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FOOD IN CONSTRUCTING TRANSCULTURAL FINNISH AMERICAN IDENTITIES IN THE MIGRANT SHORT STORIES OF LAURI ANDERSON

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ABSTRACT

In this article, I analyze the position of food in constructing the transcultural identities of Finnish migrants in three collections of short stories, *Heikki Heikkinen* (1995), *Misery Bay* (2002), and *Back to Misery Bay* (2007), by the Finnish American writer Lauri Anderson. The American-born settlers look back at their Finnish heritage with nostalgia and use foodways to establish their versions of Finnishness. First, food serves to express the migrants' ethnic difference and sameness by separating them from Americans and uniting as Finns. Second, food is a part of the settlers' inter-generational relations when Anderson's younger-generation characters invent new culinary symbols of Finnishness and rebel against their Finnish heritage or return to it with the help of foodways. Third, the migrants express their Finnishness through their relation with nature in the form of living off the land. At the same time, the characters incorporate the traits of Finnish and American cultures within their identities, which can be addressed as transcultural.

Keywords: Finnish Americans, foodways, transcultural identity

INTRODUCTION

In three collections of migrant short stories² by the Finnish American author Lauri Anderson, the role of food is instrumental in constructing the migrants' identities.

1 This article was made possible by the research grant of the South Ostrobothnia Regional Fund of the Finnish Cultural Foundation.

2 These collections are *Heikki Heikkinen and Other Stories of Upper Peninsula Finns* (1995; 31 stories; hereafter HH), *Misery Bay and Other Stories from Michigan's Upper Peninsula* (2002; 8 stories;

The characters' food practices serve them as what Angus Gillespie (1984, 148) calls "a badge of identity," as visibly uniting the migrants, distinguishing them from others, and also allowing them to find their place in the mosaic of an already multifaceted American society. In this article, I will analyze the roles of food in constructing the identities of Anderson's migrant characters as transcultural. The Finnish American³ settlers live in what Mary Louise Pratt (1992, 6) defines as the contact zone—the social space where Finnish and American cultures meet and interact. These encounters lead to the formation of identities which, to use Celia Jaes Falicov's (2002; Suárez-Orozco 2004, 192) expression, do not require choosing between cultures but incorporate the traits of both of them. The characters use their foodways to nostalgically reconstruct Finnishness in the USA as well as to negotiate their identities with the past and the present, old and modern, Finland and America. The resulting food practices comprise Finnish and American features, and demonstrate that the characters' identities selectively incorporate traits of both cultures.

I want to concentrate especially on three aspects of this identity construction. First, I will focus on the role of food in expressing the migrants' ethnic difference and sameness. Eating habits stitch the characters together, and distinguish them from Americans, but at the same time bridge these differences. Second, I will concentrate on food and intergenerational relations. Food simultaneously binds the generations of the migrants together and divides them. Through their eating practices, the young Finnish Americans negotiate their relations with their Finnish heritage and manifest either a rebellion against it or a return to it. Different generations have different culinary markers of Finnishness. The younger and older migrants both actively use the old foods from Finland in their own ways and also invent the new "Finnish" practices. Third, the characters' identities are constructed through their relations with nature in the form of living off the land by hunting and fishing. On the one hand, these practices manifest the characters' Finnishness by portraying them in accordance with the myths of a special Finnish affinity with nature. On the other

hereafter MB), and *Back to Misery Bay: "Dostoevsky's Three Annas" and Other Stories from Michigan's Upper Peninsula* (2007; 16 stories; hereafter BMB).

3 An intense migration from Finland to North America took place from the late nineteenth till the mid-twentieth century, but Finnish Americans remain a relatively small ethnic group in the USA (approximately 650,000 people). They have been active in the production of their ethnic literature, which experienced a growth spurt particularly in the late twentieth century because of the third-generation writers' activity in producing socially realistic fiction reflecting their experiences as Finnish Americans (Kauppila and Wargelin 2005, 741). Notable authors include Jane Piirto, Rebecca Cummings, Aili Jarvenpa, Lynn Laitala, Lauri Anderson, and Timo Koskinen (ibid.).

hand, their hunting and fishing also demonstrate the adaptation of the migrants and their Finnish identities to the United States.

The author of the stories, Lauri Anderson, is a professor at Finlandia University in Hancock, Michigan, and a second-generation migrant himself. Anderson has written a novel, a memoir, a book of poetry, and seven collections of short stories, all with Finnish characters and themes. In *Heikki Heikkinen*, *Misery Bay*, and *Back to Misery Bay*, he primarily writes about the second-, third-, and fourth-generation Finnish Americans living in Michigan, in the Upper Peninsula, also known as the UP or “Yooperland”—one of the centers of their concentration. The texts profile the comic and tragic aspects of their daily lives from the early to the late twentieth and early twenty-first century, and the stories are primarily set in the 1980s and 1990s. Although some stories focus on Finnish American women, the protagonists in Anderson’s fiction are generally men. Anderson revises often-held assumptions of Finnish Americanness. In a humorous disclaimer in *Back to Misery Bay*, he warns his readers that in all his stories he portrays the “wrong” Finnish Americans (such as troublemakers and divorcees) rather than stereotypical hard-working Lutheran church-goers (*BMB*, v).

Heikki Heikkinen includes mostly comical stories and is divided into three sections: (1) Becoming a Finn, (2) Heikki Heikkinen, and (3) An Odd Collection of Finns. The first section consists of three stories: “The Author,” “Eddie Maki,” and “Sam Dorvinen” (all analyzed in the section “Food and Intergenerational Relations of the Finnish American Characters” below). In these stories, the protagonists, third- and fourth-generation Finnish Americans, learn how to “become Finns” in the late twentieth century. The second section includes twenty interconnected stories, which feature the one and the same second-generation protagonist, Heikki Heikkinen, a stereotypical old, rugged, and stubborn Upper Peninsula Finn with a strong love of beer, hunting, and fishing. The texts describe his adventures and misfortunes through the 1980s and 1990s. These adventures are not unlike the ones of the proverbial Finnish simpletons Hölmöläiset.⁴ The third section comprises eight stories, which tell about the hard and often tragic (nonetheless, also not without a hint of humor) lives of various Finnish Americans, who range from lonely hermits to World War II refugees to ultra-conservative church-centered families.

4 See the tales about the Hölmöläiset in the collections of Finnish folklore, *Tales from a Finnish Tupa* (2009), edited by James Cloyd Bowman and Margery Bianco, and *The Enchanted Wood and Other Tales from Finland* (1999), edited by Norma J. Livo and George Livo.

Misery Bay and *Back to Misery Bay* are far less lighthearted than *Heikki Heikkinen* and mostly tell the bitter stories of the Finnish Americans' losses, tensions, and family tragedies. *Misery Bay* is set in the Copper Country, an area in the Upper Peninsula of Michigan, and is divided into the sections named after the local Finnish-inhabited towns and communities: Coppertown, Misery Bay, Ramsay, Watton, Toivola, and Tapiola. *Back to Misery Bay* is mainly set in the Upper Peninsula, but it also tells about the Finnish Americans from this region who now live in California, Colorado, and Illinois. The loosely connected stories in these two collections revolve around the topics of loneliness, family problems, and other troubles; the characters range from farmers and loggers to high school teachers, senior citizens, and war veterans.

Food holds a prominent position in Anderson's fiction as the titles of the stories in *Heikki Heikkinen* indicate. "Fishing," "Hunting Deer," "Taking the Smartass Fishing," and "The Poaching Hall of Fame" tell about skills of the protagonist, Heikki Heikkinen, and other Upper Peninsula Finns for living off the land. "Growing Tomatoes," "Old Finnish Cooking," and "The New Barbecue Grill" concentrate on Heikki's food conservatism and his stubbornness in keeping his own ways of cooking and eating. Anderson describes in detail the migrants' cooking and eating practices, the acquisition of the ingredients, and food-related rituals. As he often exaggerates and uses parody in portraying the characters, in some stories their foodways (such as drinking thirty cups of strong coffee a day) also become exaggerated. The foodways from Finland also have ritualistic and supernatural significance, as for instance the potential to cure soul wounds (not unlike sauna). In the stories "Uuno" in *Misery Bay* and "Another Soldier's Home" in *Back to Misery Bay*, food, hunting, and fishing, alongside sauna bathing, help "to cleanse [. . .] (the) soul" (Anderson 2007, 129) of the protagonists, a World War II veteran and a modern-day soldier returning from Afghanistan, both of whom are haunted by memories of war.

Although there are some studies on the short stories by Anderson (primarily *Heikki Heikkinen*) (see, for instance, Frandy 2007; Taramaa 2007a), the role of foodways in his fiction has not been explored before. Raija Taramaa's (2007b) dissertation *Stubborn and Silent Finns with 'Sisu'⁵ in Finnish-American Literature: An Imagological Study of Finnishness in the Literary Production of Finnish-American Authors* focuses on the representations of Finnishness in several Finnish American literary texts, including *Heikki Heikkinen*. Taramaa's research pays some attention to the characters' coffee-drinking in constructing their Finnishness, but it does not address the role of

5 The Finnish word for strong will, determination, and perseverance, one of the key components of Finnishness.

other foodways. Furthermore, she mostly concentrates on the Finnish side of the settlers' identities, and does not approach them from the perspective of transculturation. Tim Frandy's (2009) article "Ecology and Identity in the Northwoods: Finnish American Poaching Techniques and Narratives" explores the role of poaching for constructing Finnish American identities. Frandy briefly discusses the representations of this practice in Finnish American fiction, including *Heikki Heikkinen* and other short stories by Anderson. Anderson's *Misery Bay* and *Back to Misery Bay* have not been studied before, and my article attempts to fill this gap.

FOOD AND IDENTITY IN A DIASPORIC CONTEXT

In my analysis of the stories, I draw on the concepts of a connection between ethnic identity and food developed by Wsewolod Isajiw (1990, 1992), Mary Douglas ([1973] 2003), and David Sutton (2001). I approach the characters' identity formation as a dynamic process of locating themselves in relation to the Finnish American community through their cultural practices and lifestyle choices such as foodways. According to Isajiw (1990, 35), ethnic identity as a social-psychological phenomenon that derives from membership in an ethnic group gives to individuals a sense of belonging and provides the ethnic community with a sense of oneness and historical meaning. This identity is in the process of change, and new forms of it may emerge, as some aspects may gradually lose their meaning or acquire a new one (Isajiw 1992, 418). Observable behavior, such as foodways, is notable for the way it constructs and retains ethnic identity; ethnic foodstuffs, along with other ethnic traditions, constitute one basic part of a culture that makes it unique (Isajiw 1990, 37, 67). Douglas ([1973] 2003, 29) also comments that where ethnic identity is a vital issue, ethnic foods are revived in order to maintain it, and new items are recruited to the old traditions. In Anderson's stories, the characters' ethnic foodways play the roles outlined by Isajiw and Douglas, as they are prominent in constructing and manifesting the migrants' sense of affiliation to their ethnic group and in reviving their Finnishness.

The characters primarily do not have any memories of Finland of their own, and they use the practices of the first generation to look back to the past from which they are otherwise distanced. Sutton (2001, 84, 86, 102) describes this connection between food, memory, and identity in the following way: the food "from home" allows migrants to remember, reconstruct, and return to their home and past, and it evokes a shared identity with fellow people who eat the same. The Finnish American settlers use food to construct their own version of Finnishness by re-creating the

culture of “home,” which in fact has never been their real home because they have never lived there. This process can be characterized by Svetlana Boym’s (2001, 38) concept of nostalgia as missing and longing for what people have not lost. Through their food, the Finnish Americans nostalgically reconstruct an idealized and romanticized version of their past. They form their identities by inserting themselves into this past in order to create the continuity between themselves and Finland. Thus, the Finnish American settlers’ foodways mark their common ancestry and togetherness.

In migration and ethnic literatures, the language of food is prominent and plays different roles including remembrance, nostalgia, cultural contact, assimilation, and integration (Gardaphe and Xu 2007, 5–7). Foodways can be read as a significant site where community building, identity formation, and negotiation take place (*ibid.*, 9–10). First, food has the potential to unite migrants in their new home. The food from the old country is a vital recurring topic in migration fiction and non-fiction. The familiar foodways have the power to evoke memories of the settlers’ homeland and hence to evoke and construct their identities. As Edward Steiner puts it, “[. . .] noodle soup, with the right kind of seasoning, touches more channels of memory than—say, a lullaby or even a picture of their homeland” (1914, 68).

The old food signifies the ethnic integrity (Mannur 2007, 13), or, in other words, the sameness of the migrants in the new country. For them, cooking becomes a site where they nostalgically seek to produce the sense of home and the version of their oneness (*ibid.*, 14–17, 28). Second, the tropes of food in ethnic and postcolonial literature function to separate characters from the dominant group (Nyman 2009, 282). In doing so, food constructs their identities in terms of contrast and difference. Defining “difference” and creating the other are significant in establishing identity (Porter 2001, 101–2), and eating habits are instrumental in demarcating “us” and “them” (Ashley, Hollows, Jones, and Taylor 2004, 83). Moreover, migrant foodways have been traditionally perceived by mainstream culture as markers of ethnic inferiority, and, accordingly, in migration literature characters often try to dissociate themselves from their ethnicity through a disavowal of their ethnic foodways (Gardaphe and Xu 2007, 6). Third, food is also connected with the negotiation of migrants’ identities in the context of the dominant culture of their new country. Food tropes have the potential to bridge cultural differences between characters and the dominant group and to create new transcultural identities (Nyman 2009, 282). In migration literature, foodways can blend the past with

the present and the migrants' old home and culture with the new ones; as a result of this blending, new traditions and new identities are formed (Mercer and Strom 2007, 36).

Nevertheless, despite the fact that migrants often cling to the food of the former homeland, their food practices are not to be viewed as static and fixed. Food cultures and national foods are in a constant process of flux and change (Raento 2010, 298; Ashley et al. 2004, 89). The gradual changes of the migrants' foodways in a new country are usually inevitable and are linked with various factors, including changing ethnic identities (Tuomainen 2009, 528). The degree of the settlers' accommodation to the food culture of their new home may vary, but, on the whole, the food habits of the second generation are often a mixture of the various cultures in which the migrants are embedded (*ibid.*, 528). In migration literature, the foodways demonstrate the ambiguous situation of the settlers. On the one hand, they often view their old homeland and cuisine as an unchanging cultural essence, and seek to reproduce their "authentic" and fixed identities through their "authentic" and "original" foods (Mannur 2007, 14–15). On the other, during their attempts to reproduce "authenticity" the migrants demonstrate a great deal of creativity and innovation (such as using the ways of their new home in cooking the old food) as well as their adaptation and belonging to their new adopted country and its cuisine (*ibid.*, 15–16). Anderson's stories, such as "The Author," "Old Finnish Cooking," and "Sam Dorvinen," demonstrate this mixed character of the protagonists' diet in which the components of the old-time Finnish cuisine stand side by side with the products of various food cultures of the USA.

As the migrants' Finnishness is not unchangeable, different generations of the characters construct their ethnic identities in different ways and use different foodways in this construction. As Isajiw (1990, 37) puts it, the ethnic identity retained by the third generation may be of a different type or form than the one retained by the first or second generation. The same external aspects of identity, such as ethnic practices, may acquire different subjective meaning for different generations and may be lost or transformed in the course of time (Isajiw 1990, 37; 1992, 419–20). In Anderson's stories, the ethnic foodways are of different importance for the second, third, and fourth generations. The characters' juxtaposed "old-fashioned tastes" and "new-fangled ways of cooking" (Anderson 1995, 29, 72) distinguish older and younger Finnish Americans, less and more Americanized. In addition to abandoning some old food practices or giving them new meanings, the migrants recruit from their American environment new items, with the purpose of using them

as the culinary markers of Finnishness. Ethnic cuisine can absorb new foods from the outside, provide them with new meanings, include them into its system, and use alien items for the maintenance of ethnic identity (Douglas [1973] 2003, 29–30). Furthermore, in Anderson's texts the younger generation uses food for the purpose defined by Marie Gillespie (2000, 199–200): to negotiate their relationship to the parental culture and their ethnic heritage by the negotiation of food. The young Finnish Americans rebel against or return to their Finnishness with the help of eating practices. In this article, I will thus concentrate on the position of foodways in the characters' intergenerational relations and will view food not as a fixed entity (notwithstanding many migrants' culinary conservatism) but rather as a dynamic process of appropriation, reconfiguration, and transculturation.

In addition to food, the characters' ways of getting food are also instrumental in constructing their identities. According to Sutton (2001, 25), food-acquisition methods are crucial for identity formation as they can be used to show one's skills and to build a reputation in a community. In the stories, the migrants' ability to acquire their food from the land plays a strong role in the formation of their Finnishness. Angus Gillespie (1984, 150) points out that the traditions of hunting and fishing can transfer cultural values between generations and carry memory. According to him, food hunted or gathered from nature can provide settlers with independence from the larger civilization, and customs of hunting and gathering pass on the value of self-sufficiency. As a result of this, living off the land can be a symbol of separation from the surrounding urbanized culture, but at the same time it can adapt to satisfy the needs of the outside culture (150, 153). Thus, on the one hand, the characters' Finnish tradition of an affinity with nature unites them as self-reliant Finnish backwoodsmen and distances them from modern mainstream Americans who lack the necessary skills of hunting and fishing. On the other, the settlers' old ways of living off the land are influenced by surrounding American culture, adapt to it, and develop into the new forms bridging the gap between Finns and Americans.

The resulting identities constructed by the characters' foodways can be addressed as transcultural. In my analysis, I will draw on the concept of transculturation as developed by Pratt (1992). According to her, transculturation is a phenomenon of cultural exchange in the contact zones where the encounters between the dominant and the minority culture lead to mutual cultural influence (*ibid.*, 6). The subordinated or marginal groups use the materials transmitted by the dominant culture, select and invent from them, and incorporate them into their own culture (*ibid.*, 6). In the contact zone of the Upper Peninsula of Michigan, the minority

culture of Finnish migrants encounters the mainstream culture of the USA, and selectively adapts to it. The culture of the settlers is both influenced by and in turn influences America in the form of creating the new Finnish American culture in the host society. This leads to the formation of new identities with the help of food. The Finnish American characters manifest multiple affiliations, to Finland and to the USA, by the incorporation of the elements of two cultures into their cuisine. Their identities are established as hyphenated and combine several identities or, in other words, as “American Plus Finnish.” Suárez-Orozco (2004, 192) views the process of constructing a transcultural identity as a creative fuse of the aspects of the migrants’ parental culture and their new culture or cultures. As a result, the migrants synthesize an identity that allows them to incorporate the traits of both while fusing additive elements (Falicov 2002; Suárez-Orozco 2004, 192). The foodways comprising Finnish and American features construct the characters’ identities as simultaneously Finnish and American, selectively incorporating the traits of both cultures and adding new elements such as “Finnish” practices invented in the USA.

FOOD AND THE CONSTRUCTION OF IDENTITIES

In Anderson’s stories, it is the characters’ daily food practices rather than some ethnic feasts that connect the migrants with their past and construct their identities. Food and memory come together on the level of daily life, not only at “loud” ritual occasions (Sutton 2001, 28). The characters use foodways to reconstruct their Finnishness chiefly at mundane occasions. Their daily products remind them about their past, link them with their forebears, and bring Finland to the USA.

The migrants’ food practices unite them as Finns and distinguish them from others but simultaneously allow negotiating their identities with Finland and the USA. As was stated in the previous section, generalized representations of “our way” of eating unite “us” around mundane items and activities and simultaneously distance “us” from the foodways of “others” that may cause suspicion and fear (Raento 2005, 50; Ashley et al. 2004, 89). The Finnish Americans’ daily food habits are a visible marker of their cultural distinctiveness in the USA, and by eating in their own specific way the characters manifest who they are. For example, in “Santtis” in *Misery Bay*, a story featuring a Finnish American family of three generations, the grandson’s clinging to Finnish eating habits is viewed by his grandmother as one of the signs of his being a true Finn: “He looks like a Finnish hero with his blond hair, blue eyes and broad shoulders. Plus he loves smoked fish and everything pickled [. . .]. For breakfast, he gobbles up blood sausage and blood pancakes. [. . .]

Even his eating habits are heroic" (*MB*, 58–59). Moreover, to accentuate the difference between Finnish and American, and to communicate the Finnishness of the foods, the texts often use the original Finnish and dialectal Finnish American words without any translation or explanation. An example of this can be found in the story "Old Finnish Cooking" in *Heikki Heikkinen*: "His homemade *viili* [Finnish sour curd] was stringy but rich and creamy, far superior to Dannon" (*HH*, 29, original italics). Yet another example is present in the story "Heikki Rejuvenated" in *Back to Misery Bay*: "He [. . .] made himself a breakfast of fresh bacon, eggs, and *nisu* [the dialectal word for a traditional Finnish wheat sweet bread]" (*BMB*, 103, original italics). The strategy of using the original food names is powerful in ethnicizing food products and adding an exotic flavor to them (Girardelli 2004, 314–15). The juxtaposition of the migrants' foodways with the practices of Americans and other ethnic groups constructs their identities by manifesting who they are not, through contrasting themselves with culinary "others" (see the previous section). However, the migrants' foodways not only demarcate and retain the boundaries between the Finnish American diaspora and the majority culture, but also allow the characters to cross these boundaries by including the foods of their new country into their diet and drawing on both cultures.

Food embodies cultural contrasts between the Finns as migrants and the Americans as hosts. In "Eddie Maki," in *Heikki Heikkinen*, a story about a mixed Finnish-New England family in the 1960s, the differences of eating habits demonstrate how distinct the family's two heritages are. The text juxtaposes the Finnish and New England grandparents of the protagonist, the third-generation migrant Eddie, and food is no less powerful than class, language, and religion in demarcating them. Not only did the newcomers from rural Finland speak "little English," live "in the log farmhouse," and attend "the Lutheran church when the service was in Finnish," but they also "had odd customs and ate strange food—pickled fish, yogurt, heavy dark bread with smelt inside" (*HH*, 11). Meanwhile, Eddie's mother's forebears, wealthy New England urban dwellers, proud of their heritage and considering themselves ideal Americans, "lived through history," tracing their roots back to the original colonies and "did not associate with newly-arrived immigrants" such as Finns (*HH*, 11). They "attended a Congregational Church" and "ate plain food without seasoning—roast beef, boiled vegetables, potatoes, and beans" (*HH*, 11). Through the imagery of food, the text demonstrates the alienation and displacement of the first-generation migrants in the United States. The settlers' Finnish eating habits accentuate their exoticism from the perspective of the American majority

culture in the early twentieth century and their failure to comply with the ideals of culinary Americanness as it is understood by Eddie's mother's family. Thus, food is influential in drawing a visible border between Finns and Americans.

Eddie's father, a second-generation Finn, manages somehow to cross this border by marrying Eddie's mother and consequently eating the food she cooks, but his and her foodways still mark their difference and link them to their different pasts. Husband and wife keep their foods separate and treat each other's cuisine with disgust. Eddie's mother "prepared the same plain foods that her mother had prepared. She refused to make any un-American foods except spaghetti and pizza, but her Italian cooking had a peculiar New England flavor" (*HH*, 12). She "found Finnish incomprehensible and Finnish food disgusting" and "could not comprehend how anyone could eat fish roe in eggs, animal organs, or fish preserved in lye. Yet she had married a man who ate all these things." (*HH*, 12) Eddie's father in turn "abhorred his wife's cooking. Often he prepared Finnish food [. . .]" (*HH*, 12). The difference between the Finns and Americans is constructed from both inside and outside, by the foodways of the dominant and minority group. Although Eddie's father (very unwillingly) eats what his wife cooks, he is not eager to share her culinary Americanness. He prefers to cling to the old Finnish foodways of his parents and manifests his Finnishness through this choice and the emphasis of his difference from his wife.

Eddie's father's foodways also function to establish his identity in terms of ethnic sameness with other Finns and to re-create Finland, nostalgically, in the USA. He turns the old food practices into a business and runs an ethnic grocery store selling Finnish foods to the local Finnish Americans:

The Maki store was popular with Finns because Eddie's father stocked Finnish foods, made his own blood sausage, pickled his own tripe, and salted his own salmon. He spoke their language and understood their wants. (*HH*, 11–12)

His foods unite him with other Finnish Americans who eat the same. This is in line with what was presented by Sutton (2001, see above): the food "from home" brings the migrants memories of their homeland and evokes a shared identity with fellow eaters. Accordingly, besides the familiar food, Maki's ethnic grocery store offers also a sense of shared belonging, understanding, and nostalgia. It reconstructs the past by reproducing the characters' forebears' products, and in doing so it brings Finland to the USA, at least in terms of eating. This is missing and longing for what

they have not lost (Boym 2001, 38). The American-born characters have not lost Finland but they, nevertheless, miss it and try to reconstruct it. On the whole, the shared Finnish food practices allow the migrants to be independent of the food practices of the majority culture and to live in their own little diasporic world.

In the stories about Heikki Heikkinen, food also has the potential to divide. Heikki's foodways, on the one hand, set him apart from mainstream Americans and other ethnic groups, such as Italian Americans. He is an "old-fashioned Finn with old-fashioned tastes in food" (*HH*, 29), and his food practices link him with his past as he likes "to eat the kinds of food his grandparents ate in Finland" (*HH*, 29). Part of the construction of Finnish identities draws on the appropriation of American food traditions. Although Heikki is persuaded by his younger and more Americanized relatives to try such American practices as barbecue and grilling, his complete failure with barbecuing and his subsequent throwing away of the grill in the stories "Old Finnish Cooking" (*HH*, 31) and "The New Barbeque Grill" (*HH*, 71–72) demonstrate his difference from mainstream modern American culture. This illustrates that he is not a prototypical American as understood by Heikki's family. The protagonist is very conservative in his eating practices and stubborn in keeping his own ways:

Heikki was not an okra or kohlrabi kind of guy. Artichokes totally baffled him. He didn't know if they were a fruit or a kind of thorn bush. He knew his Italian neighbors ate them, but he didn't know how or why. He stuck to root vegetables, like turnips, rutabagas, carrots, and beets, but sometimes he would eat corn, green beans, cabbage, or peas. Other vegetables didn't exist in Heikki's world.

The proper way to cook a vegetable, said Heikki, was for a long time in a lot of water. Then he drained it and greased it up with thick slabs of butter and sprinkled it liberally with salt and pepper.

Today there are crazy people out who spice their foods with garlic and hot pepper, and a whole slough of other condiments. Heikki thought these people should not be allowed across the Mackinac Bridge. (*HH*, 29–30)

On the other hand, food also has the potential to bridge the differences between the migrants and the dominant culture. Despite the fact that Heikki clings to the old Finnish foodways, he also likes to eat in the old-fashioned, American way:

Heikki's idea of a good American meal was canned and frozen in the forties and fifties. He preferred beef to other meats and liked it fried or roasted. He liked to fry his steak in butter to a crisp, even, dark color on the outside and dry gray inside." (*HH*, 29)

This illustrates the generational difference between Heikki and his relatives as they have different understanding of what is "American" food according to time in which they live. Heikki considers American the food practices of his youth, whereas his relatives view modern barbecuing and grilling as American practices. Moreover, Heikki does not only eat American, but also uses the American foods to express his belonging to Michigan and to the USA in general. The stories "Old Finnish Cooking" and "Taking the Smartass Fishing" emphasize Heikki's passion for growing and eating the American varieties of potatoes:

Potatoes were close to Heikki's Finnish heart. He could wax eloquent about potatoes, especially Michigan Reds, Kennebecs, and Green Mountains. New potatoes fresh from the garden sent him into paroxysms of rhapsody. (*HH*, 65)

He views this passion as a sign of his being American, and juxtaposes potatoes with "un-American" foods:

Heikki was a real fanatic about potatoes. He liked them with nearly every meal. He preferred the red ones. Rice was for sissies and the hordes of Asia, he said. Pasta was for people who never quite became real Americans. (*HH*, 30)

Heikki seems to consider himself as having already become a "real American" in contrast to Asians and Italians. At the same time, potatoes are not only markers of Americanness, as they also are a significant part of Finnish cuisine. So, Heikki's Michigan "Americanness" has a Finnish taste to it. His identity constructed through food selectively draws on the elements of both Finnish and American cultures, and Heikki sees no controversy in his being simultaneously "an old-fashioned Finn" and "a real American."

Food allows the migrants to express solidarity, belonging, and inclusion on the basis of their shared practices through which they reconstruct Finland in the USA. Food also manifests exclusion and repulsion. The characters repulse the foods of

the culinary others, and their own Finnish practices are repulsed by others in turn. At the same time, the migrants both resist and embrace changes in their foodways. They use the new food to express their belonging to the USA and thus demonstrate their being both a part of the minority and a part of the mosaic dominant culture. This illustrates the transcultural position of the Finnish Americans. They are in the contact zone as defined by Pratt ([1991] 2005; 1992, see above): the space where the encounter of Finnish and American cultures leads to the migrants' selective adaptation to the dominant culture and the use of its materials and subsequent formation of the settlers' new culture and identities. This leads me to the question of how different generations of the migrants approach their dual heritage through their food.

FOOD AND INTERGENERATIONAL RELATIONS

In Anderson's stories, the migrants' transcultural identities are negotiated differently by different generations. As the stories follow the lives of multigenerational Finnish American families, the texts often use food to illustrate the shifts and confrontations of cultures and identities in the lives of less and more Americanized migrants. An example of this is in the way in which foodways are involved in the characters' intergenerational relations and conflicts to demonstrate the dynamic differences between the generations. On the one hand, while fathers cling to the old eating practices to remember about their heritage, trying to pass them on to their children, the younger generation may reject the old foods as a gesture to forget the past and abandon their Finnish heritage. On the other hand, the younger Finnish Americans may use foodways to demonstrate the return to Finnishness and, in other words, "becoming Finns." They do not necessarily embrace the practices of the older generation but rather reconfigure the old Finnish foods according to their needs. They also invent their own "Finnish" practices with the help of the American environment and use contemporary, commercialized, and mass-produced symbols of Finnishness. The stories also accentuate the culinary Americanization of the younger generations who are eager to accept the eating habits of the mainstream American society and to Americanize the foods of their forebearers. Nevertheless, despite the juxtaposition of the foodways of the older and younger generations, the practices of the older Finnish Americans also demonstrate the adaptation to the USA, appropriation of the new food items and recruitment of the American foods as the markers of Finnishness. This illustrates the way that, in spite of their differences, both younger and older Finnish Americans negotiate their identities with both Finland and the past, and the USA and the present, and synthesize the new

form of identities in the American context. They become “American Plus Finnish” in the multifaceted society of various “Americans Plus” (Italian Americans, Irish Americans, Jewish Americans, and so on).

Food is a place of an intergenerational rebellion of the migrant children against their traditionalist parents. For instance, in the story “Eddie Maki” the protagonist’s father tries to introduce Finnish heritage to his son. He often cooks Finnish food which he and his son eat together (*HH*, 12). When Eddie associates his father’s and other elder-generation Finnish Americans’ values and way of life with the migrants’ lower status in America, unattractive job as miners, and lack of prospects, he tries to distance himself from their diaspora. Among other things he does this through rejecting his father’s Finnish food:

Eddie reacted by refusing to eat his father’s favorite foods—*mojakkka* [the dialectal Finnish American word for a stew, popular among the migrants in Minnesota and Michigan], *nisu* [the dialectal word for a traditional Finnish wheat sweet bread], and *sillikaviaari* [herring-caviar]. (*HH*, 16, original italics)

As was stated by Marie Gillespie (2000, see above), the rejection of the parents’ food is a gesture expressing the desire to gain some independence from the family culture. In migration literature, characters can disavow their ethnicity by rejecting their ethnic foodways (see above). Therefore, while Eddie’s father, through his foodways, seeks to create a sense of continuity between generations, Eddie uses his eating practices to distance himself from his father’s generation and to break away from their “Little Finland.”

However, the story later demonstrates a dynamic and transcultural character of Eddie’s identity, which can draw on Finland and the USA and synthesize the elements of both into something new. When Eddie again negotiates his identity through foodways in order to reconcile with his Finnish heritage, he does so with the help of his Finnish American diaspora as well as American society. Among the Finnish Americans in his hometown, hunting/poaching is popular and provides them with food and an opportunity to show oneself as a “real” man (*HH*, 17). When Eddie’s friend Paavo teaches him to hunt, “[f]or the first time, Eddie felt at least a little bit like a Finn” (*HH*, 17). Then Eddie decides to use the Finnish Americans’ passion for hunting to find his place and respect in their community. He goes to university to study wildlife management and becomes a game warden, a figure of power for the

local hunters and poachers. This finally reconciles him with his Finnish heritage and gives a sense of belonging:

Eddie smiled. [...] He felt he was home at last. "I'm a Finn after all [. . .]. For a while there, I just wasn't aware of it." (*HH*, 23)

Both the practices of the Finnish American diaspora and the American university help Eddie to "become a Finn," or rather a Finnish American, and settle for this transcultural identity as he incorporates the elements of both Finland and the USA in it.

The clash between the different generations' foodways and the mixture of Finnish and American practices are also present in the story "Sam Dorvinen" in *Heikki Heikkinen*. However, the text also demonstrates that both the younger and older generations are open to Americanization and the synthesis of different foodways in constructing their transcultural identities. The story features a fourth-generation Finnish American youngster in a quest for Finnish identity in the 1980s and 1990s. The protagonist's father reminds his son about their common Finnish heritage by telling about his youth and the camaraderie of Finnish American loggers and miners in the past:

In the old man's stories, every self-respecting Finn had driven a pick-up and had worked in the woods or in the mines. [...] They had all worn ragged and stained flannel shirts as a sign of their fortitude, their *sisu*. (*HH*, 4, original italics)

The father praises their eating habits and associates them with shared experiences of the hard work of the tough and hardboiled Finnish migrants in the past:

Every tough old guy had eaten pickled eggs, pickled fish, and beef jerky at the Mosquito Inn. Every one of them had guzzled gallons of Stroh's mixed with cheap brandy. (*HH*, 4)

Naturally not every Finnish man was as tough as Sam's father claims. He wants to impress his son, and in his nostalgic stories reinvents the past as what Lupton ([1996] 1998, 49–50) calls the idealized fiction of the past. In doing so, the father draws on both the old Finnish products such as pickled fish and pickled eggs, and more modern American foods and drinks such as beef jerky and Stroh's, the beer of the

Michigan-based company and the same signifier of regional Michigan identity as flannel shirts.

For him these foods manifest “true” rugged Finnishness, and later in the text they are juxtaposed with the eating habits of his son, influenced by American mainstream culture:

Sam’s Finnishness was greatly diluted. He couldn’t even speak the language [. . .]. He preferred pizza, Twinkies, and Coke to pickled eggs and beer. (*HH*, 4)

There is a paradox: while some American foods and drinks (including regional-specific items such as Stroh’s) are put along the foods from Finland in representing Finnishness for the father and his generation (and do not “dilute” that Finnishness), the American foods and drinks of his son “dilute” it.

Nevertheless, Sam seeks to negotiate his identity with his Finnish heritage through his foodways but uses other markers of being a Finn than his father, even though—just like the father—Sam draws on both cultures in constructing his identity. The protagonist uses more modern, mass-produced, and commercialized symbols of Finnishness:

By his teens, Sam wore his Finnishness like a badge of honor. Through his T-shirts, he was always daring the world to insult his heritage. [. . .] The only liquor he would drink was an occasional nip of Finlandia vodka. (*HH*, 5)

The father clings to the foods brought by his forefathers from Finland in the early twentieth century, but his son prefers Finlandia vodka, first imported to the USA in the 1970s. It is almost exclusively directed at the export market and is one of the most iconic and recognizable Finnish drinks and brands associated with Finland by foreigners worldwide. So, Eddie’s drinking Finlandia vodka signifies that that he longs for Finnish heritage and wants to manifest himself as an iconic rugged and masculine Finn with a love for strong spirits. Despite seeming differences, both the father and the son select and incorporate within their diet the elements of Finnish and American food cultures and invent new symbols of Finnishness in the USA. This constructs their identities as transcultural—negotiating with the past and present, and comprising belonging to both Finland and the USA with no need to choose between the two cultures.

While the foodways inherited from the first generation demonstrate the characters' continuity with their ancestors and Finland, the new mixed practices illustrate the change in Finnishness from the newcomers' to their descendants' generations and the adaptation of this Finnishness to the USA. A powerful metaphor of the migrants' transcultural identities is the characters' new foods that fuse the elements of Finnish and American cuisine together. One noticeable example is Jell-O, the American gelatin dessert, which is served with dill by the migrants. It naturally does not belong to the foodways that came from Finland with the first generation. Furthermore, Jell-O is not generally supposed to be served with dill. As the stories are not aimed at the realist representation of Finnish Americans, Jell-O with dill seems not to be a real Finnish American food. Rather it is the author's comical exaggeration of the passion for dill that is for some reason considered Finnish by the characters, or even a parody of culinary Finnish Americanness mixing seemingly incompatible elements. However, the product stands side by side with the real items of the Finnish cuisine. In "The Author" in *Heikki Heikkinen*, a story following a life of the third-generation narrator, from the early days of his life surrounded by Finns in his little town in Michigan, the Jell-O with dill is one of the essential products making him realize his Finnishness: "I also knew I was a Finn because all fish in our house were pickled, all potatoes were boiled, and the Jell-O had to have plenty of dill" (*HH*, 1). For the protagonist who "becomes a Finn" in the USA, the Jell-O with dill does not seem strange. After it has been reconfigured in accordance to the migrants' tastes, it functions to manifest the characters' version of Finnishness and to unite the narrator with his family. This composite product illustrates the migrants' position in the contact zone between cultures and highlights their opportunity to use the elements of both in constructing their identities. It can be viewed as a metaphor of transculturation when two diverse elements of the dominant and minority culture, American Jell-O and Finnish dill, come together, blend, and form something new.

Both older (in spite of their conservatism and claims for authenticity of their food) and younger migrants adapt their Finnish cuisine to the American environment and invent new mixed food practices which construct their transcultural identities. An example can be found in the story "Old Finnish Cooking." In spite of Heikki's inclusion of some American foods and drinks such as canned meat Spam, Van Camp's pork and beans (*HH*, 32), and the Michigan-produced beer Old Milwaukee (*HH*, 30) into his diet, he takes pride in the authenticity of his home-made Finnish products and laughs over his younger relatives' Americanized habits. When they try to

introduce him to the modern American eating habits and put his own habits “under siege,” he is not going to change his tastes:

“Even if it’s good,” he said, “I’m not going to like it!” He had *sisu*. (*HH*, 32, original italics)

When his younger relatives try to cook “Finnish” (although in an Americanized way), Heikki does not consider their store-bought and haute style-served food authentic:

He ate his home-pickled fish right out of the jar with his fingers and didn’t understand why his chic granddaughter served store-bought pickled herring in cream sauce on a platter with a toothpick stuck in each piece. “A toothpick is only useful with peanut brittle,” he said. (*HH*, 29)

Nevertheless, Heikki’s own eating habits demonstrate a great deal of appropriation and Americanization, when he also invents new foods based on the elements of Finnish and American eating practices:

Two ingredients were usually essential when Heikki cooked American—cream of mushroom soup and Jell-O. He stirred the soup into all leftovers and called it a casserole. He added a can of mixed fruit to the Jell-O. For a Finnish touch, he mixed dill into both. (*HH*, 29)

Heikki treats the American ingredients in his own way to conform to his tastes and to make these foods “Finnish” to stand along with the ones of his forebearers. If his original Finnish foodways construct Heikki’s Finnishness in terms of continuity with Finland and the past, through such composite dishes as the Jell-O with dill, his identity is also negotiated with the USA and the present. So, the eating practices of both Heikki and his younger relatives highlight their position between cultures, countries, the past, and the present. Their food practices illustrate their being both Finns and Americans, and simultaneously neither Finns nor Americans, but something new.

There is a paradox, however: Heikki resists the Americanization of his habits without noticing that they have already been Americanized. Some food products of the USA, for him, are more “Finnish” than others. This represents the generational differences between the migrants in their ways of life and position in the USA. The generation of such old-timers as Heikki was generally confined to the jobs of loggers,

miners, and farmers and to isolated life in their close-knit ethnic communities in the rural areas of Michigan. The American foods that were present in their lives comprised mainly rough foods and drinks of miners and loggers such as beef jerky and local beer, as well as canned products and concentrates such as Jell-O or Campbell's condensed cream of mushroom soup. Consequently, these products have become more "Finnish" for Heikki and other old-timers. The younger generations of the Finnish Americans have had better opportunities in the American society; they have left the rural ethnic communities in favor of urban life (often outside Michigan) and, therefore, have had access to more varied American foods.

On the whole, food in Anderson's stories both divides and unites different generations of the migrants, and illustrates continuity and change between them. The younger generations are more Americanized than the older ones and do not necessarily retain the old food practices. Instead of clinging to the parents' and grandparents' Finnish foods, the characters use modern and mass-produced symbols of Finnishness such as Finlandia vodka. They use food items from the American culture to revive their Finnish identity or, in Douglas' ([1973] 2003, 29) terms, they "recruit" the new items and eating habits to the old traditions. The older generation's food practices also have the potential of adaptation. This demonstrates actual sameness between the older and younger migrants, whose eating habits construct their identities as drawing on and blending their Finnish and American heritages. These intergenerational differences and sameness are also manifested in the characters' food-related practice of living off the land, which will be discussed in the following section.

FOOD FROM NATURE IN CONSTRUCTING IDENTITIES

In Anderson's stories, Finnishness is expressed not only in terms of the characters' ethnic difference and sameness and their continuity between generations, but also in terms of their relation with nature, which provides them with food. The Finns' commitment with it is considered a vital component of Finnishness because nature and living off it have been a common factor in Finnish life (Johnson 1996, 243). Therefore, a far-reaching myth about Finnish people is the myth of forest dwellers and people living close to the land (Taramaa 2007b, 74). Anderson's stories portray the characters in accordance with this myth, as in the majority of the texts they are actively engaged with nature in the form of skiing, snowmobiling, living in the wilderness, gathering, hunting/poaching, and fishing.

In *Heikki Heikkinen*, *Misery Bay*, and *Back to Misery Bay*, the characters, both young and old, have the reputation of being prominent hunters, poachers, and gatherers of

the Upper Peninsula, and their practices of living off the land and woods construct the settlers' identities as transcultural. They link the migrants to the past, bind different generations, distance them from mainstream Americans, and unite as Finns who are frugal, independent, and close to nature. Marjatta Hietala (2003) refers to Ojakangas, Zug, and Roemig's (1985) Finnish American booklet *Fantastically Finnish: Recipes and Traditions*, which demonstrates that even the third- and fourth-generation Finnish Americans praise nature's gifts as an essential component in the Finnish diet. They consider closeness to forest and the love for natural ingredients as something inherent in their Finnish identity, and they consequently view picking berries and mushrooms as the activities central to it (Hietala 2003, 195). Within the Finnish American community in Michigan and Minnesota, such form of commitment to nature as hunting/poaching has become some kind of an ethnic symbol, and the Finnish Americans have long been regarded as the region's most notorious poachers (Frandy 2009, 130). Nature and relationship with it hold a central place in Finnish American literature (Johnson 1996, 244–45), and many popular Finnish American writers, including Anderson, have used poachers as protagonists in their fiction (Frandy 2009, 130). In addition to manifesting the characters' Finnishness, the practices of living off the land demonstrate their adaptation to American culture and the incorporation of its elements. Wilderness is viewed as the basic ingredient of American civilization and the symbol of American identity (Nash 1982, xi). A dominant model of American manhood has been created from men's experience in nature, and many famous American men from presidents to folk heroes exemplify that model and gain their reputation at least partly through their exploits in the wilderness (Allister 2004, 2). The characters' food from nature brings them close to their Finnish forebearers as well as to the iconic heroes of America such as Natty Bumppo, Frank Buck, Daniel Boone, Henry Thoreau, and Ernest Hemingway. In doing so, food levels out the differences between Finns and Americans.

The practices of living off the land also illustrate the generational differences in their integration into American society and highlight the migrants' transcultural identities. While among the less Americanized older generation hunting and fishing are considered a survival activity, the younger generation transforms and commercializes the old practices in accordance to the new conditions. The survival activity is influenced by the characters' American environment and turns into a sports activity, a business, or a lifestyle that has not been caused by necessity. This adaptation constructs the Finnish Americans' identities as transcultural, creatively fusing the elements of their parental culture and the culture of their new country.

Through the practices of living off the land, the characters pass on the values and skills of their ancestors from one generation to another, which creates a sense of continuity among Finnish Americans and unites them around their heritage. For example, in “Arvo Salonen” in *Misery Bay*, a story portraying a hard life of the third-generation Finnish American lecturer, the traditions of frugal and self-reliant life in the wilderness bind together three generations of his family in distinct historical settings from the 1920s to the 1980s. Arvo’s grandfather had brought these traditions from Finland and transferred them to his son, who was born in the USA:

From the time he was a little child, the father taught the boy survival skills [. . .] The boy became an excellent hunter and fisherman. (*MB*, 79–80)

The latter in turn passed on these skills to his own son Arvo: “His [Arvo’s] father taught him the same survival skills that he had learned as a boy” (*MB*, 84). For Arvo’s grandfather, a former Finnish peasant, frugality and living off the land were natural. For Arvo’s father, who grew up during the Great Depression, these skills and values were necessary to survive in Michigan. But for Arvo, a lecturer in the 1970s–1980s, who can afford to buy any products in supermarkets rather than get food himself, such frugality has not been caused by actual necessity. However, the frugality of his father and grandfather and their food acquisition methods have become enrooted in his lifestyle, and he continues their tradition of living off the land to reconstruct the past, or, as the author puts it, “to live as if the present were the past” (*MB*, 83):

From his Depression-era father, Arvo learned to be frugal and hard-working. [. . .] Much of his food came from the land. (*MB*, 84–85)

Despite the changes in society from his grandfather’s times and Arvo’s distance from the first generation, he replicates their food acquisition methods and tries to be as frugal, independent, and self-reliant as his father and grandfather. The continuity of the Finnish practices in the life of Arvo’s family creates a sense of their affinity as Finns, who know how to live off the woods.

These practices set the characters apart from mainstream Americans of Anderson’s stories, who either lack the skills of hunters and fishermen or view these activities not as food acquisition methods but as leisure. In an era of supermarkets, those who take pride in their self-sufficiency and outdoor skills and pass on these skills to their children are in sharp contrast with mainstream Americans who are

primarily food-consumers rather than food-producers. The stories contrast different roles and attitudes to hunting and fishing: survival versus recreation. Finnish foragers who could be “frugal with the little they had” (*BMB*, 21) and consider fish and meat from the woods “all free food” (*BMB*, 24) are contrasted with American sportsmen who do not need the catch. In the story “Fishing” in *Heikki Heikkinen*, Heikki’s attitude to the catch distances him from mainstream American sport fishermen on TV-shows: “He was horrified that the fishermen on those shows always released their catch. Heikki saw no sense in that. “‘If it’s big enough to catch, it’s big enough to eat,’ he said” (*HH*, 54). In “Eddie Maki,” the rugged Finnish American backwoodsmen laugh at the city hunters, totally incompetent in the woods:

The hunters hailed from places like Detroit and Lansing, and they had no intention of actually hunting. They had no knowledge of the country and no bait stands. They stayed up late, playing cards with cronies and drinking beer. [. . .] Eddie, Paavo and other locals gathered to stare at these phony hunters [. . .] Eddie and the others exclaimed over the downstaters’ stupidity. “Dumb bastards can’t tell a cow from a deer,” said Paavo, voicing the town’s clichéd wisdom. (*HH*, 18)

Accordingly, the characters’ outdoors skills serve as a symbol of their difference from modern mainstream Americans and their culture. On the other hand, the stories emphasize the fact that the migrants’ food from nature also constructs the characters’ identities as negotiating with both Finland and America. The Finnish American backwoodsmen are close to and compete with famous outdoorsmen who are the real and fictional icons of masculine Americanness. In the story “Hunting Deer” in *Heikki Heikkinen*, Heikki is portrayed as “a real hunter—every bit as daring as Frank Buck or Ernest Hemingway” (*HH*, 28), who sees himself “as a kind of Finnish Natty Bumppo” (*HH*, 27). In this story, eating venison makes the characters no less daring than Daniel Boone, an American pioneer and frontiersman: “I would soon be eating North American big game! Daniel Boone, watch out!” (*HH*, 28). Moreover, the characters consider living off the land and ruggedness so inherently Finnish that they view these iconic Americans as “a kind of Finns.” In the story “Heikki” in *Misery Bay*, the protagonist wants to read a book by a Finnish author, and his friend offers him Hemingway’s Michigan stories such as “Big Two-Hearted River.”⁶ There

6 References to Hemingway are abundant in Anderson’s fiction. For example, one of his first collections of the short stories is titled *Hunting Hemingway’s Trout* (1990) and revolves around people somehow influenced by Hemingway and his literary legacy. In the title story, two young

is no surprise in this choice, as Hemingway frequently visited Michigan himself to enjoy the natural environment, and in his several texts the characters explore the landscapes of the Upper Peninsula, familiar to and inhabited by Finnish Americans. Heikki identifies himself with one of the most iconic American male writers, whose features of strong masculinity and ties to Michigan he shares:

“He’s [Hemingway] a kind of Finn,” he said.

“That’s not a Finn name,” said Heikki.

The professor agreed. “Hemingway has no Finnish blood,” he said, “but he acts like a Finn.”

Heikki wanted the professor to explain.

“Hemingway loved to hunt and fish, and he was prone to flannel shirts,” the professor said. “He had *sisu*, too. He could be stubborn as hell sometimes—could even punch a guy out if it came to that.”

Heikki thought that Hemingway sounded a lot like himself. (*MB*, 17–18)

At the same time, hunting and fishing demonstrate that the characters are in a state of negotiation not only with Finland and the USA, but also with the past and present. Different generations approach their outdoors practices differently, and many of the characters incorporate them into the mainstream culture and turn them into a business, sports or leisure activity, or an eco-friendly lifestyle. On the one hand, the migrants’ clinging to the old practices creates a sense of continuity between generations, but, on the other, the reconfiguration of these practices demonstrates the contrast between them. For instance, in the story “Taking the Smartass Fishing” in *Heikki Heikkinen*, Heikki’s attitude to fishing is contrasted with the one of his more Americanized nephew whom he invites to fish with him. The nephew’s releasing of his catch irritates Heikki as a waste of food: “‘That kid’s been watching one too many of those fishing shows off Channel Six!’ said Heikki, referring to the fact that the nephew then released the trout back in the pool” (*HH*, 64). Heikki “wouldn’t fish with the nephew again,” as “he wanted that trout for bragging” among his friend, and then for cooking “his favorite dish—a mixture of cubed cooked beets, raw onions, pickled fish, and mayonnaise” (*HH*, 64–65). Later, Heikki finally gets the trout by dynamiting the pond, and thus wins. For him, fishing should be a means of acquiring food, but his nephew considers it a sport and a leisure activity, in accordance to the views of the modern mainstream American culture.

Upper Peninsula Finns in the 1980s try to find Hemingway’s fictional Big Two-Hearted River and to relive his fishing experience.

In Anderson's fiction, the migrants also use their inherited outdoors superiority over modern Americans for their profit and turn the ancestors' skills and ideals into a business. The traditional roles and skills of living off the land can be used to serve the needs of the outside culture, and a survival technique can be transformed into a sports or business activity (Gillespie 1984). The first generation hunted out of necessity, whereas the second- and third-generation migrants hunt not only to provide their families with meat and fish, but also to make money. They commercialize their hunting and sell American nature to Americans who want trophies but who, in the words of one of the characters are "just too damned lazy or incompetent to shoot" on their own (Anderson 2007, 26). In "Dostoevsky's Three Annas" in *Back to Misery Bay*, a story about the life of a Finnish American family in the 1970s, the generational shift in hunting is vividly described. The third-generation characters "poached, just like their fathers, but once they started, they quickly changed the rules" (*BMB*, 25). The youngsters "transformed poaching from a family necessity to a business, a livelihood that, in part, supported their families, but that also paid for their gas and cigarettes and put money in the bank" (*BMB*, 25). On the whole, they have fused together Finnish outdoors skills, American entrepreneurship, and the view of hunting as a sports activity by mainstream American society.

The migrants also reconfigure their inherited practices of living off the land to be their eco-friendly lifestyle and a means of finding harmony as they follow the footsteps of Finnish and American outdoors heroes. For instance, in the story "Isaac Tikkanen" in *Heikki Heikkinen*, a third-generation migrant returning from Vietnam decides to go into the woods and live there independently from civilization in order to find harmony in his life. He has money to live on, but prefers to rely on hunting and fishing. He is inspired by the example of both his Finnish ancestors, the fictional icons of Finnishness such as Väinämöinen, and Henry Thoreau, the American naturalist who lived in the wilderness:

"I'm going into the woods," said Isaac. "Thoreau did it, and he was sort of the ideal Finn. I want to live my life following his teachings. I want to be like Vainamoinen [sic]. I need to be away from people for a while. I need to find harmony in my life." (*HH*, 125)

The story demonstrates that for Isaac's identity his Finnish and American heritage are equally important, and they are somehow intertwined in manifesting who he is.

On the whole, food from nature, the characters' badge of Finnishness, is simultaneously a mark of Americanness. The migrants who cling to the practices of living off the land are represented as competing with the heroic Americans and hence as being more American than modern Americans. Their values construct their identities in terms of transculturation—being alike both Finnish and American heroes, belonging to both Finland and the United States, incorporating both cultures with no need to choose. The exchange between Finnish and American hunting cultures in the contact zone of the Upper Peninsula of Michigan leads to mutual influence, and the formation of new practices and identities.

CONCLUSIONS

In Anderson's stories, the position of food is as significant as in many other multi-ethnic literatures of the USA such as African American, Asian American, or Italian American, which are filled with the language of food (Gardaphe and Xu 2007, 5). The migrants use food to explore their Finnish cultural heritage. The familiar eating practices mark the Finnish settlers' common ancestry and connect them with their past. Foodways invoke nostalgic memories and function as the ground on which to construct a common Finnish identity in the new home country. The characters use their foodways to manifest their ethnic sameness and difference from Americans, seek to unite different generations through eating, and express their Finnishness in terms of affinity with nature by living off the land. However, like any food culture and national food, their cuisine is in a process of continuous transformation. Among the characters, the notion of "authentic" and "original" Finnish foods is under constant redefinition. As the stories often use humor and parody in the portrayal of the migrants' diaspora, they are not aimed at realist representation and instead revise conventional understanding of Finnish Americanness. The migrants' "authentic" practices are often parodied, exaggerated, and even mocked to demonstrate that there is no such thing as fixed and unchangeable Finnish foodways—nor Finnishness itself. Despite the fact that the characters seek to reaffirm their Finnish identity, they and their Finnishness become more and more Americanized.

With the help of my theoretical framework of Douglas's, Isajiw's, and Sutton's notions of food and identity as well as Pratt's theory of transculturation, I have demonstrated that the migrants construct their identities as transcultural. They invent new foods and practices that allow them both to use their past Finnish heritage and to come to terms with their modern American environment. The migrants

construct not Finnish or American identity, but combine the third kind of identity in the American context. The new transcultural form of identity draws on belonging to both Finland and the USA, and selecting, incorporating, and creatively fusing elements of both Finnish and American cultures. On the whole, the characters have kept their heritage but have adapted it to the Upper Peninsula, the place for contact, transformation, and cultural exchange. The migrants are both influenced by the USA and influence their new home in turn by forming a new Upper Peninsula (or Yooper) Finnish American culture and a strong regional identity. As the culture (including of course the food culture) and identity of the USA are mosaic, the migrants use their food practices to find their place in already multifaceted American society and become a patch in the mosaic of the United States—among Irish Americans, Italian American, Jewish American, and many others.

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