pelokas valkoihoisen oppilas, ja lähtökohtaisesti välit eri etnisiä ryhmiä edustavien oppilaiden välillä ovat vihamieliset. Elokuva koossa pitävä elementti on jännite eri ryhmien välillä. Valtavirtaelokuvalla

tyypilliseen tapaan jokin kuva, uhka, kokemus, luo skenaarion, jonka sisälle tarina rakennetaan hollywoodilaisittain.

Elokuvan lähiökoulu oli aiemmin keskiluokkainen, ”hyvä koulu”, mutta pedagogisen reformin ja inklusion jälkeen sinne sijoitetaan myös ongelmallisiksi luokiteltuja oppilaita. Nuori, kaunis ja vastavalmistunut opettaja Erin Gruwell on korostetusti sankariopettaja, joka oppii haastavasta lähtötilanteesta huolimatta rakentamaan pedagogiikan keinoin yhteenkuuluvuutta. Ensiksi opettaja huomioi oppilaiden lähtökohdat ja auttaa heitä luomaan oppimista edistävän ja turvallisen ilmapiiirin. Sitten hän mahdollistaa sen, että he saavat jakaa omia tarinoitaan, tulla kuulluiksi ja nähdyiksi omina itsinään, ja vasta sitten oppilaat saattavat edistyä muissa taidoissa. Elokuva päättyy juonikaavan mukaisesti opettajan ja oppilaiden symboliseen voittoon.

Luokka kertoo kuvitteellisesta lukuvuodesta nimensä mukaisesti luokkahuoneen sisällä ja koulutiloissa. Nuorehko opettaja Francois Marin saapuu syksyn alussa uuteen kouluun ja saa opetettavakseen hankalana pidetyn luokan, jossa on oppilaita monista etnisistä taustoista. Elokuvan alussa opettaja Marin kuvataan opettamassa luokalleen ranskan kielen subjunktiivia, kirjakielen muotoa, jolla ranskalainen koulutettu väestö on perinteisesti erottautunut rahvaasta. Nopeasti hän huomaa, että hänen on muutettava opetuksensa sisältöjä ja menetelmiä, jotta hän saa oppilaansa oppimaan. Marin päätyy lukemaan oppilaittensa kanssa *Anne Frankin päiväkirjaa* ja kirjoittamaan oppilailla henkilökohtaisia tarinoita, aivan kuten Freedom Writersin Erin Gruwellkin. Elokuvan loppu jää avoimeksi, eikä Marinin tai hänen oppilaittensa myöhempiin vaiheisiin viitata.

Elokuviissa kirjoittaminen näyttäytyy ennen kaikkea perusturvallisuuden ja hyväksynnän rakentamisen välineenä, se on

teini-ikäisten identiteettityötä sanan paljaimmassa merkityksessä. Elokuissa luokkahuone, koulu ja ympäröivä yhteiskunta edustavat kaikkia niitä sosiaalisia ja yhteiskunnallisia rakenteita, joita vasten ja joista ulos kirjoitetaan. Elokuvien kehys on yhteiskunnallinen: opettajan tulisi valmentaa oppilaansa sellaisiksi, että ympäröivä yhteiskunta voi hyväksyä heidät, ja toisaalta pohdittavana ovat ne ehdot, joilla yhteiskunta on valmis hyväksymään oppilaat täysivaltaisiksi jäsenikseen. Näitä kysymyksiä käsitellään teeman ohella elokuvissa monenlaisin elokuvallisin keinoin, tilallisin ratkaisuin, vastaparein ja kuvakulmien avulla.

LUOKKA: RAJAT JA OMAN TILAN OTTAMINEN
KIRJOITTAMALLA

Luokka-elokuva sijoittuu nimensä mukaisesti koulun sisätiloihin: yhteen luokkahuoneeseen, käytäville, rajatulle koulunpihalle ja opettajanhuoneeseen. Tilat ovat symbolisesti jopa klaustrofobisen ahtaat: sisällä on olevinaan järjestys, jota pidetään yllä ennen kaikkea kielellä, tavoilla ja kurinpidolla, kun taas koulun ulkopuolella, pihalla ja muualla maailmassa on meluisa kaaos. Oppilaiden puheissa vilahtavat ”metroasema” ja ”vankila”, epäjärjestyksen paikat. Tähdentämällä keinoteokoista järjestystä koulu vain kaiuttaa ympäröivän yhteiskunnan arvo maailmaa, jossa on sisäpuoli ja ulkopuoli ja johon joko kuuluutaan tai sitten ei (Mangeot 2009, sit. Strand 2009). Kieli on osa järjestystä, se joko kirjaimellisesti sulkee sisälleen tai lokeroi ”toiseksi”.

Myös opettajan professioon liittyy melkoinen paine järjestyksen pitoon, mikä näkyy opettajahuoneen ja ”kurinpitola-

takunnan” keskusteluissa. Näihin verrattuna Francois Marin edustaa vain harmittoman autoritääristä opettajaa, jonka metoditkin ovat elokuvan alussa ainoastaan lässähtäneitä, kuten Williams toteaa. Elokuva mystifioi kasvatuksellisen prosessin olettamalla, että sankariopettaja pystyy omalla toiminnallaan muuttamaan hankalaksi määritellyn opetusryhmän, vaikka samalla koulutusjärjestelmä ja vielä laajemmassa mielessä yhteiskunta on ensin määritellyt oppilaat ongelmien aiheuttajiksi (Williams 2011, 65), ikään kuin häiriöksi vallitsevalle järjestykselle. Kun elokuvassa annetaan kirjoittaville oppilaille ääni eli omaehtoisesti toteutettava kirjoitustehtävä edes symbolisesti ja luokkahuoneessa, otetaan ensimmäinen askel yhteiskunnan hierarkioiden kyseenalaistamisessa.

Silti *Luokka*-elokuvassa kirjoittaminen tapahtuu koulussa, samoin kuin elokuvan kerrontakin. Tämän valitun kehysten ulkopuolelle jää mm. se, millaisista lähtökohdista oppilaat ovat ja mitä heille koulun jälkeen tapahtuu. Symbolisesti elokuvan kehys siis rajaa oppilaille merkityksellisiä tiloja pois kerronnasta, ja samalla se mahdollistaa havainnot poissaolosta ja jopa surun (Williams 2011, 72). Taideteoksessa onkin usein tärkeää se, mitä jätetään näyttämättä tai kertomatta. Näin elokuvan katsoja voi jatkaa tulkintaa esimerkiksi kysymällä, millaisista oloista oppilaat oikeastaan ovat lähtöisin, mitä opettajan olisi hyvä tietää heistä ja miksi koulu kiinnostuu oppilaiden taustoista vasta sitten kun he joutuvat vankilaan tai saavat maastakarkoituspäätöksen, millaisia menetettyjä mahdollisuuksia heidän elämiinsä sisältyy ja miksi tasa-arvo ei toteudu. Näiden pohdintojen poissaolo eli rajaaminen ulos elokuvan kerronnasta on merkitsevää. Juuri nämä kysymykset ovat oikeastaan kirjoittamisen ja omien tarinoiden ydintä, eikä niitä siis elokuvassa kerrota.

Luokan kuvakerrontakin kuvastaa yhteiskunnan ja yksilöiden välistä suhdetta. Luokkahuoneessa kameran sijaintipaikkoja on totunnaisesta poiketen kolme: yksi kuvaa opettajaa, toinen oppilasta ja kolmas yleiskuvaa luokasta. Cantentin itsensä mukaan kolmen kuvakulman käyttö konventionaalisen otos-vastaotos-tekniikan sijaan tavoittelee kuvaukseen liukuvuutta ja epävarmuutta sekä muuttuvuutta, joka liittyy sekä opettajan että oppilaiden tilanteeseen: heidän molempien pitäisi muuttua (Mangeot 2009, sit. Strand), sen sijaan että opettaja kuvataan yksiselitteisenä sankarina ja oppilaat hänen ”vastustajinaan”, jotka sankariopettajan on houkuteltava liit-tolaisikseen ja mukautumaan yhteiskunnassa valmiina oleviin oletuksiin.

Kuten Strand toteaa, ei ole sanottua, onnistuuko Cantent tällä tekniikalla rakentamaan opettajan ja oppilaiden välille vastavuoroisia voimasuhteita, mutta elokuvan katsojaan tekniikka vaikuttaa: katsojan asema suhteessa tapahtumiin muuttuu koko ajan, eikä hänellä ole mahdollisuutta pysyvään, ennustettavissa olevaan näkökulmaan (Strand 2009, 269). Tällä on merkitys-tä elokuvakokemuksen tulkinnassa, mikä välittyy myös opiskelijoiden esseistä. Lisäksi, kuten Williams toteaa, elokuvan esittämisen konventionaalaisesta poikkeava tapa on eettisesti ja poliittisesti motivoitunut. Sillä tavoitellaan hänen mukaansa vastakohtaa Ranskassa vallalla olevalle reпублиkaanis-nationalistiselle pedagogiikalle, joka rakentaa symbolista väkivaltaa eikä huomioi oppilaiden kehollisuutta tai elämänkokemuksia (Williams 2011, 67). Elokuvasa oppilaat kuitenkin alkavat kertoa ja kirjoittaa omia elämäntarinoitaan, ja kirjoittamalla he pysyvät ainakin symbolisesti ottamaan omille kokemuksilleen ja minuudelleen tilaa. Kuitenkin elokuvan loppu jää avoimeksi, Farhin kuvaamaa onnellista loppua siinä ei ole.

FREEDOM WRITERS: KIRJOITTAMINEN
VAPAUTUMISEN VÄLINEENÄ

Jos *Luokassa* opettaja rakentaa pedagogiikkaa, joka mahdollistaa oppilaiden oman äänen kuulumisen, *Freedom Writers* menee laajemmin kiinni oppilaiden perustarpeisiin ja lopulta myös päästää nämä tuotoksineen nauttimaan yhteiskunnan hyväksynnästä. Elokuvan nimi *Freedom Writers* on metaforinen väännös kansalaisoikeusliikkeen Freedom Riders -liikkeeltä, joka työskenteli eri etnisten ryhmien yhteistyön puolesta 1960-luvulla, ja todelliseen pedagogiseen kokeiluun (ks. Gruwell 1999) perustuvassa elokuvassa seuraava sukupolvi kirjoittaa itsensä symbolisesti vapauteen.

Kun tyypillinen hollywoodilainen sankariopettaja toimii kuin pelastaja, mutta hän ei kiinnitä juurikaan oppilaiden ongelmien todellisiin syihin huomiota, Choin mukaan *Freedom Writersissä* opettaja pyrkii uudistamaan rakenteitakin muotoilemalla opetusohjelman uudelleen, kohtelemalla oppilaita tiedon rakentajina, tuomalla luokkahuoneeseen yhteisöllisyyttä ja opettamalla niin, että se on hänellekin itsensä toteuttamista. Näkemyksiään puolustaakseen elokuvan Erin Gruwell käy kamppailua moniin suuntiin: koulun rakenteisiin, instituutioihin, luutuneisiin käytäntöihin, jäykkään opetussuunnitelmaan ja oppilaista koskeviin stereotypioihin (Choi 2009, 244-245). Voikin sanoa, että oppilaantuntemuksen ja tutkimuksen keinoin hän löytää vastauksen kysymykseen, kuinka monikulttuurista ryhmää voidaan opettaa nykykoulussa (Saltmarsh 2011, 129). Ensiksi pitää voida tuntea yhteenkuuluvuutta, vasta siten voi kokea osaamista. Tästä seuraa itseohjautuvuus ja lopulta aulius toisia kohtaan. Siitä opettaja on itsekin hyvä esimerkki: hän valmis laittamaan oppilaittensa tarpeet ensimmäiselle sijal-

le, vaikka se tarkoittaisikin vallitsevien käytänteiden haastamista. (Tanase 2013, 6, 11.)

Pohjimmiltaan molempien elokuvien kysymys opettajan osaamisesta ja oppilaiden kelpaamisesta liittyy samuuden ja toiseuden kokemuksiin. Kristevalaisittain abjektin eli kartettavan toiseuden käsitteellä voidaan kuvata ilmiöitä, jotka eivät ole tietyn kulttuurin tai muun kokemuksellisella tasolla yhteenkuuluvan joukon omaksi koetulla alueella, vaan jotka uhkaavat sitä. (Petersen 2009, 38.) Sitä *Luokassa* oppilaille edustaa ranskalainen kulttuuri, ja *Freedom Writersissä* toisten oppilaiden etniset taustat amerikkalaisen valtakulttuurin ohella. Vähintään yhtä uhkaavana valtakulttuuri kokee oppilaat, mikä näkyy institutionaalisesti koulujärjestelmissä. *Freedom Writersissä* uhka puretaan yhteisöllisellä tasolla (pedagogisen reformi) ja yksilöiden tasolla (ryhmytyminen luokassa) (Petersen 2009, 33, 38).

Molemmissa elokuvissa toiseuden aiheuttamaa uhkaa puretaan etäännyttämällä, taiteen keinoin kirjallista teosta lukemalla, tulkitsemalla ja itse kirjoittamalla. Fiktio vastaanottamiselle on tyypillistä, että tekstin tuottamat mielikuvat pyritään tulkitsemaan koherentilla ja sosiaalisesti hyväksyttävällä tavalla (Holland 1978, ks. myös Pentikäinen 2012). Etäännyttämisessä tarkastelupiste viedään itseä koskettavalta lähietäisyydeltä kauemmas, holokaustiin, jota ei ole ajallisesti eikä kulttuurisesti oppilaiden todellisuutta, mutta joka tarjoaa mahdollisuuden pohtia vainotun yksilön kokemusta suhteessa ympäröivään yhteiskuntaan. Kummassakin elokuvassa luokassa luetaan samaa tekstiä, *Anne Frankin päiväkirjaa*. Teos tarjoaa mahdollisuuden tarkastella samanaikaisesti koulutetun, länsimaista sivistyneistöä edustavan juutalaisväestön historiallisia vaiheita sekä järjetömän vainon uhrin kokemuksia. *Freedom Writersissä* metodi

viedään pidemmälle, luokkahuoneesta ulos tosielämään. Lopulta luokka toteuttaa suuren, koko yhteisöä osallistavan varainkeruuprojektin, jonka turvin he saavat kutsuttua vieraakseen Anne Frankia saksalaissotilailta suojelleen Miep Giesin, ja projektistaan mainetta ja kunniaa. Elokuussa on siis Farhin kuvaama hollywoodilainen onnellinen loppu.

Ei ole sattumaa, että elokuvissa samaistumispintaa löydetään juutalaisvainoista. Juutalaiset edustavat ryhmää, jonka kokemaa vääryyttä on Yhdysvalloissa legitimoitu ja osa kansallista kertomusta. Vaikka molemmissa elokuvissa oppilaiden omista kielellis-kulttuurisista taustoista löytyisi varmasti paljon esimerkkejä, Anne Frank -mallitekstin käyttäminen voi pitää etäännyttämiin liittyvänä strategiana (vrt. Pentikäinen 2012). Kun tarkasteltava ilmiö on jokaiselle vieraalla ja siten neutraalilla alueella, se tarjoaa vapauden tulkita tilannetta analyttisemmin tekstin äärellä syntyneestä jaetusta ymmärryksestä eikä jännitteisistä asetelmista käsin. Näinkin rakennetaan turvallisuudentunnetta ja yhteisöllisyyttä: vaikeaa ilmiötä opetellaan käsittelemään osoittelematta ketään. Sen jälkeen oppilaille annetaan vapaus tuottaa itse kirjoittamalla: keinouttamisen ja valtauttamisen tavoitteena on synnyttää oppilaissa omakohtaista, reflektion kautta tapahtuvaa uudelleen jäsentämistä.

OPISKELIJOIDEN ESSEET: KIRJOITTAMINEN REFLEKTION VÄLINEENÄ

Tutkimukseni toisessa osassa tutkin reflektion toteutumista elokuvien katselukokemusten pohdinnan yhteydessä. Tämä aiheistoni eli elokuvan katselukokemusta ja omaa opettajuutta pohtivat opiskelijoiden reflektiiviset esseet on kerätty syksyllä

2014 pidetyltä äidinkielen ja kirjallisuuden tai suomi toisena kielenä -opettajaopintoihin sisältyvältä reflektion opintojaksoilta, jossa tehtävä oli osa kurssin suoritusta. Opiskelijat saivat valita katsottavaksi joko *Luokan* tai *Freedom Writersin*, jonka jälkeen he kirjoittivat katselukokemuksistaan vapaamuotoisen esseän. Opiskelijat eivät esseitä kirjoittaessaan tienneet, että esseitä pyydetäisiin myös tutkimuksen aineistoksi. Tehtävänantoni oli seuraavanlainen:

Katso elokuva *Luokka* (Laurent Cantent: *Entre les murs*, 2008) tai *Freedom Writers* (Richard LaGravenese, 2007). Kirjoita elokuvan pohjalta esse, jossa pohdit elokuvan antia opettajuuden pohtimiselle. Voit käsitellä esimerkiksi monien kulttuurien rinnakkaineloa luokkahuoneessa, kulttuurisensitiivistä pedagogiikkaa sekä opettajuutta muutoksen mahdollistajana. Voit pohtia myös elokuvaa oppimisen kontekstina – mitä mahdollisuuksia elokuvat tarjoavat oppimiselle, mitä ehkä eivät? Jos haluat, voit soveltaa Moodlessa olevaa tausta-aineistoa pedagogisesta auktoriteetista ja tasa-arvoisesta koulusta. Esse voi olla analysoiva, omakohtainen, pohdiskeleva – toteutustapa siis vapaa. Sopiva pituus on noin 3–4 liuskaa.

Lisäksi opiskelijat saivat listan tukikysymyksiä, joita he saattoivat halutessaan hyödyntää pohdintansa jäsentämiseksi. Tukikysymykset käsittelivät elokuvan monikulttuurisuutta, opettajan pedagogiikkaa ja elokuvan antia oman opettajuuden pohtimisessa. Ohjeistuksen ja tukikysymysten tarkoituksena oli varmistaa reflektion arvioivan ja mahdollisesti myös kriittisen tason toteutuminen kirjoitusprosessin aikana. Aineistoni koostuu tutkimusluvan antaneiden opiskelijoiden esseistä, joita on yhteensä 18. Kirjoittajista 11 opiskelee suomi toisena kielenä -opettajaksi ja 7 äidinkielen ja kirjallisuuden opettajaksi. *Freedom Writersin* pohjalta kirjoitettiin 14 esseitä, (6 äidinkielen

ja kirjallisuuden opettajaopiskelijaa, 8 suomi toisena kielenä -opettajaopiskelijaa kun taas *Luokan* oli katsonut ainoastaan 4 kirjoittajaa (1 äidinkielen ja kirjallisuuden opettajaopiskelija, 3 suomi toisena kielenä -opettajaopiskelijaa). En kysynyt opiskelijoilta, millä perusteella he valitsivat elokuvan.

Valitsin reflektioitehtävän ohene elokuvan katselun, koska elokuvat tarjoavat mahdollisuuden tarkastella reaalimaailman ilmiöitä arkikokemusta laajentavista perspektiiveistä. Esitysmuodoltaan monikanavaisina elokuvat ovat erityisen immersivisiä: ne pystyvät kuvan, liikkeen ja äänen keinoin ja niiden yhdistelmänä tuottamaan sellaisia fiktiivisiä todellisuudenkaltaisia tiloja, joihin katsoja voi ”upota”. Elokuvien katselu tuottama nautinto perustuukin ainakin osin hetkelliseen reaalimaailmasta irtoamiseen ja toiseen maailmaan solahtamiseen. Samalla elokuvan mahdollistavat sellaisten kokemusten saavuttamisen, joihin ei välttämättä edes ole pääsyä reaalimaailmassa tai jotka laajentavat arkielämän kokemusmaailmaa, ja immersion vuoksi kokemuksiin syntyy myös omistajuuden kokemus. Sekä kokemuksia että omistajuutta voidaan hyödyntää reflektiossa.

Seuraavassa analysoin, kuinka esseissä kuvataan elokuvaa tai katselukokemusta reflektion ulottuvuuksien näkökulmasta ja kuinka kerrotaan mahdollisesta samaistumisesta päähenkilöön tai vertaillaan omaa ja päähenkilön opettajuutta. Viitataan esseisiin kirjoittajan suuntautumisen (AIK= äidinkieli ja kirjallisuus ja S2=suomi toisena kielenä) ja numerotunnisteen mukaan.

ELOKUVASTA KIRJOITTAMINEN JA REFLEKTION TASOT

Reflektion ulottuvuuksien mukaisesti ensimmäisen eli analyttisen tason tehtävänä on kuvailla ja järjestää tapahtunutta (Kemmis 1985, Levander 2017). Tätä esiintyi kaikissa esseissä. Elokuvan tapahtumakulkujen sanallinen selostaminen on jo itsessään analyttistä toimintaa: liikkuvan kuvan tuottama visuaalinen, ääntä sekä puhuttua ja käännoselokuvissa usein vielä kirjoitettuaakin kieltä sisältävä informaatio tulkitaan sanalliseksi, ei-fiktiiviseksi, usein pohtivaksi tai eritteleväksi esitykseksi. Lähes kaikki aineistoni esseet sisältävät aloitusjakson, jota voisi luonnehtia analyttiseksi eli siinä selostetaan elokuvan aihetta, päähenkilöä ja juonta.

Katsoin ranskalaisen Luokka-elokuvan, jossa seurataan dokumentaarille elokuvalla tyypilliseen kuvaustapaan yhtä yläasteen yhdeksättä koululuokkaa ja sen äidinkielen opettajaa, herra Marinia lukuvuoden ajan. Luokka on hyvin monikulttuurinen ja siihen liittyviä neuvotteluja käydäänkin pitkin elokuvaa.

Herra Marin on opettajana aika autoritäärinen ja suosii perinteisiä opetusmenetelmiä, kuten opetuskeskustelua, jossa hän kyselee ja on itse äänessä suurimman osan ajasta tai ainakin tiukasti ohjaa keskustelua haluamaansa suuntaan. (S211)

Elokuva-analyysiin sovellettuna reflektion toinen eli arvioiva taso tarkoittaa elokuvan aiheen ja teeman pohdintaa ja sen suhteuttamista esimerkiksi tilanteisiin tai tavoitteisiin. Arvioiva ote toteutuu, kun kirjoittaja pohtii eritellen, mitä elokuva kertoo opettajuudesta monikulttuurisessa ympäristössä tai luokan vuorovaikutuksen ilmenemistavoista. Esseen kirjoitusohjeen ja tukikysymysten tarkoituksena oli varmistaa arvioiva ote, ja

moni kirjoittaja päätyikin pohtimaan esimerkiksi elokuvassa käytettyjä opetusmenetelmiä ja arvioimaan niitä suhteessa omaan pedagogiseen ajatteluunsa.

Erin Gruwell kohtaa ongelmat ammattitaitoisesti ja luovasti, elokuvamaiseen tyyliin totta kai. Gruwell käyttää aikaa, on rohkea ja osoittaa nuorille uskovansa heihin heidän käytöksestään huolimatta. Taktiikka toimii, sillä hiljalleen Gruwell voittaa moniongelmaiset oppilaat puolelleen. Yksi keskeinen tekijä luottamuksen rakentamisessa on se, että Gruwell ei näytä pelkäävän nuoria, vaan temppuilusta huolimatta hän vaatii ja luottaa. Se on nuorille uutta, joten menee aikaa, ennen kuin he ymmärtävät, että uusi opettaja on periksiantamaton ja tosissaan. Toinen mielestäni tärkeä tekijä on Gruwellin oma innostus. Vaikka aluksi oppilaat pitävät nuoren opettajan ideoita lähinnä naurettavina, Gruwellin innostunut ja tarmokas asenne opiskeluun alkaa tarttua. Uskon itsekin siihen. (AIK1)

Arviointia tapahtuu myös silloin, kun kirjoittaja suhteuttaa elokuvassa esitettyä esimerkiksi havaintoihinsa reaali maailmasta tai muissa yhteyksissä oppimaansa. Esimerkiksi useassa syksyllä 2014 kirjoitetussa esseessä pohdittiin pääkaupunkiseudulla uutisoitua nuorisojoukkojen liikehtimistä, mikä rinnastettiin uusiin suomalaista monikulttuurista yhteiskuntaa kohtaaviin haasteisiin.

Tutkimukseni kannalta ehdottomasti kiinnostavin on reflektion kolmas eli kriittinen taso, mikä pitää sisällään koetun suhteuttamista omaan arvomaailmaan ja käsityksiin ihmisestä, opettajuudesta ja opetettavasta aineesta. Esimerkiksi seuraavan esseen kirjoittaja pohtii *Freedom Writersin* alkutilanteen rotuvihaa ja etnisten kulttuurien välistä valtataistelua tavalla, josta ilmenee myös kirjoittajan ihmiskäsitystä.

Tällainen ajattelu tuntuu järjestyttävältä. Omasta mielestäni yleistäminen on yksi sivistymättömyyden merkeistä ja samaan hengenveetoon myönnän, että aika ajoin sorrun siihen itsekkin. Silti lähökohtaisesti tuntuu järjettömältä, että toista ihmistä voi vihata vain tämän etnisen taustan takia. Siksi Freedom Writersin nuorten maailma tuntuu käsittämättömältä ja surulliselta. Jos opettamissani luokissa ilmenisi samanlaista syrjintää ja rotuvihaa, olisin valtaviin haasteiden edessä. Miten kohdata ajattelua, joka tuntuu itsestä täysin vääraltä ja alkeelliselta? Ja miten muuttaa sitä? (AIK1)

Kun kirjoitetaan elokuvan katselukokemuksesta ja tavoitteena on reflektion kriittiselle tasolle ulottuva pohdinta, onkin olennaista se, kokeeko kirjoittaja teoksen puhuttelevan omia käsityksiään ja arvomaailmaansa. Edellisessä lainauksessa kirjoittaja kuvaili tunteitaan, reflektoi ajatuskulkujaan ja rinnasti elokuvassa kerrotun omaan reaali maailmaansa ja opettajuuteensa tulevaisuuden luokkahuoneessa. Osassa tarkastelemistani esseistä välittyikin arvomaailman tasolle ja henkilökohtaiseen merkityksenantoon ulottuva pohdinta, ja rajaan seuraavaksi tarkastelemi erityisesti näihin esseisiin.

ELOKUVIEN PÄÄHENKILÖIHIN SAMAISTUMINEN

Kuten Farhi toteaa, valtavirtaelokuvien opettajakuvaukset tuntuvat noudattelevan samantyyppistä kaavaa, joka nojaa opettajan kyvykkyyteen, konfliktien esiintymiseen ja sekä lopulta opettajan pedagogisen ja moraalisen ylivertaisuuden voittoon. Kertovien valtavirtaelokuvien päähenkilö tai henkilöt on usein rakennettu sellaisiksi, että katsojan on mahdollista eläytyä heidän välityksellään tarinaan ja kokea samoja tunteita kuin tarinan henkilökin (Farhi 1999). Kun katsoja

samaistuu johonkin elokuvan henkilöön, hänen on mahdollista esimerkiksi tuntea samoja tunteita kuin henkilö (Bacon 2010, 52—54, ks. myös Hietala 1994, 83). Skenaariot eli tunnistettavat rakennemallit tuottavat katsojalle mielihyvää, koska ne ovat ensinnäkin ennustettavia, ja toiseksi, koska ne siten houkuttelevat katsojaa osallistumaan tarinaan ja kokemaan ”länäolon fantasian”. Skenaarioon myös kuuluu se, että kaikki palaset osuvat lopussa kohdalleen, aukkoja ei juuri jää. Tämä illuusio puolestaan liittyy valtavirtaelokuvan katsojaskokemukseen: jännitteen tulee syntyä ja voimistua, ja sitten purkautua.

Esseiden perusteella *Freedom Writersin* päähenkilö Erin Gruwelliin oli mahdollista samaistua, mutta *Luokan* katselukokemuksen yhteydessä ei kerrottu samaistumisesta. Yhteensä kahdeksassa *Freedom Writersin* pohjalta kirjoitetussa esseessä ilmeni joitain samaistumisen tai kokemuksellisuuden tunnusmerkkejä. Sellaisiksi luokittelin aineistoni perusteella ainakin seuraavat piirteet: samaistumiseen liittyvä kuvailu ja käsitteen samaistuminen käyttö kuvaamassa omaa katsojakokemusta, kokemuksellisuuteen liittyvät pohdinnat ja luonnehdinnat kuten ”aivan kuin olisin ollut itsekkin” ja elokuvan henkilöiden ja tapahtumien rinnastaminen omaan arkielämään.

Päähenkilöön oli helppo samastua, sillä valmistuminen siintää minulla edessä melko pian, ja myös Erin toimi äidinkielen opettajana. Hän vaikutti erittäin kunnianhimoiselta, innokkaalta ja uusia ideoita täynnä olevalta opettajalta, joka oli valmis tarttumaan kaikenlaisiin haasteisiin. (AIK6)

Jos Erin olisi tosielämässä työkaverini, olisin kuitenkin huolissani hänestä. Erin uhraa kaiken energiansa oppilailleen ja hänen omat ihmissuhteensa kärsivät tilanteesta. Erin uppoutuu niin täysin yk-

sittäisen luokan elämään, että unohtaa kokonaan elää omaa elämänsä. Jos olisin Erinin ystävä, muistuttaisin häntä siitä, että elämä on myös töiden ulkopuolella. (AIK2)

Reflektiossa ja katselukokemuksesta kirjoittamisissa samaistumiskokemuksesta on todennäköisesti etua, sillä silloin kirjoittajalla on kokemuksellista tietoa aiheensa käsittelyn tueksi ja hän pystyy tarkastelemaan havaintojaan paitsi oman pohdintansa, myös esimerkiksi elokuvan päähenkilön positiosta käsin. Jo samaistumiskokemus itsessään on keino oppia uutta paitsi itsestään, myös toisen henkilön näkökulmasta. Elokuvan katsoja ohjataan samaistumaan näkökulmahenkilöön tai tuntemaan sympatiaa häntä kohtaan, jolloin hän väistämättä kokee samaa ”toiseutta” kuin päähenkilökin.

Aineistossani ilmenevät kahden elokuvan katselukokemukseen liittyvät erot voivat aiheutua monista tekijöistä, ja analysoin tässä vain elokuvien rakenteita ja ratkaisuja koskevia mahdollisia selityksiä. Ensinnäkin *Luokan* ja *Freedom Writersin* päähenkilöissä on joitain yhteneviä ja joitain eriäviä piirteitä. Sekä Francois Marin että Erin Gruwell ovat suhteellisen nuoria ja vielä kokemattomia opettajia, ja heidän sosiaalinen asemansa uudessa koulussa on heikohko. Molemmat myös päätyvät valtakulttuurien edustajina opettamaan kieltä (omaa äidinkieltään) monikulttuuriseen luokkaan, jonka kieelliset resurssit osoittautuvat hyvin kirjaviksi, ja kumpikin heistä muuttaa pedagogiikkaansa oppilaista tekemiensä havaintojen eli toisin sanoen reflektion seurauksena.

Päähenkilöissä on myös eroja: Gruwell on sukupuoleltaan nainen ja Marin mies, ja yleisesti ottaen samaa sukupuolta olevaan henkilöön voi olla helpompaa samaistua. Aineistoni 18 esseeseen kirjoittajista vain 3 oli miehiä, voittopuolisesti suurin

osa eli 15 kirjoittajaa oli naisia. Gruwellin perheestä ja muusta koulun ulkopuolisesta elämästä kerrotaan paljonkin, mutta Marinin koulun ulkopuolinen elämä jää vain homoseksuaalisuusvihjailun varaan. Gruwell päästää oppilaat lähelleen, Marin taas pitää heidät etäämpänä itsestään. Gruwellin yksityiselämän haaksirikoista, kuten avioerosta, kerrotaan, samoin hänen näytetään uhrautumassa oppilaittensa puolesta. Marin puolestaan näytetään vain kouluympäristössä, mutta Gruwellin elämästä näytetään myös hänen kotinsa, aviopuolisonsa, isänsä ja ravintola, jossa hän käy syömässä.

Myös elokuvakerronta vaikuttaa todennäköisesti asiaan. *Freedom Writers* noudattaa suhteellisen konventionaalista valtavirtaelokuvan kerrontatapaa sankarihahmoineen, henkilökohtaisen elämän ristiriitoinen ja onnellisine loppuineen, kun taas *Luokassa* käytetty kolmen näkökulman kerronta jättää katsojankin epävarmuuden tilaan: hierarkioita rikotaan, mutta mitään varmaa ei tule tilalle. Lisäksi opettajan valinnoilla ja hänen ilmentämänsä muutoksen laajuudella ja syvyydellä voi myös olla vaikutusta samaistumisen kokemukseen. *Luokka*-elokuvan Francois Marin yltänee toiminnassaan ainakin arvioivan reflektion tasolle, kun taas *Freedom Writersin* Erin Gruwell toimii väistämättä kriittisen tason reflektion ohjaamana, ja elokuvien oppilaiden voi nähdä omaksuvan saman tason kuin opettajansakin omassa toiminnassaan. Yhteenvetona voi siis todeta, että samankaltaisesta aihepiiristä huolimatta elokuvat asettivat katsojan hieman erilaiseen positioon, ja näin niiden herättämät katselukokemuksetkin erosivat toisistaan.

SAMAISTUMINEN, ETÄÄNTYMINEN JA REFLEKTIO

Reflektion ylimmälle eli kriittiselle ulottuvuudelle on tyypillistä arvoihin, moraaliiin ja esimerkiksi ammatissa toimimisen perimmäisiin tavoitteisiin liittyvä pohdinta (Kemmis 1985). Kaikissa esseissä saavutettiin arvioiva taso, mutta kriittisen tason piirteitä oli huomattavasti enemmän *Freedom Writersistä* kirjoitetuissa esseissä. Lisäksi kriittisen tason piirteitä esiintyi useammin niissä esseissä, joiden kirjoittaja esitti myös samaistumiseen tai eläytymiseen liittyviä huomioita. Tämän perusteella voisikin varovaisesti olettaa, että samaistumiskokemus tai eläytyminen on yhteydessä reflektion kriittiselle tasolle pääsemiseen.

Samaistumista ei pidä kuitenkaan sekoittaa siihen, otetaanko elokuva varauksetta vastaan, vai esitetäänkö siitä esitystapoi-neen myös kriittisiä huomioita. *Freedom Writersistä* kirjoitettiin ristiriitaisesti: toisaalta huomioitiin elokuvan stereotyyppiset ratkaisut ja siloitellut henkilöhahmot ja toisaalta elokuvan esiin nostamat tärkeät aiheet. Lisäksi päähenkilö Erin Gruwellin liiallisuuksiin menevää uhrautumista kritisoitiin. Usea kirjoittaja aloitti huomionsa vaikka-rinnastuksella:

Vaikka elokuva onkin voimakkaasti viihteellistetty katsojien miellyttämiseksi ja opetuksen kuvaus on naiivia, tarinasta pystyy myös löytämään yhtymäkohtia (--) opettajan työhön (S210)

Vaikka *Freedom Writersin* voi nähdä yhdysvaltalaisena viihde-elokuvana, on sen perimmäinen idea yhteisymmärryksestä ja ihmisten perimmäisestä samankaltaisuudesta hyvä. (AIK1)

Vaikka elokuva antaakin aika romantisoitun kuvan ongelmallisten nuorten opettamisesta, on se kuitenkin omalla tavallaan inspiroiva opettajuutta ajatellen. (S23)

Näitä ehdollistavia lauseita esiintyi erityisen paljon suomi toisena kielenä -opettajaopiskelijoiden kirjoittamissa esseissä, kun taas äidinkielen ja kirjallisuuden opettajaopiskelijoiden esseissä esiintyi enemmän varauksetonta hyväksyntää ja taideteokseen samaistumista. Tämä selittyy opiskelijoiden taustatietämyksellä. Suomea toisena kielenä opettamaan opiskelevat ovat jo suuntautumisalansa vuoksi tietoisia monikulttuurisen ympäristön esitystapoihin liittyvistä konventioista ja suoranaista stereotyyppioista, mikä välittyy kriittisten huomioiden kielentämisestä. Toisaalta äidinkielen ja kirjallisuuden opettajiksi opiskelevien esseissä taas esiintyi enemmän opettaja Erin Gruwellin pedagogisten ratkaisujen arvioimista suhteessa omaan opettajuuteen. Tulkitsinkin, että elokuvan katselu ja kokemuksen purkaminen kirjoittamalla mahdollisti sekä nautintoa tuovan samaistumisen että reflektion kriittiselle tasolle pääsemisen edellytyksenä olevan etäännyttämisen havaintojen kohteesta, jolloin huomio saattoi kääntyä elokuvan analyysistä omaa opettajuutta koskevan ajattelun perustelemiseen. Näin samaistuminen ja elokuvaa koskevat kritiikki palveli esseen kirjoittajan ammatillisuuden vahvistumista, jota kirjoittaja pääsi kirjoittessaan purkamaan ja perustelemaan elokuvan avulla. Elokuvas-ta tuli ”toinen”, jota vasten peilattiin.

Joissain esseissä oli suoraan tartuttu elokuvien keskeiseen aiheeseen, oppilaiden voimauttamiseen ja valtauttamiseen kielen avulla. Seuraavat pitkätköt lainaukset kuvastavat *Freedom Writersin* oppilaiden kokemaa vaikenemisen muuntumista dialogiksi opettajaopiskelijan analysoimana:

Elokuvan käännekohtassa Erin takavarikoi yhdeltä oppilaaltaan pilakuvan, joka on kiertänyt luokassa. Kuva on sävyiltään rasistinen ja se esittää yhtä luokan oppilaista. Erin suuttuu ja selittää

oppilaille, että samantyyppisestä pilakuvasta sai alkunsa myös holokausti. Kun Erinille valkenee, että kukaan oppilaista ei tiedä mitä holokausti tarkoittaa, alkaa hänelle samalla todella hahmottua oppilaiden taitotaso ja sitä kautta ymmärrys siitä mitä ja mihin suuntaan hänen tulisi opetustaan viedä. On mielestäni pedagogisesti hieno ratkaisu, että Erin luetuttaa oppilaillaan Anne Frankin Nuoren tytön päiväkirjan ja tekee heidän kanssaan vierailun rasismia, ennakkoluuloja ja holokaustia käsittelevään museoon (Museum of Tolerance) Los Angelesiin. Saksan kansallissosialistien harjoittama antisemitismi ja sen seuraukset vertautuvat tietysti mielessä oppilaiden omaan elämään etnisten ristiriitojen maailmassa. Anne Frank on suunnilleen saman ikäisenä sopiva samaistumiskohde ja teoksen kautta nuoret pääsevät käsittelemään myös omaa elämäänsä. Tärkein oivallus Eriniltä on – kuten elokuvan nimikin jo antaa ymmärtää – pyytää oppilaita kirjoittamaan Anne Frankin päiväkirjasta saadun esimerkin avulla päiväkirjaa omasta elämästään. On myös tärkeää, että Erin tarjoaa oppilaille mahdollisuuden yksityisyyteen suhteessa päiväkirjoihin: hän lupaa ettei lue oppilaiden päiväkirjoja elleivät nämä itse anna siihen lupaa. (S29)

Elokuvan lopussa Erin kokoaa oppilaidensa päiväkirjakirjoituksesta kirjan, jonka nimeksi tulee Freedom Writers Diary: How a Teacher and 150 Teens Used Writing to Change Themselves and the World. Näin tehden hän toteuttaa pedagogista auktoriteettia parhaimmillaan: oppilaat tulevat tarinoineen kuulluksi, ja se puolestaan lisää heidän mahdollisuuksiaan vaikuttaa omaan elinpiiriinsä ja huomata, että heidän näkemyksillään ja mielipiteillään on merkitystä. (S29)

Siinä missä elokuvan oppilaat samaistuivat Anne Frankiin, elokuvasta kirjoittaneet opiskelijat opettaja Erin Gruwelliin. Yhteenvetona voi todeta, että ainakin reflektion näkökulmasta elokuvan katselu voi tarjota sekä samaistumiseen liittyvän läheisyyden ja tunnistamisen että kriittisyyteen ohjaavan etäännyttämisen mahdollisuuden. Silloin kirjoittaessa päästään sekä

ilmaisemaan elokuvan katselussa syntyneitä autenttisia kokemuksia että jäsentämään ja perustelevaan niitä. Reflektioon sopiva elokuva voi herättää myös kriittisyyttä ja suoranaisia vastenmielisyyden tunteita - Gruwelliakin kuvattiin monessa esseessä naiiviksi, varomattomaksi ja itseihailuun taipuvaiseksi. Kirjoittajan tehtävänä ei olekaan reflektoida elokuvan täydellisyyttä, vaan lähteä täydentämään dialogisesti sen ”aukkoja”, jatkaa pohdintaa omassa kielessään ja omistajuutta rakentaen.

LOPUKSI

Henkilökohtaista kirjoittamista tutkinut Héléne Maurel-Indart toteaa, että henkilökohtaisen kirjoittamisen uhkana on aina pysähtyminen muodottomaksi puheeksi, jota kukaan ei voi hyödyntää ja jolla ei ole tunnistettavaa, jollekin lajityypille tyypillistä muotoa (Maurel-Indart 2014, 13). Reflektiivinen omia kokemuksia, käsityksiä ja oppimista pohtiva kirjoittaminen on väistämättä tällaista henkilökohtaista kirjoittamista, ja tekstien muodon sijaan onkin ehkä olennaisempaa pohtia kirjoittamisen kirjoittajaa itseään muuntavaa vaikutusta, mihin oppiminen itse asiassa perustuu. Toisaalta elokuvista käy ilmi, että kirjoittamisella on myös itseisarvoa. Se on astumista ulos vaikenemisen ja häpeän marginaalilla tavalla, joka muuttaa yksilöiden ohella yhteisöjä. Silloin kirjoittaminen on ennen kaikkea teko, jota tulee arvioida sen vaikutusten perusteella, eikä vain lopputuotteena. Tutkimukseni elokuvat kertovat kirjoittamisen transformatiivisesta vaikutuksesta, siitä, kuinka yhteiskunnan marginalisoimat oppilaat ilmaisevat minuuttaan ja tuottavat siten uusia positioita.

Opiskelijoiden esseet puolestaan tähdentävät samaistumista ja kriittisen etäisyyden ottamista ammatillisen ajattelun tuottamisen osana.

Elokuvien oppilaat käyttivät Anne Frankia mallinaan, ja elokuvista kirjoittaneet opiskelijat käyttivät pohdintansa malleina elokuvien päähenkilöitä. Maurel-Indartkin toteaa, että ehkä ainoa tapa oppia kirjoittamaan on mallien hyödyntäminen (Maurel-Indart 2014, 15). Myös reflektiossa mallien ja mallintamisen merkitystä voi pitää olennaisena, sillä sanoittaakseen kokemuksiaan kirjoittajan pitää pystyä vertaamaan niitä johonkin aiempaan. Niin aloittelevan opettajan kuin kirjoittajankin mallina voivat toimia fiktiiviset tai todellisuutta ja seipitettä sekoittavat esitykset, esimerkiksi päiväkirjat ja elokuvat. Silloinkin muodon omaksumisen ohella olennaista on, miten mallit auttavat kirjoittajaa rakentamaan oman positionsa. Näin kirjoittaminen näyttäytyy haltuunoton, jakamisen ja voimaantumisen sekä parhaimmillaan myös yhteisöjen rakentamisen välineenä. Kirjoittamisesta tulee kirjoittajan ja hänen ympärillään olevan yhteisön kohtauspaiikka, yksityisen ja yhteisen vuoropuheluun saattava teko. Siten kirjoittaminen on aina luonteeltaan monikulttuurista, sillä siihen sisältyy aina oman ja aluksi toiseksi koetun vieraan kohtaaminen.

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Johanna Pentikäinen (FT) on työskennellyt äidinkielen ja kirjoittamisen didaktiikan yliopistonlehtorina Helsingin yliopiston opettajankoulutuslaitoksessa sekä tuntiopettajana Kirjoittamisen oppiaineessa Taideyliopistossa. Lisäksi hän on kirjoittamisen oppimista tutkivan Kirke-tutkimusryhmän jäsen. Hän on kiinnostunut kirjallisuuden ja yleensä taiteiden avulla oppimisesta, taiteen ja tutkimuksen vuorovaikutuksesta, kirjoitustaitojen oppimisesta ja fiktion kirjoittamisesta.

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