



ABSTRACTS

Anneli Meriläinen-Hyvärinen

"Tell me, is it good for us here?" Biographical relations to place of three persons from Talvivaara Mining Area

The headline is a statement from my father, an 89-year-old man from Kainuu, in the form of a question, which he often asked our currently 11-year-old son at our former summer house in Kolmisoppi, Sotkamo, in recent years. With this statement, he wanted to express his feelings, attitude and position regarding the place. He had belonged there since childhood and had to give up on the place in 2007. Now it constitutes a part of a mining concession and is in the possession of Talvivaara Oy.

Memories are a central part of place experience for the people in the region. There is a connection between the essence of a place, human experience, thinking, feelings and sense perception, and the connection emerges when the problematics of a lost place are examined. Thus, the relation to a place can be examined as a life-long *topobiographical process*, which emphasises emotional states and perception. The relation to a place is a physically experienced state of mind, the dynamic existence of perception and feeling, which is largely regulated by the *body memory*. According to this, people are present in the world particularly through their lives and bodies. Time is in a central position here, since the lived life, related experience and perception are examined from this moment, through the life lived and experienced so far. A place that no longer physically exists, continues to live as a *place of memory*, in which different factors are emphasised during different phases. (Karjalainen, Pauli Tapani 2004, 2006, 2007; Cresswell 2004; Tuan Yi-Fu 2006; Massey, Doreen 2008; Korjonen-Kuusipuro, Kristiina & Kohvakka, Mikko 2009.) In case of loss, strong sense experiences are connected to the place, because along with the loss, the relation to the place in its entirety focuses on and attaches to certain atmospheres: the landscape with its individual elements, sounds, scents and innumerable nuances.

Abstracts

Kaarina Koski and Pasi Enges

"I cannot say how I saw." Unusual sensory perceptions interpreted by belief tradition

This article approaches senses as physiological but culturally organised phenomena. It analyses archived Finnish and Sámi narratives, which interpret unusual sensory perceptions according to belief tradition. Supernormal interpretation is triggered not only by the exceptionality of the perception but also by circumstances. Collective belief tradition connects the supernormal to the margins of social everyday activity: to marginal times and places and to antisocial behaviour such as norm breaches. Perception often combines two or more senses but the existence of supernormal beings in this world is only partial: they are heard but not seen or seen but intangible.

People sometimes discuss their unusual perceptions with others but the interpretation may remain open or contradictory. Descriptions of unusual sensations challenge our cultural division of senses to sight, hearing, taste, smell and touch. Yet they confirm that only those five are easy to verbalise. Internal sensations such as pain and pressure seem more difficult to explain. The experiences often mix mental and physical feelings and include inability to sense or act. Tradition offers a special vocabulary for certain states caused by supernormal beings. Those words cover the cause of the state but leave room for an individual variety of experience.

Meri Kytö

Apartment home acoustemology – construction of private sonic space

This article deals with the articulation of sonic space in urban apartment block homes in Finland. The home soundscape does not limit itself to the inside of the apartment but includes sounds seeping from the outside like the clatter of the elevator, nearby traffic signals, a neighbour singing in the shower and the leaping steps of the paperboy on the stairs.

Following the methodological idea of acoustemology (i.e., acoustic epistemology), the producing of sounds and listening are connected with cultural practices that, in their turn, produce and mould our concepts of place, space and time. What can one learn about the borders of apartment homes by listening and how do meanings like privacy make sense in the sonic relations to the neighbours and the surrounding environment?

The writings gathered via the *One Hundred Finnish Soundscapes* project (2004–2006) produced descriptions of apartments from the 1920s to the present day, giving a glimpse of the soundscape competences of the residents. The analysis of the written descriptions suggests that there are mainly three different ways of constructing sonic privacy in apartment blocks. These include emphasizing feelings of belonging through identification and anticipation of recurring sounds. In many descriptions privacy is understood as isolation and the different techniques of constructing oneself temporary privacy are concretely shutting out the sonic presence of the outside world, fostering an attitude of disregard to the surrounding sounds or to actively

Abstracts

enveloping oneself with sounds. The analysis is supported by an insight into the bylaws of housing cooperatives, adding an aspect of official sonic etiquette to the constant negotiation on when and what kind of sound is approved.