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“Sons of the Midnight Sun”: Korpelanism, Sámi and
Finnish Minorities in Swedish Newspapers in late
1930s

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In the winter of 1935 a series of strange events began to unfold. It began with news items about a flying ark that would take the true believers to the Promised Land. A religious group called the Korpelans saw the new Finnish bible translation as the abomination of desolation, which meant that the end was near. They began to end their earthly lives by quitting their jobs, getting rid of their property, etc. Such peculiar behavior caught reporters' attention and the drive was on. Coverage of the movement consisted of various rumors and rather random accounts of threats, curses, and the constant praying of members and their retreat from everyday life and reality. Since the event took place among the Sami and Finnish minorities living in Northern Sweden at the juncture of the Swedish, Finnish and Norwegian borders, there were also ample amounts of exoticism.

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Religion and ethnic minorities, tend to be newsworthy only when seen as a deviance, a nuisance or in relation to extraordinary events. The Korpelans were a Finnish speaking Christian sect found in northern Sweden at the juncture of the Swedish, Finnish and Norwegian borders. Their story can be summarized as follows.

The publication of a new Finnish Bible translation in the winter of 1935 was seen by Korpelan Prophets as the abomination of desolation mentioned in the Bible. They believed this meant the End of the World would occur in 1335 days, or on the July 24, 1937. According to the Prophets God would first call them to Heaven and a year later a flying ark would land to bring true believers to the Promised Land, followed by a worldwide religious revival. Since the number 666 was the number of man and beast, there would be room for only 666 people. However, the wife of a miner, a psychic known as “The Prophetess,” then proclaimed that the ark would arrive earlier, in the summer of 1935. As a result, the group’s activities intensified and their lives began to revolve around their imminent salvation.

This story is an excellent example of journalists writing history as it’s being made and before all the pieces have fallen into place. Ekecrantz and Olsson point out that public interest usually fades before reporters can access sufficient background information to provide a more comprehensive explanation.¹ Thus stories of religious or ethnic minorities may appear more inexplicable than necessary. Since many readers may not have any personal experience with the phenomena described on the newspaper pages, it is the media’s picture that prevails.

The purpose of this article is to analyze the media’s portrayal of the Korpela Movement. The focus is on the most frantic period, spring 1935, although later coverage has been looked into as well. The study covers both national

dailies and regional papers. Since Korpelans were Finns and Sámi, coverage of Korpelanism is examined in relation to other news items dealing with these ethnicities. Northern Sweden, the area along the Norwegian and Finnish borders was, and remains, far from Stockholm and the higher echelons of power and influence. It was, as couple of journalists called it, “the unknown Sweden.”

The Korpela story was a tale of an exotic outback religion, a non-state church and non-Swedish people gone haywire. Coverage of the movement consisted of rather random accounts of threats, curses, and the constant praying of members and their retreat from everyday life and reality. In addition, rumors arose of communist infiltration, financial irregularities and sexual debauchery. Ample amounts of drama, exoticism, and escalating and entertaining oddities meant the story had high news value.² It was also easy to personalize. Sources were readily available and it offered few alternative interpretations. Coverage was event driven in the sense that the group’s quirky activities initiated the media frenzy. Subsequently, media logic itself and the group’s activities generated new texts and the drive continued on its own until public interest faded.

Despite the newspapers’ different political affiliations, differences in readership and location there were no significant differences in the way Korpelanism was depicted. Newspapers and their sources were generally upset about similar issues, although the sources at times interpreted the same activities differently, and one person’s interpretation might vary over time. Regional papers, although they found Korpelanism deeply upsetting, tried at times to defend and explain local cultural habits. However, such articles can be found in Stockholm dailies as well.

For example, Hvitfelt, Tuchman and Manning discuss news journalism’s dependence on reliable and easily accessible sources, which of-

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ten are various officials, politicians, scientists or other experts.³ Korpela stories were no exception and journalists frequently interviewed police officers, clerics, local doctors and other dignitaries. Practically all the sources were men. The story was consequently told from their point of view. Swedish news agency Tidningarnas Telegrambyrå (TT) and occasional local press conferences were used to some extent. Only Norrlandsposten relied primarily on short TT telegram news.

Stockholm dailies sent out their own correspondents and a Dagens Nyheter reporter even travelled to northern Finland to meet with Toivo Korpela, who was the only Korpelan preacher interviewed. Many alleged quotations were nevertheless based only on hearsay. In such cases reporters created a sense of credibility for example by referring to “hundreds of people” or by using expressions such as “assure” and “without any possibility of misunderstanding.” Despite use of local sources the story was thus presented from a mainstream point of view. According to Kovach and Rosenstiel the journalist’s first obligation is to the truth.⁴ But, the truth can be told from different perspectives and balancing a story is tricky business.

News is generally not very well suited for discussing matters that have complicated social, cultural or historical roots. Since it is difficult to make sense of the event based on news coverage alone, Lundmark’s study of the Korpela Movement has been used to provide a historical and sociological perspective and to understand the elements in society that motivated it.⁵

Initially, article presents the selected newspapers and the sample, discusses special characteristics of 1930s journalism, and provides an overview of the coverage. After this the origin of Korpelanism is explained. Then the following chapters examine how Korpelans, their activities and religious life were depicted, what was presented as a problem and how public views of ethnic minorities may have affected the image of Korpelanism. The final parts examine how Korpelan leaders were perceived and how the state attempted to resolve the situation.

About the Newspaper and the Intensity of Coverage

The original encoded material, presented in the doctoral thesis, encompassed four Stockholm-based newspapers, Dagens Nyheter, Stockholms-Tidningen, Svenska Dagbladet and Social-Demokraten.⁶ The purpose of the thesis was to examine the early years of the People’s Home and to see which kind of people were viewed as undesirables, i.e. what kind of groups or individuals were labeled as deviant or a problem, how they were depicted, what was seen as a problem and what solutions were suggested. The encoded material consisted of news items published during four months in 1935 and 1938. Sweden went through fairly dramatic economic and social changes in the late 1930s. The law of forced sterilization came into force in 1935 and various social issues, such as possible legalization of abortions, population crisis and the so-called Traveler question, were debated in the newspapers. In 1938 participation in and recruiting for the Spanish Civil War was outlawed. The German Kristallnacht created a refugee debate and pushed the Swedish authorities into tightening and systematizing their routines and control mechanisms concerning foreigners staying in the country.

The quantitative study based on the four Stockholm-papers raised questions about the coverage of Korpelanism. Perhaps the regional newspapers with their better understanding of local circumstances would produce a more nuanced picture of the Korpela Movement? Therefore, three Norrland-papers, one of them bilingual, were added. Two important Stockholm-papers, competitors Aftonbladet and Nya Dagligt Allehanda, are also included. All news stories about the movement published in the nine newspapers during 1935 and 1938 are (re)examined.

The studied dailies are the liberal Dagens Nyheter (DN) and Stockholms-Tidningen (StT), the conservative elite-paper Svenska Dagbladet (SvD), the social democratic Social-Demokraten (Soc.-D) and the “evening paper” Aftonbladet (AB). Soc.-D mainly covered the Stockholm area, since the party’s press policy precluded competition between its newspapers. The leading newspapers StT, DN and SvD sold more than 100 000 copies each. SvD’s readers belonged mainly to upper social classes, while DN’s, StT’s and AB’s readers came mostly

from the middle and lower classes.⁷ These newspapers were all Stockholm-based but had nationwide circulation. Interestingly, the conservative and patriotic *Nya Dagligt Allehanda* had no articles on Korpelanism.

Northern Sweden is represented by *Haparannanlehti-Haparandabladet* (HL-HB), *Norrlandsposten* (NP) and *Norrlands-Bladet* (NB). *Norrlandsposten* was a liberal six-day paper. *Norrlands-Bladet* was a conservative, religious weekly. Although NB had no continuous coverage of the movement, it is included due to its more local, religious point of view. HL-HB was published three days a week and covered Tornedalen, the Torne Valley, the Finnish speaking area along the Swedish-Finnish border. It published the same news translated into Swedish and Finnish. Different parts of the paper addressed different audiences, since the Swedes couldn't speak Finnish and not all Finns could speak Swedish.

During the 1930s Swedish journalism was not yet fully modernized or professionalized.⁸ Newspapers generally contained few pictures, so the articles had only occasional small close-ups of interviewed dignitaries. The inverted pyramid was rarely used. Quotations tended to be long, not always clearly marked, and they contained both fact and opinion. Three-story-headlines were typical and consisted of a larger main headline followed by two smaller summarizing headlines. Articles were occasionally placed horizontally across several columns, but a linear layout, where individual texts followed the column line, was more typical.

Ethical considerations also differed from current rules. Persons appearing in the texts were nearly always presented as "Baron von Leuhusen," "Pastor Bohlin," "Police Superintendent Zetterquist," "Finnish thieves Blomqvist and Uljas," or simply "the currently unemployed former pharmacist Andersson." Women, however, were called "Mrs" or "Miss"

regardless of their professional status. When speaking of children no names were mentioned. The ethnic background was usually mentioned, if a person was not a native Swede. People's names can function as ethnic markers and have stigmatizing effect. However, based solely on names it is difficult to judge a person's ethnic background. Finnish and Sámi family names sound similar and both groups have Swedish sounding names as well. Still, despite occasional Swedish sounding names, the context usually made it obvious who was and who wasn't a Swedish Swede.

Changes in the use of language also need to be mentioned. During the 1930s Sámi were generally called "Lapps" (*lappar*) and Roma were called "Gypsies" (*zigenare*). Both "Lapp" and "Gypsy" have taken on negative connotations and are no longer used. All Finns were called "Finns," meaning that there was no conceptual difference between Finns from Finland and Tornedal Finns, who were Swedish citizens.⁹ Still, the context usually revealed what kind of Finns the story was about. Similarly, all non-citizens were "foreigners," regardless of their purpose for being in the country. The words "refugee" and "immigration" were occasionally used, but not the word "immigrant." Thus all non-citizens staying in the country were "foreigners." The Sámi, Roma, Jews, Travelers and Tornedal Finns were categorized as minorities.¹⁰

Although the purpose of this article is to discuss how Korpela Movement and Sámi and Finnish minorities were depicted, a quick overview of the original quantitative study is presented to provide a context for the further analysis. The texts were encoded according to thematic categories, in order to provide a general overview of the material, and subcategories that provided a more detailed picture of the content. Here only the general thematic categories are presented.

Table 1: Four Stockholm-papers, general thematic categories (row totals, N=3837)

	Non-Swedish population	Crime news	Religious excess	Political extremists	Other social problems	Total
Stockholms-Tidningen	4	84	1	1	10	100
Social-Demokraten	5	81	1	2	11	100
Svenska Dagbladet	6	81	1	2	10	100
Dagens Nyheter	4	88	1	1	6	100
Total	5	84	1	1	9	100

Although this table shows the content only in four newspapers, it gives an idea of the type of deviance considered most newsworthy. The newspapers' political profile didn't make any difference. Minority related issues were generally uncommon. The Korpela case, however, clearly demonstrates that the number of articles alone doesn't always reveal how much attention a topic receives.

As we can see, more than 80 percent of the encoded material consisted of crime news. A more detailed analysis of the crime news showed that approximately 90 percent of the criminals mentioned in the texts were Swedish Swedes, most of them men. Among the other ethnic groups Finns and Travelers stood out. These stories were typically about battles and bottles, that is, drunken men settling their disputes with a knife. As Catomeris points out, the iconic signs of a bottle and a knife were essential parts of the public image of Finns and Travelers.¹¹

Stories of political extremists could be included in crime news, since they were about communists and national socialists breaking the law or disturbing public order (usually scuffles during demonstrations). This category also included news of illegal recruiting or volunteering for the Spanish Civil War and a few stories of Finnish exile communists from Moscow, or "Comintern's henchmen" as one newspaper called them. They appeared in the news when caught and deported by the Swedish police. The category "Other social problems" consisted of articles discussing more general social issues, for example conditions in prisons or bad

housing conditions around the country. There were also couple of short texts advertising "The Day of the Blind," meaning that disability was a non-topic.

Approximately 6 percent of the encoded material was about non-Swedish ethnic groups. Since Korpelans were Finns and Sámi, these texts would be included in this category. Interestingly, approximately half of the articles about the non-Swedish population discussed potential problems with foreigners, for example problems with immigration and refugees, or troublemaking individuals, such as foreign pickpockets, seafarers or other persons caught without proper documents. Examples of typical minority related news included reindeer killed by predators, Sámi handiwork and reviews of books or films containing exotic Sámi characters. Some specific issues concerning education or schools were also discussed. There were very few articles about other minorities. There were naturally other news stories about the northern region as well, but reporters tended to ignore or downplay the area's multiethnic and multilingual nature. Such stories were consequently not encoded as minority related topics.

The next table shows an overview of the ethnic groups. The detailed information given in the news made it easy to encode people according to their social class, gender, origin and the role in which they appeared in the text. Since not all troublemakers appearing in the texts were criminals, the term "miscreant" has been used. "Victim" refers to persons who were victims of a crime, injustice, accident or circumstances. "Experts" appeared in the texts

in an official capacity and were usually the reporter's prime sources. If the news story contained some information about the reporter it was also encoded. "Bystanders" were persons that were briefly mentioned in the texts but who didn't play any significant role in the story. These were often family members or neighbors.

Approximately 94 percent of all persons appearing in the encoded material were Swedish Swedes and only 2 percent belonged to the ethnic minorities. However, the row totals show interesting differences.

Table 2: Ethnic background, role (row totals, N=12578)

	Miscreant	Victim	Expert	Reporter	Bystanders	Total
Swedish Swede	37	15	37	4	7	100
Traveler	61	24	2	0	13	100
Jew	12	58	19	0	11	100
Sámi	8	37	13	0	42	100
Roma	27	22	29	0	22	100
Tornedal Finn	27	33	20	0	20	100
Finn	79	6	12	0	3	100
Norwegian	40	29	26	0	5	100
Danish	45	10	35	0	10	100
Other	62	22	7	0	9	100
Total	37	16	35	4	8	100

Although the encoded material (four Stockholm-papers) contained few Travelers and Roma, more detailed analysis revealed that they appeared primarily in the crime news. In contrast, the other minorities were presented more often as suffering victims needing help. As already stated, most of the foreigners were from Finland and they too were miscreants. The category "Other" contains several different nationalities (Russians, Estonians, Austrians, Germans and other Europeans). The number of miscreants doesn't thus have the same stigmatizing effect. Persons with non-Swedish ethnic background appeared seldom as sources or experts. Since most articles were not signed, it was difficult to say anything definite about the gender or ethnicity of the reporters. An educated guess would be that they were all Swedish men.

In brief, the general conclusion made in my

doctoral thesis was that non-Swedishness, not very surprisingly, was stronger a social marker than gender or class. There was no public outrage about unruly men, "Swedish plague" or "invasion of criminals." In comparison, the newspapers spoke explicitly of "Jewish invasion" and "Traveler plague." Similarly, the Finnish communists appeared more sinister than any of the domestic political extremists. But, none of these stories were as spectacular as the Korpelan flying ark.

The Korpelan media frenzy began in early March 1935. As the first articles appeared more newspapers jumped on the bandwagon and the drive was on. It reached its peak around the turn of the month and faded in May. In the selected Stockholm and Norrland-papers more than one hundred articles were published during March and April alone. The regional papers contained understandably fewer articles than

the large Stockholm dailies. Dailies at times carried a couple of articles about the group in the same issue. Texts also tended to be unusually long (one column or more). The other dailies, except *Aftonbladet*, placed half of their articles on the front pages, which was quite exceptional¹². *Aftonbladet* had only a few front page items. Regional newspapers with their less “showy” front pages placed all Korpela articles on inner pages. After May 1935 only a few texts appeared. The Korpelans’ sudden disappearance from the pages doesn’t mean that their activities ceased. Rather, interest in them vanished.

Once a topic has made headline news, similar events may subsequently be reported, but that doesn’t necessarily lead to a new media drive. For example, in the winter of 1938 the Korpelans made a spectacular reappearance on the front pages. Despite astounding rumors of moonshine, gambling and roaming around armed with axes, the story fell flat. The same happened to a group called “the Excluded” that also made a brief appearance the same winter. This group originated among Pentecostals and had similar features to the Korpelans. For example, *Dagens Nyheter* described in excruciating detail how “the Excluded’s” male evangelist, dressed in women’s clothing and a hat, gave a show of ecstatic dance, and how another member burst out into such a frantic dance that he accidentally kicked another man violently in the groin. The congregation then tried healing him with machine oil. The reporter also noticed a bed in the chapel and feared that “things with sexual nature seems to be going on there.”¹³ Even this story disappeared quietly. Laestadians were mentioned couple of times, usually with a focus on quirky details. *Svenska Dagbladet*, for example, revealed that Laestadians were now allowed to put curtains on their windows.¹⁴

Laestadianism and the Rise of Korpelanism

The Korpela Movement had its origin in Laestadianism, which still exists. An exhaustive description is not possible, given the limits of this paper; however, certain elements must be addressed in order to understand Korpelan actions.

Laestadianism was founded by Lars Levi Laestadius (1800-1861), who lived and worked

in Swedish Lapland. Although his native language was Swedish, he also spoke one of the Sámi languages. In 1826 he became pastor of Swedish Lutheran state church in Karesuando parish, where he learned a second Sámi language. Since Finnish was more widely spoken, he quickly learned to preach in Finnish as well.

During his years in Karesuando Laestadius experienced a religious revival and began preaching against moral decay and wide spread use of alcohol. He came to believe that only an exceptionally strong spiritual passion could overcome the modern worship of Reason. His fiery and captivating sermons soon attracted large crowds and alcohol consumption among his followers diminished. Although his church services became increasingly ecstatic and less compatible with official Lutheran doctrine, he was never excommunicated. After 23 years in Karesuando he was assigned to Pajala, where he continued his mission.¹⁵ Following Laestadius’ death the movement remained firmly rooted in the Sámi and Finnish speaking areas, but split into different factions.

So-called “grace marks” (*armon merkki*) were an essential part of Laestadianism. Spiritual passion was the measure of a person’s moral character, and that passion gave the inner strength to resist powerful worldly temptations. In Laestadian parishes sins were confessed publicly. Only the parish had the power to pass judgment, keep its members in order and help them come in contact with God. Public confessions followed by intense disciplining often led to visions, revelations, speaking in tongues and ecstatic body movements, called *liikutuksia*. Such “grace marks” were seen as positive signs that meant that the person was given absolution.¹⁶

Laestadians’ relationship to the Lutheran state church was complicated. Hepokoski says that Laestadius was both highly critical of the church and strongly against leaving it. After all, he was a pastor working for it. Since the nation’s unity was believed to be guaranteed by religious unity in one faith, every citizen was required by law to be a member of the state church. This, however, didn’t mean that the state controlled the church or vice versa.¹⁷ The church had also been used as a tool in the colonization of the northern region. Its religious, missionary aims may have been genuine.

However, the church's wish to baptize the Sámi happened to coincide with the state's desire to make them pay taxes. Many pastors functioned as school teachers as well.¹⁸ As a result, the church and its pastors were often seen as parts of the state bureaucracy.

The emergence of Laestadianism broke the imagined unity in one faith and one nation. Laestadianism was in many ways a popular movement that believed in the "priesthood of Holy Spirit," meaning that its preachers were laymen, not formally educated pastors paid by the state.¹⁹ Elenius points out that Laestadianism, with its transnational character, anti-modern approach, anti-materialist esthetics and emphasis on the Finnish language, challenged the hegemony of the state church and the public schools²⁰. Laestadianism was hence an important source of resistance against growing Swedification.

Living conditions in the northern region were harsh. The region also experienced dramatic socio-economic changes. Advancing industrialism, the emergence of trade unions and strikes, and occasionally fairly violent class struggle undermined old values and weakened old political power structures. For example, in the 1930s the left won the elections in Pajala, a former conservative Laestadian stronghold. Laestadians, for their part, were suspicious of trade unions and the working class movement. They saw the socialists in their worship of Reason and challenge of the existing social order as "Satan's appendages."²¹ Due to its consistent religious doctrine and fairly large number of followers, Laestadianism could be quite influential in certain areas. It set the tone and even non-Laestadian households adopted the life style.²²

In this volatile social climate a rousing young preacher emerged. Toivo Korpela came originally from Ähtäri in northern Finland. He began his career as a Laestadian preacher in the winter of 1928-1929. He soon came into conflict with the Laestadian leaders by violating their code, according to which a young person could only preach together with an older colleague. Korpela was warned, but refused to comply and continued to attract large crowds. According to Lundmark there is no evidence that Korpela's own beliefs differed in any significant way from the Laestadian doctrines.²³

He was, however, a controversial person and heavily criticized by the old guard. He was excommunicated in 1933. A year later he returned to his home in Ähtäri, and his followers were left without a leader. Many members left as the new prophets took over the movement and the doctrine of the ark was adopted.

Waiting for the Ark—Rites and Behavior

The media frenzy began with the flying ark, as can be seen in the first headlines in 1935: "With Flying Ark to Palestine" (HL-HB, March 3), "A Flying Ark Shall Take the 666 to Palestine" (StT, March 5), "If the Ark Doesn't Arrive, We Shall Burn the Bibles" (DN, March 8), "Bible Burning If Ark Doesn't Arrive" (StT, March 11), "Religious Insanity" (Soc.-D, March 12) and "Korpelans Refuse to Work" (SvD, March 12). Norrlandsposten jumps on the bandwagon few days later by writing that "Flying Ark Will Come in June" (March 15).

These first headlines show the elements that will dominate the story: flavor for odd details, emphasis on unruly behavior, presence of the police and the notion of "religious insanity" in contrast to "sober-minded people." These examples also show the importance of headings. They attract attention, summarize the content, or single out details. Some people probably just read the headlines.²⁴ For readers relying only on the individual news texts and the main headlines, it was very difficult to understand what Korpelanism was about and what was happening.²⁵ The headings in the individual texts, such as "happy fellows on a celestial journey" or "village people in Sattajärvi are mobilizing, weapons in every house," didn't make things any better.

Judging by the reporters' descriptions of the ark and its expected flight to the Promised Land, Korpelans saw it as a real future event, or perhaps as Christ's second coming, although this expression was not explicitly used. Stockholms-Tidningen (March 14) and Dagens Nyheter (March 15) even gave an exact date for the supposed flight – and marveled at the bus loads of silly people coming to wait for it. In brief, Korpelans seemed to believe that a new better future was in this world, not in a paradise reached only after death. But, this new time was thought to arise through superhuman intervention. Millenarian groups typically seek

salvation in destruction of the present world.²⁶

Korpelans acted upon their beliefs. The texts show implicitly how the group's present and future flowed into each other and everyday deeds turned into about-to-happen actions. Since the end was near, Korpelans began systematically to end their everyday, worldly lives. After all, our everyday life consists of such mundane things as a job, school, home, furniture, kitchen utensils, clothing, etc. To be rid of all that is to end one's life without dying. The present was thus reduced to a waiting room for the ark's arrival. While the Korpelans lived in the space of almost-there, the reporters told the story in the present tense.

The longer the waiting went on, the more disturbing the group's behavior seemed to outsiders. The following excerpt is an excellent example of the typical way Korpelan activities were described:

Korpelans continue their meetings day and night. Doors and windows are closed. Only a terrible noise can be heard from inside. It is told that next Sunday starts a Rejoicing Week and everyone should be filled with joy at all cost. Several people no longer bother to go to work. Families are broken as one person leaves from home, and another donates all family belongings etc, since the ark will soon come. People scatter coffee beans on the road to get rid of evil spirits that are believed to hide in the beans. Animals are left starving without care in the sheds. Cows are left all day without food. Horses, which Korpelans use for transportation, are left to stand outside prayer rooms for hours at a time, since God provides for all, they say. In Kaunisvaara nine children didn't come to school on Monday, as the parents find it unnecessary, because "the end is near." Telephone connection to the village is broken, because the telephone operator's family belongs to Korpelans and has now cut the lines, because a telephone is a sign of impiety.²⁷

Similar descriptions, often in much harsher tone, are found in all newspapers. The regional papers were no exceptions.

Of the various Korpelan rituals cursing was perhaps the most popular theme. All newspa-

pers, except *Norrlandsposten* and *Norrlands-Bladet*, wrote frequently about cursing, but its purpose or origin is not explained. Lundmark claims that cursing emerged in a prayer meeting, when the First Prophet preached about the Harlot of Babylon and began to jump up and down, clap his hands and curse loudly: "Babylonin portto helvettiin!" (Harlot of Babylon to Hell!). As a young girl claimed to have the power to recognize who was possessed by the devil, the possessed had to step outside on the landing and purify themselves by jumping up and down and swearing "Saatanan perkeleet helvettiin!" (Satan's Devils to Hell).²⁸ As the purpose was to get rid of evil spirits, it had to be done outside. The mentioned curses appeared on newspaper pages, usually in misspelled Finnish.

Cursing spread and intensified rapidly. Soon the Korpelans began to curse everything and everyone. Newspapers followed suit and wrote upsetting stories of cursing funeral processions, pastors, churches, village people, or passers-by. There were also stories of alleged assaults, death threats, threats to storm an old people's home etc. Some sources assured that the curses were only of a spiritual kind, meaning that since the cursed didn't represent the true (Korpelan) faith, the cursed pastors were beyond salvation and the churches would collapse by themselves. Pastor Bohlin's explanation is a good example:

I do, however, not take these threats very seriously," said pastor Bohlin to *Svenska Dagbladet's* correspondent. Indeed, I was supposed to fall victim to the Korpelans' religious fervor tonight. But, I have still not heard of them and I have not taken any special precautions. One should nevertheless consider that of the some hundred inhabitants in Karesuando village only a dozen have joined the new movement and yet no violent measures are taken from their part. Claims that they would assault the Karesuando Church should also be taken calmly. In fact, it is probably so, that they believe that the church will collapse by itself.²⁹

However, this type of mitigating statements didn't offer any understandable explanation for the Korpelans' irrational behavior.

Olof Bergqvist, a member of parliament and

bishop in Luleå diocese, offered his explanation by comparing Korpelans to Laestadians. He didn't condemn ecstasy as such, although he thought Korpelans were clearly over-exaggerating. He believed such excesses would pass in due course and things would return to normal.³⁰ Pastor Segerberg also defended Laestadian traditions and claimed that Korpelans had misinterpreted them. He said that cursing was an old Laestadian habit, the purpose of which was to make one feel the terror of sin and death and long for redemption. The reporting nevertheless gave the overall impression that the mitigating explanations were neither believed nor understood. Instead, request of local police for re-enforcements was emphasized, despite the fact that initially some police chiefs doubted that the Korpelans were dangerous. Nonetheless, references to police raids and arrests increased during April and the rare more understanding voices vanished.

Lundmark speaks of other purification rites. Two persons, who found each other attractive, were instructed to fight the temptation by only lying next to each other. Another alternative was to greet each other with a kiss on the mouth—except for two men. Also, a bucket of ice-cold water could be poured over a person. The purpose was to strengthen the members and help them endure local people's mockery.³¹ The newspapers didn't write about these rites, but they appear indirectly in rumors of nude dancing and sexual debauchery, which served as proof of the Korpelans' detrimental effect on public morality. However, there was no real evidence of such dancing actually happening. For example, in *Social-Demokraten* (March 24) the headline spoke of "Nude Dancing and Evil Deeds," whereas the text merely explained how a confused young man was stopped from running out in the cold after taking off all his clothes. The same story appeared in *Dagens Nyheter* with the headline "Insane Religion Brooder Runs Out Naked." The only article referring to an official report written by a local doctor, claiming to have witnessed nude dancing, was published in *Social-Demokraten* (July 25). In *Aftonbladet's* article "Korpela Rumors Are Pure Lies" (March 26) local sources denied all allegations of nudity, threats, crawling around on all four etc.

There were also acts with no sexual conno-

tations. Since Jesus had said to let the little children come to him, Korpelans believed it was easier to get to Heaven if one behaved like a child. As a result adults played popular children's games. Newspapers wrote about adults crawling around in the snow, driving each other with reins like a horse, bellowing and butting each other; however, such acts weren't described as adults playing children's games. Instead, they were seen as new signs of insanity.

Lundmark points out that there was a rationale behind Korpelan rites.³² News journalism, however, is not interested in finding this rationale. It is the oddities that make a good story. In the process, the religious activities were reduced to a freak show. Due to the described rites and the extensive media coverage, the Korpelan prayer meetings became an entertaining freak show for the local people, who hung around the prayer rooms waiting for the next odd thing to happen. Texts mentioned large crowds as well, but it was often unclear whether the reporters referred to spectators or Korpelans.

Deviation from the expected proper procedures created a sense of disorder. According to Ericson things are usually expected to happen or be taken care of in a certain, predictable way.³³ When this doesn't happen, a feeling of disorder and uncertainty appears. The texts contained an implicit idea of normal church services, which didn't involve ecstatic *liikutuksia*, i.e. visions and bodily movements combined with speaking in tongues. There was also an understanding of the normal function and place religion should have in a society and a person's life. To refuse to work or to destroy one's property as a consequence of faith was seen as madness (in the medical sense of the word). Hence there was a clash between the society's minimalist and Korpelans' maximalist view of religion. As Korpelans began to interpret ordinary daily tasks from a religious point of view, their religiosity got out of order and became a matter out of place, to use Mary Douglas's expression.³⁴ Their religiosity took over areas of life that should have been outside the religious domain. Korpelans saw God in the "wrong" places, had "wrong" priorities and made "wrong" decisions.

In brief, different religious communities

were associated with different types of normality. The ecstatic Laestadian prayer meetings might look strange for the audience “down here,” but people “up there” were used to them. Laestadians were thus within the limits of acceptable behavior, at least on the local level, although the state church’s practices appeared as a norm. Ecstasy or deep faith as such wasn’t condemned, but the Korpelan faith was thought to be completely out of line.

Religious sects, such as the Korpela Movement, are a welcome topic for news reporters. Strange rituals and seemingly irrational behavior make entertaining stories. Since news reporting works in a 24 hour cycle and reporters write history while it is being made, newspapers have very limited interest in long historical roots or cultural complexities. Although some local sources tried to offer rudimentary explanations of the religious practices, these attempts were isolated, without any proper context and had essentially no effect. Besides, even the news sources were troubled by Korpelan behavior, meaning that turning to local officials didn’t offer any alternative voices.

Children of Midnight Sun— Question of Origin

Texts depicting Korpelanism or Finnish and Sámi minorities showed imagined differences between the South and the North. All the events took place “up there” in “the unknown Sweden.” The southern and northern parts of the country thus seem to exist in two different eras or worlds. The South is imagined as modern, industrial, rational, developed and Swedish, and the North as pre-modern, natural, mythical, exotic and undeveloped. This difference is not always explicitly ethnicized though. The texts speak generally of “people up there,” which seem include even Swedes. But, the texts list many clearly non-Swedish names and speak of Finnish language church services, bilingual local authorities, etc. At times perfectly ordinary acts, such as shaking hands and saying “how do you do,” are turned into exotic features. It is done simply by writing “hyvää päivää,” or by adding exotic items, such as lasso used to catch reindeer, in the description. Such details indicate that the event takes place in a not so Swedish Sweden.

The imagined differences between the

North and the South can be seen in the way Korpelanism was explained. Instead of searching for possible social, economic, religious or cultural explanations, the reader was offered quasi-psychological reflections about the psyche of Laplanders. For example, the county governor Gärde spoke in Dagens Nyheter of the area’s “mental backwardness” and described it as a place “where people sometimes had to resort to magic to endure the daily hardships.” Poverty, difficult conditions and socio-economic changes taking place up north were naturally also discussed in the newspapers but not in connection with Korpelanism. Answers to the emergence of Korpelanism are sought in the psyche and in nature. The lack of sunlight mentioned in texts doesn’t only refer to the long winter, but also to the darkness of the people’s minds. People “up in the outback” were described as victims of ignorance, irrationality and uncontrolled, exaggerated emotions. Since the area’s multiethnic character was common knowledge, it would be easy to connect the alleged mental backwardness with non-Swedishness.

Only pastor Segerberg referred explicitly to the area’s multiethnicity and multilingualism and explained to Norrlands-Bladet’s readers that “a person who can easily speak two, three or four languages cannot be ignorant.” He also praised the improved level of education and the Sámis’ willingness to learn new things. The fact that he found it necessary to emphasize the Sámis’ keen interest in education and learning shows that they were not expected to do that. The pastor’s views of Korpelans were nonetheless negative. The Stockholm papers naturally approached the movement from this southern point of view, but the tone in the regional papers didn’t differ in any significant way.

The combination of underdevelopment and spiritual backwardness is interesting when comparing it to the explanations given for the previously mentioned Pentecostal “Excluded.” Depictions of their activities had similar features, but “the Excluded” were explicitly described as prosperous Swedish farmers living in the wealthier part of the country. The underlying message was that prosperous people, particularly Swedes, had no need to join hysterical movements. Similar claims were also found in some Korpela articles. For example, Dagens

Nyheter claimed that Pentecostal ecstasy was different, since Pentecostals were Swedes—as if being Swedish would hinder people from going overboard. *Aftonbladet* also spoke of the “Eastern European soul” of the Finns in contrast to “more skeptical Swedes.”

A *Dagens Nyheter* reporter visited a Korpelan family. The daughter was mistakenly called the Prophetess. This error may have been caused by DN’s desire to have a spectacular headline: “At Korpela’s Prophetess—DN Reporter with the Police to the Headquarters” (March 28). The content of the article, however, doesn’t suggest that the household really is the headquarters, or that the daughter is the Prophetess. Even her name is incorrect. Further, text has no quotations and seems to be mainly based on reporter’s personal impressions. It gives the impression that the reporter didn’t speak directly to the family, which is interesting, since the visit was made with a Finnish speaking police officer. The reporter seems to look down upon the silly natives.

The DN reporter’s portrayal of the daughter’s mental state, looks and behavior revolved around signs of insanity, whereas the depiction of her brother was seemingly more positive. The journalist spiced up the story with exotic un-Swedish details, such as misspelled Finnish words, descriptions of the exotic environment and the family’s “Lappish” appearance. The word “Lapp” is here used ambiguously. Swedish word “Lapp” is synonym for “Sámi,” but since this particular family had Finnish sounding names and spoke Finnish, the described “Lappishness” refers to a more unspecific exotic un-Swedishness. By combining the brother’s alleged un-Lappish appearance and praising his calmness, strength and prowess in skiing, he was presented as an admirable person despite being a “Lapp.”

“Lappishness” generally had both exotic and partly negative connotations. The primary aim of the state’s so called “Lapp shall be Lapp” policy was to help the Sámi preserve their own culture and way of life, but in the process Sámihood was reduced to nomadic reindeer herding³⁵. The public perception of the Sámi as a form of “noble savage,” is revealed for example in a newspaper debate about the appalling conditions in Sámi nomad schools. The reader was told how “nearly everyone (has taken for

granted) the common belief that the Lapps couldn’t possibly sleep in real beds, that living in the same conditions as Swedish children would be detrimental to the nomadic lifestyle.”³⁶ In the same article it is also mentioned that living in a proper house and having electricity was believed to ruin the Sámi people. One of the consequences of this policy was that children attending the nomad schools caught tuberculosis and other serious illnesses. They were also denied the education given Swedish children.

Sunday pages of Stockholm dailies offered occasional entertaining tales of visits up north. Sámi people were generally presented as the exotic Other and in the process even perfectly ordinary details appeared to be odd. For example, one reporter referred to the public belief that the Sámi were kind of Sweden’s American Indians. After all, they both lived in teepees out in the wilderness, although the Sámi version of it was called *kâta*, not teepee. Another reporter was amazed to hear that a Sámi could attend correspondence courses. In contrast, Swedish Swedes living in the outback were depicted as self-reliant, capable and physically and mentally strong individuals. Being a Swedish “man of wilderness” thus had positive connotations. Finns in Tornedalen got less media attention than the more exotic Sámi.

Attitudes to minority languages can be seen in the use of misspelled non-Swedish words and names, particularly in the Korpela stories. Other examples of the minority languages’ low status were news items about voluntary Finnish language education in northern schools. This topic appeared in the various newspapers in the winter of 1935, only couple of months before Korpelans made their entrance. Although the opinions expressed in the newspapers were in favor of such courses, they demonstrated the structural uselessness of the language.³⁷ The Swedish government allowed lessons in the Finnish language, but the only place where one could speak it was around the dinner table at home. Thus parents themselves were often against such courses. According to Elenius the authorities’ negative attitudes led to a long-term cultural inferiority complex and conflicts of cultural loyalty.³⁸ As stated earlier, Laestadianism offered a forum for cultural resistance against Swedification.

Interestingly, the idea of the Sámi people's cultural rights didn't seem to include any of their languages. In the newspaper debate about the nomad schools Finnish was thought to be a suitable "help-language." Due to the strong Laestadian tradition and practical, everyday contacts many Sámi knew at least some Finnish, but it was still a foreign language. The Finnish and Sámi languages are related, but like German, English and Dutch, they are not mutually understandable.

In comparison, we could mention the public outrage concerning the threat against the Swedish language in Finland. This debate raged on the front pages at the same time Finnish language education in Swedish schools was mentioned on the inner pages. Front pages were covered with headlines such as "Swedish spirit must be uprooted—Pure Finnish fanaticism knows no limits" (SvD January 20) or "Students burn the (Swedish) flag—Pure Finnish incitement culminates" (DN January 21). The dramatic nationalist language battle raging in Finland clearly had higher news value than the question of Finnish language in Sweden. The latter issue was little more than a footnote.

News stories are typically fragmented and don't necessarily follow a linear progression.³⁹ Therefore, it was possible to simultaneously without any apparent contradiction condemn the threats to Swedish language in Finland and refuse to seriously discuss the status of Finnish in Sweden. Similarly, neither the existence of the Laestadians nor the rise of the Korpelans were linked to preservation of cultural identity. The threat of ongoing Swedification was not mentioned at all. On the contrary, the government and the various authorities were presented as positive forces in all articles dealing with different ethnic minorities.

The texts, however, contained a latent conflict of interest. People belonging to the ethnic minorities were Swedish citizens and thus entitled to the state's pastoral care.⁴⁰ But, minorities may have needs the ethnic majority doesn't have, meaning that catering to such needs may be viewed as a burden threatening the flock's survival. The majority population may thus view Swedification as a benevolent act, that is, as the Good Shepherd, the state, guiding the errant sheep back to the flock and showing the benefits of assimilation. For example, Tornedal

Finns were at times called "our Finnish speaking citizens," indicating that being a Finn wasn't a problem as such, hanging on to the language and culture was. It set unwanted pressure on primary schools, raised questions of the Finnish speakers' loyalty to the state and hampered an individual's chances of employment, further education, etc. As Elenius' study shows, many Tornedal families began to view Finnish as a liability, not an asset.⁴¹

Further, since the Sámi representatives interviewed by the reporters were usually not presented as Sámi, the Sámi people appeared in the texts as passive, helpless victims, not as active agents. Whatever the problems might be, they would be solved by the good and understanding Swedish authorities. The same could be said for the Finns. For example, the fact that one of the experts interviewed in the matter of voluntary language education was of Tornedal Finnish origin was not mentioned in the text. Since newspapers favor the odd, the exotic and the exceptional, they can contribute to the marginalization of religious and ethnic groups.

Kings of the Lion's Den—the Leaders

According to Lundmark the Korpelan movement was unjustly named after Toivo Korpela.⁴² Despite the fact that he was now clearly living in Finland, the newspapers spoke of him in present tense. This created an illusion of him still being active in the movement.

Various rumors flourished. First, Korpela was accused of being a communist. The fact that communists generally were against religion was not taken into account. Only the conservative Svenska Dagbladet first raised suspicions of communist infiltration and then wondered why atheists were interested in religion. Even the local HL-HB claimed that Korpelanism was closely related to communism. The source for this rumor is unknown. Boreman's not particularly positive description of Korpelanism claims that some of his followers came from working class and communist youth. If that was the case, it might explain the rumor. Clandestine Finnish communist activities in the region may have also played a role.⁴³ Since the communist party and all communist activities in Finland were illegal after 1930, exiled communists tried to use Sweden as a base for their clandestine operations. The newspapers contained occa-

sional articles of Finnish communists, usually battling with the police and resisting an arrest. However, such stories typically referred to alleged Soviet infiltration.

Second, Korpela was accused of profiting from simple people's beliefs. Suddenly, the Sámi, previously described as poor and deprived, were depicted as wealthy and very generous. Such articles were based on anonymous sources and "it-is-said-that" type of rumors. In interviews, Toivo Korpela denied all accusations and claimed he had never preached for "worldly gain."⁴⁴ Reporters admitted that he was living in a simple, two-room house—hardly a sign of a wealthy man. Lundmark finds it unlikely that Korpela made any money by preaching.⁴⁵ Still, Korpelanism was presented as the result of Toivo Korpela's own personal greed and hunger for power.

Korpela also denied ever speaking of a flying ark and stated that his own beliefs agreed with the Lutheran church. Dagens Nyheter was skeptical and commented on its own interview the following day, and spoke of true and false prophets, explicitly using the words "Janus-Korpela" (April 1). Few days earlier Social-Demokraten quoted an interview by a Finnish journalist and called Korpela a "Finnish preacher-charmer" (March 22). Pastor Segerberg expressed a positive opinion about Toivo Korpela and explained to Aftonbladet (April 24) that "Korpela wished to deepen the spiritual life and loosen up the Laestonianism's current rigid forms."

When newspapers purported to quote Korpela, they usually chose some odd remark. For example, Dagens Nyheter quoted Korpela and claimed that he had run a medieval devil's cult:

There are hundreds of people in Lapland who can assure that they heard the preacher (Korpela), without any possibility of misunderstanding, talk about the heavenly ark's imminent landing on Luossavaara Lake, and they have also heard him run a completely medieval devil cult in his sermons.

—Convert to faith, you mistrustful, otherwise the devil will lie in waiting under your bed.⁴⁶

It is possible that he had previously preached of the devil, but when his past ser-

mons were interpreted on the basis of the current Korpelan activities, his past words got a different meaning. In reality the doctrine of the ark emerged after Korpela's departure and Korpela himself denied ever preaching about it.

Except for Aftonbladet and the local HL-HB, all papers mentioned Korpela's male successors by name, but didn't write about them nearly as much as about Toivo Korpela. Rather, the successors didn't emerge as individuals and were treated merely as members of the Korpelan flock. Aftonbladet's reporter, however, visited a prayer meeting and gave a detailed account of the successors' appearance and body language, which was claimed to demonstrate an agitated and unstable state of mind. Only HL-HB paid some attention to the Prophetess, describing her visions and generally giving more attention to the current leaders' role in the present Korpelan activities.

In brief, the newspapers ignore the fact that Toivo Korpela no longer lived in Sweden. Reporters relied heavily on hearsay and didn't really provide any facts about the Korpelan leaders. Thus these descriptions didn't assist the reader in understanding the motifs behind the religious activities. Further, Toivo Korpela in particular was subjected to a form of "trial by tabloid," meaning that he is accused of things he can't defend himself against.

Korpelans in Custody—Intervention

Reporters asked both implicitly and explicitly why the police or other authorities didn't intervene. The police's problem was that, as morally upsetting as cursing or refusal to work might be, it was not illegal. However, as Korpelan activities moved from the prayer rooms to the public sphere and affected other people around them, their behavior became disorderly conduct that had to be stopped. While the local authorities might have eventually intervened in any case, due to the media frenzy and the public outcry, they had little choice but to act.

In April more stories about official intervention emerged. The state, represented by various authorities, demonstrated its power by taking children into custody and putting adults in lockups and mental hospitals. For example the police chief Taube explained that

It is necessary for us to use hard measures and try to achieve a thorough cleanup

among Korpelans. In the whole district there are about 150 Korpelans - children excluded, and one cannot blame them, since they are forced to go in their parent's footsteps. Even with the risk overcrowding the mental hospital we must try to get the worst in there. / / (It) would be a beneficial if the dispatched police officers could catch the worst among the leaders. Furthermore, Childcare Board has requested assistance in order to take some children from their parents since they are in serious danger of being affected by their parent's "madness."⁴⁷

As this example shows newspapers generally saw the authorities' intervention as just, necessary measures done for the benefit of the Korpelans. Family members, who tried to encourage their afflicted relatives to leave the movement, were also described in a positive way. Korpelans were thus seen as both troublemakers and victims. They caused problems, but they were also victims of their own religious beliefs. They had to be stopped—and, yet, they deserved forgiveness, since they didn't know what they were doing.

Traces of the Foucauldian elements of power—capacity of power, power relation and exchange of information—can be seen in the texts. Communication and exchange of information are connected to the technologies and processes that create and maintain order and obedience. When power is exercised in a concrete manner, it often requires information exchange and cooperation.⁴⁸ Newspapers themselves functioned as producers of new information. Information was also exchanged between different authorities and the intervention created a power relation between the Korpelans and the authorities. The primary aim was clearly to save the Korpelans from their own insanity and encourage them to return to normal life, but the measures taken were nevertheless a demonstration of power. Korpelans didn't ask for help. It was forced upon them.

Korpelans endured their hardships calmly. Psychiatrists explained to reporters that the hospitalized Korpelans were calm patients, who appeared to be perfectly normal as long as one didn't bring up any religious matters. Svenska Dagbladet was the only newspaper that mentioned Korpelans' seeing the state's interven-

tion as persecution, and said that "persecution (was) part of their simplified interpretations of the Book of Revelations" (April 4). SvD, however, didn't offer any further explanation. According to Lundmark the harassment delighted the Korpelans, because according to the Book of Revelations all true believers would undergo great difficulties and persecution before the world ended.⁴⁹ Since they were persecuted, the world was about to go under and, therefore, the prophecy must be right.

Conclusions

When news journalism meets religion, the big picture tends to disappear. Lundmark characterizes Korpelanism as a millenarian movement. The word "millenium" comes from Latin and refers to the thousand year rule of Christ on Earth. Such movements may arise, if there is a need for response to cultural tension or beliefs imposed by the ruling elite. Millenarian movements are often vehicles for non-violent protest, where a higher than mortal agency is expected to conquer the evil. These elements were present in the rise of Laestadianism. Korpelanism, however, was not understood as a protest against Laestadianism or the state church. Neither the newspapers nor their sources saw Korpelanism as an attempt to master uncertainties rising from the rapid, dramatic social and economic changes. Consequently, the coverage of Korpelanism was neither a religious nor a heresy discourse and it was not condemned on a religious basis.⁵⁰

On the contrary, Korpelanism was described as lunacy created by irrational religious fervor, which was seen as an expression of the dark, mythical and pre-modern soul particularly present among Finns and Sámi. The possible rationale in the Korpelan activities was not understood. Instead, Korpelanism was medicalized, individualized and depoliticized, meaning that there was nothing wrong with the system. The mayhem was caused by a number of troubled individuals. Thus, it is the medical and policing discourses that dominate the material.

There is a complex relationship between news and the social order. Media coverage of Korpelanism can be seen as mediated moral panic. The press played an important role in whipping up public moral outrage and bringing forth official intervention. Critcher states that

moral panics are unthinkable without the media.⁵¹ The Korpela case clearly articulated public morality and dealt with the fundamental aspects of order. Ericson, Baranek and Chan discuss: morality, hierarchy and conception of procedure.⁵² Order is not a neutral concept. It requires a relationship between actors. To determine that something is out of control and probity, is to determine what is good or bad, normal or abnormal, healthy or unhealthy. If things don't occur or aren't dealt with in a certain predictable way, a sense of disorder arises. In this sense Korpelans were clearly out of order.

The texts contain an implicit hierarchy based on social class, status, ethnicity and religion. However, the underlying religious and ethnic hierarchy is not quite straightforward. The Lutheran state church was taken for granted and the newspapers didn't question the church or deep faith as such. Swedishness is clearly presented as normal, more modern and developed. The described Laplandish psyche seems to be more Finnish and Sámi than truly Swedish. Finns and Sámi were imagined as being closer to nature, the pre-modern and the mythical and therefore more susceptible to irrational religious fervor. The public image of the Finns was also linked to excessive drinking and irrational violent behavior.

Nevertheless, the texts made a distinction between Korpelan and non-Korpelan Finns and Sámi. Non-Korpelans were presented as somewhat exotic but sane. If we take into account the articles about the voluntary Finnish language education, Finns were presented as "our" Finnish speaking citizens, meaning they may be somewhat strange, but they were not categorically excluded. Similarly, the state's "Lapp shall be Lapp" policy may have had disastrous effects, but the Sámi were at least thought to have a right to their own culture. In the material analyzed for the doctoral thesis only one particular minority, so called Travelers, was subjected to symbolic annihilation. They were thought to have no rights at all and were acceptable only if they assimilated and stopped being Travelers.⁵³ In public discourse they were frequently used as bad examples.

Hence, despite Korpelans' position on the social and geographical periphery and their non-Swedish ethnic origin, the Korpelans were

not perceived as being wrong, at least not in the same way as the Travelers. Rather, Korpelans were seen as misguided individuals who did wrong. Consequently, the offered solutions were based on shaping the individual's behavior. The figurative actions thus showed what not to do, how not to behave and how not to think and what happened if you chose not to comply.⁵⁴ News, more than simply disseminating information, is a metaphoric tool showing how the world is constructed. It is part of public story telling and belongs to disciplining, naturalizing and normalizing discourses.⁵⁵ Since many Korpelans were mentioned by full name, the coverage had a stigmatizing effect. Lundmark says that many Korpelans lived isolated and excluded existences the rest of their lives.⁵⁶

Sweden emerged in the texts as a just, benevolent, well-organized and well-functioning society. The local authorities were the story's goodhearted heroes. As good shepherds they tolerated the mayhem for awhile, but as the Korpelans began to disrupt public order, they stepped in, took appropriate measures, restored order and did their best to help the afflicted. Persons with a minority background didn't question the legitimacy of the Swedish state or its policies. On the contrary, the non-Korpelan, non-Swedish population appeared seemingly as fully integrated citizens. For example, some interviewed police officers and pastors spoke Finnish. Consequently, it isn't possible to claim that Korpelans were persecuted by the Swedes. However, stories, such as the Korpela Movement, may contribute to enhancing the majority population's stereotype views of ethnic minorities. Although Korpelanism wasn't always explicitly ethnicized, there could be no doubt in reader's mind that it was a non-Swedish phenomenon.

With the state playing an important role in the story, the Korpelan story could also be seen as a demonstration of the state's pastoral power. Foucault aligns the pastoral power with the secular political rationality of the state.⁵⁷ As the state began to regard the population as a resource, it was also forced to take responsibility for the administration of people's living conditions. However, for ethnic minorities the state's hardening grip and the process of integrating individuals into the state were a more complicated matter. For example, as the public

school system expanded in Sweden's northern region, the state's policy became increasingly hostile to minority languages.⁵⁸ The state's Sámi policy, well-intended as it may have been, reduced Sámihood solely to nomadic reindeer herding, which effectively excluded part of the Sámi population and caused economic, cultural and educational problems.⁵⁹ It also led to long-lasting conflicts within the Sámi community and between the Sámi and non-Sámi population.

Notes

¹ Ekecrantz, Jan and Olsson, Tom *Det redigerade samhället. Om journalistikens, beskrivningsmaktens och det informerade förnuftets historia* (Stockholm: Carlsson 1998).

² About news values see e.g. Hvitfelt, Håkan *På första sidan. En studie i nyhetsvärderingar* (Stockholm: Beredskapsnämnden för psykologiskt försvar 1985); Lule, Jack *Daily News, Eternal Stories. The Mythological Role of Journalism* (New York: Guilford Press 2001); Allan, Stuart *News Culture* (Buckingham: Open University Press 2001); Bell, Allan *The Language of News Media* (Oxford: Blackwell 1991); Hulten, Gunilla *Främmande sidor. Främlingskap och nationell gemenskap i fyra svenska dagstidningar efter 1945* (Stockholm: JMK, Stockholms universitet 2006).

³ Hvitfelt 1985; Tuchman, Gaye *Making News: A Study in the Construction of Reality* (New York: Free Press 1978); Manning, Paul *News and News Sources: A Critical Study* (London: Sage 2001).

⁴ Kovach, Bill & Rosenstiel, Tom *The Elements of Journalism: What Newspeople Should Know and the Public Should Expect* (New York: Three Rivers Press 2007), 37-47.

⁵ Lundmark, Lennart (1985): *Protest och profetia. Korpela-rörelse och drömmen om världens ände*. Lund: Arkiv.

⁶ Ellefson, Merja "Staten är vår herde god." *Representationer av annorlundahet och ordning i fyra svenska trettioalstidningar* (Stockholm: JMK, Stockholm University 2007).

⁷ Rydén, Per "Guldåldern 1919-1936" in Lundström & Rydén & Sandlund (ed) *Den svenska pressens historia III* (Stockholm: Stiftelsen Den svenska pressens historia and Ekerlids förlag 2001); Anderson, Ivar *Svenska Dagbladets historia 1884-1940* (Stockholm: Svenska Dagbladet 1960); Hadenius, Stig and Weibull, Lennart *Massmedier. Press, radio & TV i förvandling* (Stockholm: Bonnier Alba 1997); Hadenius, Stig *Dagens Nyheters historia: tidningen och makten 1864-2000* (Stockholm: Bokförl. DN 2002); Sundell, Gunnar *Ord och öden i ett tidningshus, ur Stockholms-Tidningens historia 1889-1959* (Stockholm: Tiden 1959); Torbacke, Jarl *Dagens Nyheter och demokratins kris 1922-1936. Friheten är vår lösen* (Stockholm: Bonnier 1972).

⁸ Ekecrantz and Tom Olsson 1998; Rydén 2001.

⁹ Languages spoken in the north include Swedish, Finnish and three Sámi languages. In the border area Norwegian is understood as well. During the 1930s the Finnish spoken in Swedish Tornedalen was still considered a Finnish dialect. If Finnish was taught in schools, it was standard Finnish. Today Tornedal Finns no longer fully understand Finnish. In 2000 Sweden recognized both Tornedal Finnish, called *Meänkieli*, and (standard) Finnish as national minority languages. Norway recognized Norwegian Finnish, called *Kväniska*, as such in 2005.

¹⁰ The origin of Travelers (tattare) is uncertain. According to Svensson they were originally poor, landless Swedish peasants, vagabonds or outcasts. Travelers and Roma had similar roving life styles and the Traveler language borrowed many Romani words, but they are generally seen as two different groups. During the inter-war period a popular belief was that Travelers were half-bloods, that is, half Swedish, half Roma. During that period they were also commonly seen as a pestilence and were used as bad examples in public debates about forced sterilization. The Travelers often played the role of the exotic Other in Swedish popular culture. They were generally depicted as exotic, sensual, potentially violent, criminal, undisciplined and unruly. About Travelers see Catomeris, Christian *Det ohyggliga arvet. Sverige och främlingen genom tiderna* (Stockholm: Ordfront 2004); Svensson, Birgitta *Bortom all ära och redlighet. Tattarnas spel med rättvisan* (Stockholm: Nordiska muséets förlag 1996); Hazell, Bo *Resande folket. Från tattare till travellers* (Stockholm: Ordfront 2002). The encoded material contained only twenty-six Jewish and fourteen Roma actors. There were so few non-Swedish Jews and Roma that there was no point keeping them as a separate category.

¹¹ Catomeris 2004. The public image of the Travelers was similar to that of the Finns.

¹² The original quantitative study showed that crime with its 17 percent was the second most popular front page news. Although some of the stories were fairly spectacular, for example suspicion of industrial espionage for the Soviet Union or an embezzling Baron in the House of Nobility, crime didn't make it to the front pages nearly as often as Korpelans.

¹³ DN (February 2, 1938) had a fairly spectacular headline: "The Evangelist of the Free Church of the Excluded gives a demonstration of ecstatic dancing - Wordly authorities are asked to intervene - Evangelist dressed in women's clothing - Curious passers-by," my translation.

¹⁴ SvD (July 19, 1938).

¹⁵ Boreman, Per *Laestadianismen – Fennoskandias märkligaste väckelse och dess förhållande till kyrkan* (Stockholm: Svenska kyrkans diakonistyrelses bokförlag 1954); Larsson, Bengt Lars Levi *Laestadius. Hans liv och verksamhet och den laestadianska väckelsen* (Skellefteå: Artos bokförlag 1999); Wikmark, Gunnar Lars Levi *Laestadius väg till nya födelsen* (Lund: Acta Historico-Eccleastica Suecana nr 43, 1980).

¹⁶ Boreman 1954, Wikmark 1980, Lundmark 1985. There are two Finnish verbs that can be translated as "move." The verb "liikkua" is intransitive, for example "auto liikkuu" – the car is moving. The verb "liikuttaa" is more difficult to translate. It can mean for example to move something or set something in motion, as "liikutan lasia hiukan" – I moved the glass a little. It can also be used for emotions, as "tämä oli liikuttava tarina" – this was a moving story. To be "liikuttunut" is to be moved by something and to be in "liikuttuneessa tilassa" is to be in a state of high emotion.

¹⁷ Raittila, Pekka *Laestadian Movement History* (A Lecture Series at Pastor's Seminar October 18 and 19, 1982, at Inter-Lutheran Theological Seminary, available <http://www.apostoliclutheran.org/history.php>: 2; Kinnunen, Mauri "Lestadiolaisyhteisöjen rakenne" in *Teologinen Aikakauskirja* (Vol 4, 2002).

¹⁸ Forsgren, Tuuli “Synen på samer - vad säger 1700-talsdokument” in Granqvist (ed) Svenska överord. En bok om gränslöshet och begränsningar (Stockholm/Stehag: Brutus Östlings bokförlag Symposium 1999); Lundmark, Lennart “Lappen är ombytlig, ostadig och obekvämlig,” svenska statens samepolitik i rasismens tidevarv (Umeå: Norrlands universitetsförlag 2002); Svanberg, Ingvar and Mattias Tydén I nationalismens bakvatten. Om minoritet, etnicitet och rasism (Lund: Studentlitteratur 1999).

¹⁹ Raittila 1982, Kinnunen 2002.

²⁰ Elenius, Lars Både finsk och svensk. Modernisering, nationalism och språkförändringar i Tornedalen 1850-1939 (Umeå: Umeå universitet 2001); Elenius, Lars Nationalstat och minoritetspolitik. Samer och finskspråkiga minoriteter i ett jämförande nordiskt perspektiv (Lund: Studentlitteratur 2006).

²¹ Lundmark 1985.

²² Lundmark 1985.

²³ Lundmark 1985.

²⁴ Hvitfelt 1985.

²⁵ Examples of frontpage headlines (my translation): “With flying ark to Palestine” (DN March 7), “Burning of the Bible if the ark doesn’t arrive – The believers stop working” (StT March 11), “Religious insanity – Korpela-revival is spreading – 13 hour prayer meetings” (Soc.-D March 12), “At Korpela meeting in Kiruna – Monotonous mumbling in Finnish from noon to evening” (AB March 20), “Korpela Movement takes dangerous forms – Confusion, panic, ecstasy! – The believers butt each other and bellow, and behave like animals – Korpelans threaten a vicar to life and limb” (SvD March 24), “Korpela denies the flying ark - My aim is honest! Church-friendly - bad elements have sneaked in among the believers - Hopes to return to his Swedish believers in the fall” (DN March 30), “Three Korpelans taken by the police – sect’s meetings should be prohibited, says the bishop - But the mental confusion is probably temporary - Supporters in good faith – The leaders not up to their task (StT April 8) ”Korpelans chant curses at a girl’s funeral – ‘Cursing Weeks’ are soon over, ‘Rejoicing Weeks’ are about to begin – Ungodly telephone destroyed – Coffee beans are spread out on the road – Awful situation in Muodoslompolo” (SvD April 10), “Big raid at Korpelaner in Pajala – Police in a nightly cleansing action” – Village people ask for protection” (StT April 12), “Korpela is said to travel to America” (HL-HB April 30).

²⁶ Talmon, Yonina “Millenarian Movements” in European Journal of Sociology Vol 7, Issue 2 (1966): 166-169; Lee, Sang-Taek Religion and Social Formation in Korea: Minjung and Millenarianism, Berlin: Mouton de Gruyter 1996): 14, 20-22.

²⁷ StT (April 10, 1935), my translation.

²⁸ Lundmark 1985.

²⁹ SvD (March 24), my translation.

³⁰ “Such ecstasy, which seems to occur at the meetings, we are indeed already used to at the Laestadian meetings – I have myself many times witnessed it – but that it would lead to mental illness is not common. The small Korpela movement seems in a more excitable way than its predecessor to appeal to the soul’s tender and sensitive strings than the old Laestadians ever did. It resembles in this respect the Laestadianism’s Sturm-und Drang period, when things were pretty fiery. Korpelans seem to have similar manners. But now the Enlightenment is more widely spread up there in the outback and I do not think that this movement is very likely to get much attention. /.../ Korpelans may at the moment seem to be insane. Staying up all-night and listening to preacher’s rousing speeches naturally makes them tired. /.../ A person can temporarily become mentally confused and seem mentally deranged, but after a good rest it usually goes over /.../” (StT April 8, my translation)

³¹ Lundmark 1985.

³² Lundmark 1985.

³³ Ericson, Richard V and Baranek, P. and Chan, J Representing Order: Crime, Law and Justice in the News Media (Buckingham: Open University Press 1991)

³⁴ Douglas, Mary Renhet och fara. En analys av begreppen orenande och tabu (Nora: Nya Doxa 1997).

³⁵ This policy created long-lasting conflicts within the Sámi community and between the Sámi and the local non-Sámi population. It is a much too complicated matter to be discussed here. The point is that a part of the Sámi community lost the right to own reindeer, which in turn meant that they were no longer considered to be “real Sámi.” About the state’s Sámi policies see e.g. Lundmark, Lennart Så länge vi har marker. Samerna och staten under sexhundra år (Stockholm: Prisma 1998); Lantto & Mörkenstam “Sámi rights and Sámi challenges. The modernization process and the Swedish Sami movement, 1886–2006” in *Scandinavian Journal of History* Vol. 33, No. 1 (March 2008): 26–51; Henriksen, John B “The continuous process of recognition and implementation of the Sami people’s right to self-determination” in *Cambridge Review of International Affairs* Vol. 21, No: 1 (March 2008).

³⁶ Pastor and nomad school inspector Calleberg interviewed in StT, September 8, 1938.

³⁷ Derrida, Jacques Den andres enspråkighet eller den ursprungliga protesen (Göteborg: Daidalos 1999). Derrida discusses the structural uselessness of Arabic in French Algeria. He says that it was possible to study Arabic at school, but due to its low status and limited area of usage in the society only few students bothered to learn it. Finnish and Sámi languages in Swedish society were and remain in a similar position.

³⁸ About the attitudes towards Finnish language see e.g. Elenius 2001 and 2006. Negative attitudes to Finnish (and Sámi) language have prevailed. Elenius and Ekenberg conducted an interview study after the minority law passed in 1999. The law created special administrative areas in the Sámi and Finnish speaking areas in the north and gave people the right to use their own language when dealing with governmental or municipal authorities. This study shows how people still feel ashamed of speaking Finnish or Sámi in public. The results of this study are published in Elenius, Lars and Ekenberg, Stefan Minoritetsspråk och myndighetskontakt: flerspråkighet bland användare av samiska, meänkieli och finska i Norrbottens län efter minoritetsspråklagarnas tillkomst 2000 (Luleå : Centrum för utbildning och forskning inom samhällsvetenskap (CUFS), Luleå tekniska universitet 2002).

³⁹ Lacey, Nick *Narrative and Genre. Key Concepts in Media Studies* (Hampshire/NY: Palgrave 2000); Lule, Jack *Daily News, Eternal Stories. The Mythological Role of Journalism* (NY/London: Guilford Press 2001).

⁴⁰ About pastoral power see Danaher, Geoff and Tony Schirato and Jen Webb *Understanding Foucault* (London: Sage 2000); Dean, Mitchell *Governmentality. Power and Rule in Modern Society* (London: Sage 1999); Foucault, Michel "Pastoral Power and Political Reason" in Carrette (ed) Michel Foucault, *Religion and Culture* (New York: Routledge 1999): 135-153; Foucault, Michel "The Birth of Social Medicine" in Rabinow (ed) Michel Foucault. *Power, Essential Works of Foucault 1954-1984* (New York: The New Press 2000): 134-156; Foucault "Governmentality" in Rabinow (ed) Michel Foucault. *Power, Essential Works of Foucault 1954-1984* (New York: The New Press 2000): 201-222; Foucault, Michel "The Subject and the Power" in Rabinow (ed) Michel Foucault. *Power, Essential Works of Foucault 1954-1984* (New York: The New Press 2000): 326-348.

⁴¹ Elenius 2001, Elenius & Ekenberg 2002.

⁴² Lundmark 1985.

⁴³ Boreman 1954, about clandestine communist activities see Lackman, Matti *Samarbete för revolution. Kommunisternas hemliga verksamhet i Tornedalen 1918-1939* (Luleå: Tornedalica, nr 52, 1997). The Finnish Communist Party was founded in exile by the leftist activists who fled to Moscow after the 1918 Finnish Civil War.

⁴⁴ Korpela interviewed in DN (March 30), HL-HB (March 21), HL-HB (April 6).

⁴⁵ Lundmark 1985.

⁴⁶ DN (April 1), my translation

⁴⁷ StT (April 12), my translation.

⁴⁸ Dean 1999: 83-84; Foucault 1999: 140; Foucault 2000: 206-223; Foucault, Michel "Omnes et singulatum: Toward a Critique of Political Reason" in Rabinow (ed) Michel Foucault. *Power, Essential Works of Foucault 1954-1984* (New York: The New Press 2000): 298-325.

⁴⁹ Lundmark 1985.

⁵⁰ Lundmark 1985: 11; Lee 1996: 24, 31; Tromph, Garry W "Introduction" in Tromph (ed) *Cargo cults and millenarian movements* (Berlin: Mouton de Gruyter 1990) 1-4, 7. About typical religious discourses see e.g. Hjelm, Titus "News of the Unholy. Constructing Religion as Problem in the News Media" in Sumiala-Seppänen, Lundby and Salokangas (eds) *Implications of the Sacred in (Post)Modern Media* (Göteborg: Nordicom 2006).

⁵¹ Critcher, C *Moral Panics and the Media* (Philadelphia: Open University Press 2003): 131.

⁵² Ericson, Baranek and Chan 1991.

⁵³ Ellefson 2007.

⁵⁴ cf. Wuthnow, Robert *Communities of Discourse. Ideology and Social Structure in the Reformation, Enlightenment and European Socialism* (Massachusetts: Harvard University Press 1989) and Åker, Patrik *Vår Bostad i folkhemmet. Bilden av hemmet i en organisationskrift* (Nora: Nya Doxa 1998)

⁵⁵ Ericson, Baranek and Chan 1991; Bird, Elisabeth S and Dardenne, Robert W “Myth, Chronicle and Story. Exploring the Narrative Qualities of News” in Berkowitz (ed) *Social Meanings of News, a Text-Reader* (Thousand Oaks: Sage 1997). Cf. Foucault, Michel *Övervakning och straff* (Lund: Arkiv 1998).

⁵⁶ Lundmark 1985.

⁵⁷ Dean 1999; Foucault 2000: 202-220; Foucault, Michel “Sexuality and Power” in Carrette (ed) *Michel Foucault, Religion and Culture* (New York: Routledge 1999): 115-130; Foucault, Michel “The Political Technology of Individuals” in Rabinow (ed) *Michel Foucault. Power, Essential Works of Foucault 1954-1984* (New York: The New Press 2000): 403-417.

⁵⁸ Elenius 2001 and 2006.

⁵⁹ Lundmark 1998 and 2002.