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Primitive Passions and Nostalgia for Nature Decadence and Primitivism in Maria Jotuni's Work

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An allegorical short story entitled 'Luonto ja ihminen' ['Nature and Man'] (1905) by Maria Jotuni (née Haggrén, 1880-1943) depicts the ruin of the ancient union between Man and his beloved Nature. One day Man, who is wandering in the forest of life, is led towards a mysterious, misty bog. Intoxicated by the tranquillizing scent of the bog, Man encounters Culture, in the shape of a seductive *femme fatale*. When Man and Nature later reunite, 'Hän oli väsynyt – silmäin kirkas kiilto himmennyt – ja pää oli painunut maata kohti' [the Man was tired, the bright shining of his eyes was fading – and his gaze was lowered towards the ground].¹ Man admits his error and asks to return together with Nature again. She refuses and, shocked by the betrayal of Man, Nature freezes to death: 'Ja tuli talvi ja peitti Luonnon kääreliinoihinsa' [And then winter came and covered Nature with its shroud].²

The story of Man and Nature featured in Maria Jotuni's debut collection *Subteita: Harjoitelmia* [*Relationships: Sketches*] (1905) exemplifies the general outlook of civilization and its discontents in Jotuni's work. The Finnish author, whose collections of short stories *Relationships* and *Rakkautta* [*Love*] (1907) shocked reading audiences, presents a melancholy vision of modernity as a condition of alienation and over-cultivated tiredness. The titles of the collections are rather ironic in the affections to which they refer: erotic and romantic relationships are torn apart by a constant power struggle between the sexes and end in disappointment and suffering. Marriage is a trap and love is revealed to be a lie. The individual stories hint at taboo topics that extend well beyond the conventional shock effects of Naturalism: from paedophilia to psychological and physical violence to veiled sadism. At the same time, the vision of sickening modernity is paired with a nostalgic quest for nature and its vital potential. As a kind of compensation for the

loathsomeness of modernity, there is a search for the primordial in nature, opening onto a mysterious sacred space beyond the violent struggle of everyday life.

In this article, I investigate Decadent aspects in the prose writing of Maria Jotuni, whose work represents the perpetuation and reconfiguration of Naturalism and Decadence in early twentieth-century Nordic literature. In my reading I explore Jotuni's contribution to Decadence and Naturalism by tracing the primitive impulse in her fiction. Looking at the ways in which the ambivalent notion of the primitive and its tropes permeate Jotuni's work allows for a consideration of the affiliation of primitivism and Decadence in the *fin-de-siècle* constellation of cultural thought. The critical stance towards modernity and its alleged progress form a central idea in the Decadent imagination, which builds on ideas of the decline of the West. The desire to escape modernity is paired with a quest for a primordial condition of humanity. This anti-modern view of the world nourishes nostalgia for a pre-civilized condition of harmony with nature.

Here I understand primitivism broadly as a constellation of narratives and tropes entwined with the ambiguous notion of the primitive, particularly prominent in the literature and culture on either side of the year 1900. The concept of the primitive oscillates between two almost diametrically opposed ideas: what is primordial and pure in origin and what is crude, undeveloped and barbarian.³ We may also speak of chronological, cultural, and biological aspects of this notion, meaning the ancient forms of human civilization, as well as the exotic, peripheral cultures outside of Western modernity or the instinctive, animal remnant in modern man. In literary works these various categories tend to overlap, producing new metaphors and re-imaginings of the primitive. While the notion of the primitive is as old as the idea of civilization, these discourses increased towards the *fin de siècle*. As discussed by Marianna Torgovnick, in modernity the primitive became a metaphor for discussing otherness, not only outside the Western world but also within the dominant culture: the primitive thus became an important element of defining and representing the modern self-identity, the primitive in us.⁴

It is also important to emphasize the critical potential of primitivism, or even its decolonial horizon, to quote Ben Etherington.⁵ The conventional idea of primitivism as a colonial project of the imperialist age and as a unidirectional projection from centres to peripheries is not accurate. Instead, as discussed by Etherington, for many authors primitivism offered a reactionary aesthetic project away from the margins.⁶ Narratives of the primitive frequently express a critical stance towards the civilization they escape and challenge the hierarchies of social domination and colonial attitudes they depict.⁷ This kind of ‘empathic primitivism’, as it is called by Etherington, extends to women who write primitivism, including Maria Jotuni. While Jotuni’s stories employ and represent contemporary tropes of women as primitive and close to nature, they also subvert, appropriate and critically challenge these tropes, showing the tragic aspects of these assumptions from a female perspective, and revealing how these tropes hark back to the gendered hierarchies of society. The play with mimesis and irony typical of women who write Decadent literature thus extends to the uses of primitivism as well.⁸ As a result, Jotuni’s work features a catalogue of alternating images of the primitive, from nostalgia for the primordial in nature to cynical visions of the beast lurking in civilized modern man. In my reading I illustrate these various configurations of the primitive in Jotuni’s work by analysing a selection of her short stories, a novella *Arkielämä* [*Everyday Life*] (1909) and her posthumously published novel *Huojuva talo* [*The Swaying House*] (1963).

In Finnish literary history, Jotuni’s work has generally been considered as neo-Romanticist, neo-Realist, early Modernist, or part of the tradition of the Finnish peasant novel.⁹ The notions of Naturalism and Decadence were largely effaced in literary history until the 1990s, when a re-evaluation of the national canon took up these concepts for discussion.¹⁰ This reinterpretation of the Finnish *fin de siècle* also directed attention to women writing literature of Decadence. In recent years the work of L. Onerva (1882-1972) in particular has prompted new research from the perspective of Decadence.¹¹ Jotuni, on the other hand, has been less often discussed in this context, as her work is detached from so-called ‘core’ Decadence and moves towards primitivism, Naturalism, and rural Decadence, frequently enveloping Decadent themes of decay, eroticism, and

the morbidity of life in an allegedly realist setting. Annamari Sarajas and Pirjo Lyytikäinen have nevertheless evoked the *fin de siècle* in their critical discussions of Jotuni, especially with regard to her early work.¹² In the following, I extend these perspectives to Jotuni's later prose fiction, hoping thereby to advance the reappraisal of her work as part of neo-Naturalism and neo-Decadence in twentieth-century fiction.

Maria Jotuni, née Maria Kustaava Haggrén, was born in 1880 in Kuopio, a rural town in the region of Northern Savonia, to a tinsmith and a farmer's daughter. Despite their modest origins, the Haggréns encouraged their children to read and educate themselves. The spirit of the era, including a national awakening and Finland's cultural and economic rise, was favourable to the kind of social mobility exemplified by Jotuni's life. Her hometown of Kuopio had become the centre of literature written in Finnish in the late nineteenth century; the members of the intelligentsia in the capital, Helsinki, were still in many respects Swedish-speaking. In Kuopio there were prominent female role models to follow, in particular, Minna Canth (1844-1897), an eminent Naturalist author and advocate of women's rights.¹³ In 1900 Jotuni moved to Helsinki to study literature and art history at the university, which at that time still required special permission for a woman to enrol. In the capital she soon became acquainted with cultural circles and young authors, notably Otto Manninen (1872-1950) and Joel Lehtonen (1881-1934), whose contribution to Finnish Symbolism and Decadence was later acknowledged.¹⁴ There she also met her future husband, Viljo Tarkiainen (1879-1951), who became a professor of Finnish literature at the University of Helsinki. In 1906 Maria Haggrén-Tarkiainen started to publish under the pen name Maria Jotuni. The name is not without its primitivist implications, as 'Jotuni' refers to 'giants' in Nordic mythology, ambiguous entities who were constantly in conflict with the gods.¹⁵ In folklore these mysterious spirits had both negative and positive connotations. With regard to the positive aspects, Jotuni lived up to her name: she became a well-regarded award-winning author, novelist, aphorist, and playwright, whose plays are still staged in Finnish theatres.

Woman, Nature and Primitive Passions

Maria Jotuni's debut collections, *Relationships* and *Love*, were met with controversy among reading audiences. Many critics acknowledged the artistic merit of Jotuni's writing and her original aphoristic style favouring dialogue and irony,¹⁶ yet at the same time her focus on erotic affairs and female sexuality, often tinged with pessimism and even cynicism, bewildered even those who appreciated the literary value of the collections. To quote a critic writing in a conservative journal, 'How should we evaluate this intense, extremely passionate sensuality, which in these stories manifests itself even more unconcealed than perhaps ever before in Finnish literature?'¹⁷ Terms such as 'love instinct' and 'ecstasy' recurred in critiques. In contrast, in the context of the time Jotuni's reception was not exceptional. In Finland, as in many Nordic countries, Naturalism and Decadence were generally perceived as a malicious French invasion that threatened the progress and modernization of the young and healthy nation.¹⁸ In general, the atmosphere was hostile to Decadence regardless of gender, but female authors employing Naturalist and Decadent modes were the targets of particularly harsh criticism. Naturalism, Decadence, and Symbolism reached the North more or less at the same time as they emerged in Western and Central Europe, although no actual 'schools' were formed under these banners. Naturalism often went by the name of Realism, and few dared to mention what can be identified as Decadent literature by that name.¹⁹

In the *fin-de-siècle* context, Jotuni's short fragments and stories correspond with the contemporary Western and Central European Decadent and Naturalist fiction of Jeanne Marni, Peter Altenberg, Ola Hansson, and August Strindberg.²⁰ Strindberg's *Giftas I-II* [*Married I-II*] (1884-1886) is clearly echoed in Jotuni's pessimistic short stories, which circulate and reinterpret the Strindbergian depiction of love and marriage as scenes of constant power struggle between the sexes.²¹ Jotuni, however, distances herself from the misogyny permeating *Married*. In contrast to Strindberg, who satirized the emancipated and educated 'Cultural woman' as a materialist and egoist, Jotuni presents us with a tragic quest for love and happiness. Moreover, if Strindberg caricatured the Cultural Woman as a sterile creature alienated from nature and thus the epitome

of degeneration, Jotuni's portraits of upper-class women are not devoid of primitive passions.²² The volume *Relationships*, for instance, begins with a kind of eulogy to female sexuality. The eponymous protagonist of the first story, 'Aina', resembles a New Woman figure who feels liberated from the guilt of sexuality: 'Nyt hän ajatteli mielellään ruumiinsa muotoja – kunnioitti itseään ja nautti siitä, että hän oli nainen – että hän oli elävää lihaa ja verta' [She thought of the shape of her body with pleasure – she honoured herself and she enjoyed – enjoyed being flesh and blood].²³ The human body is seen as a vital site of erotic life forces and a 'sacred temple of love', to quote Aina: 'Ja eikö ollutkin pyhä koko luonto kaikissa muodoissaan – eikö ollutkin pyhä koko ihmisolento – eikö ihmisruumis rakkauden pyhä temppeli?' [And was not nature sacred in all its forms – was not the whole human creature sacred – was not the whole human body a sacred temple of love?]²⁴ 'Päiväkirjasta' ['From a Diary'], a story from the collection *Love* provides another example of this tendency. The protagonist confesses her agonizing desires: 'Ruumistani polttaa. Ja tiedän, mitä minä tahdon. Tahdon kerrankin tyydyttää kaipaukseni, monet tukahdetut haluni' [My body is burning. I know what I want: I want to satisfy my longing and my many repressed desires, for once].²⁵ The protagonist of an epistolary story, 'Kirjeitä' ['Letters'], also from *Love*, presents an adulterous upper-class woman writing to her secret lover as she remembers their moments together and awaits the next meeting: 'Sellainen yö, kuin se siellä luonasi, kannattaa taas kuukausia kitua' [A night, like that there with you, it is worth suffering for months].²⁶

The provocative trope of the female body as a 'sacred temple of love', which oxymoronically blends spirituality and eroticism, can be seen as an allusion to the new liberal conceptions of female sexuality emerging in contemporary Nordic feminism. Jotuni was interested in the radical and liberal ideas of Laura Marholm and Ellen Key.²⁷ Inspired by Nietzsche's philosophy and evolutionism, Key, an author who was also well recognized in Finland, criticized the conservative and Christian views of women as less sexual creatures who were supposed to tame the 'naturally wild' male sexuality.²⁸ These liberal and empowering ideas of female sexuality extend to Jotuni's descriptions of femininity, yet her female figures seldom conform to

stereotypical ideas of New Women.²⁹ The use of primitive tropes of women tends to result in conflicting images, in keeping with the Decadent aesthetics of contradiction. The ambiguity arises largely from the multi-faceted notion of nature, which evokes both vital life forces and violent life struggles. These alternating images are exemplified by the story 'From a Diary', for instance, which builds on a contrast between 'sick' life in the city and the empowering paradise of nature. However, the nature of human beings never becomes a paradise but shatters and leads to suffering. The Nietzschean Dionysian pathos of transgression combines with regression to animal instincts or even to a sadomasochistic fantasy of being dominated and enslaved by men. 'Sinun pitää rakastaa minua voimakkaasti kuin metsän peto' [You must love me powerfully as a beast of the forest], demands the protagonist of 'From a Diary'.³⁰ 'Miksi en siis saanut olla sinun kanssasi. Elää ja kärsiä sinun kanssasi, sinun orjanasi' [Why could I not be with you, to live with you. To live and suffer with you, as your slave], demands the protagonist of 'Letters'.³¹

Another oxymoron emerges in Jotuni's depiction of maternity. Jotuni's work has been associated with Key's ideas of female sexuality and maternity.³² Key distanced herself from conventional ideas of modern women as self-sufficient creatures transgressing against the family traditions, and instead united sexual anarchism with maternalism, emphasizing the positive power of maternity as a life-continuing force.³³ In Finland, as in many countries, Key's ideas divided minds in cultural circles. Conservative feminists attacked Key, even considering her as an anti-feminist and renegade who tried to smuggle the patriarchal concept of femininity into the new rhetoric of female emancipation.³⁴ These contradictions also reverberate in Jotuni's depiction of maternity. In a positive sense maternity endows women with a particular life-shaping force, even stimulating a mystical feeling of union with others. However, joining the chain of generations simultaneously signals a submission to others, as suggested in 'From a Diary': *'etten se ole enää minä, ei minun oma ääneni, vaan elämä minussa, tulevien sukujen elämä, joka kauttani elämäänsä kaipaa.'* [it is no longer me, not my own voice, but the life in me, the life of the future generations, which yearns for life through me].³⁵

The protagonist feels taken by an uncanny other life, which she has no right to repress, and her own voice is replaced by the mystical voice of generations.

These examples from Jotuni's work illustrate how the blending of evolutionism and emancipation generates contradictory ideas of agency and sexuality. Jotuni's stories alternate between a quest for empowering sexuality and vitality, echoing a Nietzschean will to transgress, and pessimistic views of realizing the dynamic potential of life and nature in current society. The resignation is illustrated by the way in which Jotuni's female protagonists are frequently trapped in lost illusions, sickness, and death. In the story 'Aina', the empowering feeling of love and erotic passion turns to deception. Love is just a deceptive 'mirage', to quote the protagonist. The ending of the story 'Letters' hints at the death of the protagonist, who is suffering from tuberculosis. In 'From a Diary' the female protagonist loses her beloved to death. The story concludes with a depiction of the protagonist searching for consolation in spiritual emotions triggered by nature. Many stories present narratives of illness, in which primitive passions evolve into hysteria and neurosis. The gloomy vision of society and mankind echoes the philosophical pessimism of Schopenhauer and Nietzsche. Reciprocity of love is seldom realized in life, which is fundamentally seen as a vicious circle of desires and suffering. Although Jotuni distances herself from Strindberg's misogyny, her diagnosis of civilized modernity as decay forms part of the general anti-Modernist hostility to modern times. The ending of the volume *Love* illustrates this view of civilization as corruption: the collection ends in a depiction of two servants peeping through a keyhole to see into the gentlefolk's dining room, which is compared to a mental asylum.³⁶

The austere view of life and love extends even to Jotuni's original literary style. Her style does not represent Decadence in terms of voluptuous or ornamental writing. Rather, her prose is characterized by a distinctly laconic and aphoristic manner, which effaces the narrator and renounces abundant description, instead favouring dialogue, short phrases, and dense expressions. The depiction of the love passion of a female protagonist in the short story 'From a Diary' provides a pertinent example: 'Kaipaus täytti väkivaltaisena sieluni. Tunsin vaan yhtä. Rakastin sinua. Niin

se oli. Rakastin. Miksi en siis saanut olla sinun kanssasi. Elää ja kärsiä sinun kanssasi, sinun orjanasi’ [My soul was violently filled with a longing. I felt only one thing. I loved you. It was such. I loved].³⁷ There is an obvious contrast in the content and form of expression: the passionate feeling of the protagonist is cut through with short phrases and constrained into a short, laconic form. In a way, the concise style illustrates the repression of passion, which the protagonist experiences as violent and painful. Jotuni’s style was also appreciated by her Nordic contemporaries: she sent a copy of the Swedish translation of *Love* to Knut Hamsun. In a complimentary letter, Hamsun praised the volume: ‘My God, how hot and beautifully you write about topics that can be written in an ugly and dirty manner. I admire you.’³⁸

Another feature typical of Jotuni’s writing is the use of the so-called ‘zero-person’ subject in the Finnish language. In these constructions, there is no overt subject, and the verb is in the third-person singular; the implied subject is translated into English as *you* or *one*:³⁹ ‘Sitä on yksinkertainen ja lapsellinen, kun on kokematon’ [One is childish when one is young and has no experience], says the female protagonist of the short story ‘Hilda Husso’ as she reflects on her relationship to her former lover, the father of her illegitimate child.⁴⁰ The use of this structure produces an effect of self-distance and generalization: the protagonists use the zero-person form to express personal feelings and experiences, thus distancing themselves from these intimate emotions, regarding and analysing life from a general perspective.⁴¹ This distancing strategy can function as a means of survival, which helps in coping with painful memories and life’s sufferings. At the same time, by distancing themselves from the subjectivity of emotions, an author moves from spontaneity to cerebrality and reasoning. The passionate primitive is thus transformed into a self-reflective modern individual. This twist is not without its cynical aspect, as it suggests an alienation from the self and from emotions.

Rural Decadence and Mystical Spirituality

Several stories in the volume *Relationships* focus on various forms of decay and degeneration in the upper classes. We may speak of ‘core decadence’ in the sense that Decadence has traditionally been associated with the urban and the modern or defined as refined decay amongst the upper classes.⁴² But the idea that the *fin de siècle* happened or was situated exclusively in the metropolitan centres of the industrial age is far from accurate. In their disappointment with modernity, many authors of Decadence and Naturalism turned away from the metropolis to alternative spaces of imagination outside the realm of civilization and its discontents. As discussed by Scott Ashley, the cultural history of the nineteenth century is focused on great cities, but the Decadents were always somewhere else, either imaginatively or physically.⁴³ Rural paradises, savage seas, and other primitive realms became central to the imaginative geography of both Decadence and Naturalism and their varied combinations. In the Nordic context this kind of ruralist tendency became prominent in the Naturalist work of Jotuni’s contemporaries like Strindberg and Hamsun. In the spirit of Rousseau’s cultural pessimism, introduced to Nordic intellectual circles by Strindberg in particular,⁴⁴ rural Naturalism and Decadence present us with a nostalgic escape from the entanglements of modern life. At the same time the rural setting frequently turns into an exploration of the primitive in its most negative sense: the Naturalist descriptions of rural life tease out the beast in man lurking in the natural paradise.

Jotuni’s novella *Everyday Life* provides an example of this kind of rural Naturalism, which envelops motifs of decay and Decadent characters within story worlds that depict everyday realities. *Everyday Life* describes the life of ordinary rural people on a summer day in a remote countryside village. It thus sets out a kind of naturalistic narrative of *tranche de vie*, ‘a slice of life’ in the framework of a summer paradise. The episodic text affords a view of the life of a collective through a male protagonist, a solitary vagabond called Nyman, a student dropout from theology, called ‘priest’, who frequently visits the village. He meets the villagers and listens to their joys and sorrows, in particular those of ordinary peasant women. They all stand at the threshold of life-long choices in love and marriage. In effect, the brief time-span of the novella covers pivotal events of

human life from death to birth. The existentialist anxiety that colours the novella is fortified by flashbacks to the villagers' past. The beauty of the summer day unfolds in a painful struggle of good and evil: Nyman meets, for instance, an infanticidal mother; and he is told about an incest case recently revealed in the village.

Nyman, who guides the reader into the 'Heart of Darkness' in the primitive countryside, is affiliated with a recurrent character type in Nordic Naturalism, a dilettante drifter figure, whose sentimental education ends in deception and resignation. Loneliness and existential disgust for the human condition in modernity is prominent among young bohemians and appears in the works of such authors as Herman Bang, J. P. Jacobsen, Arne Garborg, and Juhani Aho.⁴⁵ In the context of French Naturalism and Decadence, this character type resembles over-reflective and analytical modern man in terms of Paul Bourget, and sentimental 'bovarists' and melancholic bachelors in the works of Gustave Flaubert, Guy de Maupassant, and early J.-K. Huysmans.⁴⁶ The Nordic bohemian has also some affinity with Charles Baudelaire's spectators of modern life. Yet in the Nordic context, these figures frequently lack the calculation of a cerebral dandy: sensitivity to emotions combined with a tendency to melancholy is their prominent feature, which posits a contrast to cool and even cynical figures in French Decadence exemplifying 'la froideur de la jeunesse, ce grand signe de la seconde moitié du XIXème siècle' [the coldness of youth, this great symbol of the second half of the nineteenth century], as the Goncourt brothers described the *fin-de-siècle* young in *Renée Mauperin* (1864).⁴⁷ Calculation and cerebrality are also lacking in Jotuni's Nyman, who is prone to sentimentality. In particular, he feels a continuous, passive suffering: 'Ei kukaan osannut kärsiä niin kuin hän. Kaikesta hän nytkin kärsi, kehnoudestansa, ihmiskurjuudesta, jonka hän yksin tunsu, kaikesta' [Nobody could suffer like he did. For everything he suffered, even now, for his poorness, for human misery, everything that only he could feel, for everything].⁴⁸

Everyday Life was compared to Strindberg's *Hemsöborna* [*The People of Hemsö*](1887), another novel that illustrates the ruralist tendency in Nordic Naturalism.⁴⁹ In *The People of Hemsö* the archipelago idyll is transformed into a morbid satire of Nordic rural life; the power struggle

between the sexes typical of Strindberg is coupled with a struggle for life amidst the harshness of nature. Strindberg's work is highly satirical, caricaturing the primitive in nature and the way nature takes over civilized man. In Jotuni's work the affective tone of the text is very different. The existential struggle experienced by the characters prompts a mystical sense of sacredness that is prominent in the novella. Many contemporary critics had directed their attention to the peaceful mood of the text.⁵⁰ In Jotuni's novella, the pessimistic view of love and the human condition is contrasted with the beauty of nature in summertime. Through the protagonist, Nyman, *Everyday Life* opens up a view to an ecstatic experience of nature, even a kind of oceanic sense of merging with the world, a vanishing of the boundaries of the self. The male protagonist experiences the beauty of nature in the summer: 'Maan ja kuivuvan viljan huumaava tuoksu päihdytti aistit ja tukahdutti tunnon omasta olemisesta' [The heady scent of the soil and the drying grain intoxicated the senses and effaced the sense of being].⁵¹ These scenes echo Hamsun's rapturous descriptions of nature, which Jotuni praised in an essay on Hamsun and his mystical description of the scenery of the North.⁵² At the same time, the ecstatic experiences of nature remind us of the theories of vitalism that inspired Nordic authors at the beginning of the twentieth century. In the framework of the ideas of Henri Bergson, Friedrich Nietzsche, and Ernst Haeckel, the concept of nature was reconfigured into an empowering force of life, or *l'élan vital*, to use Bergson's term. In this view the primitive in nature reflected not only savage animal instincts and the atavistic libidinal past, but also designated its vital potential, ranging from erotic life-forces to spiritual and mystical transcendence beyond the visible reality.

Everyday Life has tenors of mystical spirituality and ecstatic experiences of nature's beauty, but the peaceful tone of the text in Jotuni's novella also reveals a critical view of the gendered community. Nyman refers to a New Man (Swedish: *en ny man* means 'a new man'), yet the name is somewhat ironic. As a melancholy, anguished dilettante and drifter figure, Nyman rather exemplifies an anti-modern attitude and a comforting nostalgia for nature. While Nyman consoles the villagers, he remains a passive eyewitness incapable of true change and action. The changing

narrative perspectives are also suggestive of this passivity and further evoke inequality of gender. The ecstasies of primordial nature are experienced by the male character, viewed through the lens of Nyman's experiences, but what is mainly left for the female protagonists is the feeling of being trapped in the anxiety of the human condition. The novella concludes with an exaltation of motherhood in a scene depicting a young mother with her new-born baby, on a beautiful Sunday morning in the Nordic summer sun. Through the lens of the male protagonist, there is a sense of the sacred – Nyman witnesses the Madonna-like scene with awe and wonder, viewing maternity 'pienen elämän salainen päämahti' [as the secret. leading power of little life].⁵³ Yet the final phrase depicts the desolate cry of servant maid, who has chosen to submit to a man whom she does not love.

Savage Intellectuals and Gothic Affects

Narratives of the primitive tend to develop into allegories of civilization, projections of discontent with the civilized mind. According to Torgovnick, the primitive frequently becomes a convenient locale for the exploration of Western dullness and degeneracy.⁵⁴ Joseph Conrad's *Heart of Darkness* (1899) can be considered a founding text in this respect: the colonial voyage into 'dark Africa' turns into an investigation of the corruption of the imperialist West. The savage landscape illustrates a civilized mindscape, hinting at the heart of darkness within the civilized person. In this view the primitive also signals the unknown depths of the human psyche. As D. H. Lawrence put it, 'The wild creatures are coming forth from the darkest Africa inside us.'⁵⁵

The frustration with civilization, combined with an ambivalent allure and fear of the primitive, formed an underlying theme in Jotuni's work from the debut of her collection *Relationships*. The theme of civilization and its discontents is powerfully encapsulated in Jotuni's posthumously published novel *Huojuva talo* [*The Swaying House*] (1963), which sets out to explore a nightmarish marriage, the corruption of modernity and the dangerous instincts lurking behind civilization's façades. The vast, almost 600-page novel, written in the 1930s, remained unpublished

for decades. Jotuni wrote *The Swaying House* for an international ‘All-nations Prize Novel Competition’, organized by the British company Pinter Publishing Ltd. in 1935. Perhaps her shocking and sinister narrative did not appeal to the Finnish review board, which decided to send another work to London.⁵⁶

The Swaying House presents a catalogue of Decadent themes entangled with power and the struggle between the sexes: narcissism, manipulation, sadism, lack of empathy, and evil. The novel features a male human beast and a tyrannical husband, Eero, who tortures his submissive wife both psychologically and physically. Eero represents a savage intellect *par excellence*: in the eyes of society he is a successful journalist and a politically active speaker, but at home he cheats, manipulates and thrashes his wife. The wife’s altruism and understanding lead to a vicious circle of aggression, pardon and submission. The primitive trope of the human beast is explicitly used in *The Swaying House* to depict the brutal husband in whom the atavistic instincts trigger blind aggression. As the wife, Lea, recalls after a violent attack by her husband:

Gorilla. Hän oli ollut gorillan syleilyssä. Pitikö Eero ottaa tuollaisena gorilla-ihmisenä, jonka sielussa liikkui tiedottomia voimia epäselvinä ja vastuuttomina kuin eläimillä? Ja minkälainen on se maailmankuva, joka heijastuu tuollaisen ehkä sairaalloisen eläinihmisen aivoihin ja hänen tajuamattaan ärsyttää hänen kiihtynyttä hermostoaan ja nostattaa ihmisen kannalta katsoen rikollisia haluja, haluja, joita oli varmasti eletty kymmeniä- satojatuhansia vuosia sitten, haluja tuhota ja hävittää vaikkapa vain pelkän tuhoamisen ja liian voiman vuoksi?

[A gorilla. She had been in the embrace of a gorilla. Should one consider Eero as a gorilla-man, whose soul was occupied with all kinds of unconscious powers, obscure and irresponsible like the animals had? And what kind of worldview would be reflected in the brain of that kind of being, who was perhaps a morbid human beast, a worldview that stimulated his excited nervous system and instigated criminal instincts in him and held an unconscious influence on him, triggering desires that harked back to tens or hundreds of thousands of years, desires to devastate and ruin only because of sheer destruction and excessive power?]⁵⁷

Jotuni’s version of the *bête humaine* motif is represented as even more brutal and monstrous than classic naturalistic descriptions of this topic. Émile Zola’s violent criminal, Jacques Lantier of *La Bête humaine* (1890), feels horror at the libidinous, atavistic other self that invades him and compels him to murder. Jotuni, in contrast, keeps her distance from the interior of the male character,

leaving out self-reflection and ideas of remorse. The description of the brutal husband is equated with the horror of civilization and the horror of the primitive beast: the hyper-civilized and the primitive in the man are both collapsed. What is more, in the cerebrally-orientated modern individual archaic, atavistic instincts flourish and trigger new forms of violence. This type of beast expresses an affirmative 'yes' to primitive brutality and draws on Nietzschean ideas of the Superhuman and Dostoyevsky's criminal figures, which were the demonic, intelligent male characters that inspired Jotuni.⁵⁸ 'Ihminen on vaistoiltaan verenhimoinen ja julma. Sen syvimmät nautinnot ovat alkuvaistoisia ja yhteisessä veressä asustavia' [Man is bloodthirsty and cruel in instincts. His deepest pleasures arise from primitive instincts, and they inhabit a common blood], to quote one of Jotuni's aphorisms.⁵⁹

In *The Swaying House* the primitive trope of the human beast is coupled with other discourses that tie the primitive to the instinctive, unknown force beyond the visible surface. Ideas of the mysterious power of blood and enigmatic origins of humanity permeate the narrative discourse. In the context of *The Swaying House* we may speak of an aesthetics of an uncanny primitive, which is reinforced by the novel's generic interplay with Gothic fiction. In the Gothic tradition, 'evil' is often defined by the threat it poses to 'civilization'.⁶⁰ As the title of *The Swaying House* suggests, Jotuni's work draws on the repertoire of the Gothic novel, as it reminds us of the motif of a mysterious house as a symbolic element of Gothic fiction. In Jotuni's novel, the trope of 'the swaying house' is explained as an allusion to the biblical parable of the wise and foolish builders: the foolish builder built his house on the sand and it fell in a storm.⁶¹ Emily Brontë's *Wuthering Heights* (1847), one of Jotuni's favourite novels, is featured among the subtext in *The Swaying House*; in some respects the narcissistic, orphaned male protagonist is reminiscent of Heathcliff and his demonic powers.⁶² Although the novel is set in a modern city, we find here a classic Gothic setting of an innocent woman captivated by a primitive monster, plagued in a Gothic house of horrors by effects of shock, fear, and disgust.

The affective tone of the text confirms the generic affiliation. *The Swaying House* is characterized by an uncanny, dreamlike mood, typical of Gothic fiction. An alternating sense of the real and the unreal in this novel generates a kind of epistemological uncertainty at many levels. From the perspective of the female protagonist, the husband remains a mystery, which the woman attempts in vain to understand. With his glassy green-yellow eyes, he even reminds her of a paranormal monster from their very first meeting: ‘Hän muistuttaa jesuiittaa, tahi mitä kummaa, pyöveliäkin tahi villiä talonpoikaa, tuollaista alkukantaista’ [He resembles a Jesuit or something strange, hangman or savage peasant, something primitive].⁶³ And yet the wife falls in love and marries him. From the perspective of the implied reader, the characterization detaches from the psychological consistency of realism and moves towards an aesthetics of strangeness. Madness commingles with love, love with hate, eroticism with disgust and horror – the Decadent combination of contrasting emotions intensifies the power of affect, as is typical of the Gothic and of Decadence.

The effects of Gothic horror demonstrate how *The Swaying House* is inscribed in the fiction of the long *fin de siècle*, which, as David Weir and Vincent Sherry have argued, was re-invented and reconfigured in Modernism.⁶⁴ This view of literary Modernism as a continuation of Decadence extends to Jotuni’s novel, in which the tropes of the primitive are used to uncover the Decadent faces of modernity. The marriage depicted in the novel is set in a brand-new modern apartment in the city, and the primitive, again, is used to hint at the savage lurking in modern civilization and to mirror modernity as sickness. Along with this general anti-modern attitude, the uncanny primitivism of *The Swaying House* evokes the gloomy political and affective atmosphere of the 1930s. The primitive powers mobilize strange political ideas that manifest themselves in the *bête-humaine* husband. In some respects, the marriage depicted in the novel can be interpreted as totalitarian power in miniature. The narcissistic male protagonist fantasizes about violence and destruction: ‘Sweep the whole life away -- send us to prisons, send us to concentration camp’ he wishes in anger.⁶⁵ The Janus-faced concept of the primitive achieved its most horrific meaning in

Nazi ideology, which adopted the primitive vocabulary of the animal origin of mankind to reinforce racism. The motto 'Blood and Soil' was supposed to indicate the continuing link between the blonde beast of today and the blonde beast of primitive times.⁶⁶ In this context, the Gothic primitivism of *The Swaying House* hints at the sinister discourse of 'blood' and 'origin' of the 1920s and 1930s.⁶⁷ Jotuni, however, employs these discourses in a critical way, showing the horror and the evil of the savage intellect who is using primitive power.

The Swaying House provoked a public scandal when it was published in 1963 after the author's death. The novel's cynicism and pessimism did not convince the critics. What is more, Jotuni's grandson later claimed that *The Swaying House* featured a *roman à clef*, a portrait of Jotuni's own marriage.⁶⁸ While the biographical layer of the novel has divided critics,⁶⁹ the mystery of this Gothic novel, and its mysterious primitivism, has continued to appeal to the reading public up to the present time – *The Swaying House* has been staged, filmed and presented on radio.

Concluding Remarks

While Jotuni has enjoyed the position of a well-recognized author in Finnish literary history, her work has never been easy to situate in the canon of women writers in Finland. The pessimism and anti-modern attitudes permeating Jotuni's work have prompted various interpretations and have even seemed incompatible with ideas of emancipation or 'the woman question', as it was called in the Nordic context.⁷⁰ The narratives of the primitive discussed above are illustrative of the poetics of contradiction prominent in Jotuni's work. A nostalgia for the vitality of nature and its reinvigorating condition seems to be doomed by the sickness of modernity, which feeds the Darwinian beast in man. But although Jotuni's works remain ambivalent about women's possibilities in the stranglehold of primitive passions and patriarchal culture, they are nevertheless detached from the misogyny featured by many male authors of Decadence. Jotuni's emphatic primitivism uses tropes of the primitive for their critical potential. The effects of disgust and shock attached to these tropes were intended to challenge conservative reading audiences, prompting

them to reflect on the female condition. Jotuni's pessimism is reactionary. As she wrote, 'Maailmanparantaja on aina epämielinen' [A reformer is always unpleasant].⁷¹

¹ Maria Haggren, 'Luonto ja ihminen', in *Subteita: Harjoitelmia* (Helsinki: Helsingin uusi kirjapaino, 1905), p. 76. The English translations of Jotuni's work, unless otherwise stated, are my own.

In Finland, Maria Jotuni is generally known under her pen name Maria Jotuni and is referred to as Jotuni throughout this article. References in these notes retain the names under which she published (Maria Haggren and Maria Haggren-Jotuni).

² Haggren, 'Luonto ja ihminen', p. 77.

³ Michael Bell 'Primitivism: Modernism as Anthropology', in *The Oxford Handbook of Modernisms*, ed. by Peter Brooker, Andrzej Gasiorek, Deborah Longworth, and Andrew Thacker (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2010), pp. 353-67 (p. 354).

⁴ See Marianna Torgovnick, *Gone Primitive. Savage Intellectuals, Modern Lives* (Chicago and London: University of Chicago Press, 1990), pp. 11-18.

⁵ See Ben Etherington, *Literary Primitivism* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 2017), p. xiii.

⁶ *Ibid.*, pp. xii-xiii.

⁷ *Ibid.*, pp. 10; 25.

⁸ On these strategies, see Viola Parente-Čapková, *Decadent New Woman (Un)Bound: Mimetic Strategies in L. Onerva's Mirdja* (Turku: University of Turku, 2014).

⁹ See, for example, Annamari Sarajas: 'Maria Jotuni', in *Suomen kirjallisuus V*, ed. by Annamari Sarajas (Helsinki: SKS & Otava, 1965), pp. 67-94, and Kai Laitinen, *Suomen kirjallisuuden historia* (Helsinki: Otava, 1997), pp. 316-28. In *Suomen kirjallisuushistoria II* (Helsinki: SKS, 1999), Jotuni is featured among the authors of modernization.

¹⁰ The notion of Decadence was introduced notably by Pirjo Lyytikäinen's study *Narkissos ja Sfinksi. Minä ja toinen vuosisadanvaihteen kirjallisuudessa* (Helsinki: SKS, 1997); on the reconsideration of Naturalism, see Päivi Lappalainen: *Koti, kansa ja maailman tabraava lika. Näkökulmia 1880-luvun ja 1890-luvun kirjallisuuteen* (Helsinki: SKS, 2000) and Riikka Rossi, *Le naturalisme finlandais: Une conception entropique du quotidien* (Helsinki: SKS, 2007).

¹¹ See Lyytikäinen, *Narkissos ja Sfinksi*, and Parente-Čapková, *Decadent New Woman (Un)Bound*.

¹² See Annamari Sarajas, *Orjens nukkuu. Tutkielmia kirjallisuudesta* (Porvoo-Helsinki-Juva: Werner Söderström Osakeyhtiö, 1980), p. 177, and Lyytikäinen, *Narkissos ja Sfinksi*, pp. 235-36.

Despite the position of Jotuni as a classic of Finnish literature, her work has remained long under-researched. Irmeli Niemi's biography *Arki ja tunteet. Maria Jotunin elämä ja kirjailijantyö* (Helsinki: Otava, 2001) has provided an important source for the study of Jotuni. New research is currently in progress, and in recent years Jotuni's work has prompted several essays and articles from the perspective of dialogue studies and narratology, studies of the everyday up to Modernism, and primitivism and pessimism. See Lea Rojola, 'Puhetta siitä. Lukijuuden rakentuminen Maria Jotunin novellissa Rakkautta,' in *Kokouspaikkana kieli. Näkökulmia persoonaan, muutoksiin ja valintoihin*, ed. by Taru Nordlund, Tiina Onikki-Rantajääskö, and Toni Suutari (Helsinki: SKS, 2006), pp. 475-98; Lea Rojola, 'Konstit on monet kun kahvihammasta kolottaa,' in *Täysi kattaus. Ruokaa ja juomaa kirjallisuudessa*, ed. by Siru Kainulainen ja Viola Parente-Čapková (Turku: Turun yliopisto, 2006), pp. 269-96; Riikka Rossi, 'The Everyday in Nordic Modernism: Knut Hamsun's *Sult* and Maria Jotuni's *Arkielämää?*, *Scandinavian Studies (Provo)*, 82.4 (2010), 417-38; Riikka Rossi, 'Villainen ja soturi. Alkukantaisuus ja pessimismi Maria Jotunin naiskuviissa', *Kirjallisuuden naiset. Naisten esityksiä 1840-luvulta 2000-luvulle*, ed. by Riikka Rossi and Saija Isomaa (Helsinki: SKS 2013), pp. 113-40; and Anna Kuutsa, "'Konstitpa on vaimollakin": Dialogikerronta yhteiskunnallisen teeman esiintuojana Maria Jotunin novellissa "Kansantapa"', *Kirjallisuudentutkimuksen aikakauslehti Avain*, 4 (2017), 20-35.

¹³ For more on Naturalism in Finland and Canth's Naturalism, see Rossi, *Le naturalisme finlandais*.

¹⁴ On Lehtonen's decadence, see Lyytikäinen, *Narkissos ja Sfinksi*, and Antti Ahmala, *Miten tulla sellaiseksi kuin on? Autenttisuus ja itsestä vieraantuminen Joel Lehtosen varhaistuotannossa* (Helsinki: University of Helsinki, Faculty of Arts, Department of Finnish, Finno-Ugrian and Scandinavian Studies, 2016).

¹⁵ According to Niemi, Jotuni chose this name deliberately, conscious of its mythic connotations. See *Arki ja tunteet*, p. 70).

¹⁶ On Jotuni's reception, see Niemi, *Arki ja tunteet*, pp. 66-68; 77-82.

¹⁷ See the review in *Uusi Suometar*, 14 November 1907.

¹⁸ See Pirjo Lyytikäinen, Riikka Rossi, Viola Parente-Čapková, and Mirjam Hinrikus, 'Decadence in Nordic Literature: An Overview', in *Nordic Literature of Decadence*, ed. by Pirjo Lyytikäinen, Riikka Rossi, Viola Parente-Čapková, and Mirjam Hinrikus (New York: Routledge, forthcoming 2020), pp. 3-5.

¹⁹ On Naturalism in Finland, see Rossi, *Le naturalisme finlandais*; on Nordic Decadence, see Lyytikäinen et al., 'Decadence in Nordic Literature: An Overview'.

²⁰ On the influence of Altenberg and Marni, see Annamari Sarajas, *Orfeus nukkuu. Tutkielmia kirjallisuudesta* (Porvoo-Helsinki-Juva: Werner Söderström Osakeyhtiö), pp. 178-83.

²¹ A novella *Kaksoskasvettuma* [*Double excrescence*] in a collection of short stories *Kun on tunteet* [*When there are feelings*] (1913) is dedicated to Strindberg on his birthday in 1909. See Maria Jotuni, *Kun on tunteet* (Helsinki: Weilin & Göös, 1913), p. 74.

²² In the preface to *Giftas*, Strindberg criticized the upper-class 'cultural woman', whom he considered degenerate in comparison with peasant women. Strindberg attacked Henrik Ibsen's *Et dukkehjem* [*A Doll's House*] (1879) in particular, considering Nora, 'the ideal of all degenerate cultural women', as a liar and a hypocrite. See August Strindberg, *August Strindbergs Samlade Verk 16. Giftas I-II. Äktenskaphistorier* (Stockholm: Almqvist & Wiksell Förlag, 1981), p. 13.

²³ Jotuni, 'Aina', in *Subteita*, p. 6.

²⁴ Ibid.

²⁵ Maria Haggrén-Jotuni, 'Päiväkirjasta', in *Rakkautta* (Helsinki: Yrjö Weilin, 1907), p.170.

²⁶ Haggrén-Jotuni, 'Kirjeitä', in *Rakkautta*, p. 138.

²⁷ She probably knew Marholm's *Zur Psychologie der Frau* (1897-1903), a Swedish translation. Niemi, *Arki ja tunteet*, p. 61.

²⁸ On Key's conception of sexuality and maternity, see Claudia Lindén, 'Moderlighetens idé hos Ellen Key', in *Ny syn på Ellen Key*, ed. by Siv Hackzell (Nacka: Bembo Bok, 2000), pp. 35-48.

²⁹ See Rojola, 'Konstit on monet kun kahvihammasta kolottaa', p. 497.

³⁰ Haggrén-Jotuni, 'Päiväkirjasta', p. 170.

³¹ Haggrén-Jotuni, 'Kirjeitä', p. 145.

³² See Lea Rojola, 'Lea Modernia minuutta rakentamassa. Veren ääni', in *Suomen kirjallisuushistoria 2. Järkiuskosta vaistojen kapinaan*, ed. by Lea Rojola (Helsinki: SKS 1999), pp. 162-63.

³³ See Lindén, 'Moderlighetens idé hos Ellen Key', pp. 44-46.

³⁴ On these discussions, see Tiina Kinnunen, 'Ellen Key (1849-1926)', in *Klassikkogalleria. Feministisiä ajattelijoita 1600-1950-luvulta* <<http://www.helsinki.fi/sukupuolentutkimus/klassikkogalleria/key/index.htm>> [accessed 17 June 2019].

³⁵ Haggrén-Jotuni, 'Päiväkirjasta', p. 170. Italics in original.

³⁶ The scene is depicted in the first edition of the collection, but not included in all further editions. See Haggrén-Jotuni, *Rakkautta*, p. 175.

³⁷ Haggrén-Jotuni, 'Päiväkirjasta', p. 145.

³⁸ See Niemi, *Arki ja tunteet*, p. 86.

Jotuni also sent the volume to the Danish critic Georg Brandes, an advocate of the Naturalist movement in the North. Brandes was especially impressed by the story 'Letters'; see Niemi, *Arki ja tunteet*, p. 87. The story 'Love', from the volume *Love*, appeared in French translation (probably translated from the Swedish version) in the French review *Lettres Scandinaves* in 1909. A selection of Jotuni's short stories was published in French translation as *Cours de femmes* (1929), and selections of her stories have been published in English in various anthologies.

³⁹ See Lea Laitinen, 'Zero Person in Finnish: A Grammatical Resource of Construing Human Reference', in *Grammar from the Human Perspective: Case, Space and Meaning in Finnish*, ed. by Marja-Liisa Helasvuo and Lyle Campbell (Amsterdam: John Benjamins Publishing Company, 2006), pp. 209-33 (p. 209).

⁴⁰ Maria Jotuni, *Kun on tunteet* (Helsinki: Yrjö Weilin, 1913), p. 59.

⁴¹ See also Rossi, 'Villinainen ja soturi', pp. 113-40.

⁴² On 'core decadence', see Lyytikäinen et al., 'Decadence in Nordic Literature: An Overview', p. 5. A relatively broad understanding of Decadence serves to underpin the various forms of Decadence in Nordic literature. As discussed by David Weir, various nineteenth-century movements, from Romanticism to Modernism, are based on some concept of Decadence. The notions of Naturalism and Decadence can be seen as overlapping concepts, which coincide in several ways. See David Weir, *Decadence and the Making of Modernism* (Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 1995), pp. xvi; 44.

⁴³ See Scott Ashley, 'Primitivism, Celticism and Morbidity in the Atlantic *fin de siècle*', in *Symbolism, Decadence and the Fin de Siècle: French and European Perspectives*, ed. by Patrick McGuinness (Exeter: University of Exeter Press, 2000), pp. 175-93 (p. 175).

⁴⁴ For Rousseau's influence on Strindberg, see Poulénard, Elie, *Strindberg et Rousseau* (Paris: PUF, 1959).

⁴⁵ The figure of a vagabond reminds us of similar figures in contemporary fiction, including the narrating 'I' of Hamsun's *Sult* (1890) or the wandering Romany figures in Maxim Gorky's short stories, and the figure of the eponymous character in Selma Lagerlöf's *Gösta Berlings saga* (1891).

⁴⁶ Regarding Huysmans, the Scandinavian drifter figure is even more reminiscent of the weak pessimist M. Folantin in *À van-l'eau* (1882, translated as *Drifting* or *With the flow*) than des Esseintes from *À rebours* [*Against Nature*] (1884), a novel for which *À van-l'eau* creates a Naturalist precedent.

⁴⁷ See Edmond et Jules de Goncourt, *Renée Mauperin* (Paris: Charpentier, 1864), p. 71. The coldness of the youth is attributed to Renée's brother, who, represented in a satirical tone, epitomizes the cerebrally oriented, calculating type of the young bourgeoisie.

⁴⁸ Maria Jotuni, *Arkielämä* (Helsinki: SKS, 1994), p. 7.

On themes of existential anxiety in *Everyday Life*, see also Riikka Rossi, 'Vapauden muunnelmia. Naturalismi ja eksistentialismi Maria Jotunin *Arkielämää* -kertomuksessa', *Kirjallisuudentutkimuksen Aikakauslehti Avain*, 1 (2011), 5-23.

⁴⁹ See Niemi, *Arki ja tunteet*, p. 96.

⁵⁰ See for instance the review in the journal *Valvoja* 1909, reprinted in Jotuni, *Arkielämää*, pp. 124-27.

⁵¹ Jotuni, *Arkielämää*, p. 9.

⁵² See Maria Haggren-Jotuni, 'Knut Hamsun. Hajanaisia ääriivivoja', in *Valvoja*, no. 11 (Helsinki: Söderströms, 1908).

⁵³ Jotuni, *Arkielämää*, p. 116.

⁵⁴ Torgovnick, *Gone Primitive*, p. 153.

⁵⁵ Lawrence, however, used this trope in a positive way to refer to the empowerment of the primitive feelings inside us. See D. H. Lawrence, 'The Novel and the Feelings', in *Thomas Hardy and Other Essays*, ed. by Bruce Steele (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1985), p. 202.

⁵⁶ Jotuni's husband, Professor Viljo Tarkiainen, had received an invitation to the competition. However, the Finns chose to send Auni Nuolivaara's novel *Paimen, püika ja emäntä* [*The Shepberd, the Maid and the Farmer's Wife*]. Jolán Földes's *The Street of the Fishing Cat* received the first prize in the All-Nations Competition. See Niemi, *Arki ja tunteet*, pp. 244-50.

⁵⁷ Maria Jotuni, *Huojuva talo* (Helsinki: Otava, 1963), pp. 328-29.

⁵⁸ Dostoyevsky's *Bésky* (1871-72, translated as *Demons*) was one of Jotuni's favourite novels. See Niemi, *Arki ja tunteet*, p. 254.

⁵⁹ Maria Jotuni, *Kootut teokset IV. Tobvelisankearin rouva. Tyttö ruusutarbassa. Avonainen lipas* (Helsinki: Otava, 1930), p. 341.

⁶⁰ See Andrew Smith, *Gothic Literature* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 2013), p. 100.

⁶¹ See Matthew 7: 24-29, and Jotuni, *Huojuva talo*, p. 269.

⁶² See Niemi, *Arki ja tunteet*, p. 254.

⁶³ Jotuni, *Huojuva talo*, p. 85.

⁶⁴ See Weir, *Decadence and the Making of Modernism*, and Vincent Sherry, *Modernism and the Reinvention of Decadence* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2015).

⁶⁵ Jotuni, *Huojuva talo*, p. 392.

⁶⁶ As discussed by George Boas, the Nazis would readily have claimed that civilization had distracted men from their original condition, for it was no longer the civilization of the Germans, but a degenerate international style of culture. See George Boas, 'Primitivism', in *Dictionary of the History of Ideas. Studies of Selected Pivotal Ideas*, ed. by Philip P. Wiener (Oxford: The Clarendon Press, 1973), pp. 577-98, (p. 597). See also Torgovnick, *Gone Primitive*, p. 6.

⁶⁷ As Monica Žagar has shown, the ideas of the purity of the white Nordic race influenced Hamsun's conceptions of race and gender. See *Knut Hamsun. The Dark Side of Literary Brilliance* (Seattle & London: University of Washington Press, 2009).

⁶⁸ Kari Tarkiainen, *Viljo Tarkiainen. Suomalainen humanisti* (Helsinki: SKS, 1987), p. 220.

⁶⁹ The author of Jotuni's biography, however, challenges the autobiographical interpretation of Jotuni's husband as the human beast of *The Swaying House*. See Niemi, *Arki ja tunteet*, pp. 256-57.

⁷⁰ On these discussions, see Rossi, 'Villainainen ja soturi', pp. 132-34.

⁷¹ Jotuni, *Kootut teokset IV*, p. 391.