SAUNA AS SYMBOL

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THESIS
Submitted to the Faculty of Graduate Studies and Research
in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Degree of
MASTER OF ARTS

ABSTRACT

The *sauna*, which literally translated means "a bathhouse", is a key symbol of Finnish culture and identity. It is both an expression of ideal Finnish culture and an institution which mediates the contradictions between the ideal and the actual in Finnish life. As a transformative ritual, sauna bathing transcends cleansing, symbolizing purification, renewal, healing, life cycle and seasonal changes. It is also uniquely conducive of social intimacy among the formal and reticent Finns. An examination of the *sauna* as a symbol of national identity reveals that the cultural meaning of the sauna is not as timeless as Finnish cultural mythology suggests, but is largely an invention of the Finnish nationalist movement of the nineteenth century.

RÉSUMÉ

Le mot sauna dont la traduction littérale serait "bain public", est un symbole de la culture et de l'identité finlandaises. C'est à la fois une expression de l'idéal de la culture finnoise et une institution qui médiatise les contradictions entre l'idéal et le réel de la vie finlandaise. En temps que rituel transformateur, le sauna transcende la simple notion de nettoyage, et symbolise la purification, le ressourcement, la guérison, le cycle de vie et les changements saisonniers. C'est également un élément d'intimité sociale chez les Finnois qui sont plutôt réservés de nature. L'analyse du sauna comme symbole de l'identité nationale révèle que sa signification culturelle n'est pas éternelle comme pourrait le laisser croire la mythologie culturelle finnoise mais qu'elle est essentiellement une invention du mouvement nationaliste finlandais du XIX^{e} siècle.

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS.

I would like to acknowledge my gratitude to the many people who have helped me in my research. At McGill University, Dan Aronson, John Galaty and John Leavitt read and commented on earlier versions of this paper. Kirsi Viisäinen and Päivi Keskikiikonen have been invaluable for their unstinting assistance as informants, translators, contacts and commentators. In Finland, Hwei Ming Boey and Lappeenranta University of Technology kindly assisted in administering my questionnaires to their students. Katariina Nikku Tihveräinen was not only my first and best informant, but a helpful critic of an earlier version of this paper. Thanks are due to the 220 anonymous respondents to my questionnaire, and to the many who befriended me during my three years in Finland. Finally, thanks to Kirsti Hyväri, friend and former landlady, who ensured that I had the opportunity to experience the weekly sauna ritual.

Darkness descends.
    Two pairs of aching feet,
Having traversed the expanse
    of verdant forests turned
Gold in mellow autumn,
    Seek the most perfect balm they know.
But wait.
    The waiting ends.
With the fruits of their labour cleaned,
    And gleaming mysteriously in a corner,
These feet find the warmth
    That is born of those forests
Kindled by a heritage --an inherited passion--
    And time.
That poignant moment hits as,
    With habitual dexterity, a feminine hand
Casts water onto fiery stone.
    The warmth engulfs, overwhelms, soothes,
Draws together the feet, the hearts, the minds
    And the souls -- a silent language. (r90)

INTRODUCTION

It is difficult, in retrospect, to know at what point I began to recognize that the sauna meant much more to the Finn than it did to me. Perhaps it was when I began to weary of the inevitable first questions put to me on being introduced to a Finn: "Have you been to the sauna? How do you like the Finnish sauna?" Perhaps it was long before then, when I first began to go with my family to the sauna my grandparents had built with great pride in their back yard. When I lived in Finland, I became quite an enthusiastic supporter of the "real" Finnish sauna by the lake, and any longings I now have for the country inevitably evoke images of the summer sauna and swim.

I went to Finland the first time, in 1978, to discover my "roots." I went back the second time to discover if the wonderland of my first visit truly existed. It did not. The two years I lived in Lappeenranta, from September 1983 to July 1985, was a time of intense fascination of and exploration into Finnish culture to try to explain to myself how the same country could present such a different face from the one I had met before, to try to understand how my infatuation with Finland became a love-hate relationship, and to try to resolve the anger I felt toward the country which seemingly had betrayed me and the memories I carried from my first visit. When I lived in Finland that first time, I didn't understand why people spoke of Finns as cool, reserved, shy and difficult to get to know. In my own experience, I knew them to be warm, welcoming and the best kind of friends. I was then a college exchange student in a rural, residential "Folk College" [*Kansanopisto* and *Kansankorkeakoulu*] located less than 20 km outside of the town of Joensuu in North Karelia. Exchange students fit a very special but well recognized niche in Finnish society. They are accepted with a welcoming and protective attitude and it was assumed that their reason for being in Finland was to learn about their way of life. My second stay in Finland was under completely different circumstances. I lived and worked in Lappeenranta, in South Karelia, teaching English for adults and university students in two schools (an evening college for adults

[*Kansalaisopisto*] and a technical university [*Teknillinen Korkeakoulu*]) as well as for local industries on contract jobs. The foreign language teacher -- or any foreigner who has no immediately recognizable and acceptable reason for living in the country -- is in a much more ambiguous position than the exchange student. This ambiguity is characterized by greater social distance and a watchful rather than protective attitude. I learned about Finnish shyness, and about loneliness, as I lived and worked with Finns. Eventually I was able to resolve my feelings of anger and learned to accept the Finns on their own terms; I was able to come home feeling sadness at leaving Finland.

In the analysis which follows, the sauna has been my guide to understanding Finnish culture. I was drawn to the sauna because, like a nagging conscience, it seemed almost inescapable. The predictability of "How do you like the Finnish sauna?" as an introductory question, the importance of ensuring that foreign guests experience the sauna, the Finns' sheer joy in the summer sauna by the lake, these impressed on me, although not consciously at first, the cultural value of the sauna. I began to realize how embedded the sauna is in Finnish culture, that understanding the sauna implies understanding the culture, too. Realization of the key role the sauna plays in Finnish culture led me to analyze Finnish culture through the sauna, to using a key symbol which expresses the essential notions of the culture as the means by which to conceptualize the cultural system.

The sauna is introduced in the first chapter, with the suggestion that this pervasive institution represents more in Finnish culture than a simple bath. In Finland, the sauna is described as a necessity of life. It is also the subject of keen interest among Finns; one aspect of this is the Finns' efforts to explain the importance of the sauna through scientific research into the physical and psychological effects of sauna bathing. This research is a form of discourse, an important way that Finns explain themselves to themselves. Through the scientific idiom, Finns establish a "natural" explanation for a cultural phenomenon. But, as an explanation for the Finn's love of sauna bathing, this research is inevitably inadequate since, from the conceptualization of the problem through to the conclusions, the cultural aspects of the sauna experience are disregarded. From a

cultural perspective, the physical and psychological effects are aspects of experience -- rather than the whole experience -- which can be understood as powerful stimuli feeding into and intensifying the sauna experience, enhancing its symbolic impact. The following analysis begins where these strictly naturalistic explanations end, presenting an explanation of the importance of the Finnish sauna in cultural terms.

Chapter Two explores the Finnish world view which defines reality in terms of nature. In a deeper sense than is true for society, nature is "real." In its manifestation as the forest, nature is the revitalizing center of the Finnish world view, the "true" home of the Finn. The sauna, built of wood, fired with logs, and situated near the trees and the lakes, is a part of the forest. Metaphorically, the sauna is the forest; like the forest, the sauna revitalizes. The sauna bath is part of "real" Finnish life. It represents a link between the actual and the ideal, a refuge from urban society, the rediscovery of how to be a "real" Finn.

Chapter Three discusses the sauna bath which, from the Finnish perspective, is only incidentally a bath. The bathing process is primarily a metaphor for a highly elaborated conceptualization of ritual transformation. For the Finn, the sauna bath is a liminal interlude, separate from everyday existence. This liminality is marked by special taboos and by nakedness. In the sauna, one is distanced from the actual: away from time, from one's problems, from the stresses of the everyday world, from social roles and status the Finn can be his/her "real" self. From the profane, actual world, the dirty bather goes to the sauna; from the sauna, the bather emerges clean, pure, renewed.

Chapter Four examines the social aspects of sauna bathing. The stress on privacy, autonomy and individualism in Finnish culture constrains social interaction; this inhibition is called shyness. Sauna bathing is an important form of socializing in Finland because, in the separateness of liminality, social roles may be overcome and the difficult transition from public to private relationships eased. In the sauna, solidarity and equality are stressed. These symbolic meanings are incorporated into family life, the family being the most important group to bath together, into social life as a form of entertainment and hospitality, and into public life as an aid to group solidarity and communication.

These meanings of the sauna represent the myth of a timeless and enduring culture, ideal Finnish culture. This is reflected in the presentation of my analysis, the perpetual present echoing the cultural stress on the continuity and permanence of Finnish values. In fact, actual life poses constant threats to the notions of the ideal culture, threats which are dealt with in a number of ways. For example, similarly to the way the Finns' valuation of the sauna is legitimized in naturalistic terms, science is used to modify the Finnish definition of the "real" sauna to incorporate technological innovation. The liminality of the sauna is upheld, despite the widespread secularization of the society, by a conscientious reaffirmation of the importance of the taboos for keeping the sauna "real," using the idiom of tradition or history as authority. The debate about the authenticity of the mini sauna, which is so popular in urban areas for reasons of convenience and privacy, continues.

In Chapter Five, the notion of culture as timeless is re-examined. From an historical perspective, the arbitrary and deliberative origins of symbols may be revealed: the sauna, as a symbol of national identity, is shown to have been a political construction of the nineteenth century nationalist movement. The invention of traditions can be seen as one way of responding to the changing conditions of the actual world, the use of public discourse to redefine public symbols as one way of reinventing traditions. The sauna thus represents both old and new meanings, both customary and invented traditions. This in no way diminishes the symbolic power of the sauna; rather, it represents the continuing process of the re-creation of meaning.

CHAPTER 1

THE SAUNA

> "These Finns! What have they achieved? Once they inhabited half Russia. But did they found a state? No! As soon as there was trouble they set sail across the sea to Finland, found a suitable birch grove and built a sauna."
>
> --Paasikivi (1870-1956), President of the Republic of Finland 1946-1956 (*in* Juva 1973:17).

The traditional Finnish sauna is of fundamental importance in Finnish culture. Even a cursory introduction to Finnish culture provides evidence of this, as in the Finnish proverb, "Wherever three or more Finns come together, within three weeks there will be a sauna" (Aaland 1978:92). The sauna is pervasive in Finland, a part of family life, community life and spiritual life, of business, politics, entertainment and sports. Finns brag that Finland is the only country in the world with more saunas than cars (Herva 1982:6; Aaland 1978:65; Teir 1976a:13), having 1 sauna for every 3.5 inhabitants. The sauna is a standard feature in all Finnish homes, whether farmhouses, suburban dwellings or city apartment blocks; in fact, traditionally, the sauna was built first and then the home. The ubiquitous sauna is in all sports complexes, health spas and hotels, as well as in institutions such as prisons, army barracks and larger firms in business or industry. An American traveller in Finland wrote, "As if a sauna at home, work and play weren't enough, the Finns have developed portable saunas to carry on camping trips. On hikes through the forests, I saw portables, standard equipment for the Boy Scouts" (Aaland 1978:68).

The pleasures of the sauna are still preferred over the conveniences of modern showers and bathtubs. In fact, the sauna is not part of the same cultural category as showers and baths. For example, it is unthinkable that

a state minister would publicly give thanks at an international conference for her morning shower in the way that Väänänen, (then) Minister of Education, did for the sauna:

> I am glad that a representative of the Ministry of Education has been given the opportunity of expressing before an authoritative international audience her gratitude to the Finnish sauna for its enriching contribution to Finnish culture (1976:10).

At the same conference, the (then) President of the Republic of Finland declared his solidarity with all Finns saying, "For me -- as for most other Finns -- the sauna is a way of life" (Kekkonen 1976:8). Indeed, the sauna is a very important part of the Finnish way of life. "It enters into the life of every Finn as much as the bread he eats or the shirt he wears upon his back. He could not survive without it, or, at least, he thinks he couldn't" (Bugbee 1940:69). The uninitiated foreigner can learn about saunas and proper sauna behaviour through the numerous books, articles and pamphlets which have been written expressly for that purpose. Seldom, however, will the sauna ever come to mean the same thing for foreigners as for Finns, for whom the sauna has been described as "the chief gratification in life" (Travers 1911:143). The Finns feel that "the sauna is Finland's gift to mankind" (Konya and Burger 1973:8); but what to the Finns is a complex bundle of meanings, a place where the physical, spiritual and social become metaphorically bound together, a symbol closely tied up with the Finns' own cultural self-image, is to the rest of the world usually little more than an interesting and novel addition to sport and health programs. In Finland, the sauna is a core institution, a central part of life. "[For the Finn, the sauna] evokes a host of ideas and feelings that are all part and parcel of the traditional Finnish bathing ritual" (Herva 1973:289). The sauna is what anthropologists have called a "key symbol" (Ortner 1973) which expresses some of the most fundamental concepts of the culture: "the Finn is not a Finn without the sauna" (Kivistö n/d:20).

WHAT IS A SAUNA?

The traditional sauna is a small wooden building, located separately from the main house and preferably close to a water source, such as a lake or river where bathing and swimming are possible in the summertime. Today,

this may only be possible for farms or summer cottages in rural areas, but it remains the ideal. "Our image of a 'normal' Finnish sauna is on the shore of a lake, and the lake-water, still today, is suitable for all sauna needs, for washing and for steam" (Patoharju 1977:26). In modern urban areas, the sauna may be built right inside the house or apartment. A sauna usually consists of one, two or three rooms. A one-room sauna consists of just the steam room, without a separate space for washing, with a number of wooden pegs for hanging clothes and towels outside the door. A two-room sauna will have a separate room for washing and/or changing, and in a three-room sauna each of the activities of sweating, washing and dressing has a separate space. Country saunas often have a small porch in front of the sauna, as well, where people can sit and relax afterwards. The number of rooms may increase the convenience of the sauna, but it is not felt to significantly influence the quality of the bath which is determined by other factors.

The Sauna Ceremony

The sauna event begins with heating the stove, which may take time and planning if a wood-burning stove is used. These preparations are felt by many to increase the value of the sauna bath. This is because the preparations not only build a sense of anticipation but contribute to preparing the bather psychologically for the sauna experience.

> Any person who rushes into the ready-heated sauna directly after coming from work will leave it only half as relaxed as the person who has correctly lit the oven in the wood-fired sauna, collected the fresh birch twigs for the birch whisk and in those ways inhaled a little smoke and forest air (Badermann 1976:264).

The bathing procedure is very simple. When the room has been heated to between 70 and 100 degrees Celsius, the bathers, leaving their clothes on the pegs outside, enter naked and sit calmly on the benches, higher for more heat and steam, lower for less. Periodically, the bathers toss water onto the hot rocks to produce steam which brings on profuse sweating while also raising the humidity of the air. The humidity of the atmosphere is an important factor in the comfort and enjoyment of the bath: Finns say that "a sauna without steam is like sitting under the sun of the Sahara (like a

hell)" (r58)[1] but that "when you throw water on the stove then the heat and moisture together make you feel like you're in heaven" (r62).[2] Switches of young birch branches, called *vasta* or *vihta* in Finnish, may be used to gently whisk the skin to stimulate more sweating. The sweating phase may be punctuated by short cooling-off periods outside of the steam room or by refreshing swims in the lake. Finally, the bathers wash thoroughly, either in the same room by pouring water over themselves with buckets, or in an adjacent washing room equipped with a shower etc., according to the style and modernity of the sauna. Then the bathers don loose robes to relax and cool down with a drink of beer or juice and a snack. The period of resting and socializing afterwards is an integral part of the sauna experience, especially important when the participants do not all bathe together. The sauna proceedure lasts for varying lengths of time, from a quick 15 to 20 minute steam and wash to a whole evening of relaxing entertainment.

The sauna has often been compared to a ceremony, highlighting the step-by-step procedure.

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[1]Citations credited with an 'r' and a number, for example (r58), refer to questionnaire responses, i.e., "respondent #58." The total number of returned questionnaires is 218. The majority of the respondents completed their forms in Finnish, while a large minority completed English versions of the same questionnaire. All citations presented in the text will be given in English; all translations from Finnish sources are by the author, unless otherwise noted. The questionnaire is presented in Appendix A, results of the quantitative analysis in Appendix B, and supplementary qualitative data in Appendix C.

[2]Unlike the Finnish prototypes, recreational saunas in North America are usually dry sweatbaths, as the sign posted outside the Montreal YWCA's sauna makes very clear:

> DANGER! DANGER! DANGER! DANGER! DANGER! DANGER!
> Caution. This sauna operates on electrical dry heat only. *Under no circumstances* is water to be added to its heating elements. This is not a steam bath. Adding water could not only cause permanent damage to the apparatus but could also result in electrocution.

While it is true that the sauna is not a steam bath, like Turkish baths or Russian banyas, neither should it be dry. In fact, the Finnish sauna is both a dry and wet heat bath and the alternation of dry heat and humid steam is considered to be part of the great pleasure of tossing water onto the stones (see for example Konya and Burger 1973).

> The length of time that this tradition lasts likens it to a ceremony -- a ceremony not unlike perhaps the Japanese tea ceremony where rules exist. When obediently followed, this ceremony enhances the physical and spiritual well-being of a participant. I've never gone to the shower with as much pomp.... (r90).

The key here is that the sauna preparations should enhance, not detract, from the experience. Heating the sauna, undressing, sweating, cooling, repeating the sweating and cooling, relaxing afterwards with the other bathers -- it all should contribute to focussing one's attention on the ritual itself. For example, in Germany, where the sauna has recently become a popular form of recreation, it is common to specify the exact period of time to be devoted to each stage of the bath, to the point where manufacturers have developed programmable saunas which automatically time each stage to the minute; however, according to the ideology of the Finnish sauna, Finns believe that this type of perfectionism "contradicts the deeper meaning of the sauna" (Badermann 1976:264).

Access to the Sauna

Finns are proud of the fact (and justly so, given its cultural importance) that, in Finland at least, the sauna represents not a status symbol or luxury item but a basic necessity which is accessible to all. "Every farm has one," [the Finn] said with pride, "and even the poorest peasant manages to build a sauna." (Travers 1911:143). In the opinion of one author,

> The heat of [the sauna's] stove, at least in the rural districts of Finland, has been one of the few really equally distributed social benefits ... [and] the only benefit favouring to the poor. The poorer the region, the better seem to be the saunas (Janhunen 1976:78-79).

In fact, "[the sauna] means as much to the poor as to the rich, to the laborer as to the professional man" (Bugbee 1940:69). This is no less true in modern, urban Finland than it was in the traditional, agriculturally based society of earlier times. "Most factories, blocks of flats, offices, have a sauna tucked away somewhere, and the family without access to one is

rare indeed" (Nickels 1968:278). This comment is confirmed statistically[1]. Finnish statistics list 1,781,771 households (1980) and approximately 1.4 million saunas (1986) for a ratio of 78 saunas per 100 households -- a figure not significantly different from the 1937 census of rural dwellings which reported 80% of all farms as having saunas. However, "the number of regular visitors to the sauna must be put higher than this" (Janhunen 1976:80) because the 20% of households which do not have private saunas can otherwise have access to saunas. For example, in some cases, notably blocks of flats and other high density dwellings, several households may share a communal sauna facility (each family usually being allotted certain times for use). The National Board of Housing planning regulations[2] stipulate that there must be at least one sauna for every 20-35 dwelling units (Helamaa 1976:22). Also, there are approximately 10,000 public saunas in swimming and sports facilities, bathing institutions, hotels, army barracks, prisons, etc.[3] The Finnish Sauna Society estimates "that three out of four [Finns] use the sauna regularly" (Teir *in* Konya and Burger 1973:7) but research investigating the proportion of the population of one Finnish town who are sauna bathers and the frequency with which they use the sauna (see

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[1]Sources of these statistics are as follows: 1937 statistics *from* Mather and Kaups 1963:497; 1980 statistics *from* Tilastokeskus [Central Statistical Office of Finland] 1982b; 1986 statistics *from* Helamaa 1986:6-8.

[2] Regulations also state that every house built with the aid of a government loan must be equipped with a sauna. These laws clearly indicate recognition, at the level of national government, of the importance of the sauna.

[3]There is another point to consider in interpreting the accessability of the sauna from these statistics. The sauna is less common among the ethnic minority groups in Finland; therefore, statistics for the whole population of the country do not exactly represent the Finnish culture. For example, the 1937 ratio of persons per sauna in the predominantly Swedish-speaking area of southwestern Finland was 20.8 persons per sauna (Mather and Kaups 1963:497), although by 1970 the rural areas of the Aland Islands (also a Swedish-speaking region) reported that nearly 50% of the real estate units were equipped with saunas (Janhunen 1976:79). No data is available on other minority groups.

tables 1 and 2) shows that the sauna enjoys almost universal popularity and accessibility in Finnish culture.[1]

TABLE 1
Percentage of men and women who take sauna baths in the total population of a small town (Vammala).

Age	Men (n=657)	Women (n=854)
20-29	97.9%	99.2%
30-39	99.5	99.0
40-49	99.2	99.4
50-59	97.7	97.6
60-69	100.0	92.0
70-79	96.6	94.9
>80	91.7	100.0
Mean	97.5%	97.4%

(Source: Vuori et al. 1976:245)

[1]Questionnaire responses were sorted into four categories of sauna bathing frequency: 23 of 105 respondents (21%) go to the sauna very frequently, more than twice weekly; 66 of 105 (63%) go to the sauna once or twice weekly, about the norm in Finnish culture; 12 of 105 (11%) of the respondents go to the sauna one to three times monthly, which is less often than the culture defines as adequate; and 4 of 105 (4%) go to the sauna very infrequently, less than once monthly. Analysis of the responses of these three groups suggests that those who bathe in the sauna less frequently value the social and utilitarian uses of the sauna above personal satisfaction. For example, those who bathe infrequently ranked "do business in the sauna" higher than those who bathe most frequently, the group which ranked this the lowest. Furthermore, one-third of those who go to the sauna monthly, and one-quarter of those who sauna less often, stated that "feeling close to family and friends" are irrelevant to sauna bathing, compared to only 9% of those who bathe more than twice weekly and 14% of those who bathe weekly. (See Appendix B.)

TABLE 2
Frequency of sauna bathing
of the population of a small town (Vammala)

Age	Men (n=649)			Women (n=832)		
	1-4	5-7	>8	1-4	5-7	>8
	times per month			times per month		
20-29	42.5%	22.4%	35.1%	40.3%	20.9%	38.8%
40-49	28.7	19.7	51.6	37.9	13.2	48.9
60-69	58.0	16.1	25.9	65.7	12.4	21.9
Mean						
- summer	38.7%	18.8%	42.5%	46.5%	16.3%	37.2%
- winter	61.2	16.8	21.5	70.0	13.7	16.3

(Source: Vuori et al. 1976:246)

The Uniqueness of the Sauna

The word *sauna* is a very ancient word in the Finnish vocabulary, its etymology indicating that it is not a loan word (Kaarela 1944:5), but entered the Finnish language when the proto-Finns were hunters and gatherers who had not yet migrated to the Finnish peninsula (Herva 1973:292). Linguistic evidence also suggests that the Finnish mind categorizes the sauna as unique in Finnish culture. Unlike the Swedish term, *badstuga*, which literally translated means a "bath-cottage", it is clearly differentiated from both bathtub, *kylpy*, and bathroom, *kylpyhuone*. Furthermore, the Finns are very particular about precisely what is a "sauna."[1]

> It is also surely a source of annoyance to the Finn when he sees the word ["sauna"] being misused in other countries. Articles such as barrel-shaped steam cupboards or slimming jackets have appeared on the world market with the label of "sauna." The sign "sauna" may also be seen on the doors of certain questionable

[1]In English by contrast the word "sauna" is often used to express any kind of sweat bath or steamy environment. For example, the Montreal newspaper (*The Gazette*, Saturday, July 11, 1987) headline, "Heat, humidity, turn city into sauna," would never appear in Finland (even supposing that Finland could get hot and humid).

> massage parlours. This is the worst thing of all for the reputation of the genuine sauna (Valtakari n/d:1).

Even in Finland, "the sauna may change so much that it hardly deserves to be called a sauna at all" (Väänänen 1976:10). From the Finnish perspective, "sauna" refers not merely to the steamy atmosphere which causes one to sweat, but to the design, technology, behaviour, and values inherent in the concept -- to the Finnish traditions, in other words, and nothing else is good enough to deserve the name. "Every true Finn still finds it mortifying that the Swedes got in first with the registration of the name Sauna Ltd in the USA" (Fast 1973:83).[1] Even in Finland, however, there is some controversy about exactly what distinguishes a "sauna" from a "non-sauna." It is somewhat ironical, given the Finnish concern with the purity of the word, that "sauna" is perhaps the only Finnish word to have been borrowed into the general usage of many of the world's languages.[2]

Kiuas

The Finnish language uses distinct words not merely for the sauna itself, but also for the most important components of the sauna. The *kiuas*, or sauna stove, is considered to be the "heart" of the sauna. *Kiuas* is a Finnish word which is linguistically unrelated to kitchen stoves (*liesi* or *hella*), ovens (*uuni*) or other types of heaters (*kamiina, lämpöpatteri*). The types of *kiuas* may be very diverse, ranging on a technological scale from extremely primitive (a pile of stones over a fire) to very sophisticated

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[1]Of course, Finns are not the only ones to enjoy this kind of cultural snobbery. Russian culture also has a long tradition of sweat bathing, called *banya*, although (unlike in Finland) this is now in serious decline. In many respects the *banya* is similar to the sauna, but Russians look down on the sauna with scorn equal to the Finnish attitude towards the *banya*.

> Recently, the Moscow banyas have encountered some competition from fancy new Finnish saunas. Will the sauna eventually replace the traditional Russian banya in popularity?
>
> "The sauna is not even the same thing," says [the Russian] with disdain. "The air is drier and it is not as good for you. We will always go to the banya" (Jewett 1987:4A).

[2]Even the name of the country, Finland, comes from Swedish. The Finnish name is *Suomi*, and Finns are *Suomalaiset*.

(electric, heat-storing stoves). Thus, *kiuas* refers to a general type of technology which fulfills the very specific function of heating a sauna.

Different types of *kiuas* give off different types of heat. The primitive *savusauna* (literally, "smoke sauna") had no chimney or flue from which smoke might escape and was heated for many hours before bathing. Immediately prior to bathing, the fire was allowed to die and the smoke was cleared. This produced a gentle, even heat which radiated not merely from the rocks of the *kiuas* but from the entire structure. This type of sauna fell into disuse because of the time, labour and fuel required for heating. This was largely replaced by the wood burning sauna which this paper will refer to as "traditional."[1] The *kiuas* of the traditional sauna is more complex, with a firebox and chimney (thus no internal smoke). The traditional sauna requires less heating time than the *savusauna*, which means that the heat produced by this type of technology is more localized in the *kiuas* with less heat radiation from the walls. The electric, gas and oil powered stoves are the most recent innovations of the *kiuas*, the electric type being the most common of these. All types of *kiuas* have in common the rocks which serve to store heat and radiate it evenly during bathing, but the development of more energy efficient models means that fewer stones are heated, heat is retained for less time and heat becomes progressively localized. This, in effect, lessens the quality of the bath.

The value of different types of *kiuas* is expressed with many different metaphors. For example, "many sauna enthusiasts are of the opinion that the steam of an electric stove is 'lifeless' and badly suited to a genuine sauna" (Helamaa 1976:22). For others, the issue is expressed in emotional terms:

> "I remember the days of my childhood, when I heated the smoke sauna and my eyes filled with tears because of the smoke. Around the great cowl the dirt was washed off; we were like in church.

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[1]The designation of one or another type of sauna as "traditional" is arbitrary. The *savusauna*, the prototype of all later models, is considered by many to be the only true, traditional sauna; others, however, consider the critical distinguishing feature of the traditional sauna to be the use of wood as fuel. In this paper, the type of wood-burning sauna with a flue is labelled "traditional" because this type of sauna still maintains an important position in today's society, whereas the chimneyless *savusauna* is now rather rare.

> Now that I am older I sit in an electric sauna, which is clean and nice-looking. Now I get tears in my eyes when I think of the old smoke sauna" (*in* Teir 1976a:15).

The symbolic connotations of the sauna are of such cultural importance that the type of stove, and the concomitant type of heat and bath, have even taken on a moral value for some people.

> Without a hearth there is no sauna, and the further the production of metal stoves is commercialised the less will be left of the real Finnish sauna.... The Finnish sauna image which we are selling abroad is suffering moral bankruptcy (Patoharju 1976:121).

Since the continuing use of the older types of saunas have come to represent a continuing high valuation of many traditional Finnish values and even of Finnish culture itself, modernization of the sauna -- whether technologically and economically or culturally through behavioural or ideological modification -- has meaning in spheres far beyond what is actually changed. Furthermore, the results of recent research into the physiological effects of different sauna types have convinced many people that the cultural valuations of the different technologies have been scientifically proven. In this way, the traditional sauna values have been reinforced by modern scientific ones: "The hearth is the soul of the sauna, and to preserve this soul it must be correctly designed, made of the proper materials, properly heated and the *löyly* (steam) generated in the proper way" (Patoharju 1976:121).

Löyly

During bathing, water is thrown onto the hot rocks of the *kiuas* to produce steam. The Finnish words for normal steam or vapour is *höyry* or *huuru*; sauna steam is *löyly*. The different types of steam are not considered synonymous, nor even closely related.

> *Löyly*, the almost untranslatable word meaning the very hot, slightly humid wave of air produced when a little warm water is thrown over the stove stones, is an important active ingredient of the sauna. The air suddenly seems hotter and envelops the bather with an invisible glowing cloud, pleasantly stinging the skin (Konya and Burger 1973:16).

Löyly has an interesting etymology. Although it is impossible to trace with great exactness changes in the meanings of words which happened long before the language was standardized and preserved in writing, it is

possible to get some clues to the original meanings by comparing related words within a language family. The list below (from Collinder 1955:95) includes languages from the widely scattered Finno-Ugric family, of which Estonian is the closest to Finnish (these two languages being, with effort and practice, mutually intelligible).

Finnish	löyly	sauna steam
Estonian	leil	breath, life
Livonian	läul	steam, vapour, breath, spirit
Votyak	lul	breath, spirit, soul, life
Zyryene	lol	spirit, soul, life
Vogul	lili	breath
Ostyak	lil (tit)	breath, spirit
	lält-	to breath
Hungarian	lélek lélkë-	soul

The apparent early semantics suggested by this list substantiates the hypothesis that sauna steam and other steam are conceptualized as distinct categories; it indicates, furthermore, that the steam of the ancient sauna probably had a spiritual or mystical significance[1] which gives us some hint as to the origin of the distinction between *löyly* and ordinary steam. There are also some remnants of this original meaning of *löyly* in the idiomatic usages of the word in common speech.[2]

> It is no accident that Finns speak of "*löylyn 'lyönti'*," literally "striking steam (in a sauna)" and that *löylyttäjä* (person throwing the water on the hot stones for vapor) means in common parlance a person giving someone else a scolding or a thrashing, and *löylytys* a fight and a thrashing (*selkäsauna*). A mentally retarded or eccentric person is called *löylynlyömä* (literally, struck by steam in a sauna) (Achté 1981:6).

The patterns of sauna use also suggest the sacred quality of the sauna bath derives from its *löyly*. In earlier times, the sauna building was not reserved exclusively for bathing but in the interests of economy and convenience was also used for other tasks, such as making malt beer.[3] For

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[1]See also "Origins of the Sauna," below, for further evidence supporting this point.

[2]Lakoff and Johnson (1980) treat idioms as metaphors and the idiomatic aspects of an expression as a part of its conceptualization and meaning.

[3]Aaltonen suggests that dirty tasks (not including making malt beer) were not originally allowed in the sauna but that about the mid- to late nineteenth century "the doors of the *sauna* were opened wider and wider for

example, Sarmela documents how these tasks were often turned into parties by the young people whose duty it was to attend to them:

> In S.W. Finland [there] were the malt sauna watches to which the village youth gathered to keep company with the girls taking care of the malts drying there. At the malt sauna watches the task of the young people was to watch over the sweetening process of the malts in the heat of the sauna or threshing house. The work was, as the name implies, primarily watching and it left the youth plenty of time for socializing, playing games and even dancing, as during other work parties (1969:121).

These mundane tasks, and especially dancing and exuberant games are strictly taboo in the more usual context of sauna bathing. Also, the strongest sauna taboo is against sex; nevertheless, "the sauna is used (so says the literature) as a hiding place [for sex], but cold (!), not during bathing!" (r145). The distinguishing factor, it seems, may be the *löyly*: the steamy bath itself is sacred, the bathhouse may or may not be.

Vasta, Vihta

When the *löyly* rises, the bathers may take a sauna switch made from a leafy bunch of young birch twigs and gently beat themselves. This stimulates perspiration and circulation giving the skin a pleasant tingling sensation. Again we find very specific vocabulary, a part of Finnish language and culture since prehistoric times (Vilkuna 1977b:3), for this specifically sauna-oriented implement: *vasta* in the eastern dialects, *vihta* in the western dialects. The twigs are always gathered in early summer, the 'best' date was said to be June 29, while the leaves are still young, soft and full of moisture. Then they were bound, always with a single, supple young twig, with the shiny side of the leaf facing out and stored for use all through the year (Venkula-Vauraste 1985:57).

> [A] little anecdote about the birch whisk in Germany: I had told some friends about birch whisks, and they had promised to try them out sometime. They later reported miserably how they had tried them out on a cold November day; they complained that the birch whisks had been very painful. There is quite a difference between birch whisks and birch branches (Badermann 1976:266).

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purposes originally foreign to it, even for such tasks as slaughtering and laundering" (1953:166). It is not clear from his statement, however, how wide-spread such habits were.

The Origins of the Finnish Sauna

The sauna has a long tradition in Finnish culture, the vitality of this symbol renewed and reaffirmed through the important cultural expressions of each age apparently since the time of the pre-historic proto-Finnish tribes. Archeological evidence indicates that 2500 years ago the ancestors of the Finns crossed the Baltic sea from what is now Estonia, presumably in search of richer hunting grounds in the vast forests of the Finnish peninsula (Juva 1973:19). Archaeologists have discovered what appear to be the remains of an early, primitive sauna in stone-age settlements (Laaksonen 1986:8).

> "Wanting to purify themselves with sweat, the remote ancient Finns heated rocks in a pit, that is in a sauna, covered the pit ... like a teepee, tossed water on the rocks and whisked themselves with birch switches. Therein is the sauna" (Vilkuna *in* Laaksonen 1986:9).

The earliest documentary evidence of the Finnish sauna, the chronicles of the Russian historian Nestori who describes the journey of the apostle Andreas, dates from the year 1113:

> The inhabitants, apparently tribes in northern Russia closely related to the Finns, heated a room with a sauna stove to a fiery heat and in the hot steam beat themselves with switches. The chronicler emphasizes that it is certainly not masochism and that the bathers truly enjoy that peculiar torment (Kirkinen 1981:11).

Finnish scholars believe that it is still possible to get glimpses of the Finnish culture of the pagan era through the amazingly rich tradition of oral literature, such as the *Kalevala*.[1] The *Kalevala* is the epic poem of Finland, the ancient oral literature of a people, eventually compiled, edited and written into epic form for wider dissemination. Folklorist Elias Lönnrot travelled through the more isolated villages of Finland's forest hinterland collecting the poems from the old bards in the early nineteenth century, first publishing his collection as the *Kalevala* in 1835. The narrative opens with the myth of creation and ends with the story of the

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[1]The *Kalevala* is the best known and (in modern times) most influential body of Finnish oral literature, but it comprises just a fraction of the total corpus of collected traditions. The *Kalevala* consists of over 22,000 lines; by comparison, already by 1889 the Finnish Society had collected 22,000 songs, 13,000 stories, 40,000 proverbs, 10,000 riddles, 2,000 folk melodies and 20,000 incantations, games etc. (Sharp 1917:8448).

coming of Christianity, while the major part describes the lives and deeds of the people of two villages including descriptions of the beliefs, customs, rituals and shamans' magical spells. Reference to the sauna appears again and again throughout the *Kalevala*: 13 of the 50 cantos, or "runes", refer to the sauna.[1] "[The folklore collections] may not unfittingly be called voices from the past, because they belong to a pre-literate people and have been transmitted orally through successive generations" (Mead 1968:46).[2] Even more importantly, today the *Kalevala* is considered to be the national epic poem of Finland and is a part of every Finn's education, symbolizing for a modern nation the integrity and the antiquity of the Finnish people.

THE EFFECTS OF SAUNA BATHING

When Finns talk about the sauna, almost inevitably they tell about the great feeling one gets from sauna bathing. "You enjoy your life when you are sweating in the sauna" (r9), said one respondent; another phrased it in this way: "The soft and relaxed feeling given by the sauna and steam to the whole body ... cannot be described in words" (r125).[3] What exactly does the sauna bath do? Finns have turned to medical science and psychoanalysis as

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[1]Two different translations of the *Kalevala* (the 1889 translation by Crawford and the 1907 translation by Kirby) are used as references. The *sauna* is translated variously as "bath-house", "fireside", "toilet-room", "honey-chambers", "fire-place", "penthouse", "vapour-bath" or "bath." The *vasta (vihta)* is referred to as a "whisk", "birch-whisk", "broom," "birch-broom," "brooms of birch-wood," "tassel," "birch-tassel," "silken tassel," "besom," "bundle," "foliage," "brushes" and "silken brushes."

[2] Finnish scholars are probing folk traditions, such as the *Kalevala*, the most thoroughly analyzed, to learn more about the ancient Finns. Concludes one researcher, "heroic epic poetry allows one to see amazingly far into antiquity" (Siikala 1985:34). Nevertheless, the validity of assuming that oral traditions recorded in modern, Christian times accurately reflect beliefs and cultures of ancient times is open to debate. (See also chapter five.)

[3]Questionnaire respondents ranked "relaxing in the sauna" as the most important reason for going to the sauna, with 91% of the sample stating this as a very important reason, 4% as a less important reason and only 4% as not relevant. These results are much higher even than "feeling clean" which was the next highest score at 70%, 26% and 4% respectively. (See Appendix B.)

two different ways of conceptualizing and understanding the effects of sauna bathing.

> Finnish physiologists have tried to discover the secret of the sense of well-being that follows. Their research has led them to the conclusion that it results from stimulation of the circulation and of other vital bodily functions. A recent examination of the psychological effects has given a scientific basis to what every sauna fanatic knew already: anxiety, depression, bad temper, all give way to a sense of general relaxation in the heat of the sauna (Herva 1973:292).

In themselves, these conceptual frameworks are inadequate for a complete understanding of the effects of sauna bathing, as cultural context of the sauna is overlooked; however, these perspectives do offer useful insights into the influence of physiological and psychological stimuli on the experience of symbols.

Understanding the Sauna in Physiological Terms

"Since ancient times ... the sauna has been known as the place of births rather than of deaths" (Karesoja et al. 1976:204). Medical studies have investigated a great number of physiological responses to the heat and humidity of the sauna environment (of which only a few will be discussed here) which seems to indicate that sauna bathing is not a significant health hazard.

The sauna is commonly used by athletes after strenuous sports. A survey of Finnish athletes, for example, shows that 38% use saunas after competitions to prevent or cure muscular aches and pains and 31% to promote recovery from exertion; the sauna was perceived to be effective treatment for muscular discomfort by 46% and for recovery by 33% of those surveyed (Vuori 1976:146, table 9). Vuori suggests that "the need for sauna in sport is based mainly on psychological factors and is largely a matter of tradition, fashion, beliefs and subjective experience" (1976:149). However, the collective experience of the Finnish athletes is corroborated by medical research which determined that the sauna effects "a significant decrease in neuromuscular activity" or, in other words, that the sauna has a tranquilizing effect on muscles (Warner 1971:7).

This is not the only case where the subjective experience of the Finns has been supported by scientific research. Finns commonly report that one

sleeps better after a sauna.[1] For example, one respondent claims that "the sauna perks me up if I am tired. It makes me tired, if I am too wound up to fall asleep" (112). In one experiment, subjects were monitored for brain wave activity during sleep after a sauna bath and the results "can be interpreted as a 'deepening' of sleep, especially during the early part of the night" (Putkonen and Elomaa 1976:275).

A recently discovered effect of sauna bathing involves the influence of atmospheric ions. Studies show that air is ionized by high energy sources, including sauna stoves. Different kinds of heat sources, however, produce different proportions of positive to negative ions. The glowing elements of electric sauna stoves produced a much greater proportion of positive ions, the iron stove of the wood-burning sauna (when heated properly so that the metal does not glow) produced both positive and negative ions but with a slightly greater increase in negative ions, and that where the *kiuas* was built of stone with very few metal parts, as is traditional for the *savusauna*, the increase of negative ions is much greater than the increase of positive ions (Graeffe et al. 1976). This is significant because negative ions are believed to increase one's sense of well-being, while positive ions have a detrimental effect:

> There is scientific evidence to show that a change towards a surplus of positive ions in the air has adverse effects, like lassitude, faintness and lowering of mental and physical capacity. This seems to happen without any relation to the effects of regular air pollution.
>
> Under these conditions, part of the population will suffer from insomnia, nervousness, tension, migraine, nausea, swellings, heart palpitations, indigestion, "hot waves", diarrhoea, vertigo, and older people will feel depressed, apathetic and very tired--symptoms that at their worst are just what you can experience in an electric sauna (Patoharju 1976:131-132).

Thus, research into every aspect of sauna bathing is providing a scientific explanation for many folk beliefs and values. Even the *vasta* has been "proven" to have a "therapeutic effect on the skin" due to the chemical properties of the birch leaves (Vilkuna 1977b:3). In Finnish culture, the folk value is probably greater than the strictly scientific benefits of such research.

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[1]This was commonly cited by respondents in the questionnaire; these results were not specifically coded, however.

Understanding the Sauna in Psychological Terms

The concept of "well-being" cannot be restricted to physical sensations for the sauna has a number of powerful psychological effects on the bather as well. A psychoanalytic perspective focuses on the effects of the sauna on the psyche, the reasons for which are not recognized consciously by the bather and are subjectively experienced simply as a feeling of well-being. The sauna is thought to be successful at promoting this sense of well-being because it provides a socially acceptable environment for reducing psychic tensions. These tensions are part of the normal, instinctual drives of early life; when these instincts are gratified, the individual experiences contentment, when ungratified, frustration and aggression.

> The sauna seems to offer the bather a wide variety of opportunities to discharge the instinctual tensions deriving from the early stages of personality development, for which no proper outlets exist in other social contexts (Tähka et al. 1971:65).

For example, every person needs rest and recreation. In the psychoanalytic literature, this is described as "regression in the service of the ego," which means that certain functions of the ego are temporarily given up or replaced by earlier modes of experiencing and action in a controlled way (as opposed to the psychopathology of uncontrolled regression). Examples of this in everyday life are dreams, games, playing, enjoyment of the arts and creative activity; after indulging in such regressive activities, the person feels refreshed and more able to cope with adult realities -- or as one Finn described it, "[the sauna] loads my batteries" (r19). "This type of regression in the service of the ego takes place in the sauna, and it is beyond doubt one of the preconditions of the pleasure and delight produced by a sauna" (Tähka et al. 1971:65). One of the ways that temporary regression reduces psychic tension is by reproducing infantile experiences and feelings. The earliest stage of life is associated with the most fundamental pleasure experiences, the passive-receptive type of gratification the infant gets from the warmth of the mother's body and from the bodily stimulation of her care and feeding; a Finnish respondent says of the sauna that "the caressing heat hugs my body" (r125). These sensations of warmth and touch can be relived by adults in the sauna as "[the bather] merges into the reassuring warmth of the sauna like a newborn babe into his

mother's embrace" (Achté 1981:2). Typically, bathers experience this subjectively simply as a feeling of security and satisfaction (Tähka et al. 1971:66).[1] The resultant effect of sauna bathing on the psyche of the (mentally healthy) bather is a general feeling of relaxation and well-being. "There are so many emotional things [associated] with the sauna that you can't express it with words. When you try it yourself then you will realize the magic of the sauna" (r18).

Overdetermination of Experience

Few things in life offer an experience so consistently positive as does the sauna for the Finn. This is because many different stimuli, the physical, the psychological, the cultural, all reinforce the same positive experience. For example, even non-religious Finns tell of a feeling of being "reborn" in the sauna. From the psychoanalytic perspective, the sauna induces a form of mental renewal, cleansing or purification -- the metaphor may vary -- which is the result of the release of unconscious psychic tensions, but there is also symbolic action, such as ritual cleansing and revitalization, which are cultural events. Similarly, psychoanalysts speak of regression in the service of the ego as a relaxation of psychological adaptive mechanisms; the relaxation of social mechanisms of adaptation, such as the temporary relief of role expectations would be facilitated by this. The cultural focus on solidarity in the sauna, with the social effect being increased openness and willingness to communicate with others, may also be reinforced by strong, unconscious psychological experiences:

> *Identification* plays an unusually important role in the sauna. On the one hand, the bather employs this regressive form of object relationships to avoid the erotization of his relationships to

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[1] Tähka et al. suggest that the sensation of warmth on the skin may have other effects: it may recall the period before the infant's subjective differentiation of the external world called "primary narcissism" (1971:68) or, alternatively, it may recall the infant's development of a sense of separateness from the external world because of the tactile stimulation which helps to make one aware of one's own body and its boundaries (1971:65-66). The former may lead to an *unio mystica* experience while the later may reinforces the bather's sense of identity and individuality. It is unclear to me, however, what differentiates the bather's response to a single sensation, warmth on the skin, into one of these two contrary experiences.

> other bathers that the common nakedness tends to stimulate. On the other hand, the very fact that all bathers are without clothes tends to accentuate the part played by identification.... Identification in the sauna temporarily increases the bathers' willingness and ability to understand one another and the views of one another. Sauna is a place where one talks and philosophizes a lot, but where conversation rarely assumes the nature of a dispute and, even more rarely, a quarrel. The traditional view is far from ill-founded that the sauna is a place promoting harmony, peace and benevolence among people (Tähka et al. 1971:70).

The researchers have also suggested that the "exciting, frightening and mysterious" quality of the sauna[1] may have a psychological source: in that early phase of childhood when "an intensive curiosity regarding sexuality in general and the parents' intimate life in particular" develops, the sauna may be experienced by children as "closely related to the unknown sides of the parents' life -- and that of the mother in particular -- and is at once anxiety-evoking and stimulating" (Tähka et al. 1971:68). In adulthood these feelings are still with us unconsciously, although the associations may now be experienced in other terms, as magic or faith, for example. "The forms of prelogical and magical thinking tend to be mobilized and preserved in connection with the sauna and sauna bathing. In the dim light of old saunas there prevails an atmosphere of mysticism, magic and devoutness" (Achté 1981:4-5).

> Both the magical tradition of the sauna as a source of health and the many unconscious associations attached to the sauna, often connected with parents regarded in childhood as omnipotent, still give many people faith and confidence in the therapeutic effects of the native Finnish bath (Achté 1981:1)

Thus, the poorly conceptualized or unconceptualized aspects of the sauna bathing may nevertheless contribute to the experience of the symbol, as the conjunction of multiple factors overdetermines the symbol's impact on the bather, creating an especially powerful experience. The influences of physical and psychological stimuli have been recognized as a feature of key symbols in other cultures, as well. For example, Geertz sees the "use of emotion for cognitive ends" (1973:449) as a central feature of the Balinese symbol, the cockfight. Turner also links the physical and psychological import of a ritual as critical elements of its symbolic power, hypothesizing

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[1]See also chapter three for discussion of liminality.

that natural and physiological phenomena are chosen precisely because they "may be expected to arouse desires and feelings" (1970:29). The special efficacy of the sauna as a cultural symbol is partly a result of the way that the physiological and psychological experiences feed into and intensify the symbolic impact of sauna bathing on the bather.

CULTURAL ANALYSIS OF THE SAUNA

Indigenous analyses of the sauna have not explained why the sauna is so important in Finnish culture; indeed, Finnish medical, psychological, and even social analyses of the sauna assume rather than explain the status of the bath.[1] The following cultural analysis of the sauna is an attempt to understand the sauna in the context of the culture in which it is embedded. At the same time, Finnish culture is illuminated through examination of the sauna because important symbols like the sauna express essential cultural notions.

The sauna is a symbol of rich and myriad associations, a network of meanings which is the key to understanding the meaning of the sauna and a path to understanding and developing insight into the culture. A semantic network is "...a set of words, experiences, and feelings which typically 'run together' for the members of the society....a set of experiences associated through networks of meaning and social interaction in a society"

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[1]For example, Kaarela writes "for we Finns and for related peoples the sauna has always been, and remains still, a holy place" (1944:4). Likewise, Tähka et al. assert that "the sauna is traditionally associated with the Finnish culture. The Finns love their sauna and it is a point of national pride for them" (1971:63). Leimu, too, concludes that "it certainly should be worthwhile starting some ethnological or sociological research on modern Finnish bathing customs" (1983:83) without giving adequate indication as to why Finnish bathing is of particular cultural interest. Finnish sociologist Aaltonen believes that although "many of the traditions of the *sauna* [were wiped out] as [the great agricultural revolution of the 1970's] shook and moved the cultural foundations of the old form of life and as environmental conditions changed," the sauna is still used today for "cleansing the body and refreshing the mind" because these "were the functions of the *sauna* which had the greatest practical value for the changed circumstances" (1953:160) -- he does not however explain why the sauna is more practical for cleansing than modern plumbing, or more effective for relaxation than other forms of recreation.

(Good 1977:27). The semantic network of the sauna is created through synecdoche, metanym and metaphor. Each concept carries with it a whole set of associations and experiences, each entailment of which may have many more entailments, and so on, resulting in a large and (more or less) coherent complex of associations. Thus, the sauna is not an isolated concept, but an intricate network of linkages and entailments: this system is the meaning of the symbol. The sauna takes a number of disparate themes of a very broad scope and interconnects them all by illustrating the links and similarities between them.

The culture which can be discovered through analysis of the sauna as symbol is ideal Finnish culture, a cultural image which cannot exist in actuality because real life never lives up to what it "really should be." Schneider's perspective of American kinship is also applicable to the sauna as a symbol in Finnish culture:

> This book is *not* to be understood as an account of what Americans *say* when they talk about kinship and family, although it is based on what Americans say. It is *not* about what Americans *think*, as a rational, conscious, cognitive process, about kinship and family, although it is based in no small part on what Americans say they think about kinship and family. This book should *not* be construed as a *description* of roles and relationships which Americans can be observed actually to undertake in their day-to-day behaviour in situations of family life, although it is based on what Americans say they do and on what they have been observed to do.
>
> This book is about symbols, the symbols which are American kinship (1968:18).

The sauna is a key to the ideal culture, to the "real" sauna, to what it means to be "really" Finnish, or a "real" Finn. Analysis of the sauna is particularly important to understanding Finnish culture because the sauna also functions to mediate fundamental contradictions between the ideal and the actual in Finnish culture.

CHAPTER 2

NATURE AND THE NATURE OF FINNISH REALITY

> The Finn who seeks solitude deep in the forest or out on the fells builds himself [a sauna] and uses it at night for his bedroom (Herva 1973:290).

The sauna is an integral part of the Finnish conception of the ideal life, of "real Finnish life". A people's world view is "the picture they have of the way things in sheer actuality are, their most comprehensive ideas of order" (Geertz 1973:89). The image of the solitary Finn in the forest symbolizes the Finnish world view, the most real of reality; the image includes the sauna, which makes this reality a Finnish reality.

THE FINNISH WORLD VIEW

In the Finnish reality, there is a fundamental opposition between society and self. The most highly valued personal quality is individual independence. So critical is this to one's social reputation that by demonstrating an independent nature, one can turn even misbehaviour or misfortune to one's credit. For example,

> Having an illegitimate child may have temporarily stigmatized an individual; however, taking responsibility for it and raising it well showed independence (Roberts 1982:201).

The autonomy and equality of the individual in relation to others are also highly prized for these are guarantees of one's independence. For example,

> ...the marriage relationship made it obvious that the individual, and not the couple, is the irreducible social unit. People are not expected to submerge their identity into their spouses' at marriage. To do so would weaken the individual's autonomy, a central part of notions of self. Furthermore, the competitiveness involved in the marriage relationship emphasized egalitarianism. To be willing to argue and tease (and open yourself up to counterattack) is by itself an admission that your opponent is

worthy and on approximately the same level as yourself (Roberts 1982:205).

Fundamental concepts of self have repercussions for all social interaction, influencing all of social life, such as when "conflicts over the issue of personal independence seem most important" (Roberts 1982:205). In work life, these values define the giving or taking of orders in negative terms, while in leisure, these values restrict social intercourse because "although people enjoy company, they need to see themselves as independent of others, preferring to be at home in their own company" (Roberts 1982:244). Yet this cultural emphasis on individual independence does not mitigate the need for social involvement and "the people ... express a deep feeling of commitment and loyalty to their community" (Roberts 1982:100). Thus results the central contradiction inherent in Finnish culture: social relations imply dependence; real independence demands solitude. "How can a community be formed out of a population of people whose notions of self emphasize personal autonomy and egalitarianism?" (Roberts 1982:29). Roberts describes how in Rasti (population 199), the village he studied in central Finland, the social pariahs of the community serve to focus attention on this conflict:

> Villagers are ... fascinated by the negatively evaluated people.... In their total disregard for what other people may think or how they will react and in their willingness to alienate others they are also acting out an extreme version of the central village value of personal autonomy and independence. The villagers' constant talk about these negatively evaluated people may act as a boundary maintaining device, constantly communicating what can happen if personal autonomy and independence are asserted to the exclusion of the consideration of the benefits of community (1982:229-230).

The contradiction between social interdependence and individual independence cannot be resolved; it can, however, be mediated by the third realm of the Finnish world view, nature, for nature may be a refuge from society. In the backwoods, a person may live the independent and self-reliant life Finnish culture values most -- although this, too, is a demanding life: Finns are also known for their *sisu* (Finnish stubbornness, perseverance against all odds) and hard work. In the forest, away from the competing, clamorous demands of society, the Finn can return to the life of

his ancestors, to the way of life that Finns were born to live -- he can rediscover "real" Finnish life.

The Forest Finn .

Nature is closely tied to the Finns' conception of themselves as a unique people, as is suggested by the way the Finns describe themselves as people of the northern forests,[1] as people only recently "come out from the trees".[2] "The Finnish identity can be found in the forests" (Paasilinna 1987:46). For Finns, the traditional challenges and the conquests have been not other peoples[3] but the forests, the land, the nature. They have a great respect for other forest peoples, such as the Sami, but only scorn for the ignorance of the urban tourists (usually conceptualized as Germans) who come to Finland to experience the wilderness as if it were an entertainment center. Today, because the forest industry is the backbone of the country's economy and few farms would be viable without the extra income from harvesting the farms' private forests, Finns feel that "right up to the present the forest has been the formative influence in their lives" (Juva

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[1]Most of the land surface of Finland, 65%, is covered with forests; only 8% is cultivated (Saariaho 1973:344).

[2]This expression, which roughly means "only recently left the forests and the forest way of life to become urbanized/civilized," was used on several occasions by native Finns as a way of trying to explain puzzling or unusual Finnish cultural habits to me.

> Finland is a northerly country. It is thinly inhabited and does not boast many historical signs of high culture. That has made people -- even a few good Finns -- believe that we have always been underdeveloped forest denizens, Nordic weirdos who have just climbed down out of the trees (Paasilinna 1987:44).

[3]Throughout the almost thousand years of colonial rule in Finland, wars were fought between the rulers, the Swedish king and the Russian Czar, the Finns being but pawns caught in the middle who could do little more than escape to the forest during the most dangerous periods. The Finnish people as a whole fought their first war against themselves -- the civil war after independence. Their only other experience as a nation at war was during World War II, against the Soviet Union.

1973:17).[1] A Finnish writer stated proudly, "If one wanted to summarize Finland and Fennicism in a simple phrase, it would have to be the Forest Finn" (Paasilinna 1987:44).

In the Finnish world view, the traditional way of life, which still defines the most esteemed values of the culture, is based on a model of self-sufficiency, of independent, small-holding farmers living in relative isolation from each other and from the world, where the man who cleared the forest owned the land. "A location on the northern frontiers of settlement in Europe suggests that isolation is a characteristic of Finland. Isolation is a theme which runs through Finland's story" (Mead 1968:26). Finns define themselves as a people who are their own masters and live according to a doctrine of equality and freedom, inextricably bound to the environment and the seasons.

> The first thousand years of unwritten history of the Finns in Finland determined their basic character, which has remained constant to this day. The small-holdings, scattered villages, the vast wilderness, and the natural freedom of the men of the forest, have molded a self-sufficient, independent and yet a stubborn people (Juva 1973:18).

Finns see their culture as a way of life which, for centuries, depended upon the *sisu* and independence of the Finns for survival. "The severity of life in the north and the ever-present forest have molded the Finnish character. In the backwoods a man must rely on himself, on his own strength and his own inventiveness" (Juva 1973:17). A traveller in Finland before urban transformation, himself of a culture where nature is less central to the world view, describes the Finnish attachment to their world and their nature with some astonishment, but also with some insight:

> It requires a people of a Finnish, or utterly nerveless, temperament, to endure life year after year, and, worse still, winter after winter, amid such surroundings. Yet in their undemonstrative way the country people gave evidence of enjoying life much like the rest of us (Franck 1930:106-7).

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[1]We must be wary of imposing meanings on history, for the cultural meanings of the forest or of wood in earlier times cannot be stated for certain. One author writes that "until the middle of the 19th century, wood was considered almost valueless in Finland" (Soininen *in* Roberts 1982:42), while other sources, such as the *Kalevala* which tells of the ancient Finnish forest god (*Tapiola*), suggest an enduring high valuation of the sauna.

Winter Finn, Summer Finn

The forces of nature are impressed most definitely on the Finnish mind by the changes of the seasons, for the seasonal changes are extreme at such extreme latitudes. The summer is short but brilliant, a time when non-stop sunshine transforms the frozen, sleeping north into a vibrant landscape full of life and growth. Finnish life is a reflection of the natural cycles: "a Finn in winter is not at all the same as a Finn in summer" (Nickels 1968:278). The Finnish way of life is, in fact, two distinct ways of living, for as the seasons change the Finnish personality changes, too, and with it his/her social behaviour. "Winter is for sleeping," a Finn once reproached me when I complained of tiredness during a warm and sunny June. When nature sleeps, so do the Finns; in winter, life is home-centered, social interaction limited. In the dark days when the sun never shines, the basic colours the Finns wear are black and dark colors such as browns, dark blues and so on (with red is an exception, being very popular as an accent colour in winter wear for women). All of the living and growing of nature is compressed into the light and warmth of summer. Likewise the Finns: from the first of May, Finns begin to wear white and light (e.g., pastel) colours, social life becomes more intense, and living is more and more out-of-doors and away from home. The more the sun shines, the less the Finns sleep. In modern, industrial society, these changes are more limited by the emphasis on clock time, although even industry adjusts to the seasons by starting and closing earlier than in the winter to allow their employees more time outside: "Many factories close for the whole of July or work at a reduced scale. Most town offices shut firmly at 4 p.m. or sometimes even 3 p.m. in summer" (Nickels 1968:275).[1] In pre-industrial Finland, there was greater independence from clock-time, greater opportunity to live with the natural rhythms of the seasons.

> The people pay little attention to the clock in summer or winter. Any work they have to do in the winter-time is most likely to be done during what, farther south, is the night, since the moon, the aurora borealis, the stars, the reflective snow make a half-light, except at what would be midday were there any day. Then

[1]One industry where I worked occasionally had winter hours of 8.30-16.30 and summer hours of 7.00 - 15.00. There may also be an economic rationale for summer closings.

> the Northern night is at its darkest. The radio -- and every one in the North has a radio -- tells every few hours the date as well as the correct time; otherwise few would know where one day leaves off and another begins. And as in winter many Finns sleep or at least spend most of their time in bed, in summer they often go several days without sleeping at all, and without even lying down. They are quite impervious to sleepiness or fatigue during the endless summer days; so that you can get workmen to come at ten o'clock at night and work all night at some odd job, from which they go back to their regular tasks during the day (Franck 1930:117).

Nature in Culture

The importance of nature and the close bonds with nature that the Finns feel is one of the most pervasive themes of Finnish culture, "one of the most notable, inescapable features of the Finnish life" (Nickels 1968:274). To be nearer to nature is to be nearer to what is "real".

> There are more ways of describing the sound of the wind through the trees in Finnish than in any other tongue. The meanings of many Finnish surnames and place names have some connection with nature, in the latter case usually indicating their topography. Helsinki is a notable exception, but Lahti, bay; Jyväskylä, grain village, Valkeakoski, white rapids; Joensuu, river's mouth, are a few of many examples. Even the names of the months owe nothing to Roman emperors or deities as elsewhere, but are firmly rooted in the earth: *toukokuu* (sowing month) is May; *heinäkuu* (hay month), July; *elokuu* (life or harvest month), August; and, ruefully evocative, *lokakuu* (mud month), October[1] (Nickels 1968:276).

Even in today's urban centers, the Finns have managed not to distance themselves completely from nature. "How can you reject the immutable facts of winter and summer, lake and rock, home fields and virgin forest?" (Juva 1973:18). The impossibility of living isolated from nature is evidenced in diverse areas of life. Finnish architecture and urban planning are internationally famous. The key to their success is that "buildings merge with surrounding nature, trees and rocks are left as natural playgrounds for the younger inhabitants" (Nickels 1968:276). Tapiola, just outside Helsinki, and Imatra, 300 km. to the northeast, are known as "garden cities," famous examples of urban areas which do not neglect nature. Imatra, for example, is also a major hydro-electric power center:

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[1]The authors neglected to mention *kesäkuu*, June, "summer month," and *marraskuu*, November, "death month."

> Nowhere about the place is there a suggestion of factory atmosphere, and but for the hum of the big power-plant one might take this for a summer retreat for the wealthy, with birds singing above the muffled roar of the rapids (Franck 1930:105).[1]

Finnish creativity with the nature theme goes even further:

> You have only to look at modern Finnish design in glass, wood and stone to recognize natural objects (leaves, roots, ice shapes) plus the designers' inherent feel for handling natural materials. You have only to listen to Finnish music to find it captured there, too (Nickels 1968:276).

The use of natural materials is a key to esthetic popularity in Finland; disdain for synthetics is not restricted to an elite, "cultured" class, nor to expensive items produced for such a group. Everyday artifacts, such as clothing, household utensils, home furnishings and interior decoration rely heavily on the natural beauty and textures of wood, linen, cotton and wool for success in the marketplace. "One thoughtful woman commented that though much might change 'Finns will never be so Americanized as to use plastic flowers; we'll always use fresh ones'" (Lander 1976:176).

Another way that Finns incorporate nature into their lives is in their rituals. For example, hospitality is recognized by offering fresh flowers to one's hostess. "The passion for growing things is something you notice early on any visit to Finland: flowers on restaurant tables at any time of year, evergreens clambering everywhere. One Easter custom is to grow a box of grass in the house" (Nickels 1968:277). The first of May, *Vappu*, has traditionally marked the change from the winter period to the summer period and is the day when the children first went out barefoot -- on a quick, symbolic run if snow still covered the ground (personal communication). The end of the summer period, originally the most celebrated festival of the agricultural year was All Saints' Day Eve at the end of October, the last day before "death month," November. Today's two most important rituals, Christmas and Midsummer have a number of themes in common. Long before they came to be associated with Christ and St. John, Christmas and Midsummer marked the winter and summer solstices, the winter without light and the

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[1]There is now a pulp and paper mill in Imatra which alters this idyllic picture considerably. Finns do not consider Imatra any more of a "garden city" than any other Finnish town, although it is more famous because the town plan was drawn by the famous architect, Alvar Aalto.

summer without night, and the changing seasons. These natural changes are marked and recognized with fire: at Christmas, candles and fires light the winter darkness, called *kaamos*, and anticipate the returning sun; at Midsummer, Finns rejoice in the midnight sun with large all-night bonfires by the lake or sea. To reaffirm symbolically man's place within nature, evergreen Christmas trees and branches and Midsummer birch trees and branches are brought indoors -- to homes, to churches, to every place where the event is celebrated (Hall 1967:67).

Retreat

The Finnish transition to modern life and times is aggravated by a fundamental and distressing contradiction: urban life is contrary to a Finn's self-image. The solution to this dilemma is escape. Every summer during their month-long holidays (the average holiday period) Finns retreat from the city, finding refuge in nature, at their summer cottage[1]. "The Finn continues to enjoy his wide horizons and his self-sufficiency as he has always done -- even if it means the economy of the country almost grinding to a halt for several weeks of the year!" (Nickels 1968:275). This summer escape is vital to all but the rare (and lucky) ones who live year-round in the forest.

Even the wealthiest and most waited-on Finns suffer from the

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[1]Most Finns either own or have access to a summer cottage. In 1970 in Finland, there were 1,781,771 households and 176,104 summer cottages. This would indicate that 11.6% of households own their own cottage; however, these statistics may be misleading and certainly a far greater percentage of the population have access to a summer cottage. For example, kinship ties gives several households access to a family cottage: Roberts writes that "[villagers'] cottages in the country offered their urban children and grandchildren a vacation place." This accounts for a great many households, especially considering that no-one usually goes to a summer cottage alone, but that 52.3% of all households are comprised of two or fewer persons. The socio-economic group with fewest cottages (less than 2% of all cottages in Finland) are labourers with only 3.9% of labourer households owning cottages, compared to 31.6% of managers, higher administrative or clerical employees and 7.5% of pensioners (Tilastokeskus [Central Statistical Office of Finland] 1975). However, many firms and labour organizations have summer cottages available for rent at very low rates, so large numbers of people who cannot afford their own cottage nevertheless are not deprived of their summer escape (Nickels 1968:275).

> nostalgia of the primitive[1], and men in high places assure you that their only reason for working eleven months of the year is to be able to spend the twelfth in their cottage in the country (Hall 1967:59).

The cultural ideal is to "retire into the depths of the country ... as far away as possible from other people" (Irwin 1973:138); neighbours (although not visitors) are definitely to be avoided if possible. Life is lived outdoors, life is rejuvenated.

> There is also a seasonal return to the isolation of the *korpi* [wilderness, backwoods] or to the primitiveness of the *torppa* [small, independent farm]. Most Finns live in towns or urban areas today, but they are not by tradition a nation of town-dwellers. There is a widespread craving for isolation: for escape from the concrete (rather than ivory) tower of the town to the clapboard (rather than log) cabin of the countryside. Many Finns are natural solitaries. There remains a protective isolation for those who want it (Mead 1968:26).

The concept of "urban" in Finnish culture, which does not exactly correspond to North American concepts, gives further evidence of the Finnish world view and helps to illustrate the Finnish need for retreat. In Finnish, *maaseutu*, which typically translates as "countryside," describes, in fact, relative isolation (leading Finns, when learning English, frequently to confuse the English term "countryside" with "wilderness") and *taajama*, which translates as "densely populated community," in the Finnish context can be any place which requires more than one road. *Kylä*, "village", is a very small settlement and any place which has a church is more than a simple village and is called a "church-village" (*kirkonkylä*). *Kaupunki*, translated as "city" in English, refers to anything from a large village to a world metropolis. But these Finnish terms can be better understood from another perspective which is more relevant to the Finnish world view: *maaseutu* means solitude, *kylä* means living among kin and close others, and a *kaupunki* means living where social relations are no longer

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[1]In the foreign literature, the Finnish conception of "nature" is often interpreted as "primitive" -- reflecting the authors' cultural perspectives and world view rather than the Finns'.

among kin and acquaintances but among strangers.[1] Roberts' case study of Rasti, a village of 199 inhabitants, illustrates this analysis. In the following anecdote, the headmaster is not attempting to represent an empirical fact about local kinship (for in such terms the statement would be incorrect), but rather to define the world view of the villagers for a newcomer:

> A village teacher recalled that when she first arrived in Rasti, in the 1950s, the head teacher advised her not to get into a quarrel with anyone since everybody in the village was related to one another (1982:112).

The church village of this commune has grown to between 2000 and 3000 inhabitants, becoming an urban center where "there is little or no social meaning to the larger residential neighborhoods" (1982:98), where people live among strangers.

> Church villagers who come originally from the other villages of the commune do not have close relationships with their new neighborhood; they have, however, often maintained very strong ties to their family and friends in their home village. Some church villagers even participate actively in the social life of their home village. When rural villagers pay social visits in the church village, they are almost exclusively to relatives or former villagers (1982:99).

The need to escape society is as much a part of Finnish life as the need to live with strangers for one's livelihood; in villages like Rasti, when families move to the urban areas their houses in the village are often "relegated to use as summer homes" (1982:94).

> It is amusing to see how the people of Finnish cities, even of bucolic towns of twenty thousand, where what we call heat is unknown, where big parks and calm, clean, rustic atmosphere and surroundings give the place as peaceful and quiet an air as the average man could endure, think that they "simply must go to the country" every summer (Franck 1930:111).

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[1]Analysis of the questionnaires reveals little systematic variation in responses by location of residence, except that city dwellers tended to rank "get well when feeling sick" higher than either town or village residents. (See Appendix B.)

For the Finn, the summer cottage represents more than just a holiday, it is "real life" -- real Finnish life.[1]

The Myth of the Forest Finns

Illustration of the Finnish world view can be found in Aleksis Kivi's classic novel (1870) of "real" Finnish life, *The Seven Brothers*. Although any reader may appreciate Kivi's evocative descriptions of Finnish nature and delight in the adventures of the wild youngsters, for Finns this story has become the myth defining the Finnish world view. It is "the most widely circulated book in Finland next to the Bible," in an apt comparison (Matson 1973:5). The translator of the English edition writes, "For the non-Finnish reader [*The Seven Brothers*] can be ... a key to the Finnish national character and the country by which that character was molded" (Matson 1973:5).

> It might be difficult to recognize in the Finnish farmer of to-day the children of nature Kivi drew. Yet ... national character does not easily change, and Kivi's "brothers" are still typical of the nation. The traits of character that determined the course of their lives -- stubbornness, hardy individualism, endurance, independence, love of liberty -- are those which have determined the course of Finland's history in our times.... If it is the spirit of the nation a stranger to Finland wishes to know, there is still no better introduction than Kivi's novel (Matson 1973:5).

It is said that "Kivi wrote his novel in the 1860's, drawing even then on his memories of earlier times" (Matson 1973:5). In fact, Kivi drew his inspiration not so much from a historical time as from mythic time, and therein lies his special genius. He is today considered a "heroic soul, if ever there was one" for his work was not recognized in his own time, "his death hastened on by a cruel criticism of 'The Seven Brothers' accusing him of coarseness and of dishonouring the calling of an author" (Matson 1973:6),

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[1]Paasilinna (a Finnish author of fiction) cites many other examples of how the Finns have found refuge in the forests, including as a sanctuary for civilians from enemies during war, for deserters from war ("nicknamed the Pine Cone Guard"), and as a strategy for fighting the war because "Finnish forces have always preferred to operate in forests." And finally,

> if a Finn decides to commit suicide, he goes to the forest and hangs himself from the branch of a tree. Only the pines, with the wind soughing sadly through them, witness this final act. The forest takes its own as we say in Finland (1987:46-47).

a legend which further enhances the mythic quality of the novel. This novel, probably the original published version of the "solitary Finn in the forest with his sauna" image as personification of the Finnish character, consists of a series of adventures loosely structured around the theme of the brothers' escape from civilization to an independent life in the virgin forests, free of the constraints of social life, and their eventual return to their village. The seven brothers represent the Finnish people, "each a facet of a larger personality, that of a race" (Matson 1973:9). The forest is their refuge and the wives, the farms, the village and the church are society; in the brothers' adventures is the model of what it is to be a Finn.

Finns come by their stubborn, forest-loving nature naturally: "from their father they had inherited the ... powerful eagerness to hunt game in the forests" (Kivi 1973:14). But, the Finn's tie to society is equally a part of their heritage, if at times more irksome: "their mother tried, indeed, with tongue and rod to turn them into the path of work and diligence" (p.14). If from childhood Finns have "fled to the forest for shelter, heedless of their mother's cries" (p.15), to escape the demands of social living, it is not without wondering "what will poor mother be thinking?" (p.17). In this dual nature is the seed of ambivalence and contradiction, as the following passage illustrates:

> AAPO: What fools we were! Let robbers and gypsies wallow like this with only the sky for roof.
> TIMO: God's sky, anyhow.
> AAPO: Living here with wolves and bears.
> TUOMAS: And with God.
> JUHANI: Right, Tuomas! With God and his angels. Ah, if we only had the eyes of a soul in Heaven, we'd see as plainly as anything a whole host of sheltering angels with wings in a ring around us, and God himself, like a grey old gaffer, sitting right in our midst as a loving father.
> SIMEONI: Ay, but what will poor mother be thinking?
> TUOMAS: She'll be wanting to hammer us tender the minute she can lay her hands on us.
> JUHANI: Ay, boy, that would be a beating!
> TUOMAS: A beating. A good beating.
> JUHANI: A fire-spitting beating. We know that.
> AAPO: We've got to take it some time.
> SIMEONI: That's true. So best to go and get the beating over and end this bullock's holiday.
> JUHANI: A bullock doesn't exactly go of its own free will, brother, to be slaughtered.

AAPO: Don't talk rubbish, boy. Winter's coming, and we weren't born with a pelt on our backs.
SIMEONI: So there's nothing for it but homeward march for our hiding, and a well-earned one.
JUHANI: Brothers, brothers, let our backs be spared a little while yet. How do we know what way out God may find for us in the next two or three days. Ay, let's still romp here, our days there around our tree-stump fireplace, our nights in our spruce hut, grunting side by side in a row like suckling pigs in a stye.-- What do you say, Lauri boy, in your claypit? What? Shall we go meekly and take our hiding?
LAURI: Let's stay here yet (p.17).

The brothers' adventures begin with a series of disappointing encounters with society: they are thrashed in a fight with the brothers of a neighbouring farm, they are turned down in a marriage proposal, and they suffer the church's righteous attempts to teach them to read. At last the eldest cries, "Out of this, boys; my nature can stand no more" (p.55). Their farm proves no refuge: "Isn't our home now without the poor man's only treat, the roaring steam of the sauna? There the ruins of our sauna smoke and smolder" (p.94). Only the forest is freedom for boys of a Finnish nature.

JUHANI: On one corner of the earth a day of peace still gleams for us. Ilvesjärvi Lake yonder, below Impivaara, is the harbour to which we can sail away from the storm. Now my mind is made up. [...] There we'll move and build a new world. [...] The forest shields its pups. There we are indeed on our own ground; deep as bleary-eyed moles we'll dig ourselves in, right to the bowels of the earth. And if they feel like meddling with us lads there, they'd be made to see what it feels like to disturb seven bears in their lair. Now to the tanner's to draw up a lease in writing. For ten years let the farm pass into other hands.
SIMEONI: I, too, long for an abode of peace. Brothers, let us create ourselves a new home and a new heart in the depths of the forest (pp.95-96).

In the solitude of the virgin forest, the brothers build themselves "a new cabin [which] was to serve the brothers both as dwelling-place and sauna" (p.121). The sauna is significant, for it tells the Finnish reader about the social status of the brothers. The sauna is not a separate dwelling, as in real farms -- which are a part of society -- like the one the brothers eventually built out of the forest: "Gradually all the buildings needed on a farm grew up in Impivaara yard. Thus a fine sauna was built where yard and field met, and after that the platform vanished from the cabin...." (p.272). Nor is the sauna absent, for the brothers are neither robbers

(social outcasts) nor gypsies (non-Finns). The sauna is their home: as the sauna's place is at the margin of the farm, so the brothers are at the margin of society; as the sauna is liminal (see chapter 3), so the brothers are living in liminal -- mythic -- time.

In the forest, living in their sauna, the brothers learn to depend on their Finnish character, their stubbornness, their self-reliance, their *sisu*, to survive. Through their adventures in mythic time, they mature to a better understanding of themselves, of their strengths and weaknesses, of their needs: "it is not good for man to be alone" (p.257). They realize, finally, that the rewards of the forest are limited -- "They scoured the forest even now on their skis, but little was the gain from their labour" (p.266) -- and turned again toward society: "To work, brothers! To work with all our strength; for such a life would be worth the labour, and we have seen that mankind is not such a rogue as we have thought" (p.258). With the maturity they found in the forest, they are able to turn the strengths of their Finnish ways to learning to survive in society. And now, "in fatherly, gentle fashion they were received by the Vicar" (p.271), "wherever I let my eye rest, the kind smile of a friend looks back" (p.297) and "there is no longer any obstacle to a [marriage] union" (p.300).

Thus, from "the wilds of Impivaara, now transformed into a prosperous farm" (p.308), the Finn, child of two callings, finds his place in the world by accepting his dual nature:

> Ten golden years have passed since with hate and fury in our hearts we fled into the darkness of the forests. We did that. But I believe if we had gone on idling in the south yonder, in the bitter air of persecution and wrath, it is as sons of sorrow we should now be walking! Lucky for us therefore that we left the village and our neighbours; for now a great change has come over us. Here we stand, casting the mild eye of peace over Toukola village yonder, and there behind us we have a noble support to our backs (pp. 279-280).

In nature the Finn may find the strength to live in society.

NATURE AND THE SAUNA

Nature is a key symbol in Finnish culture and these two key symbols, nature and the sauna, are inextricably linked: "Finns' love of nature and their quiet respect for the individual are echoed by sauna" (Gaynor

1986:136). The essential elements of the sauna -- wood, rock and water[1] -- are also the essential elements of the Finn's environment, as expressed in the folk saying, "Where there is rock, water and birch trees, there will be Finns" (Sutyla 1977:90). The construction, location, materials and traditions of the sauna building create links with the symbol "nature." Going to the sauna is going back to "real" life, to nature; like summer, like nature, the sauna is revitalizing.

The traditional sauna is built entirely of natural materials: the structure and implements are all wooden and the stove is fashioned of rock. The ideal site for the sauna is by a lake, sea or river which provides a natural source of water for washing and/or swimming. "With sauna -- both the place and the process -- the rule of thumb is: the more primitive[2], the more prized" (Gaynor 1986:141). A Finnish sauna should ideally be "an organic part of the life and environment" (Laitinen 1976:93). Saunas which do not conform to these symbolic criteria, for example by using synthetic materials, are considered to be less authentic, less "real," or corruptions of the "real" Finnish sauna. "In Finland nowadays there are very few 'real saunas' (smoke saunas). The electrically heated sauna is not a sauna in the 'real' meaning of the sauna" (r201). The first Finnish attempts at urbanization and the resulting transformation of traditional life-ways led to a crisis as the new saunas deviated more and more from the cultural definition of the "real" sauna.

> The earlier log building was abandoned for board structures. Since sawdust was used as filling, the sauna soon rotted. The floor was concrete, which dried slowly after the bath and smelt mouldy. In the corner stood a boiler that was also often used for boiling laundry, emitting alkaline fumes that left the ceiling and walls with a smell foreign to the sauna. Beside the boiler stood a tall sauna stove which sent its little steam straight up to the

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[1]Water is as basic to the environment as the forest. Finland has about 55,000 large to medium sized lakes (diameter of over 200 metres/656 ft), the total number of small lakes and ponds is untold. The land area of Finland includes 27% lakes (and unspecified "other areas") -- more than three times the area devoted to cultivation (see footnote 1, page 29). The country also has a coastline of 1,100 km/684 miles, not including the shorelines of the thousands of large and small islands in the archipelagos of the Gulfs of Finland and Bothnia (Saariaho 1973:344).

[2]See footnote 1, page 35.

> ceiling. Thus, by the 1920s the Finnish sauna had reached its qualitative nadir (Helamaa 1976:20).

With increasing urbanization, the construction and symbolic qualities of the Finnish sauna have been subject to increasing interest and debate: how can the "real" sauna, "real" Finnishness, be preserved now that the Finns have "come out of the trees"?

The "Real" Sauna

For many people, modern threats to the real Finnish sauna are best rebuffed by refusing to adapt the sauna to modern needs: "[the sauna] could best be compared with the sacred cow of India; it should not be touched" (Teir 1976a:13). The issue of the "real" sauna is primarily (although never exclusively) an issue of technology, for many people feel that "applications of modern technology rarely improve the enjoyment of the sauna" (Patoharju 1976:123). The meaning of the sauna as symbol is vested primarily and sometimes exclusively in the old smoke saunas or wood burning traditional saunas. At the heart of this argument is the value of the sauna as a metaphor for nature and all the powerful meanings inherent in this association: the "real" sauna is one which evokes the forest in which the urban Finn can be a "real" Finn.

> "Purists, lovers of the traditional wood fire sauna, rebel against these [technological] refinements; they believe that without the smell of smoke there is no real sauna atmosphere" (Konya and Burger 1973:14).

Thus, the debate becomes one of modern economics and convenience versus traditional quality; "the further the stove is commercialised, the less there is left of the real Finnish sauna" (Patoharju 1976:123).

> According to many purists, however, there has been too much commercialization and too many variations on the theme. Disgusted Finns, and others who knew better, grew weary of saying, "No, sorry, that sauna has too few rocks," or, "This is not a sauna, it has *no* rocks" (Aaland 1978:102).

Even the summer cottage saunas may become drawn into the debate "with the invasion of lake shores by a semi-urban and wild sprouting of saunas" (Laitinen 1976:91).

The problem, though, is that the debate cannot be won: while every Finn would undoubtedly agree that smoke saunas and traditional saunas are qualitatively superior to the small, modern, electric saunas that are found

in apartments and houses, the fact is that for most urbanites the smoke sauna is an impossible dream. Faced with this dilemma, a new metaphor for supporting the traditionalist definition the "real" sauna has come into use, the metaphor of science. The Finnish scientific community is giving support to the traditionalist ideology of the sauna through research which "proves" the value of folk wisdom, such as the superiority of the "real" *savusauna* over electric "sweat closets" and which has been used for developing modern saunas which meet certain scientific standards of quality. During World War II, a Finn named Viherjuuri organized a group of Finnish journalists, doctors and architects to take up the cause of modernizing and protecting the sauna, of keeping it "real."

> The Finnish Sauna Society (*Sauna Seura*) watches over and maintains the age-old sauna tradition by collecting literature and information, conducting scientific research, and providing an extensive information and publications service (Konya and Burger 1973:149).

Viherjuuri also published, in 1940, the first comprehensive work on saunas, called *Saunakirja*, "The Sauna Book" (Aaland 1978:86-87). The efforts of the Sauna Society are "aimed at preserving the originality of the Finnish Sauna" (Väänänen 1976:11).

> The Sauna Society's impartial expert board, attached to the Export Committee, has the right to award the FS sign to thoroughly tested saunas, stoves and accessories. According to the Society this sign guarantees that the sauna product:
> -- Has been designed by a Finn;
> -- has been manufactured in Finland;
> -- is of a high practical and technical standard;
> -- is pleasing in appearance and *suitable in a Finnish sauna setting* (Konya and Burger 1973:149; emphasis added).

The Sauna Society is an institutional structure which gives new form and substance to the beliefs and ideology of the sauna. The society has a growing membership and it's activities have expanded to include conferences and publications about the sauna. Recently (1984), it also founded the offspring organization, *Suomalaisen Saunan Tutkimussaatio* (The Finnish Sauna Research Foundation) to take over the research aspects (Pakkanen and Valtakari 1985:4,5; Laaksonen 1986:10). The Sauna Society's standards are generally accepted in Finland today. The "real" sauna design continues to be defined in symbolic terms:

> An original Finnish sauna has structures which are based on the natural use of wood and the wooden designs are traditional.... A sauna made of a natural, traditional material, wood, fits into its surroundings and provides the appropriate sauna feeling. The sauna is basically an introverted affair, for meditation and quiet socializing. Bold forms, over-sized windows and artificiality are out of place. A true Finnish sauna should look as if it had sprung out of its surroundings (Visanti 1976:90).

For today's urban Finns with small, electric saunas which can be built right into the house or apartment, certification of the "Finnishness" of their sauna is not the only strategy for maintaining the sauna as a metaphor for nature. Urban Finns become "real" Finns at the summer cottage. "This is a part of Finnish culture: summer cottage, lake, sauna and summer. What else could you hope for? That's what most Finns think" (r31). A Finnish summer cottage need not be more elaborate than one room and a sauna. If even this is beyond one's means, then one can manage without a separate living space, but not without the sauna.[1] "The summer cottage without a sauna would be just a building, a superfluous place" (r142). During the summer, the sauna is used much more frequently than in the winter, at the summer cottage usually every day (see table 2, page 7). The primary celebration of summer, *Juhannus* or Midsummer, most often incorporates both the sauna and the cottage into the celebrations.[2]

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[1]Of all summer cottages in Finland (including those owned by foreigners and non-Finnish speakers), only 10.6% do not have private saunas (Tilastokeskus [Central Statistical Office of Finland] 1982b).

[2]A 1971 survey of the residents (sample = 2272) of Helsinki, the most highly urbanized and densely populated city of Finland, reports that a total of 56% of the respondents went to the sauna as part of their Midsummer celebrations and 36% of the people spent their Midsummer at a summer cottage. Other Midsummer activities include staying home (24%), visiting in the city or countryside (23%), camping (10%) and participating in local public celebrations (17%). The frequency of the different types of celebrations varies predictably with the different age groups. Summer cottage celebrations are most popular with families (the middle-aged and their children), the group most likely to have their own cottages. The young people spent the holiday with other young people, at dances, restaurants, festivals or camping, at public places accessible to such groups (and away from parents). The elderly, often the least mobile group, spent Midsummer at home more frequently than any other age group. A much greater proportion of the population (62%), mostly from those who actually spent the holiday at home or visiting, stated that they preferred to spend Midsummer at a summer cottage (Nurmi 1971).

> The sauna is always part of the celebration of midsummer, which has been conveniently fixed on a Saturday so that everyone can spend it in the country. Now birch takes the place of the Christmas fir, and great branches are cut to decorate houses, cars and even railway engines. After the sauna, there is outdoor dancing, and bonfires are lit on lake and sea shores (Hall 1967:67).

"Sauna and summer holidays are connected with each other" (r17). But when the summer holidays are over, the Finn can still take a moment to escape, to be a "real Finn," in the sauna. For the Finns, summer is a refuge from the long, cold, dark and difficult winters; during winter, the only escape is the sauna.[1]

> The back of winter has just been broken[2].... It took rather a long time to heat the sauna, it's been really cold for many months. But now the warmth is delightful.... Even the switch was taken from the freezer, and now it feels just like summer (r111).

The special fragrance of the sauna, which derives from the wood, the wood smoke, and the switches, is also a strong, evocative link with nature.

> "That's the way [i.e., with wood] the saunas are heated on the farms. The old way is really best. The scent of freshly burned birch lingers in the sauna" (*in* Aaland 1978:66).

The sauna switches, called *vasta* or *vihta* in Finnish, are made of fresh, young, birch branches which never completely lose their scent, even when stored (dried or frozen) for use during winter. The switches are often soaked in water and then placed briefly on the hot stones to warm, which fills the air with their scent as the steam rises, as if one were in the midst of a birch forest in summer. The scents of the sauna are mentioned again and again as one of the pleasures of the experience and, for a Finn, those aromas are also a direct link with summer, with nature at its best.

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[1]This is not to suggest that Finns don't enjoy winter, most love it. Finns learn from childhood to be a part of nature even in winter, for example by learning to ski as soon as they can walk rather than trying to isolate themselves indoors. In fact, many Finns live in a winter climate by choice: immigrants to North American settled primarily in the snowy forests of the Great Lakes region. (In the U.S., for example, by 1920, the period after the heaviest migration, 44% of foreign born Finns lived in upper Michigan and Minnesota [Mather and Kaups 1963, fig.4 and pp.498-499].) Sometimes, however, even Finns long for some reprieve.

[2]This is a Finnish expression meaning that it is past the winter solstice and the days are getting longer.

Bringing birch boughs into the sauna is also meaningfully linked to the larger celebrations of the seasons when birch and spruce trees or boughs are brought indoors. An even more important link with the holiday celebrations of nature is the tradition of going to the sauna on the eve of the occasion, which marks the end of work and the beginning of the holiday, a tradition which prompted Kivi to write "the eve is the height of a feast-day" (1973:81).[1]

LINKS

The sauna and nature are both key symbols of the culture; in part, they are key because they are linked. Through the logs it is built from, the *wood* it is heated with, the *vasta* that is used in bathing, and the seasons and traditions that it helps to celebrate are synecdocal links to nature. The sauna also joins nature metanymically, through the lakes and the forests it is built beside. The sauna expresses nature and nature becomes a part of the sauna. In Finnish myth and Finnish culture, nature and the sauna are inseparable. "Real" Finnish life is rooted in an image of independence within nature, an image which makes life more satisfying for many Finns; for example, the words of one nostalgic Finnish emigrant tell of his longing for this national dream of the good life:

> I will save enough money and as soon as I am sixty-five years old, I will go to Finland. I shall buy a small, red cottage near a blue lake and then marry a middle-aged widow with some means, build a sauna, raise chickens and vegetables and heat my sauna on Saturdays and live happily ever after (Kinanen *in* Sutyla 1977:91).

The sauna is an important link to this ideal Finnish reality in the less-than-ideal, ordinary world all Finns actually live in, especially for those urban dwellers whose lives are, by definition of the Finnish world view, farther from the most real because they are farther from nature. Metaphorically, the sauna is nature; going to the sauna is going back to nature; going back to nature is a return to "real life," a refuge from society, a revitalization in mythic time. A character in a Finnish novel asks, "Is there a sauna system in Heaven?" and receives the reply "No,

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[1]See chapter 3 for further discussion of the ritual sauna on the eve of a holiday.

Heaven could manage without it" (Lassila *in* Valtakari 1978b:5). Heaven can manage without a sauna; by implication, earthly Finns cannot: "This [being in the sauna] is real life and this is repeated once a week" (r168).

CHAPTER 3

SAUNA AS RITUAL

> One is liberated from one's corporeality...and from the profane fetters of the spirit, one sheds one's worries and one's fatigue, one's vexations and one's apathy. One's muscles become supple, one's mind refreshed. As an institution simply for cleansing, the sauna wouldn't be of the same culture (Valtakari 1978b:5).

To conceptualize the sauna as simply a Finnish style of bathing is to misunderstand the institution. The sauna is a ritual, in which a person may participate in various social transformations, cleansing being just one aspect of its total meaning. Victor Turner's discussion of the ritual process provides a useful model for the analysis of the sauna as ritual.

THE LIMEN

A critical symbolic quality of the sauna is liminality. Van Gennep (1960) used the metaphor of a house with separate rooms to describe ritual transition from one social state to another; liminality refers to the threshold, the interstitial period between two states. Thus, the essential nature of liminality is separation: the ritual participant is symbolically separated from the ordinary. Turner (1970) expanded on this theme, identifying a number of characteristics which mark the liminal period as separate from the normal social sphere, such as nudity, behavioural changes, reflection, sacredness and taboos, cleansing, egalitarianism, and a sense of rebirth; Turner's analytic descriptions of liminality will be compared with

how the Finns themselves conceptualize the liminality of the sauna.[1] Turner (1970) emphasized that this separation is a critical feature which distinguishes transformative symbols, rituals, from confirmatory symbols, ceremonies. While the sauna as symbol may perform either of these functions, this chapter focuses on the power of the sauna to transform individuals from one social state to another.

Worlds Apart

Spatially, temporally and socially, the sauna is set apart. Traditionally, the sauna building has always been built at the edge of the farm compound, like a threshold between the home and the world of fields and forest. The sauna bath is also the threshold between work and leisure, the week and the weekend, the profane and the holy. This threshold period, Turner writes, "has few or none of the attributes of the past or coming state" (1970:94). The Finns clearly and explicitly express this sense of separation of the sauna from the ordinary. "The sauna is a different kind of environment, another world" (r144). "[The sauna] takes your mind out of the ordinary and everyday things" (r89). The sauna is a separate space with a separate time, where hurrying is not allowed, where you can take time out from rushing around, where you don't feel time. "Time stands still in the sauna" (Herva 1973:291). The sense of separation is so complete that one is able to forget the ordinary world -- and its problems -- for a little while: "[Going to the sauna] is sometimes like travelling out of your troubles" (r21).[2]

The symbolic separation of the sauna is conceptualized at once as something practical, as something emotional and as something spiritual, as a

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[1]Some of the characteristics of liminality identified by Turner cannot apply to sauna bathing, for example, complete obedience to the initiator or elder (1970:99) and the initiands as polluting to the uninitiated (1970:97): not being an initiation ritual, the type of ritual used by Turner to illustrate liminality, Finnish sauna ritual has neither initiators nor uninitiated. Some other of Turner's observations, regarding equality and comraderie, are discussed in chapter four.

[2]Questionnaire respondents considered "getting away from their troubles" to be a significant reason for going to the sauna: only 18% felt this to be an irrelevant reason, while 27% ranked it as very important and 52% as less important. (See Appendix B.)

separation which encompasses all levels of experience. On the practical level, the sauna is something for which one must prepare and then physically enter thus creating a separation with the ordinary life left outside. "[The sauna is like travelling because] you *go* to the sauna" (r59).[1] "[The sauna is like travelling because] you must prepare for it" (r22). The separation is also something emotional, since one experiences different feelings in the sauna such as relaxation, invigoration and the joy of life which are often overshadowed by the pressures of the ordinary world outside. "[In the sauna] you must not hurry, just enjoy that [sauna] feeling and your life" (r13).

Turner also describes liminality as a stage of reflection:

> Neophytes are withdrawn from their structural positions and consequently from the values, norms, sentiments, and techniques associated with those positions. They are also divested of their previous habits of thought, feeling, and action. During the liminal period, neophytes are alternately forced and encouraged to think about their society, their cosmos, and the powers that generate and sustain them (1970:105).

The Finnish experience in the sauna supports Turner's assertions. A recurring theme expressed by Finns is that the sauna is a place where people can think, an opportunity for meditation. Removed from the mundane concerns and problems of ordinary life, it becomes possible to contemplate extraordinary ideas. As one respondent put it, "Seldom do you stop to think about how the world is going in a shower" (r99). The sauna is a place to think about things, where the Finn learns to understand is him/herself and his/her relationship to the rest of the world. "In the sauna one can be in touch with one's feelings, with one's own self" (r.123).

The sauna is also something spiritual, a holy and peaceful place. Turner suggests that the concept of "unstructured" may become identified with "unbounded," that is, with what is "infinite" -- a deity. This is similar to the Finnish concept of the sauna as a holy place, as nearer to God. As a Finnish respondent commented, "[Without the sauna] an earthly holy room, a secular rest for the soul, would be missing" (r145). One

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[1]Note also Konya and Burger's explanation of the meaning of the Finnish word *sauna*: "The word does not refer to the activity itself, but to the building in which it takes place. One does not take a sauna -- one goes to the sauna" (1973:9).

author wrote that in the *löyly* "it is as if a person passes into a higher, happier world" (Kaarela 1944:10). Finns often point to the *Kalevala* as proof that the sacredness of the sauna is an ancient tradition.

> "The use of the bathhouse was a cult among the ancient Finns," [the Finn] said.... "It was a sacred place where the bathers sat quietly and refrained from singing and spoke only in subdued tones. In the deep country the people still use the *sauna* as a sort of rite." (Strode 1941:91)

While it may not be possible to say definitively that the ancient sauna bath was indeed a form of pagan worship, it is clear that the sauna has been associated with Christian beliefs for centuries.

> "These stubborn people," wrote an astonished Swedish economist in 1776, "even connect the sauna with their theology and think the sauna building is some kind of shrine" (Aaland 1978:1975).

Furthermore, Finns have long incorporated the sauna into their religious expressions in folklore and art. For example, "the people in the murals of that Tampere church are naked: they are ascending into heaven from a *sauna*!" (Rosvall 1940:245). The irony of associating the hot and steamy sauna with heaven rather than hell is also well established in sauna-lore: "Christian theology explained that [the sauna must stand for an hour or two after heating[1] because] the devils should have a chance to gloat in the heat and then clear out. The Finn, though, can probably stand more heat than the devil" (Rosvall 1940:246). This is the theme of a Finnish folk-tale in which a farmer with a passion for sauna bathing accepts an offer from the devil to visit the heat of hell. He enjoyed the wonderful heat so much that the devil threw him out -- "the Devil's Hell was Heaven for the farmer" (Aaland 1978:76-77). Another story adapts a traditional Christian parable to the Finnish sauna metaphor:

> The Lord walked on the isthmus on a sere August day, and He was tired. He met an old man in the valley, and asked him the way to the nearest house. His legs could carry Him no farther. "Then let the leg break."
>
> He came into a house. Could He find a bed for the night? "On your way, tramp!" replied the old woman.
>
> He asked the farm girl for a grain to eat. "Steal it from the hens!" she retorted.

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[1]The traditional smoke saunas produce a poisonous gas: two hours after heating, the sauna is still very hot but the air is then clear (personal communication).

> The Lord heard the beating of bath whisks and knocked on the *sauna* door. "You will let me bathe?"
>
> A contented voice answered Him: "Whoever you are, come in!"
>
> The Lord threw water on the stones and blessed the steam, and the people wondered that it smelled of a thousand roses and hissed from the stones like the music of church bells. And the blind saw, the deaf heard, the crippled and sick were well.
>
> "What is this for a church -- black sooty stones? An altar -- this bench?" they asked.
>
> The Lord folded his hands across His breast, the walls moved away, the roof arched up: the sky was a tent, the lamps of the Lord blazed in the sky.... (Leino *in* Rosvall 1940:247).

Although the vast majority of Finns are officially members of a parish, nowadays only about four percent attend church on Sundays (Louhivuori 1973:177). In an increasingly secular modern world, religious imagery is less meaningful for many Finns, even if the feelings for the sauna remain.[1] "In my opinion, the sauna has nothing to do with religion. It makes one feel better also spiritually, but it is not religious (r24)." "In no respect [is the sauna like a church], since almost exclusively positive images are associated with it" (r186). For the religious, the sauna remains a necessary purification before Sunday church; but for the non-religious, the profane and the sacred have transmuted into public and private. In an age when "making a living" meant everyday life, "the day of rest" meant a "holy day." But life is no longer synonymous with work; work is only public life. Private life is leisure, the time for self and family -- the day of rest has become a holiday, a vacation. Finnish respondents stressed that going to the sauna meant "to sweat away the dust of their work" (r14). Time has a different meaning in a secular world view, but the dichotomy remains: "The sauna is opposite [to the workplace]. It makes one feel at home" (r94). The work-a-day world of society and social roles, dependence and social hierarchy, of city living and taking orders -- none of which is "really Finnish" -- is profane, public life. The world of home and summer cottage, of independence and self-reliance, of solitude in the forests, of relaxation with close and loyal friends and family, is the sacred world of

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[1]The changing conception of religion in everyday life may be one reason for the unusual rankings by questionnaire respondents to "feel better spiritually" as a reason for going to the sauna: 33% very important, 33% less important, 31% not relevant. (See Appendix B.)

private life. "After a hard week you need an event that breaks the week clearly. Getting to the sauna is such an event" (r42).[1]

Behaviour

In the sauna, a separate set of behavioural norms and taboos help to create and maintain the sense that the sauna is different, a special place. Turner described the liminal period as the "betwixt and between" stage of transformation, when neither the ordinary nor the new conceptualizations of the individual as a social being are applicable. "We are not dealing with structural contradictions when we discuss liminality, but with the essentially unstructured" (1970a:98), a period when the norms of the social structure are not relevant, when ordinary behaviour is no longer appropriate. This distinction between ordinary behaviour and behaviour within the liminal period may be expressed either as the absence of rules or as the presence of special rules; the latter is the true for the Finnish sauna. A well-known old Finnish proverb says, "In the sauna one must conduct oneself as one would in church."

One of the basic behavioural restrictions of the sauna is against boisterous behaviour. Essential to the sauna is a peaceful atmosphere. Quiet conversation is welcomed, but singing, shouting, raised voices or loud noise would destroy it. Finns are typically quiet people who do not shout at their children or each other, seldom speaking above the minimal sound level necessary for hearing, but this is especially important in the sauna where peace and relaxation essential to the sauna concept.

> In the steam room we have the hissing of the water hitting the hot stones, the birch whisk slapping against the naked skin, and then, possibly, the stillness of an evening, with the water lapping on the lake shore. However, the auditory nerves should not be strained excessively during the sauna. Tiled washrooms with their echoes are sufficiently off-putting in themselves. Music and loud

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[1]Roberts discusses how another important Finnish ritual, the coffee ceremony, is used to "make the boundaries between the world of festivity and the world of work as clear as possible. [These ceremonies] emphasize the danger of either of those worlds taking over a dominant role in the individual's life. They communicate the need for those worlds to remain in the dynamic balance that is only possible between clear opposites" (1982:263).

> conviviality [*sic*] can be understood after but never during the sauna (Badermann 1976:267).

Likewise, bathers are expected to sit still; wild and uproarious behaviour is not acceptable. Excessive physical movement is denounced as unpeaceful as well as unhealthy.

> Since most Americans are unfamiliar with the sauna, Sonja and her attendants spend much of their time carefully educating their customers to the Finnish way of bathing. "We explain the history of the sauna. But, more important, we tell people that sauna time is a time to be still and quiet" (Aaland 1978:104).

For young children, this is the first rule of the sauna; "in the bath you can play more [than in the sauna]" (r106, age 6 years).[1]

Even violent emotions which would disturb the peace are forbidden in the sauna. "Hatred and anger do not belong in the sauna: if you go angrily to the sauna, your anger will be soothed sitting on the benches" (r145). Normally people will suspend arguments or quarrels while in the sauna, or simply avoid going to the sauna with anyone with whom there is a serious disagreement because "most of all, the sauna is a place for enjoyment and you can't enjoy the sauna if you are quarrelling" (personal communication). In fact, Finnish soldiers in the UN peacekeeping forces on Cyprus decided that the world seems to be in great need of more sauna style behaviour: "The Finns' ambition was to build a single ... sauna for both the Turks and Greeks and be free to go home" (Aaland 1978:93).

Nudity in the sauna is a very important part of the behaviour of the ritual. In fact, Finns find the North American custom of wearing towels or bathing suits into the sauna disgusting. The practical purpose to taking off one's clothes is to minimize the physical discomfort of sweating in the steam. There is also an additive aspect to removing one's clothes, that of contributing the symbolic meanings of nakedness to the bath. Turner writes that nakedness is commonly used to represent the liminality of the ritual

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[1]Analysis of the questionnaire results suggests an inverse correlation between age and the strength of these taboos. For example, "party and drink and have fun in the sauna" was considered to be acceptable by sizable proportions of the two groups of respondents under 30 years old, but clearly unacceptable by those over 30 years old. Making love in the sauna was even more strongly felt to be unacceptable by the older group, although a significant minority of the 21 to 29 year old respondents felt this to be an acceptable reason for going to the sauna. (See Appendix B.)

participants, who, "in the words of King Lear ... represent 'naked unaccomodated man' " (1970:98-99). Clothing belongs to the ordinary world. It is a part of social hierarchies and possessions and of concepts such as time and work, none of which belong in the sauna. In the sauna, everything, including the participant, is stripped down to the bare essentials: "It is a place where people can relax and can be equal to each other because they are naked -- just what they are" (r39). Removing one's clothes means removing oneself from the ordinary world, it means becoming a part of the separateness of the sauna. "All sense of hurry should be removed with along with your clothes" (Valtakari n/d:3).

Nudity in the sauna is normal, non-suggestive and non-erotic. Says one Finn, "I think that nakedness would be more unnatural if there were no saunas" (r80). In the old bathing customs, there was no false modesty and nudity was easily accepted:

> Information[1] is available from all over the country to show that the two sexes bathed together, and that it was quite usual to go from the house to the *sauna* scantily clad and to return naked and barefoot both in winter and summer.... In the summer it was customary to sit naked out-of-doors until dry; in the winter, the bathers sat naked in the kitchen-living room and dried themselves without the use of towels, afterwards donning their underclothes (Aaltonen 1953:163).

This description about the unself-conscious nudity of the Finns at the sauna is from a traveller who wrote in 1802:

> They will sometimes come out, still naked, and converse together, or with any one near them, in the open air. If travellers happen to pass by while the peasants of any hamlet, or little village, are in the bath, and their assistance is needed, they will leave the bath, and assist in yoking or unyoking, and fetching provender for the horses, or in any thing else, without any sort of covering whatever, and while the passenger sits shivering with cold, though wrapped up in a good sound wolf's skin (Acerbi 1802:298).

However, symbolic values and social conditions may often come into conflict, particularly during periods of rapid social change. Sauna practices clearly illustrate the changing morality of nudity during the hundred years from the mid-nineteenth to the mid-twentieth centuries, when "the moral conceptions of the higher estates began to have an influence" (Aaltonen 1953:164-165).

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[1]This author is referring to historical information from the 19th century and earlier.

For example, by 1882, another traveller's description illustrates the state of transition, and of ludicrous inconsistency, in sauna bathing and morality:

> In some places the men and women [who have been bathing together], as if by agreement, do not return together, and the old women wear something around their loins as they go to or come from the bath....
> There was a crowd of visitors [in the family room], neighbors of different ages, and among them three old fellows -- a grandfather, father, and an uncle -- who were sitting upon one of the benches with legs crossed, minus a particle of clothing, shaving themselves without a looking-glass. Nobody seemed to mind them... (du Chaillu 1882:208,209).

"A report from 1892 from Southern Finland relates that the bathers, to observe due modesty, did not take off their shirts until they were on the platform and, on coming down, used to cover themselves with the birch-twig whisk" (Aaltonen 1953:165). Although nudity in the sauna continues to be considered appropriate, complete nudity outside of the sauna itself, even if a part of the total sauna ritual, gradually lost respectability.

Another entailment of the lack of social classification, according to Turner (1970), is that participants may be rendered sexless. In the sauna, the bathers lose their sexuality: there is a strong taboo against sexual behaviour or references. The symbolic meanings of nudity in the sauna do not include sexual provocation, although nudity may recall the prohibition against sex. "Various taboos are the most severe where there seem to be the most temptations, and therefore the strongest inner prohibitions in the sauna are directed at traditionally sexual stimuli" (Achté 1981:8). The words of another Finn clearly express the strength both of the taboo and of the temptation:

> Nothing gets friends closer to each other like a sauna. I can go to the sauna with boys and girls, it doesn't matter. This mixed sauna does not include any sexual feelings (well, maybe sometimes). It is just friends doing something they all like (r24).

The taboos against comparing bodies, making lewd remarks or any overtly sexual behaviour are strictly followed. One respondent justified this taboo in biomedical terms, saying that sex in the sauna is "dangerous for the heart" (r186). Another respondent commented:

> What kind of sexual emphasis is meant [in this questionnaire]? Is it that there are still prejudices (in a university???!) about the

> sauna being like a brothel (or something like that)? Actually, half of the people to whom I gave the questionnaire laughed as soon as they got to "in an intimate place" [section F]! (r145).

Herva writes that "it would never occur to a Finn to use the sauna for sexual intercourse. After all, there are more congenial places for that" (1982:5). However, the prohibition against sexual activity is not based exclusively on considerations of suitability and convenience. One of Finland's most famous artists, Akseli Gallen-Kallela, told in his autobiography this story of how he learned the meaning of the sauna taboos:

> It was still a common custom also in Satakunta in those days for the male and female hands of even so-called gentlemen's farms to bathe together. When I was a brat I once took part in such a sauna and my eye chanced to fall on a fat, naked, red-headed servant girl who in all her splendour was descending the sauna-platform. In my innocent indiscretion, I made an impertinent and indecent remark. Bailiff Tuomas who was in the bath rose from his bench and said sternly: you...I'll show you! An earnest silence then prevailed for a long while in the sauna, nobody dared smile, though the episode was doubtless one to make at any rate the farm hands roar with laughter had the person been a less authoritative one than Tuomas. I sneaked away ashamed from the sauna; I felt that I had done something that offended the purity of the sauna, and from that moment on I was awakened to respect the holiness of the sauna and nudity (*in* Ilmonen 1974:29).

The purpose of the taboo is to protect the sanctity of the sauna.

When the sauna has been borrowed into other cultures where it does not carry the same symbolic value as in Finland, these taboos have not always been understood[1] or maintained. For example, in foreign countries, sexy, bikini-clad young women are often employed to advertise saunas, something which is never done in Finland. Or, more seriously, public saunas have also

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[1]One author, an Englishman who lived many years in Finland, described an unusual variant of this taboo:

> A strict rule applied -- or was supposed to apply -- to this mixed bathing in birthday suits, however. The ritual was known as bathing on *Chestnoye-Slov*; each bather was regarded as being on his or her word of honour "*not to look*" (McGrady-Bell 1950:147).

I have never heard of this taboo against "looking" (although propriety demands that people do not stare at one another -- in or out of the sauna); furthermore, the expression "Chestnoye-Slov" is not Finnish and no other source refers to this custom. A Finn, on hearing of this "rule," replied, "He's making up his own rules."

been used in some countries to hide illicit sex.[1] Such abuses of the sauna outrage and disgust the Finns, for whom the sauna is an object of special respect, even reverence. "It's wrong that in foreign countries they can use the sauna name for all sorts of massage parlours and variations of the sauna" (r116). This objection is not a new one, for already in the Middle Ages, when communal bathing declined in the rest of Europe because of its bad reputation, the Finnish bath was defended against such erroneous assumptions.

> It is not as Poggio claims in a letter to Leonardo Aretino: that naked people of both sexes meet with inappropriate notions. He probably means the people in northern Germany, especially near the Baden area, who are rather loose with their morals. Among these people there are some who are so loose and degenerate in the hot baths that they even drink and sleep and allow themselves all

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[1]Aaland writes that in Amsterdam, "some straight saunas are equipped with closed-circuit TV to discourage promiscuity" (1978:95). The United States is another prime example:

> One of the more exotic sauna developments in America is the massage parlour sauna. In Minneapolis, for example, they date from 1963.... According to the License Inspector of the Minneapolis Police Department, 7 of the saunas have had "problems with prostitution" within the past year. On July 10, 1974, one of the massage parlor saunas was ordered closed by city officials. The closing involved sex charges. *None of the 17 saunas in operation is owned by a Finn nor by anyone of Finnish descent* (Kaups 1976:53; emphasis added).

Another author told a Finnish audience that, in America, there are

> ...certain people who, preoccupied with sex, look upon the sauna as a center of debauchery. To satisfy their appetites and to separate them from their dollars, a number of opportunistic operators have been promoting their public sauna establishments as "stimulation parlors for mixed clientele", employing "experienced female massage technicians" for the personal gratification of the guests. I am sure I do not have to draw you a picture. Although local regulations have been established to deal with the problem, most are unenforceable or ineffective. In the meantime, a number of reputable public sauna establishments have ceased to advertise in order to avoid attracting unsavory clientele and I know of at least one such long-established neighborhood public sauna which had to take its street sign down, to be able to continue serving its regular customers. *Naturally, it is our position that sex has nothing to do with and does not belong in the sauna* (Choslowsky 1976:72; emphasis added).

> kinds of evil and other foolishness in the baths. If such immodest creatures were found with their customs in Nordic bathing places, they would immediately be carried out and thrown into the deep winter snow drifts with the risk of being smothered. In the summer they would be thrown in ice cold water and left some time without food (Olaus Magnus [1555] *in* Aaland 1978:72).

The changing moral norms of the nineteenth century influenced the old habits of mixed-sex bathing, too. The old customs permitted, even preferred, large groups of mixed company.[1] "Men and women use the bath promiscuously, without any concealment of dress, or being in the least influenced by any emotions of attachment," wrote a traveller in the early nineteenth century (Acerbi 1802:297). Segregation of bathers began to gain popularity and spread throughout the country during the 1870s and 1880s (Leimu 1983:79). Aaltonen suggests that there may not have been a single cause for this new custom, but that the widespread social upheaval introduced a combination of factors which weighed strongly in favour of segregated bathing.

> It is apparent that, because of the attitude emphasizing modesty, men and women began to take their baths at different times. But there were also social reasons for it. In the latter half of the 19th century the rural population increased considerably. On many farms there was thus no longer room in the bath-house for all the people at the same time, and the turns had to be regulated. Local reports also state that, when the intensification of cattle husbandry in the 1870's and 1880's greatly increased the women's share of the work, these could not take their baths as early in the afternoon as the men and chose to bathe last (1953:165).

Discussions of sauna practices written during the mid-twentieth century often stress that mixed bathing practices were common "until just a few decades ago" (Kaarela 1944:12); in fact, mixed bathing continues to be a part of sauna bathing, although circumscribed much more narrowly than in earlier times (see chapter 4).

Sex segregation in the sauna helps to define gender roles and socialize

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[1]Leimu writes, "It is, however, quite clear that different sexes did not bathe together in just any combination; for instance, young marriageable women and men never did" (1983:79). There is evidence, however, both from accounts by travellers (eg. du Chaillu 1882) and from other research (Aaltonen 1953), which contradicts this statement.

the sexes.[1]. For example, when small children bathe with the women, the young boys graduation to bathing with the men is a significant event. Leimu writes that, in the traditional agrarian society of the nineteenth century, the change for little boys from bathing with their mothers in the women's sauna to bathing with their fathers in the men's sauna constituted an important mark of maturation:

> Saturday evening sauna was the high point of the week. It was a holiday, and all members of the community participated. So it was not unimportant which group one bathed in because everyone knew. When the boy transferred over to taking saunas with the men his status grew in the eyes of the whole community, be it a large farmhouse, a group of neighbors, or even a whole village (1983:82-83).

This is one step in the development of the boy's adult male role identity which is especially reinforced by the fraternal solidarity of the all male sauna cohort. Sauna behaviour both reflects and develops differential expectations in behaviour of boys and girls. All children are required to participate in the family sauna and all children are encouraged to develop a high tolerance for the heat and steam. Among boys, however, this leads to stamina competitions: "If you go with your friends to the sauna, it is some kind of test of 'how [much of a] man you are'" (r26).[2] For boys, the sauna is a test of *sisu*.. *Sisu* is a uniquely Finnish concept, generally translated as "guts," "stubborn courage," or "true grit." However, these translations are lacking the context of the Finnish culture. *Sisu* also means the strength of independence and the ability to cope alone, to suffer alone. It is the most esteemed virtue of the Finnish man, the drive behind the Finn's

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[1]The questionnaire results suggests some variation by gender for a few of the reasons for going to the sauna. For example, men seem to be somewhat more enthusiastic than women in ranking "feel more than clean," "get to know workmates or strangers better," and "do business in the sauna," as well as in breaking the taboos against sex, drink and parties. Women, on the other hand, rank "preparing for a special occasion or holiday" much higher than men and "feel Finnish" and "follow the traditions" somewhat higher. Some of these have clear correlates in the culture: men drink more alcohol than women, men are more often involved in business, men are shyer than women, while women are typically responsible for preparing for special occasions, including traditional celebrations and rituals. (See Appendix B.)

[2]Roberts suggests that "competition was not a means of separating [oneself] from others but a way of being social" (1982:236) which would also help foster *sisu* competitions in the sauna.

capacity for almost superhuman efforts in face of crises.[1] "The sauna, sisu and Sibelius are most often used as the 'triple ace' combination of essential elements in the Finnish image" (Valtakari 1984:3) but the sauna and *sisu* are not completely independent concepts.

> It is in conformity with the ego ideal of the Finnish male that he should be a good "sauna man" who is able, when necessary, to endure sauna heat up to the point of blistering. Also, the rolling [*sic*] in the snow or a swim in a hole in the ice after *löyly* are generally regarded as manly. Thus, these performances ... are in line with the ideal formation of the Finnish male, which includes the Spartan ideal emphasizing the ability to endure pain and suffering. This, again, is tradionally [*sic*] associated with what we call *sisu* and regard as a distinctive characteristic of the Finn (Tähka et al. 1971:67).

Where do the Finns get their strength, whether to win in sports, in war or in any other kind of competition against man or nature? The answer can only be either *sisu* or the sauna, where *sisu* is learned.

The "Real" Traditions

Taboos are as critical to the sauna as its links to nature, and the bath which does not conform to the taboos of the sauna as symbol is not a "real" Finnish sauna. From the perspective of the taboos and rituals of the bathing procedure rather than of the structure and technology of the sauna, urbanization of the sauna is not a threat, becoming one only if traditional sauna customs are abandoned; from this perspective, urbanization of the sauna can mean a preservation of the "real" sauna. "Although the sauna has developed technologically, the early bathing tradition has been preserved" (Valtakari 1978b:5). The individuals involved in this debate are thinking as conscientiously about standards of sauna behaviour as others are about standards in sauna construction: "Alcohol, sex and inappropriate behaviour did not belong in the old sauna. Let us keep this in mind. Let

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[1]To state briefly the other side of the coin, *sisu* is also the weakness of the weaker sex, the male sex. In my experience, women are clearly less shy and more versatile in coping with daily life. Men, as is evidenced by the high rate of alcoholism among men but not women, are much more vulnerable. In Finnish culture, men learn to deal with crisis and challenge by relying on *sisu*; in the humdrum world of an easy, ordinary life, however, *sisu* merely translates as loneliness -- and worse, as a loneliness which can neither be admitted nor addressed. Women, typically, are against *sisu* competitions in the sauna. (See also footnote 1, page 90.)

us keep this fence around the culture of the sauna" (Valtakari 1978b:5). The goal is to preserve the sanctity of the sauna in whatever physical adaptation it may acquire. "I hope that even if the sauna may lose some of its originality on its way to the world, it will continue to be a place of peace and harmony" (Väänänen 1976:11). The Sauna Society now recognizes the need to support, in addition to the original fields of research in medicine and construction/engineering, this alternative vision of the "real" sauna and has therefore recently instituted a research division devoted to cultural traditions.

THE PASSAGE

"Ritual is transformative" (Turner 1970:95): one emerges from the sauna bath in a fundamentally different state than one entered. The power of the sauna to transform is rooted in liminality which enables one to cross a threshold to a new state of being, which can symbolically transform one into a new person. Turner describes liminal individuals as polluting. The transformations induced by the sauna are conceptualized in Finland according to a model of pollution and cleanliness: Finns describe bathers as dirty and impure before the sauna, clean and pure afterwards. Finnish culture has elaborated on this theme to include a number of *rites de passage.* In the sauna life begins and life departs, a person enters sick and emerges healthy and the stages of life and time are crossed. The *Kalevala*, where the ritual uses of the sauna are illustrated by rites of cleansing and purification before important or ceremonial occasions, tells Finns that transformation by ritual cleansing in the sauna is an ancient Finnish tradition.

> Then the smith, e'en Ilmarinen,
> Went to take the bath he needed,
> There he bathed himself at pleasure,
> And he washed himself to whiteness,
> Washed his eyes until they sparkled,
> And his temples till they glistened,
> And his neck to hen's-egg whiteness,
> And his body all was shining.
> From the bath the room he entered,
> *Changed so much they scarcely knew him,*

For his face it shone with beauty,
And his cheeks were cleansed and rosy
(Lönnrot 1907:201; emphasis added).

Cleansing

There is a sense among Finns that "real" cleanliness is possible only from the sauna. Merely washing (in a shower or bath) is useful and convenient on a day to day basis, but this is superficial and inadequate in itself. "I wouldn't feel clean at all if I couldn't go to the sauna once a week" (r76) is a common Finnish sentiment. Kivi writes that from the sauna we become "as clean as though we had just come from the midwife's nimble paws" (1973:81). The sweat released in the sauna originates from deep in the skin; for this reason, the sauna is felt to have a deep cleansing effect. This process of sweating away impurities is especially important for anyone involved in dirty, sweaty or disgusting work. In these situations, unless a person has been to the sauna, he may continue to feel unclean, as if some residue or taint of the pollutant remained with the individual. "The sauna makes me feel cleaner [than a bath or shower]. When I am sweating in a sauna it takes away all my dirtiness. When you take only a bath or shower, you cannot sweat. All the dirtiness that is deep in your body stays there" (r29). Finns have used the sauna as their primary method of personal hygiene for thousands of years -- yet they recognize that the sauna is not exclusively, or even primarily, a form of washing. "Washing is like a 'by-product' [of sauna-bathing]" (r172).[1]

Purification

Ritual cleansing, purification, is an important function of the sauna. "In the sauna one gets clean, like in church (except in a quite different way)" (r100). "In the sauna, the body and soul are cleansed[2]" (r123). In

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[1]From the questionnaire results, there are five reasons for going to the sauna which were judged "very important" by over half of the sample. These are relaxation (93%), cleanliness (73%), feel better physically (61%), feel more than clean (60%), and feel better mentally (58%). (See Appendix B.)

[2]The Finnish verb "puhdistaa" can mean either to cleanse or to purify; likewise, the noun "puhdas" means both clean and pure.

the Middle Ages[1], the sauna became incorporated into Christian rituals of purification; the first book ever written and published in the Finnish language, Agricola's Prayer Book of 1544, recommends the use of the sauna all year round (Finnair 1971). The traditional preparation for church services, the Sabbath, Christmas and other holy occasions is bathing in the sauna on the eve before. "Earlier, one went to the sauna on Saturday and on Sunday one went, clean, to church" (r115). Even today, sauna bathing on the eve of important celebrations often has special significance; for example, the New Year's Eve sauna is said to wash away all of the dirt of the old year (see also below "Cycles").

Renewal

The sauna is ritual power. This power, which can transform pollution into cleanliness and profane into sacred, which is like being nearer to God, can infuse the individual with energy and vitality: "The sauna is the best way to 'renew' oneself" (r194). Within the liminal period, "the nakedness and vulnerability of the ritual subject receive symbolic stress" in order to highlight this power, but the passage from this unstructured time back into the normal structures of social life is regenerating, a symbolic rebirth (Turner 1970:108,110). "Many say that the feeling after the sauna is like being born again" (r20). The individual crosses the threshold from the world of the profane/public to the world of the sacred/private in the sauna, restored and purified: a person is reborn a "real" Finn, free, on his/her own free time, to be the person he/she "really" is.

Healing

The sauna is also a place of healing. The same power which can rid the body of dirt and evil and can make a person feel reborn is also efficacious against illness, as emphasized by the number of Finnish proverbs lauding the healing properties of the sauna. For example, the most common is, "If a sick person is not cured by tar, liquor or sauna, then he will die."

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[1]The Christianization of Finland came comparatively late in European history, starting about the year 1100 in both Western Finland and Eastern Karelia (now in the Soviet Union), and continuing at least until 1300 (Juva 1973; Mead 1968; Kirkinen 1981).

Another is, "The sauna is the poor man's apothecary" (Aaland 1978:75). Rune XLV of the *Kalevala* describes the origin of disease and of the magical curing powers of the sauna, telling Finns that the healing power of the sauna is greater than the evil power of illness. In this myth, the wicked witch Lowyatar, Death's daughter, goes in secret to a sauna and gives birth to nine children, the nine dread diseases. Her evil offspring are then set loose to destroy the people. The old sage, the greatest enchanter, Väinämöinen, turns to the white magic of the sauna to find a cure.

> Wainamoinen heats the bath-rooms,
> Heats the blocks of healing-sandstone
> With the magic wood of Northland,
> Gathered by the sacred river;
> Water brings in covered buckets
> From the cataract and whirlpool;
> Brooms he brings enwrapped with ermine,
> Well the bath the healer cleanses,
> Softens well the brooms of birch-wood;
> Then a honey-heat he wakens,
> Fills the rooms with healing vapors,
> From the virtue of the pebbles
> Glowing in the heat of magic
> (Lönnrot 1889:655).

His magical healing incantation begins:

> Come, O Ukko, to my rescue,
> God of mercy, lend thy presence,
> Give these vapor-baths new virtues,
> Grant to them the powers of healing,
> And restore my dying people....
> (Lönnrot 1889:656).

In *The Seven Brothers*, Kivi's protagonists declare, "Hot steam in the sauna that's the best physic for soul and body. [...] Let the body have [more steam] if it wants; for the hotter the sauna the greater its healing-power" (1973:78,79). In modern times, the bio-medical profession has divested the sauna of much of its specific curative powers, but it has not lost its healing magic: "When I get sick I go to the sauna" (r108). A great variety of general ailments, such as fatigue, aches and pains, colds and nervous ailments are normally treated with sauna bathing in Finland. Finnish folk healers still follow the tradition of tapping into the sauna's

power by treating their patients in the sauna: "Cupping[1] and the sauna go together like a lid and a bushel," and an old proverb says that "when you *are healed* in a cupper's sauna, you'll never die." (Väänänen 1986:32). Even more important than these fringe practices, however, is the generally held belief that the sauna is an important part of a healthy life.

The sauna is also intimately linked with sports in Finland as a way to help the athlete recuperate after intense physical exertion. "All Finnish athletic complexes have saunas -- sport and sauna are inseparable in Finland" (Aaland 1978:68). The sauna is often credited as a factor in the high performance of Finnish athletes: "the Finns are an extremely athletic race; they have a larger number of world's records to their credit, in this connection, than any country ten times their size. They owe much in health to their national steam bath, or *sauna*" (McGrady-Bell 1950:42).[2] Because of this belief that the sauna is an advantage in athletics, Finns may be unwilling to compete without it and "it is said that when the Finnish athletes attended the Olympics in Los Angeles, they brought their birch twigs with them for fear they could not obtain them in America" (Bugbee 1940:72). One author suggested that designs for saunas are being exported all over the continent because the benefits of sauna bathing in Finnish athletic performance has become obvious to other nations (Kaarela 1944:86).

Complementary to this physical healing power, the sauna also helps to purge psychological afflictions, such as depression and stress. "In the sauna, your overwrought brain cells start to work again, so that you can make it to work again on Monday" (r100). The use of the sauna for mental release is recognized through specific traditional practices. For example,

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[1]Cupping, a traditional Finnish cure, is blood-letting and is one example of the cures performed in the sauna.

[2]The idea that sauna bathing improves athletic abilities has been the subject of recent scientific investigation. Wijburg says that the combination of the sauna with sport is an important part of the accompanying medical care of the athletes (1976:150) and suggests "Let us return to this simple therapy. In and around the sauna, we have every opportunity of assisting sportsmen, simply, cheaply and purposefully" (1976:154). Vuori's research shows that "for Finnish athletes the sauna cannot be replaced even if different modalities of physical therapy were available" (1976:147), although he credits the sauna with a primarily psychological advantage (1976:149). (See also chapter one.)

"Finnish students traditionally recuperate in the sauna after the year's final exam" (Aaland 1978:236). Finnish mental health professionals, too, have acknowledged that "bathing in a sauna is ... an important mental hygienic factor in Finnish society" (Tähka et al. 1971:72).[1]

Cycles

Cycles of time and the transitions from one period of time to another are marked and celebrated with the sauna. Life cycles are one type of these and all life crisis events incorporated the sauna into the rites of transitions. Traditionally, the integration of the sauna into the life cycle of the Finn began at birth. The *Kalevala* has many references to the sauna as the place of birth. For example, the final Rune (L) tells of the coming of Christianity. A virgin-mother, Mariatta, "Pure as pearly dews of morning, Holy as the stars in heaven" sought for "a worthy birth-place, For an unborn child and hero" (Lönnrot 1889:727). She was turned away from the sauna by the brook and gave birth in a stable, which was miraculously transformed into a steamy sauna:

> Thereupon the horse, in pity,
> Breathed the moisture of his nostrils
> On the body of the virgin,
> Wrapped her in a cloud of vapor,
> Gave her warmth and needed comforts,
> Gave his aid to the afflicted,
> To the virgin, Mariatta.
> There the babe was born and cradled,
> Cradled in a woodland-manger
> (Lönnrot 1889:726).

Finns have suggested that the sauna is a "natural" birthing place because the smoke and heat create a bacteria-free environment (Kaarela 1944:16), but the medical profession now knows that this is a false assumption (personal communication). Even when the medical advantages of hospital services became available, Finnish women contrasted the lonely and alienating hospital of the distant town unfavorably with the comforting warmth and

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[1]The questionnaire results show that "feeling better," both physically and mentally, is one of the most important reasons for going to the sauna. The lower ranking of "get well when feeling sick" illustrates how the healing properties of the sauna are conceptualized less as curative than as part of a healthy way of life. (See Appendix B.)

privacy of the homey sauna (Lander 1976:43; Virtanen *in* Aaland 1978:77). The sauna is still recognized, if no longer actually used, as a birthing place in Finnish culture. "People no longer give birth in the sauna but continue to be reborn there" (Valtakari 1978b:5).

Marriage is a rite of transition which has been well documented in Finland, showing that traditionally the sauna was an important part of the marriage ceremony throughout the country, although local customs varied somewhat. There were three different sauna rituals (not all of which were used everywhere), or sauna stages of the marriage ritual. The first was a part of the *lähtiäiset*, or "leave-taking," which marked the young woman's departure from her natal home, the end of her girlhood.

> Sad moments were also lived in the Karelian[1] bridal sauna as the bride with her maiden friends spent her last moments of freedom wailing in lamentation in her father's sauna. It took an hour to make the short way to the sauna with all the rattling of pots and pans and carrying of water. Washing the bride was an important procedure, and just as important was keeping the water used for the bridegroom as a kind of magic substance or love potion (Kivistö n/d:20).

The second stage was a part of the marriage ceremony itself, marking the union of the couple, the start of their life together.

> Before the marriage, the bride and groom took a sauna together, beating each other lightly with the 'vihta' and occasionally exchanging them. It was believed that this ceremony would ensure a harmonious marriage (Venkula-Vauraste 1985:57).

Finally, the last stage of the ceremony was the couple's sauna bath after consummation of the marriage.

The sauna was the beginning but also the ending, the place of birth and the place of death. A person was prepared for his/her final life transition, the funeral, with a ritual washing of the corpse in the sauna, after which "the 'vihta' was placed under [the dead person's] head in the coffin" (Venkula-Vauraste 1985:57). Some sources also say that, in their last hours, people would drag themselves or were carried to die in the sauna (Aaland 1978:77; Nickels 1968:278; Aaltonen 1953:160).

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[1]Karelia is the Eastern part of Finland, the larger part of which was ceded to the Soviet Union in the peace treaty which ended the war between these two countries in 1941.

The cycles of the weeks and the seasons, too, are very significant ways of marking time and the rituals which mark these also incorporate the sauna. The traditional weekly sauna serves to mark the progression of time, the change from one week to the next, as well as to prepare the bathers for the church and the Sabbath. Over the years, travellers have noted again and again how Saturday is marked by the sauna.

> I never failed to bathe every Saturday [in Finland]. The custom described has come down from olden times (du Chaillu 1882:209).

> As we drove home, Eho pointed out smoke curling from the smokeholes or chimneys of little bathhouses at every farm. Saturday was the Finn's night of pleasure. The smoke plumes were like banners announcing a festival (Strode 1941:88).

> The statement that if anyone wanted to invade Finland, it should be on Saturday night, has more than a grain of truth to it. This is the traditional time to heat up the sauna and have a bath, after the week's labour and before Sunday church (Sutyla 1977:37).

For today's Finns, this is no less true: "Saturday doesn't feel like Saturday without the sauna" (r78).

The yearly cycles are likewise marked with celebrations which incorporate the sauna. Often, too, at these special times the power of the sauna was used to manipulate time during its threshold periods, its periods of vulnerability; for example, there were many sauna beliefs, customs or taboos associated with important liminal times.

> For our forefathers, whose livelihood depended on farming the land, [Christmas] was the turning point when the year changed and the day again began to lengthen.... Omens were observed and magic performed and it was considered important to observe various rules. What was done and left undone was believed to influence the whole rest of the year (Hakamies 1979:5).

At Christmas these rules included going early to the sauna for good luck and to avoid misfortune, bathing in silence to protect against pests and placating the elves by preparing them a sauna and/or food (Hakamies 1979). An individual is born, renewed and reborn into new stages of life in the sauna; similarly, the renewal and rebirth of time is also celebrated in the sauna. Thus, the sauna, although separate from ordinary time itself, helps to give time meaning.

Reintegration

Van Gennep (1960:11, and later Turner [1970:94]) describe the ritual process as composed of three stages, separation, transition and incorporation; in the sauna ritual, removing one's clothes and entering the sauna represents the separation phase, the sauna bath itself the transition phase, and the period of post-bathing relaxation with snacks is incorporation. Van Gennep writes that "the rite of eating and drinking together ... is clearly a rite of incorporation" (1960:29), and this is so in the sauna ritual, too, which is not concluded until the participants have eaten and drunk and relaxed together. In earlier times, this final phase of the ritual was clearly marked, as the participants did not dress after the sauna until after the communal rite of incorporation (Aaltonen 1953). Changing moral codes have modified the *form* but not the content of the process; in fact, in modern times the post-bathing period has gained in importance for, with the advent of sex-segregated saunas, this is the only time when all of the ritual participants may share in the event as a collectivity.

WASHING IS TRANSFORMING

The Finnish metaphor for sauna as ritual is washing. Foreigners visiting Finland inevitably describe the sauna as a peculiar bathing habit, yet Finns repeat again and again that the sauna is not just a bath. Every Finnish child knows that "you don't need to be dirty to go to the sauna" (r107, age 11 years). In Finnish culture, the relatively simple process of bathing has been developed into a complex and elaborate image for conceptualizing symbolic transformations. These transformations are possible precisely because the sauna is not an ordinary bath, because it is liminal; a key marker of the extraordinary status of the sauna in Finnish culture is the observance of taboos, without which a sauna is not a "real" Finnish sauna. In the sauna, washing becomes cleansing, purification, healing, and renewal of self, of life and of time; through the ritual of the bath, the Finn becomes closer to his ideal self, to being a "real" Finn.

Thus, the sauna is the threshold between the pale reflection of Finnish culture as it is lived and Finnish culture -- life -- as it ought to be: "the sauna is the border between the everyday and the sacred" (r145).

CHAPTER 4

REVEALING THE SHY FINN

> "I think we are more open when we are naked" (r42).

The symbolic transformations of clean to unclean, impure to pure, sick to healthy, etc., are uniquely personal attributes, yet sauna bathing is neither a highly individualistic nor solitary activity: the sauna has the power to transform and revitalize social relations as well as individuals. As the forest mediates between the individual and society, so too the sauna mediates the contradiction between private and public in social life. The sauna ritual allows participants to step out of their quotidian social roles into liminality where they may meet others openly and as equals, as "real Finns."

THE SHY FINN

If asked to identify the most salient feature of his own national character, the Finn would say quietly, "we are shy." Taciturn to the point of being sullen, shy and suspicious of strangers but totally honest and loyal to their friends, Finns feel themselves to be highly vulnerable to emotional or psychological inflictions, nearly defenseless against any slight by anyone. A stranger -- and public life in general -- is often incomprehensible, "unpredictable" (Roberts 1982:232); social life is risky. "[Trust and openness] are ideals, but villagers perceive them as unrealistic and dangerous" (Roberts 1982:229). Shyness (*ujous*) is the Finn's defense, a way of protecting one's privacy and independence. Outsiders sometimes say that Finns are cold or unfriendly, but, in fact, however warm-hearted they may be, they are restricted in the ease with which they are able to meet and get to know others by their Finnish sense of personal privacy which leads to a shyness in relating to strangers. This is evidenced by embarrassment

about speaking out or putting oneself forward around others, by reticence about telling about oneself and by self-monitoring of speech and behaviour. The literature on Finland offers innumerable examples of this characteristic behaviour; even the (then) president of the nation, Kekkonen, described Finns as "a people of dourlike temperament" (1976:8). One author writes, "It is probably true to say that on the whole the Finns are withdrawn, frequently to the point of unfriendliness, and suspicious of strangers, whether foreigners or other Finns" (Irwin 1973:20). An American traveller, Harry Franck, tells anecdotes with a tongue-in-cheek humour of what it is to be shy "to a truly Finnish degree":

> The old couple, for instance, who keep the village shop at which we halted for afternoon tea ... had lived for many years in one of the Dakotas. They failed to mention that perhaps irrelevant fact until some time after we arrived, not only out of Finnish reticence but because they evidently preferred to let me unsuspectingly spread my character on the records before they decided whether or not I was a worthy example of the people they had left a decade before with deep regret.
>
> Nor did they trust me fully even after they had volunteered the information (1930:107-108).

On another occasion:

> Even in the genial glow of my [Finnish] companion's delightful personality, the bearded head of the family, in shirt-sleeves, was taciturn to a truly Finnish degree, after he had apologized for not being Sunday-dressed. His ponderous, horny-handed wife was even more so. The only articulate remark pumped up from the depths of her Finnish reticence was an admission that America must be far away; and her husband hardly improved upon this burst of insight (1930:125-126).

He described the attitude of these bashful Finns as follows:

> They consider effervescent people crazy. They cannot understand our enthusiasms, our excitements, our pleasures in anything outside the daily routine. Their closest neighbors, the Swedes, especially, astound them in this matter. Even an animated conversation between foreigners on a train brings first looks of surprise, then of tolerance or indifference, finally almost of resentment (1930:87).

This "national characteristic" is very important in defining public behaviour. By saying "we are shy" the Finn summarizes succinctly and effectively how respect for individual privacy restricts social interactions: initiating interactions with strangers, asking personal questions of non-intimates and speaking loudly are all considered to be

intrusive behaviour. "Finns have learned the value of minding their own business. Non-interference is national policy. It is also an individual characteristic" (Nickels 1968:277). Roberts calls this "formality:"

> The adjective *jäykkä* (stiff or formal)...implies an attempt to keep people at a distance. [...] It is used...to describe relations between strangers or nonintimates in general--regardless of their relative positions in the social hierarchy. [....] The right of all people to privacy and autonomy...is generally assumed. People do not feel uncomfortable with distance, nor do they feel a need to pretend that it does not exist. Among the people of Rasti, formality is frequently defensive -- a means of protecting privacy (1982:165,166).

He also recognizes that "formality and stiffness are aspects of a pervasive reticence, or ambivalence, about openness and trust in relationships in general" (1982:166).

To test the strength of this cultural rule of non-interference, I once asked a group of Finnish university students -- university students are known as being more out-going and sociable that most other groups -- what they would do if they saw a classmate whom they had never met sitting alone at a table in the cafeteria: would they go to sit with him/her? No one would go. I asked, what if they knew this person was very lonely and would be really happy if someone would come to sit with him/her? Still no one would go. But if you *know* that the person would appreciate it? "No," they told me, "you can't just go and sit with someone you don't know." One person's loneliness and need for companionship does not give another the right to intrude.[1] Roberts' research supports this observation:

> A woman who is a summer resident from a different part of Finland recalled that when she was first married and came to the village with her husband (who as born and raised there), she wanted to go visit the other villagers in order to get acquainted. Her husband was horrified, explaining that you don't go to someone's house

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[1] In my own experience, however, I found that Finns often do appreciate the opportunity to meet new people if the other person is the one to take the risk of initiating the relationship; on the other hand, it is possible that this acceptance may be more common towards foreigners for whom the same behavioural expectations do not apply.

here if you don't have specific errands or if you don't have an invitation (1982:243).[1]

On another occasion, I asked a group of Finns (all adults, mostly middle-aged) why Finns were so shy. Most people suggested that it was a matter of climate or geography, of nature, and all assumed that such a characteristic was immutable. I suggested that shyness was a chosen behaviour, that people could decide, and make an effort, to be less shy. I suggested that Finns wanted to be shy, or thought that it was good to be shy. The idea produced total confusion; perhaps the Finnish world view, with its distinctive moods and motivations including the acute discomfort of social shyness, seems to the Finns "the only sensible [one] to adopt given the way things 'really' are" (Geertz 1973:122).

The Person

Underlying the behaviour of the shy Finn is a cultural contradiction in social relations between public and private, parallelling the opposition between society and the individual. In Finnish culture, the person consists of a public persona, which is the mask or role with which the individual confronts the world, and the true inner personality, the solitary "soul," which is private and not readily accessible to others. The private person is the domain of one's personal thoughts, beliefs and confidences which are shared only with a few special people (or with none) and never in very open, public situations. If perceptive, one may recognize that "there is far more beneath the stolid surface of the Finns than a mere seeing ever suggests" (Franck 1930:122). The Finnish custom of concealing what lies within goes beyond mere modesty, as the following anecdote suggests:

> To look at his modest face, with its smile as naively ingratiating as a good-all-through child, a child whose goodness you worry about for fear it will never be able to cope with the hard-boiled world when it grows up, you would never dream that my companion in Finland had been or could go through intolerable hardships and escape death a score of times by his steady nerves and his ready wits. All this side of him, anything beyond the fact that he is a station-master who knows his English well and is the best

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[1] I believe that the principle of non-interference is pervasive throughout Finland but that the specific rules about what constitutes a justifiable excuse for intrusions (such as uninvited visits) varies by region, as this example suggests.

companion the authorities could thrust upon a visitor to Finland, would have been lost if one had depended upon the man himself to tell the story of his life (Franck 1930:119).

The Finnish language, too, hints at this duality. In Finnish, "human being" is *ihminen*, but "person" may be translated as either *henki* or *henkilö* because in Finnish there is a semantic distinction which does not exist in English. A clue to the difference between these two words can be found by examining the semantic scope of the morpheme as a root and as components in compound words[1] (*from* Wuolle 1978).

HENKI

henki	spirit, life, person, air
hengellinen	spiritual
hengenheimolainen	kindred spirit
hengenheimolaisuus	congeniality of mind, affinity between
henkikirja	census list
henkilääkäri	personal physician
henkinen	intellectual
henkisyys	spirituality, intellectuality
henkiystävä	close friend, bosom friend
olla hengissä	to be alive
Pyhä Henki	Holy Spirit

HENKILÖ

henkilö	person
henkilökohtaisesti	in person
henkilökunta	staff, personnel, employees
henkilöllinen	personal [i.e., belonging to a person]
henkilöllisyys	identity
henkilötiedot	biographical data
henkilötodistus	identity card

These few examples (which are far from exhaustive) illustrate that although both *henki* and *henkilö* mean "person," the way they are used within the language reflects the different aspects of the person: *henki* is used to refer to the more personal or private side while *henkilö* is used when referring to the public persona. Linguistic research has also shown that indirectness is imbedded deep in the structure of the language, for example by avoiding the use of the "I - YOU" axis or explicit subjects, even when making suggestions (but there is one important exception: *rakastan sinua*,

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[1]Finnish is an agglutinating language, in which words are usually formed from compounds of morphemes, unlike English in which words are typically simpler and more independent morphemes.

"I love you", the most personal statement, cannot be said indirectly) (Flint 1985).

Another aspect of the Finns' social mask is that "they suppress their emotions, if they have any, ruthlessly. Even the gambling children are good losers, with poker faces" (Franck 1930:84). Self-control over emotional expression is a highly valued trait.

> This heavy emphasis on control over emotion is evident in the frequency with which villagers use terms like poise (*tasapaino*) to describe people they admire. One villager expressed his respect for the man who had been the central figure in communal politics for the last several decades in the following way: "He is placid. No matter what is going on, he is calm and even on the outside" (Roberts 1982:227).

A Finnish friend once explained that, although in some ways a passionate people, Finns do not show their emotions openly: you have to be able to read their eyes to know what is going on inside. Since only those who know one well will have the understanding necessary to read one's eyes, what better way to protect one's inner self?[1]

> The display of self-control also emphasizes personal independence.... The person demonstrates that he cannot be easily manipulated by others. [....] Finally, self-control is valued because it means that even if everything else about a villager's life is known and constantly observed, the inner world of emotions and feelings remains private (Roberts 1982:228).

The Finnish seclusion of self is present in all areas of life. For example, seldom do Finns discuss future plans: they will announce them as *fait accompli* at the point of action so as not to reveal hopes which may not be realized. Personal joys, such as love or affection for others, are also subject to strict self-control:

> Couples confined their expression of mutual affection to when they were alone.... According to a number of village informants, if villagers became aware of a romantic tie between two young people, the couple was likely to be constantly teased. The correct response by the couple was to not react to the teasing but to try to appear unperturbed. Thus courtship provided training for the outward control of expressions of affection expected in later life. It emphasized that control of emotion is expected from an individual at all times (Roberts 1982:197).

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[1]On the other cultural extreme, an African student once complained that he was suffering terribly in Finland because no one ever really laughed "naturally," that is, long and loudly, "right from the belly".

Personal problems, especially, are not open for public knowledge.

> The open and direct pursuit of quarrels was avoided, but complaints and grievances were often expressed to friends, and they were not forgotten. The villagers kept up outwardly cordial relations with people against whom they held a surprisingly large number of grievances (Roberts 1982:224).

The Finn grapples with life's difficulties stoically and alone, in extreme cases keeping silence even from spouse, family and friends.[1]

The Finnish concept of the person, and the pervasive shyness which expresses it, is a coherent -- if often painful -- aspect of the Finnish world view. *Independence*, autonomy and equality of the individual, the highest personal values, are guarded from the distressing demands of society; social life, too, is supported because "control of emotions is the guarantee that individual differences can be cultivated and tolerated" (Roberts 1982:227).

Family and Friends

An individual's private world consists of family, kin and very close friends; the public world consists of all others, including both strangers and acquaintances. There is a definite and strong division between these two categories of people, a gulf which is difficult to cross. In the public world, one is shy, keeping a respectful distance from others out of consideration for their privacy.[2] Only one's private world has the right to expect access to one's private self, can really know one personally. This is because the Finnish soul is very vulnerable[3]; privacy serves to protect

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[1]The psychological stress of this attitude can easily be imagined. Indeed, Finns are aware of the price they pay for their independence: "[Several younger men] expressed their strong resentment over the pressure put on them as children not to show emotion -- especially not to cry" (Roberts 1982:228).

[2]The Finnish translation for "privacy" is *yksityisyys*. In the social context (i.e., excluding property rights, legalities, etc.) "privacy" is also, synonymously, *oma rauha*, "own or personal peace" or *eristäytyminen*, "keeping aloof", "staying apart" or "keeping oneself to oneself" (*from* Wuolle 1978).

[3]This vulnerability is illustrated with an anecdote by a traveller, much impressed by the (to him) peculiarities of the Finnish character, who recounts how a young Finnish woman reacted when told that her services in

what is most easily hurt by allowing only one's most trusted friends and family into one's personal life.

> To a number of villagers, trust and openness seemed to be the key to an ideal friendship. When asked what they meant by the term friend, villagers frequently defined it as a person to whom you could speak openly and not expect that what you said would be spread throughout the village (Roberts 1982:219).

Roberts writes that "friendship is a culturally loaded term and very difficult for people to discuss" (1982:218). A Finn's active social network (outside of work or other ascribed relations) is typically rather restricted. True friends are few and ideally are bound by a strong set of mutual obligations. Loyalty, for example, is a key virtue in personal relationships and the quality of loyalty demanded by friendship in Finnish culture is similar to what is expected between spouses. In fact, Roberts writes, "behaviour between friends was often similar to the public interactions between spouses" (1982:220). These friendships are often based on the firm foundation of a long association beginning in childhood or student life, because these relationships have stood the test of time and also because (as one Finn commented) "children hadn't learned to distrust others and to hide their feelings" (*in* Roberts 1982:219).[1] Nevertheless, "trust in the ideal friendship seems potentially foolish or dangerous to villagers.... The few times people spontaneously discussed friendship...was to indicate the danger of being too naive and idealistic about it" (Roberts 1982:220). Given the Finns' fierce sense of independence, close

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the sauna as a steam servant and scrubber would not be required:

> There was something in this girl's manner as she reluctantly withdrew which suggested hurt feelings at having her no doubt efficient services scorned; a look as if she were cudgeling her stolid brain to remember how she had been at fault on some earlier occasion (Franck 1930:127).

[1]Roberts (1982:218) writes that:

> Villagers seemed to associate the formation of friendships with childhood. The Value Behavior Study included the question: On what basis do you become close friends? Interviewees rated "Being together during childhood and youth" as both the most frequent basis for friendship among villagers and the best basis for friendship.

relationships are to be entered into warily. Because intimate social relations imply dependence, too many friendships can limit one's independence too much. All relationships, therefore, are based on a delicate balance of contradictions. Only the ties which bind family or close kin are likely to be able to bear the strain of dependency, and these are normally the people one relies upon in need.

> It was particularly significant that an elderly cottager, who lived alone, and often stressed that she *never* borrowed from other villagers, also emphasized that she would not remain living in the village if her daughter and son-in-law did not visit her so often. If she shunned any expression of dependence on other villagers, she bragged about how much she relied upon her children (Roberts 1982:213).

The ultimate in Finnish independence, of course, is Finnish solitude: "A number of people answered that they had no friends" (Roberts 1982:218). Thus, private life consists of a small network of relations, kin and friends as close as kin, which are stable and enduring.[1]

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[1]These observations are substantiated by studies of friendships (Allardt and Wsolowski 1980) and kinship ties (Heiskanen 1969) in Finland. The first study, based on 994 interviews of working-age persons, gives quantitative data on "really close friends," a classification which includes relatives but not members of the family living in the same household (note that spouses, commonly regarded as "best friends," were not included). A total of 26% of all respondents reported that they were without friends, with the higher age groups having higher rates of friendlessness (35% of 60-64 year-olds but only 14% of 15-24 year-olds); 47% of the total sample reported three or more friends. Of those who reported at least one friend, 24% found their best friend from among childhood friends or schoolmates, 29% from their neighbours or workmates, 15% of best friends were relatives and 13% listed potential spouses (girlfriends, boyfriends and fiancé(e)s) as their best friends; 5% of the sample had only relatives as friends.

The second study is based on 304 interviews of residents of three Finnish communities. The mean number of "effective" relatives (those with whom contact is maintained at least twice a year) of the total respondents is 5.21, 76.8% of whom the respondents reported to enjoy meeting (rather than meeting out of a sense of duty or obligation). On average, the respondents interacted with 10.5% of their effective relations on an almost daily basis, with 14.5% at least weekly, with 30.7% several times monthly and with 44.2% less than monthly. (These statistics are averages based on disaggregated data presented by the authors.) Furthermore, Roberts writes that

> kinship ties are a key link with the world outside the village. The people whom villagers visited in the church village were generally relatives. When villagers had been to a celebration in

The transition from public life to private life in social relations is a difficult one. "The decision about how intimate one is with another person is a difficult question for all but relatives and the closest of friends" (Roberts 1982:265). There is little overt evidence in ordinary life to mark the point at which an acquaintance becomes a true friend. The resolution of this dilemma may be found outside the sphere of the ordinary -- in the sauna.[1]

> one of the other rural villages of the commune, almost inevitably relatives were involved. Also important were kinship ties to urban areas (1982:217).

[1]The opinion that the sauna is the only, or even the main, way of overcoming shyness is not the generally held view:

> It is sometimes said that the true Finn only loses his reserve when he has a bottle in his hand and a considerable portion of the contents of the bottle in his stomach (Irwin 1973:20).

While it is true that Finns become more talkative when drunk (when I arrived in Finland in 1982, I used to complain that the only Finns who would talk to me were the drunks at the bus stop), this is not the same as the openness of the Finn in the sauna. Roberts makes this same point, despite the fact that "in Rasti, alcohol is both a symbol of sociality and community and an important aid in producing those states" (1982:280).

> While ... Rasti men begin to "open up" when they are drinking, it is important to understand that this opening up is not like the opening of a locked box, where something carefully protected and kept secret is suddenly brought out for others to see. The "opening up" of the men while drinking is better compared to the unfolding of a fan. It is not a distinction between inside and outside but rather the exposing of more surface. When men drink, they tell more stories -- stories that do not expose the storyteller's innermost thoughts and feelings. In male group drinking, the importance of the privacy of a person's intimate thoughts and emotions is, if anything, reinforced; the villagers see over and over that in even the most convivial and social atmosphere, these are not to be exposed (1982:284).

The analysis of Finnish drunkenness by Falk and Sulkunen concludes that, despite the generally held belief that "conversation among drinkers touches on things that are not usually discussed, sources of resentment as well as of friendship, and that such discussions take place in an atmosphere of intimacy, solidarity and confidences" (1983:396), in fact,

> the only solidarity which exists among the members of the group is that which they derive from drinking together. Such solidarity

SAUNA FELLOWSHIP

In the sauna, the situation is quite different: foreigners who are introduced to Finland by way of the sauna will relate enthusiastic stories about the friendliness of the Finnish people (eg. Aaland [1978]) and the Finns themselves explain that they are open, relaxed and talkative in the steamy bath. "For example, in public saunas you easily talk with strangers. That does not happen often in the streets" (r42). For a Finn, sauna bathing is an important form of social interaction: "going to the sauna is a way of leading a social life" (r4). As a social event it may be characterized by the closeness of an intimate tete-a-tete between two, or by the expansive solidarity of a large group or party; in the words of the (then) president of the Finnish Sauna Society, Professor Harold Teir, "The idea is not to have the best sauna on the block, but to get the entire block into the sauna" (*in* Aaland 1978:17). The sauna "is something that gets people closer together" (r24), a place of social communion where the feeling of well-being and revitalization can be shared. It is a place where a group of people can be together when the day's work is done and can take some time to enjoy one another's company. This is the social effect of liminality: "Being relaxed, fresh and naked makes you open and happy. You just can't feel this kind of solidarity elsewhere (such as in discos and pubs)" (r56).[1]

> has no content to it: the men do not unbutton themselves to each other, nor do they communicate in any other way. Among drinkers, each individual ultimately remains alone with his joys and sorrows. The function of the group is thus to allow each man to drink in peace and to share his guilt (1983:398).

Unlike the empty solidarity of drinking, the sauna is the only institution within the Finnish culture which encourages real openness in an atmosphere of intimacy, solidarity and confidences.

[1]There are public and private saunas. Public saunas, such as those found in sports facilities, hotels, etc., are always sex segregated and open to everyone. Public saunas can function at the individual level; social transformations, which are social occasions shared with a select company, usually happen only in private saunas. (As almost every household has access to a sauna, this is not a serious limitation to the use of the sauna; furthermore, public saunas are often rented for private use.) Public saunas are less effective for private revelations with intimate friends because this would be a violation of the public/private separation in the Finnish

Turner writes, "transitional beings ... *have* nothing. They have no status, property, insignia, secular clothing, rank, kinship position, nothing to demarcate them structurally from their fellows" (1970:98-99). Or, as a Finn describing the sauna succinctly put it, "nakedness knows no differences in rank and dignity" (Helamaa 1976:23). This absence of social differentiation within liminality creates between the people who share it a relationship of complete equality and of a comradeship which "transcends distinctions of rank, age, kinship position, and, in some kinds of cultic group, even of sex" (Turner 1970:100). Turner's description is echoed by the Finns:

> Name and status don't mean anything when in the sauna. You can be together in harmony, listen to one another, and enjoy one another's company, when you don't have to treat the others like a lord or address them formally. You can just be! (Salomaa 1984:5).

Such is the power of the sauna to overcome social status that the (then) president of Finland, Urho Kekkonen, praises the sauna as "a great leveller: there are no ministers, VIPs, labourers or lumberjacks on the sauna platform, only sauna mates" (1976:8). Once again, the sauna reinforces the fundamental values of the culture: the Finn in the sauna is a "real" Finn, equal and unashamed before his/her neighbour.

In earlier times, the equality of the countryside was practiced in the home and in the sauna, where the farmer and the farmhand and all the members of their families shared in the same social life: they lived under the same roof, ate the same meals and shared the same bath.[1]

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world view. The sauna as symbol is especially effective because it reaffirms these concepts while allowing for them to be overcome.

[1]A traveller in Finland in the nineteenth century described this ideology (du Chaillu 1882:210):

> Servants, especially the girls, expect to be treated as members of the family. No farmer in those regions would venture to break through this long-established custom of equal rights, for it would raise a great outcry against him, and he would appear proud and haughty in the eyes of his neighbors. I asked the wife why she had not a special room for her working-man. He answered me himself: "Do you think I would remain in a family where I was treated like a dog, and sent to sleep in a room all alone, as if I were a villain? No, indeed; I will sleep only where the family

> At a time when there were a large number of both family members and hired hands in the farm-house and when, in addition, the so-called tenants, at least the crofters living close by, were allowed by custom to use the bath-house of the farm, it had to be spacious. Oral tradition tells of bath-houses to accommodate 20-30 people at a time (Aaltonen 1953:160).

This principle extended to the whole community. The farms of the village shared in the expense and trouble of heating the large saunas by heating their saunas in turn "and the inhabitants of several neighbouring farms, often the whole village, used one another's bath-house" (Aaltonen 1953:160). Thus the sauna highlighted the fundamental social value of generalized equality. In modern times, the egalitarian ideology is firmly entrenched but the possibility of living by it is more limited. Public life is stratified into bosses and workers, richer and poorer; ideals are relegated to private life.

> Once in his summer cottage, the managing director will enjoy precisely the same activities as his junior clerk: fishing, boating, swimming, chopping wood for the sauna, repairing or extending, or simply lazing (Nickels 1968:275).

When he enters the sauna, the "real" Finn not only is reminded of his ideals, he lives his ideals: "[The sauna] is a tradition and makes everybody equal" (r88).

Turner wrote that "deep friendships between novices are encouraged" and "all are supposed to be linked by special ties which persist after the rites are over, even into old age (1970:101); Finns believe "nothing gets friends closer to each other than a sauna" (r24).[1] In ordinary circumstances, the inner, private self is normally protected within the well-established loyalties of close friends and kin and by the Finn's intense cultural respect for personal privacy. Personal interaction is facilitated and promoted by sauna bathing because, in the sauna, these norms are transcended. To a Finn, the symbolic significance of going together to the

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does."

[1]The actual socializing often happens during the post-sauna period while all the bathers are relaxing together with a drink, snack or meal. The new social status may be expressed in the reintegration phase of sauna bathing, with the advantages that the social transformations are fulfilled when all participants (even in segregated saunas) can participate and that the peace of the sauna is respected.

sauna is based on the parallel between baring one's body and baring one's innermost self, metaphorically laying one's private self naked before the other; people who throw off their clothes together throw off their public facade for one another's benefit. In both cases, the ordinary constraints on behaviour based on privacy norms are violated -- private parts of the body which are normally hidden are exposed (which becomes normal in the context of the sauna) and the private domains of one's self are opened (which is considered a positive attribute of the sauna). The following anecdote illustrates this:

> I was with my wife once at a reception when I saw an old, good and pleasant friend of mine, and quickly decided to introduce him to my wife. But, when I had to tell my friend's name, I was very embarrassed -- how is it possible to not know this man's name, despite the fact that he is certainly a friend of many years? Without clothes, in the sauna (Salomaa 1984:5).

In the sauna, the tensions associated with maintaining one's mask disappear -- "you can be yourself" (r123) -- and social intercourse is thus more relaxed and easier. "People usually go to the sauna together and talk much, even more than usually" (r27).

> The physicality of the [sauna] experience eliminates the awkwardness that characterizes other social encounters .... The usually reserved Finns give up their alluring bashfulness to freely reveal themselves in this ritual that reaches deeper than surface exchanges (Gaynor 1986:139-140).

This social transformation from public self to private self is possible because of the liminality of the sauna. Turner explains:

> This comradeship, with its familiarity, ease and, I would add, mutual outspokenness, is once more the product of interstructural liminality, with its scarcity of jurally sanctioned relationships and its emphasis on axiomatic values expressive of the common weal. People can "be themselves," it is frequently said, when they are not acting institutionalized roles. Roles, too, carry responsibilities.... They confront one another, as it were, integrally and not in compartmentalized fashion as actors of roles (1970:101).

Comparing Turner's statement with a Finn's description of the social value of sauna bathing clearly illustrates that the two authors are describing the same kind of social reality:

> It can happen that, in a hard life, sometimes you feel that what you're doing or what you are is an interpretation of a certain role. You have to be what your status is, you have to do what is expected. You can't tell a joke in the group because it's not

> expected of you. You dress, youth especially, according to your role. You have to be polite, attentive, flattering. That creates pressure. The new word is stress. Where do you undo all this? Where do you go? It's not hard -- to the sauna! No clothes, no inequalities, no roles. You are naked, you are with your own body, you accept your own existence. That is already a lot. If you accept yourself, you can also accept others easily. And the same for the others. You feel that you belong to the group, you are a part of it (Salomaa 1984:5).

When two people enter the sauna, they are also entering into a symbolic relationship in which the social is reflected in the bodily. Removing one's clothes is removing one's public mask; a physical state becomes a social reality. Sweating together in the sauna, removed from the impinging demands of ordinary life, Finns can be the people they "really" are, and can recreate their relationships with others as they ideally should be -- open, equal and trusting.

WHO GOES TO THE SAUNA TOGETHER?

Home and Family

The most important group to bathe together in the sauna is the family. "Everyone in the family goes to the sauna, from babies to grandfathers" (78). All family members normally sit together in the sauna, and it is never *improper* for family members to go together to the sauna, whatever their ages. There are variations, however, such as when children get older and wish to go separately as an indication of their growing independence or, when married, the adult children normally want to go to the sauna with their own spouses and families rather than with their natal families. But, the family sauna remains an expression of family solidarity and unity. "The sauna is a part of the home and of home life" (116). Sex integration at the family level emphasizes the solidarity of the family unit and the equal membership of both male and female members.[1] Traditionally, the men were the masters of the fields and the forests, the women mistresses of the home and the barn. When the work was done, they came together in the sauna. In

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[1]Roberts also writes that spouses are considered equals, and that the marriage relationship itself emphasizes the personal autonomy and independence of each spouse (1982:202-205).

the modern world, men and women again have their different jobs, and when the work is done, they come home, to the sauna. It is this image of family togetherness, in place of the images of sexy young women used elsewhere, which is most commonly exploited in Finland to advertise saunas.[1]

The relationship between the home and the sauna is so important that, metaphorically, the sauna is home. "A home without a sauna isn't a real home" (r55). The metaphorical link between home and sauna is evident already in the *Kalevala*. For example, in Rune XXXIV, the wandering magician, Kullervoinen, laments his homelessness in the characteristic triple imagery of the bardic style:

> Others have their homes to dwell in,
> Others hasten to their firesides
> As the evening gathers round them;
> But my home is in the forest,
> And my bed upon the heather,
> And my bath-room is the rain-cloud
> (Lönnrot 1889:533).

Similarly, in Rune VII, the aged wise-man Väinämöinen is tempted by this description of home, which is synonymous with one's own country, farm and sauna:

> "What are you prepared to give me,
> If I send you to your country,
> To the borders of your cornfields,
> Or the bath-house of your dwelling?"
> (Lönnrot 1907:68).

More recently, a moving example of this metaphor comes from one Finn's recollections of the Winter War (1939-1940). The Russians had taken over a Finnish farm-house for use as a temporary headquarters. The soldier's orders were to burn the house; he replied, "That is my home." In relating his story, the house itself did not evoke the emotions of home, but the smallest details of the sauna are lovingly remembered:

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[1]The questionnaire respondents ranking of "feel close to their family and friends" clearly establishes this as an important part of sauna bathing. The greatest variation in responses to this question relates to the frequency of sauna bathing: the largest proportion of respondents who ranked this reason as irrelevant are from those groups who go to the sauna less frequently than is the norm while the smallest proportion ranking this as irrelevant were those who bathe in the sauna more frequently than is the norm.

> I bent over my skis to make sure my bindings were tight, removed the safety from my submachine gun, and placed it across my chest. Then we quickly skied toward the house, past my sauna where I had taken numerous baths. The snow around the building was undisturbed and through the window I saw a piece of candle and a book of matches; there was a faint smell of charcoal and rotting birch whisks (Engle and Paananen 1973:86).

Hospitality

Sometimes outsiders will be invited to enjoy the sauna with the family, in which case the sauna will always be sex segregated.[1] For example, a house guest will naturally be invited to the sauna. This welcome ritually brings the guest within the sphere of the family's private lives, the Finnish way of inviting the guest to feel "at-home."

> The Finnish *sauna* is a place not only for family bathing, we learned, but for entertaining one's friends. It has a special social value like the Japanese tea ceremony. The offer of a *sauna* bath is the height of Finnish hospitality (Strode 1941:88).

Roberts' analysis suggests that this may be particularly important because "The roles of guest and host are both problematic for villagers. [...] It is as though the social relationship of being a guest temporarily turns even friends or old acquaintances into strangers" (1982:241-242). On certain special occasions, such as at Christmas, which have a strong tradition as family time, outsiders rarely participate in the family sauna because inviting a guest would require dividing the family to conform with the expectation that the sauna must be segregated, in contradiction to the holiday celebration of family togetherness. Also, the family should be ready to welcome the guest into their private circle before the sauna will be shared. "Perhaps one would go to the sauna with some guests out of politeness, but generally one must accept them already beforehand, before going with them to the sauna" (r145).

> The stranger, the passing inhabitant of the cities, does not bathe with the people, for they are shy: he may have his bath, but all alone. It was only when they had come to regard me as one of themselves that I was allowed to accompany them; then the neighbors, old and young, would often come to bathe and keep company with Paulus (du Chaillu 1882:207).

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[1]Alternatively, if the families are less close, each family may bathe as units in turn.

The sauna, the home and hospitality are thus closely linked: "The sauna is a part of the warmth of the home" (r129).

Social Groups

In addition to families, any group, such as work teams, clubs, student groups, etc., may have a "sauna evening" (*saunailta*), a kind of party organized around bathing in the sauna. Long term associations do so regularly. For example, "the sauna is an important part of student social life" (r88).[1] Roberts also reports that in Rasti, "during the summer, the [Agricultural Women's] group may hold a sauna evening; up to thirty people may attend these affairs" (1982:151). The sauna party, during which group dynamics can change dramatically,[2] has two purposes: to help ease the

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[1]A large proportion of the questionnaire sample are students, of which most are young men studying engineering at the university where I once worked (respondents #1 - #89 [77 male, 12 female]). Non-students account for 90 of the respondents in the quantitative sample. The principle difference between the students and others is the students' high valuation of drinking and partying in the sauna. Although virtually no non-students chose "party, drink and have fun in the sauna" or "enjoy a beer or liquor in the steam" as very important reasons for going to the sauna, 23% and 16% (respectively) of the student respondents did. Students also seem to be more willing to break the taboo against sex in the sauna. There is virtually no difference between students and non-students regarding the top five reasons for going to the sauna (except that students are more likely to rank "more than clean" as very important). (See Appendix B.)

[2]I participated in a *saunailta* in Finland (May, 1985) where this change in behaviour before and after the sauna was very obvious. I was one of a team of teachers in a one week course in intensive English with a focus on the oral skills needed in business. The participants were all businessmen from local industries, some of whom knew each other. At the beginning of the course, the interactions (both social and educational) were overshadowed by the Finns' "shyness." As the days went by, people began to get to know one another better but the group dynamics began to change only very slowly. The *saunailta* was organized for Thursday night, the penultimate day of the course. As the group gathered, people were standing stiffly with a beer in hand, discussing business strategies. In the sauna, an excellent old-style *savusauna* on the lakeshore owned by one of the firms participating in the course, I had a long and fascinating discussion with the only businesswoman participating in the course (and the only other woman present at the party) who until then had hardly spoken except as required in the course. By the time everyone had been to the sauna, business was the farthest thing from anyone's mind. The next day, a more jovial and friendly group said reluctant good-byes. It was through the *saunailta*, primarily, that these

tensions involved in group work situations, thereby aiding existing groups to function more smoothly, and to mark and facilitate the transition from impersonal relations to social interaction. Finns' high value on individual independence extends to working independently,[1] thus they feel the stresses and tensions of group work very acutely. The sauna is a very useful tool for promoting good working relationships within groups because it helps to diffuse these tensions by reaffirming the solidarity of the group and by relieving personal stress and aggression at the psychological level. The social benefits of the sauna have even achieved some international fame as a peculiarly Finnish way of negotiating important deals. For example, Finland's former president Urho Kekkonen was known to meet with important Soviet politicians in the sauna, and was well respected for it by his countrymen.

> The "night school" of the Cabinet came into existence in 1958. This is the unofficial meeting of the Cabinet on Wednesdays, and it includes a sauna bath. A sociological investigation came to the conclusion that the sauna baths had a positive effect on decision making in the Cabinet, at least in country like ours with so many political parties (Ter 1976a:15).

Marjatta Väänänen, (then) Minister of Education in the Finnish government, wrote,

> ...in Finland, we often solve disputed issues in the sauna. It is out of the question that, for instance, the labour market organizations could manage without a sauna. When incomes policy negotiations grind to a halt, the representatives of both the unions and the employers have a sauna together and, in most cases, the agreement on wages and salaries is reached in the heat of the sauna. A Finnish Government which tries to get along without a sauna will not remain long in power (1976:11).

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individuals finally came together into a cohesive group.

[1]For example, in an informal survey of a class of engineering students in Finland, almost without exception all of the students expressed the desire to work independently rather than in cooperative group or team situations. This group was almost exclusively composed of male students, and perhaps relates to the strong emphasis on male *sisu* which forbids men from publicly admitting to a problem (making team efforts at problem solving impossible). There would probably be a significantly higher rate of willingness to cooperate among women in similar situations.

Foreign businessmen, too, are routinely taken to the company sauna. One Finnish businessman, on whom this responsibility regularly fell, joked about this with me, a foreigner, saying, "Why do all our guests have to go to the sauna? Are they all so dirty?" A Finnish writer suggested that the sauna was "occasionally used for discussions and get-togethers with the aim of reaching decisions and results" because "people become easier to handle when they undress" (Donner 1987:13). In fact, taking business partners to the sauna is a very clever and subtle manipulation of the Finnish sauna culture.[1] Within the private space of the sauna, moral obligations of honesty and good faith may weigh more heavily on the participants than during formal negotiations. Furthermore, it is a good opportunity to really get to know the other person, the "real" person, not his business mask, and so facilitate better rapport and communication.

There are some negative repercussions of these practices, however. In the business world, where men are still in the majority, women can be severely disadvantaged by exclusion from sex segregated business saunas. "Those stupid business saunas, they normally make women's progress and presence in a welcoming work community more difficult" (r115). The problem is a serious one, for even in companies with non-discriminatory policies, women may be handicapped from rising to international negotiations, if the foreign representatives are, as is usually the case, men.

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[1]Although the business and political uses of the sauna are well recognized, there is some difference of opinion as to exactly what happens in the sauna. Most respondents did not challenge the wording of the questionnaire which asked whether "Finns go to the sauna because they like to do business in the sauna" and, in fact, Väänänen (above) wrote that "agreement ... is reached in the heat of the sauna." Some people, however, feel that the actual negotiations must take place afterwards. In response to the questionnaire, one person wrote, "Terrible! It's true that some people use the sauna to their advantage: they soften the negotiations. But I can't believe that anyone actually negotiates in the sauna. Even such softening (= persuasion) is already blasphemy!" (r145). Another wrote, "sauna bathing and the sauna feeling in no way are a part of rushing around, or (oh horror!) business negotiations, alcohol, rowdiness, etc." (r164). The statistical distribution of questionnaire responses shows that 40% of the respondents do not consider "doing business in the sauna" to be a relevant reason for going to the sauna, compared to 42% who ranked this as a less important reason and 14% who consider it to be a very important reason. (See Appendix B.)

The "Real" Sauna?

Saunas are increasingly becoming smaller and more individualistic. The standard is fast becoming the apartment sauna, or "mini-sauna," also sometimes called a "bathroom sauna" or, by the less enthusiastic, a "sweat closet". As smaller dwellings with private saunas in each apartment become the norm,[1] a change from the large apartment block saunas shared by all residents, and from the communal saunas of past centuries and large family saunas of the rural areas and early urban period, the sauna is invariably reduced both in size and function. Mini-saunas rarely seat more than two or three persons comfortably, meaning that not only are the social uses of the sauna severely restricted, but that often even families cannot all go to the sauna together. Under these conditions, the individual takes precedence over social groups, separation rather than unity is experienced and urban atomization and individualism are highlighted; even in the sauna, ideals and realities are in conflict.

> The new wave, fine saunas in individual apartments, is probably not a good idea.... You go to the sauna alone, in the dry steam from the electric stove you try to sweat as quickly as possible and then get out. The whole idea behind the traditional sauna, the week's event, is being turned upside-down. Isn't Friday (earlier Saturday) anything magical in a person's life anymore? Where are the block saunas, the friends, the feeling of relaxation, the feeling of belonging to the group, the nice stories, the birch switches and the clean boxer shorts. Don't these things exist anymore? Instead of these, we have plenty of pent-up feelings, the anger of our neighbours, bombs, violence, and mob-mentality (Salomaa 1984:5).

What does the modern sauna mean? Sauna habits have become a subject of public debate and strong personal conviction, as if the relative worth of the traditional sauna over a modern electric one were an issue of profound importance.

> When a Finn talks about the sauna, especially his own, there is nothing to equal it, especially if he built it himself. Sauna

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[1]A glance through some recent Finnish home and decorating magazines (*Meidän Talo* [Our Home] and *Avotakka* [The Hearth]) reveals that all of the homes illustrated have small, private saunas. The smallest apartment illustrated is in a newly renovated hundred year old heritage building: 49 square metres in size, it consists of one room, a kitchen and a sauna/bathroom (Vehviläinen 1987:89).

> discussion and sauna criticism are often fairly biting even among friends (Teir *in* Konya and Burger 1973:7).

Indeed, it is a vitally important issue, for if the popular new mini-saunas cannot mediate between public and private, bridging the gulf between social life as it all too often actually is and social life as it ideally should be, can they still be considered "real" saunas? For concerned individuals, the issue is not one of bathing practices, but is part of the problem of determining what "real" life means, of defining what living a meaningful life is.

UNMASKING THE REAL FINN

The shy Finn is a "real" Finn hiding behind a public mask, a vulnerable individual whose cultural ideals are in contradiction to the demands of ordinary life. On the one hand, this defensive persona protects the individual's ideals -- privacy, independence, autonomy -- from erosion by public life; but on the other hand, social life is inhibited, social ties restricted, tipping the precarious balance of contradiction between private and public towards individualism and solitude. Within the sauna, as easily as stepping out of his clothes, the Finn can step out of the constraints of being a Finn, in a uniquely Finnish way revitalizing social relations and restoring the public/private balance. Thus, the "real" sauna may be both a refuge from ordinary public life and a recreation of "real" Finnish social life.

CHAPTER 5

THE SAUNA IS FINNISHNESS

> "Finnishness and the sauna belong inseparably together. One cannot think of a Finn without a sauna nor a sauna without a Finn" (Timonen 1981:8).

Finns are very conscious of the sauna as an emblem of Finnishness--they believe it, encourage it and proclaim it whenever possible.[1] Finnish national identity was created during the nationalist movement and, as a part of this process, the sauna was recreated to symbolize Finnishness to the emerging nation. Implicit in this ideology is the concept of national identity as an ideal, based on notions of an idealized past; the "real" Finn, then, becomes a goal rather than an attribute, the "real" sauna a means of reaching that goal. The sauna is a key symbol which summarizes what it means to be a Finn.

CULTURAL CONTINUITY AND THE CREATION OF FINNISHNESS

The analysis of the preceding chapters has approached understanding the sauna as a network of meanings, by which the relationships of the sauna to

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[1]Of a sample of 195 respondents, 50% expressed the notion that the sauna is uniquely Finnish, part of the Finnish way of life or traditions, or otherwise important to their identity as Finns. These comments, taken from the qualitative sections of the questionnaires, were used to categorize the respondents for quantitative analysis. There is very little variation between these two categories. Although the "Finnishness" group had the highest ranking of "relaxing in the sauna" (98% very important) and the "No Finnishness" group had the lowest ranking of this reason (88% very important), the difference is not great enough to be confident of its significance. The respondents were also categorized according to those who wrote in the qualitative section that sauna was a necessity in their lives (37 respondents) and those who didn't (158 respondents); there was no systematic variation in responses between these groups. (See Appendix B.)

diverse areas of life and the cultural notions which define these relationships as meaningful may be highlighted. The image of culture fostered by this approach is of a synchronic balance of elements, steadfastly preserving an inner harmony while enduring the waves of time. The Finns would probably find this view appealing, for they take tremendous pride in the ancient roots of their bath: "Is there any where else in the world which has preserved some culture [i.e., the sauna] in its original form through the centuries and millennia of turmoil?" (Greis 1981:28). Nevertheless, a truer conception may be achieved with the incorporation of a diachronic perspective into the analysis.

It is impossible to say with any assurance exactly what the sauna represented to the pre-historic ancestors of today's Finns, for throughout the ages, the form and meaning of sauna bathing have changed and adapted to many new conditions. Conversion to Christianity did not doom the sauna to extinction with the shamans who are thought to have used it for their magical incantations because the sauna as symbol turned to serve the church, to find new meanings in the new traditions. Later, "the great agricultural revolution, beginning in the west and south approximately in the 1870's, wiped out many of the traditions of the *sauna* as it shook and moved the cultural foundations of the old form of life and as environmental conditions changed" (Aaltonen 1953:160). The perennial re-creation of the meaning of the sauna for each new era, the infusion of new meanings for new world views, has enabled it to survive the tests of time. It is likely, however, that some of the meanings of the sauna are metaphors with a long history, while others are more recent. Throughout the preceding analysis, references have been made to such evidence, both from folkloric and archival sources, as suggests historical antecedents to the metaphors of today. On the other hand, the most easily recognizable meanings of the sauna, those of which the Finns are most conscious, such as the sauna as a symbol of national identity, are of a more recent tradition. The notion of the sauna as a remnant of proto-Finnish culture is an important cultural myth, symbolically useful as a legitimizing strategy, but must not be confused with historical fact.

> No culture remains totally unaltered with the passage of time; as generation succeeds generation, all kinds of changes occur, some abruptly, others imperceptibly but nevertheless with equal

> persistence. Thus, sameness must in reality be a matter of cultural similarity or continuity. These kinds of connection are unlike the absolute notion of sameness, however, in that they depend on the observer's criteria of relevance -- on a whole set of presuppositions, in other words, about what traits really constitute acceptable or interesting evidence for some sort of link. Clearly, then, a premise of cultural continuity cannot usefully be regarded as a question of pure fact (Herzfeld 1982:3).

Smith defines cultural continuity as the continual fusion of old and new, as the ever-present cultural dialectic between tradition and innovation: "Continuity is the synthesis within which tradition is persistent viability through adaptation and change is the novel manifestation of a durable identity" (Smith 1982:135).* Although both tradition and change are inherent in culture, there are always aspects of the culture which are apparently unchanged and others which are apparently transformed; this may be understood as a cultural decision to focus either on change or on tradition. Smith suggests, furthermore, that "one task of anthropology should be to delineate the conditions under which participants of a given socioculture will identify 'tradition' or 'innovation' as the dominant characteristic of a sociocultural element" (Smith 1982:127).

Finns identify the sauna with tradition. For example, a Finnish respondent stated that the "sauna has nearly 'always' belonged to our culture" (r28). Already in 1882, a traveller wrote that "the custom [of the Saturday sauna] has come down from olden times" (du Chaillu 1882:209). Several travellers describe the sauna's antiquity by reference to the *Kalevala*:

> The form of the sauna has changed little in remoter Finland since the time when Ahnikki steeped birch-whisks and prepared the vapour-bath for Ilmarinen before his journey to Pohjola [in the *Kalevala*] (Travers 1911:143; see also Rosvall 1940, Aaland 1973).

Finnish writers also sometimes stress the continuity of the sauna by reference to the sharing of a common experience with one's ancestors: "The sauna provides a means of recapturing the enjoyment of bathing experienced by our forefathers" (Konya and Burger 1973:9; see also Herva 1982:4, Valtakari n/d:2, Teir 1976a:17). The most telling clue to the Finnish attitude, however, is that Finns see no contradiction in recognizing "how the use of the sauna has ... changed with the general transformation in

living conditions generally," while stressing "how the sauna has yet held tenaciously to its unique character" (Helamaa 1976:23).

> The Finnish sauna has remained almost unchanged over millennia.... The changes which have occurred in the sauna are results of technical developments and have affected only the outer trappings of the sauna: its spirit and the manner in which the bathing takes place have remained unchanged" (Visanti 1976:83-84).

This notion of the sauna as a synecdocal link to the past is a quite different attitude to cultural continuity than that of, for example, the German architect who defines the designing of sauna facilities as "a primarily creative activity for which there is, fortunately, no ready recipe available and that must always adapt itself to the individual case" (Lauster 1976:103). The German identifies the sauna with innovation, despite recognition of the "Finnish archetype." In Finnish culture, the sauna is identified with tradition, continuity being defined according to cultural criteria of relevance based on the notion of the "real" sauna. Furthermore, to identify the sauna with change is to corrupt the "real" sauna. For example, one writer contrasts changes in the Finnish sauna where tradition is emphasized with changes in the sauna occurring in foreign cultures where innovation is emphasized in order to illustrate how the latter represent "mutations" of the "real" sauna, the former:

> Although the sauna has changed considerably from [olden]-time, something essential has been preserved: the sanctity of the sauna.
> A tour through foreign countries makes it only too obvious how much the sauna has changed over the years. Often all that is left of the original article is the name.... The mutations have often lowered and not improved the quality (Herva 1982:5, 8).

This emphasis on tradition was not always the case, for during the social upheavals of pre-independence rural Finland, the sauna was used to highlight change rather than tradition. By the late nineteenth century, the socio-economic infrastructure of predominantly agricultural Finland was no

longer viable and the population increase over the past century[1] could no longer be supported on the land[2]: "a substitute bread made out of chaff and birch-bark was a staple item in the diet of many households in eastern and northern Finland, even during years of normal harvests. When the harvest failed, the effect was often catastrophic" (Kirby 1979:2). The resultant social effects were unemployment, emigration and the development of a rural class structure consisting of an increasingly wealthy landowning minority and an impoverished landless majority[3], which was far from the Finnish ideals of independence and equality. As these changing rural conditions led to the social stratification of the countryside, sauna[4] traditions changed too, reflecting a new concern to emphasize inequality rather than community solidarity. The company one kept in the sauna became an indicator of one's social status[4] and denial of the sauna indicated a refusal to recognize equality, an expression of pretensions to superiority.[5]

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[1]Population figures for Finland (*from* Kirby 1973:3, table 1):

Year	Total Population	Urban districts		Rural districts	
1750	421,500	--	--	--	--
1800	832,700	46,600	5.6%	786,100	94.4%
1860	1,746,700	110,000	6.3%	1,636,400	93.7%
1880	2,060,800	174,300	8.5%	1,886,500	91.5%
1900	2,655,900	333,300	12.5%	2,322,600	87.5%

[2]"Over three-quarters of all Finnish farms in 1910 were of less than ten hectares in size, and over half were less than five hectares.... It should be noted that 10 hectares was regarded as an absolute minimum for self-sufficiency by Finnish agronomists in the 1920s" (Kirby 1979:10-11).

[3]This category included leaseholders (rent was paid in the form of day labour on the landlord's farm and tenants had little security either of tenure or from increasing labour demands), scrapholdings (farms too small to support the tenants) and the landless farmhands. "Recent research would suggest that of those engaged in agriculture in 1910, roughly 40 per cent were freehold farmers, 20 per cent leased their land, and 40 per cent were farmworkers with little or no land" (Kirby 1979:10).

[4]These changes were not, however, uniform throughout the country, each province, district or parish had their own local expression of the developing social hierarchy (see Aaltonen 1953, for example).

[5]"Now the servants were increasingly housed and fed separately, and the farmer (*talollinen*) sought to identify himself with the gentlefolk (*herrasväki*) rather than with the common people (*rahvas*)" (Kirby 1979:9).

> In many places we know exactly when and why the women-folk, at least the housewife, ceased to join in the common bath. For instance, when in 1881 a new mistress came to a Central Finnish farm from a neighbouring parish, she immediately introduced the new custom of refusing to join the other people on the farm at their bathing (Aaltonen 1953:166).

Important shifts in the meanings of symbols such as the sauna suggest that the traditional world view was in crisis; this was parallelled, during the same time period, by a similar crisis among the urban elite. While the rural areas were struggling to survive, the urban gentry were struggling with political issues: in 1809, Finland was transferred from the Swedish crown to the Russian Czar, who granted her autonomy over her own affairs. This sparked a crisis of identity among the Swedish-speaking upper classes and a search for identity among the emergent Finnish-speaking intellectuals which gained momentum in the latter half of the century under the rallying cry, "We are no longer Swedes, we cannot become Russians, let us then be Finns!" (Juva 1973:30)[1]. The result was the nationalist movement.[2] The goals of the nationalists included the creation of a sense of national identity which had never before existed among the scattered people of the forests.[3] The Finns had never had a national level form of political

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[1]Cf. d'Azeglio: "We have made Italy: now we must make Italians" (*in* Hobsbawm and Ranger 1983:267).

[2]Roberts also writes that "[Finland's] transfer to Russia, in 1809, had a number of significant impacts on [its] development as a national entity with its own autonomous core" (1982:46).

[3]This point is also suggested by Roberts, who wrote:

> Well into the middle of the 19th century Finland lacked an autonomous and truly unifying and integrating economic and political structure.... "The Russians ran into a country without a center in the Finland of 1809" [Alapuro]. The various Finnish-speaking regions were linked to an external core -- Sweden -- and not to each other during the period of Swedish rule (1982:46).

Herzfeld makes a similar point in reference to Greece prior to the Greek nationalist movement and political independence:

> Certainly, the formation of a Greek national identity in terms of cultural continuity was something of a novelty to the largely illiterate country people (1983:17).

organization nor a symbol of national loyalty: the governments, the noble classes, the kings, even the official languages had always been foreign. The most basic task of the nationalists, for nationalism was more than a simple program for political independence, was the creation and recreation of symbols. The work of the artists and the academics was to renew waning symbols and infuse new meaning into old symbols: "romantic nationalism in art and literature in the 1800s raised [the sauna] again to its former glory" (Valtakari 1978:4).

> Before 1808, no Finn had attempted to paint the sauna on canvas. Artistically, examining a sauna would be like painting an oven or a toilet -- it just wasn't done. But the forces of nationalism and realism changed this... The sauna soon became the central subject for many a Finnish painter, depicting scenes of blood letting, old women bathing, and birch gatherers (Aaland 1978:83).

The sauna, though in decline and disuse in the cities and in a state of major transformation in the countryside as the ideology and practice of sauna bathing adapted to the new social realities, was taken by the nationalist movement as an enduring symbol of Finnishness: here, finally, was a truly national institution -- not Swedish, not Russian[1], uniquely Finnish -- with which the whole people could identify. This meaning of the sauna as a symbol of national identity and solidarity eventually became the accepted meaning of the "real" Finnish sauna.[2]

Also, Trevor-Roper writes that "the whole concept of a distinct Highland [Scottish] culture and tradition is a retrospective invention" (1983:15); in fact, Hobsbawm characterizes the period of 1870-1914 in Europe as a time of "mass-producing traditions" (1983b).

[1]The Russian sweat-bath, the *banya*, is similar to the Finnish sauna in many respects but is not culturally evaluated -- neither by the Finns nor the Russians (see footnote 1, page 13) -- as the same as the Finnish sauna.

[2]The sauna is also used as a symbol of Finnishness for Finns living outside of Finland. For example, Finnish soldiers stationed overseas say, "We have Finnish beer, some Finnish food, Finnish newspapers and magazines, but the sauna is the most substantial link we have. You go inside, take a deep breath and smell the burning wood, sit back and imagine you're home in Finland" (*in* Aaland 1978:93). It is also an important symbol of ethnic identity for citizens of other countries who choose to recognize their Finnish "roots." According to Lockwood, "the sauna is one of the most viable expressions of Finnish-American identity" (1974:72). Johnson writes that "the *sauna* still exists ... as a folk institution wherever Finnish Americans live, retaining its most important traditions and tabus in rural

INVENTED TRADITIONS

The concept of "invented traditions" was presented by Hobsbawm as "responses to novel situations which take the form of reference to old situations" (1983a:2).

> "Invented tradition" is taken to mean a set of practices, normally governed by overtly or tacitly accepted rules and of a ritual or symbolic nature, which seek to inculcate certain values and norms of behaviour by repetition, which automatically implies continuity with the past. In fact, where possible, they normally attempt to establish continuity with a suitable historic past (1983a:1).

For example, during the crisis period of rapid social and political change, the nationalists looked for symbols of an idealized past in "tradition" which they believed was a harmonious pattern of life preserved in rural ways. They searched for unchanging symbols of Finnishness which could revitalize the people in their struggle for political independence. The *Kalevala* is a example of this: "in Finland ... folklore studies played an important part in creating a national consciousness long before statehood could be achieved" (Herzfeld 1983:12). By the nineteenth century, the oral literary traditions had disappeared from all but the most isolated forest communities. The customary meanings of this poetry for the peasants from whom they were collected was not considered to be of importance; their real value was considered to lie in their power to inspire nationalist feelings and identity. They were also used to support claims to political competence by "convincing Finns that their ancestors were not mere forest dwellers, but had been a spiritually gifted race" (Juva 1973:31). Thus, Finnish folklore is an invented tradition.

As a major element of this new tradition, the *Kalevala* had a profound influence on the thinkers of the time:

> The great Finnish epic, the 'Kalevala,' is in a sense the most significant national epic in existence. In it are reflected not only the manners, beliefs, superstitions, and customs of a race, but the very soul of that race. The Finnish pulse beats in the 'Kalevala,' the Finnish heart stirs throughout its rhythmic sequences, the Finnish brain molds and adapts itself within these

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areas" (1951:33). And Mather and Kaups conclude that "the correlation of saunas with Finnish settlement in rural America is impressive" (1963:503).

> metrical limits. There is, too, certainly no other instance so remarkable of the influence upon the national character of an epic work which as it were summarizes the people for itself. In no exaggerated sense, the Finland of to-day is largely due to the immense influence of the national sentiment created by the universal adoption of the 'Kalevala' as, after the Scriptures, the chief mental and spiritual treasure-house of the Finnish nation (Sharp 1917:8443).

Almost certainly we can assume that the *Kalevala* influenced the intellectual elite in choosing the sauna as a new symbol in their art, since the sauna appears repeatedly in the old folklore and many artists explicitly drew on the *Kalevala* for their inspiration (see Ilmonen 1976).

Hobsbawm emphasizes that invariable "traditions" must not be confused with "customs," social patterns which must be variable (at least to a point) in order to accommodate changing circumstances (1983a:2). The sauna apparently has a long history as a nearly universal Finnish custom, but only in modern times has it also become an invented tradition; the difference lies in the conscious attempt by the nationalists to transform abruptly the Finnish people's response to social change from a cultural adaptation which emphasized change to one which emphasized tradition. Both the customary meanings of the sauna, such as the symbolic expressions of rural inequalities, and the invented tradition, as a symbol of nationalism, are representations of continuity; but, as Smith suggests, the critical question is not whether the sauna has changed over time (for this is undeniable) but rather "under what conditions both insiders and outsiders see continuity regardless of changes which have occurred or discontinuity despite traditions which persist" (Smith 1982:14). The revitalization of the sauna symbol by the nationalists is part of the revitalization of a world view, a world view which may not be identical to the traditional one on which it was modeled, but one in which the belief in a continuous tradition is a vital aspect. Herzfeld suggests that "the premiss of cultural continuity [as pure fact] ... is some indication of the substantial political interests that are vested in it" (1983:4); the Finnish case seems to confirm this.

The process of inventing traditions is legitimized by invoking the past; even today, the concept of "real" Finnishness is defined by reference

to an idealized past.[1] Hobsbawm writes that "all invented traditions, so far as possible, use history as a legitimator of action and cement of group cohesion" (1983a:12), but this history is filtered by culturally constructed criteria of relevance which create the impression of greater consistency in tradition than may actually be the case (Herzfeld 1983:3). Herzfeld's discussion of Greek nationalism and traditions could equally well be applied to Finland:

> When cultural continuity is quite obviously a political issue--and in Greece it was never anything else, since it provided the theoretical justification for creating the nation-state in the first place -- the observer's personal politics are crucial in determining whether such continuity is admitted to exist (1983:4).

For example, "non-traditional" meanings of the sauna, meanings which do not support the invented tradition of the sauna as a symbol of national solidarity and identity, for example, the sauna as a means of differentiating social status or as a relative of the Russian *banya*, are seldom recognized. Furthermore, assumptions of cultural continuity typically lead the Finns to assume cultural values for ancient sauna which,

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[1]The designation of any given time period as "traditional" is as arbitrary as the appellation of certain cultural forms, like the sauna, as such. However, common usage generally refers to 19th century rural culture as "traditional," apparently since the nationalists first began to seek out pre-industrial cultural forms as models of "true" Finnish culture. Implicit in this usage is the assumption that rural culture had remained essentially unchanged for centuries before this. Finnish ethnology focuses on tradition research (e.g. Aaltonen 1953, Sarmela 1969) and is "primarily concerned with the past, and especially with the rural peasant past" (Roberts 1982:6).

despite serious scholastic efforts (eg. Siikala 1986), cannot be proven.[1] For example,

> The ancient Finns believed that fire came from heaven, and was therefore sacred. For this reason they looked upon the sauna as a holy place. It was a centre for the worship of the dead, a place where diseases and evils of the body were driven out, and even where unhappy love affairs could be settled. Some people consider that the practice of throwing water over the stones evolved as a form of sacrificial ceremony (Konya and Burger 1974:13; see also Aaland 1978:15,16).

While there is some evidence that the sauna has long had spiritual significance (see chapter one for linguistic evidence), the sauna practices of the ancient Finns are more securely part of the cultural myths of the modern Finns than of historical record. Nevertheless, such assumptions are as integral to Finnish national identity as they are to the concept of the "real" sauna: "if it were just a place to get clean, it would hardly have survived as a national institution for over two milleniums [*sic*]" (Herva 1982:3).[2]

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[1]The sources of these beliefs about the ancient cultural values of the sauna are generally the oral traditions, such as the *Kalevala*, which were compiled in the nineteenth century. These beliefs cannot be simply assumed to be true, as there is no independent evidence to support these sources. As windows to the past, they must be assumed to be distorting ones for, transmitted orally for centuries during which important cultural shifts occurred (including conversion to Christianity), it is inevitable that these traditions will have been altered in the process; in other words, these traditions must be assumed to represent continuity rather than identity with the past. Furthermore, the biases of research must be considered. As one of the most significant symbols of identity and nationhood, folklore is especially vulnerable to ideological interpretations (cf. Herzfeld 1982). For example, Roberts writes, "the primary motivation of early Finnish folklore studies was the nationalistic desire to find in Finnish folk poems a set of indigenous, uniquely Finnish values on which to base Finnish society," and that "Finnish folklorists have continually reinterpreted these poems and their implicit values, as Finland's political position has changed" (1982:5). In his survey of the attitudes which have influenced the interpretation of traditions, he suggests that today Finnish researchers view "Finnish folk culture [as representing] a unique and 'harmonious combination of the eastern and western components of the culture' " (1982:6, quoting Vilkuna) -- as befits a neutral nation balancing eastern and western political interests.

[2]Herzfeld makes a similar case for Greek folklore about which, he writes, "it is hard to see how *any* statement ... in Greece could be ideologically neutral" (1982:140,144).

The discriminatory use of history serves to cloak the arbitrariness of symbols, and especially of invented traditions, with the illusion that they arise "naturally" from the culture. Although the sauna may seem particularly appropriate as a nationalist symbol because it includes fellowship as a fundamental aspect of its customary meanings, the arbitrariness of the sauna as a symbol of national solidarity is evident when we recognize that this metaphor was competing with the customary use of the same symbol as an expression of status differentiation among the rural populations. The success of the illusion is obvious in the Finns' use of natural imagery to describe the metaphor, the sauna is Finnishness: "The sauna suits a Finn like a nose on a face" (r124). "The sauna is a part of the Finn's basic character" (r125).

The level at which people are conscious of their symbols is a distinguishing factor between "customary" and "invented" traditions. For example, Hobsbawm writes, "most of the occasions when people become conscious of citizenship as such remain associated with symbols and semi-ritual practices (for instance, elections), most of which are historically novel and largely invented" (1983a:11-12). This contrasts with Turner's discussion of customary symbols, of which he states that "a complex relationship exists between the overt and the submerged, and the manifest and latent patterns of meaning" (1970:46). This contrast is important for it relates to the function of invented traditions as political constructs used to control or manipulate groups of people: " 'invented traditions' have significant social and political functions, and would neither come into existence nor establish themselves if they could not acquire them" (Hobsbawm 1983b:307). A strong emotional commitment to a universal and invariable set of vague "values, rights and obligations of the group membership" (Hobsbawm 1983a:10) is created by the conscious and conscientious participation of members in universal and invariable traditions; latent meanings and variable customs leave too much opportunity for variation -- or individual will -- for effective manipulation.

Yet perhaps the most interesting aspect of invented traditions is the extent to which these are welcomed, indeed even sought, by the people who are subject to their manipulation: "the most successful examples of manipulation are those which exploit practices which clearly meet a felt--

not necessarily a clearly understood -- need among particular bodies of people" (Hobsbawm 1983b:307). The customary response to the perception of social change is, as we have seen from the sauna example, to emphasize change and modify existing cultural elements to these new conditions. But where this response is felt to be inadequate or undesirable the appeal of an ideology promising a happier future based on notions of an idealized past is easily understood. This was the case in nineteenth century Finland where social upheaval quickly produced very basic conflicts between the value system of the traditional world view and the new social order; where, for example, cultural values based on egalitarianism and independence confronted stratification and dependency relations and the traditional balance between individual and community was neglected in favour of exploitative individualism.

> We should expect [the "invention" of tradition] to occur more frequently when a rapid transformation of society weakens or destroys the social patterns for which "old" traditions had been designed, producing new ones to which they were not applicable, or when such old traditions and their institutional carriers and promulgators no longer prove sufficiently adaptable and flexible, or are otherwise eliminated... (Hobsbawm 1983a:5).

But implicit in the notion of Finnishness as an identity legitimized by reference to an idealized past is the conceptualization of identity as an ideal, as a purpose or goal, rather than as a self-evident attribute. Thus, a consequence of this ideology, of the invention of Finnishness, is its ramification into a fundamental division of the world view into an ideal reality and an actual reality, an ideal which as time and change continue, becomes less and less relevant as a model for the actual, lived reality.[1] Herzfeld writes that "ideological criteria of culture, if they are to be

---

[1]Herzfeld discusses a similar case of cultural contradictions which developed out of Greek nationalism, where there are still today "obvious discontinuities between Hellenic ideal and Greek actuality" (1982:19). The Greek case is different from the Finnish example, however, because the ideological division in Greek culture is a "conflict between an imported ideology and a nativist one" (1982:21). Unlike in Finland, where the two images refer to different levels of reality, one referring to ideal reality and the other to lived reality, the Greek dichotomy is more clearly politically motivated and referring to different political spheres: "[Hellenism is] an outward-directed conformity to international expectations about the national image and [Romeism is] an inward-looking self-critical collective appraisal" (1982:20).

judged successful must in some measure become self-fulfilling prophecies" (1982:18). This is the real power of the nationalist tradition: it both creates and resolves the world view contradictions. When the ideal culture defined by the Finnish world view and the actual world the Finns must live in are in contradiction, the traditions and values arising from the culture are also felt to be in constant jeopardy, thus in need of perpetual revitalization, and traditions are invented to recreate a meaningful link between the ideal and the actual. The void between the ideal and the actual left by the passing of traditional social customs is partially filled with the notion of "Finnishness" as a meaningful yet durable purpose. Furthermore, meaning is a dialectic: the traditional world view also gains new purpose as the definition of Finnish identity, in the process partially maintaining the old world view despite the disturbing discrepancy with actuality. For example, the sauna helps the urban Finn stay in touch with nature, temporarily resolving the contradiction of the "forest Finn" in the city. At the same time, the Finnish valuation of nature is reaffirmed by the sauna teaching that such values are important components of Finnish identity, thus inhibiting the adoption of a world view more suited to the urban environment which might permanently ease the discomfort of living away from nature.

The continuing debate about the nature of the "real" sauna is an indication of the problem of reconciling cultural symbols to a changing, and ever more quickly changing, social world, of the constant effort needed to maintain and reproduce the symbols which make life meaningful. This debate is "essentially a process of formalization and ritualization characterized by reference to the past" (Hobsbawm 1983a:4), a program for making Finns more conscious and conscientious of their sauna tradition, the course by which a custom may be remolded into an invented tradition. Hobsbawm writes that "where the old ways are alive, traditions need be neither revived nor invented" (1983a:7-8), but the Finnish sauna illustrates that a symbol may function as both a living tradition and an invented one.

SAUNA AS A KEY TO MEANING

The sauna is a key symbol in Finnish culture because it is a key to meaning: "Without the sauna," wrote one respondent, "[life] would be as empty as a house without a woman's step on the sauna path" (r104). Another wrote that without the sauna life would be "mean, cold, depressing" (r125). Statements such as these, as Ortner points out, are "a signal that the symbol is playing some key role"; in order to understand why the key symbol is meaningful we must understand its "relation to other elements of the cultural system of thought" (1973:1343). That the sauna is an important source of meaning in their lives is expressed by Finns in many different ways, reflecting the different functions of the sauna within the cultural system which define its keyness.

"The sauna is a habit without which you don't know how to be" (r141), says one Finn. Ortner describes one type of key symbol, elaborating symbols, as "vehicles for sorting out complex and undifferentiated feelings and ideas, making them comprehensible to oneself, communicable to others, and translatable into action" (1973:1340). In this context, she defines meaning as systematically drawing relationships and interconnecting disparate elements of the culture, as the power to organize experience. As the previous analysis illustrates, the sauna is a network of cultural notions which defines the relationships between many diverse areas of life, including an individual's relationship to nature, to him/herself, and to others; it is a concatenation of meanings expressing the ideal reality of the Finnish world view. According to Ortner, "rarely are these symbols sacred in the conventional sense of being objects of respect or foci of emotion; their key status is indicated primarily by their recurrence in cultural behavior or cultural symbolic systems" (1973:1340). This describes the customary traditions of the sauna, the sauna which was earlier considered inappropriate for artistic veneration, the sauna which today is "a part of every-day Finnishness" (r113). "We are as used to sauna bathing as to eating, reading, going to the movies, and so on" (r114).

"I go to the sauna because it is a part of the Finnish way of life" (r112). The sauna also focuses on the entire, complex network of meanings and tells the Finn what it means -- Finnishness. "[Without the sauna] a

part of Finnish tradition and Finnishness would be gone" (r116). "[Without the sauna] I wouldn't be Finnish" (r68). In Ortner's typology, it is a summarizing symbol, "which are seen as summing up, expressing, representing for the participants in an emotionally powerful and relatively undifferentiated way, what the system means to them" (1973:1339). Some Finns express this concept, the sauna is Finnishness, by using the metaphor of travelling to express being or not being a part of the culture: travelling away brings on homesickness and the longing for a sauna, but returning from a journey means the need to have a sauna to fully re-enter the culture -- "After a long trip, first to the sauna" (r6). This association of the sauna with Finnishness is the most commonly recognized meaning of the symbol, yet it is one which could not have existed before the Finnish nationalist movement. As an invented tradition, the sauna is also a sacred symbol, for it points to a greater whole, the secular whole of the people, the culture, the nation. "It does not encourage reflection on the logical relations among these ideas [in the system], nor on the logical consequences of them as they are played out in social actuality, over time and history. On the contrary, [it] encourages a sort of all-or-nothing allegiance to the whole package" (Ortner 1973:1340).

Why does a Finn go to the sauna? -- "To be a good Finn" (r41). Many Finns describe the meaningfulness of the sauna in terms of a sense of identity and belonging. The only truly national institution dating from the pre-independence period, the sauna is also one of the few symbols to provide a sense of continuity for the typical Finn who is no longer alone in the wilderness surviving by courage, wits and *sisu*, but a highly educated urbanite in a complex industrial society. The sauna is a way to be a real Finn; it is also "a journey to yourself and to the depth of your soul" (r159).

"[The sauna] is something that makes normal life easier" (r128). The sauna is still a part of the customary traditions of the culture, a part of the world view which gives meaning to private life, but it is also an invented tradition which, through the highlighting of national identity, gives meaning to public life, something which Finnish notions of ideal reality do not do. The sauna not only helps show the Finn the value public life, but also to instill pride, loyalty and acceptance of self as a public

identity, as a Finn, satisfying individual needs by transforming them into a need for a Finnish identity. The sauna is key because it links and mediates the contradictions in the Finnish world view: "[Life] wouldn't work without a sauna!" (r138).

"The world would be empty without the sauna" (r70) because the sauna summarizes the values which makes life worthwhile and then tells the way to achieve this meaningful life, by being Finnish. Thus, the common usage of the metaphor, the sauna is Finnishness, is also a way of expressing that the sauna continues to be an important source of meaning in Finnish life -- or as the Finns say, "The spirit of the sauna-steam is needed still" (Valtakari 1978:5).

APPENDIX A

THE QUESTIONNAIRE

Age:_____ Sex:_____

Occupation:_____

Place of Residence:_____(city? town? village?)

(A) What do you think would <u>best</u> represent Finland and Finnish culture to a foreigner?

1._____

2._____

3._____

4._____

What do you think would <u>best</u> represent Finland and Finnish culture to a foreign child?

1._____

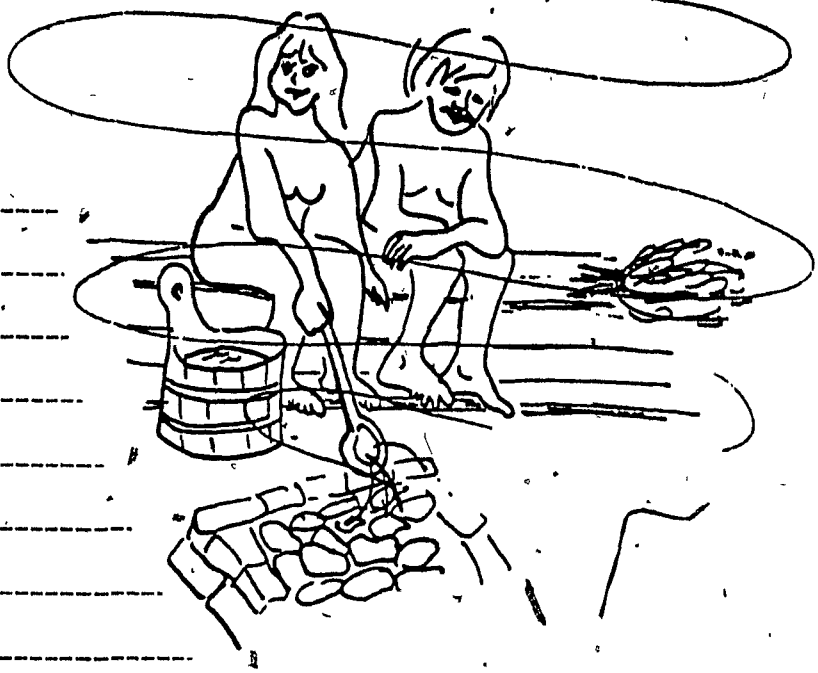
2._____

3._____

4._____

(B) Please write a brief story about this picture. Your story must include the answers to these questions.

WHERE?
WHAT?
HOW?
WHO?
WHEN?
WHY?



(C) How is the Finnish sauna different from a bath or shower?

(D) How often do you go to the sauna? _____[1]

How would your life be different without a sauna?

[1]This question did not appear on earlier versions of this questionnaire.

(E) Why do you go to the sauna?

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

4. _____

5. _____

6. _____

7. _____

8. _____

9. _____

10. _____

(F) Why do FINNS (in general) go to the sauna?

Listed below are a number of possible reasons. Please rank them as very important (XXX), less important (XX), or not relevant (X).

"FINNS go the sauna because they like to....

_____ "feel clean."

_____ "feel more than clean."

_____ "get away from their troubles."

_____ "feel warm in the winter."

_____ "get well when feeling sick."

_____ "go to the sauna before sex."

_____ "go to the sauna after sex."

_____ "feel close to their family and friends."

_____ "go to the sauna to prepare for a special occasion or holiday."

_____ "be alone."

_____ "get to know workmates or strangers better."

_____ "do business in the sauna."

_____ "party and drink and have fun in the sauna."

_____ "feel better physically."

_____ "feel better mentally."

_____ "feel better spiritually."

_____ "relax in the sauna."

_____ "enjoy a beer or liquor in the steam."

_____ "make love in the sauna."

_____ (women only) "feel clean after menstruating."

_____ "feel Finnish."

_____ "follow the traditions."

(G) How is the sauna (or going to the sauna) like....

a home? _____

_____

a church? _____

_____

your workplace? _____

_____

a party? _____

_____

sports? _____

_____

travelling? _____

_____

(H) IF YOU HAVE ANY COMMENTS THAT YOU WOULD LIKE TO ADD ABOUT THE SAUNA OR ABOUT THIS SURVEY, PLEASE, ADD THEM HERE:[1]

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

[1]This question did not appear on earlier versions of this questionnaire.

PALAUTA ENNEN HELMIKUUN 1987 LOPPUA

LIISA EDELSWARD
1251 ST. MARC, #8
MONTREAL, QUEBEC
H3H 2E8 KANADA

KYSELY

Ikä_____ Sukupuoli_____

Ammatti_____

Kotipaikka_____ [ ] Kaupunki
[ ] Taajama (Kirkonkyla jne.)
[ ] Maaseutu

(A) Mitkä asiat mielestäsi parhaiten edustaisivat Suomea ja suomalaista kulttuuria ulkomaalaisille?

1._____

2._____

3._____

4._____

Mitkä asiat mielestäsi parhaiten edustaisivat Suomea ja suomalaista kulttuuria ulkomaalaisille lapsille?

1._____

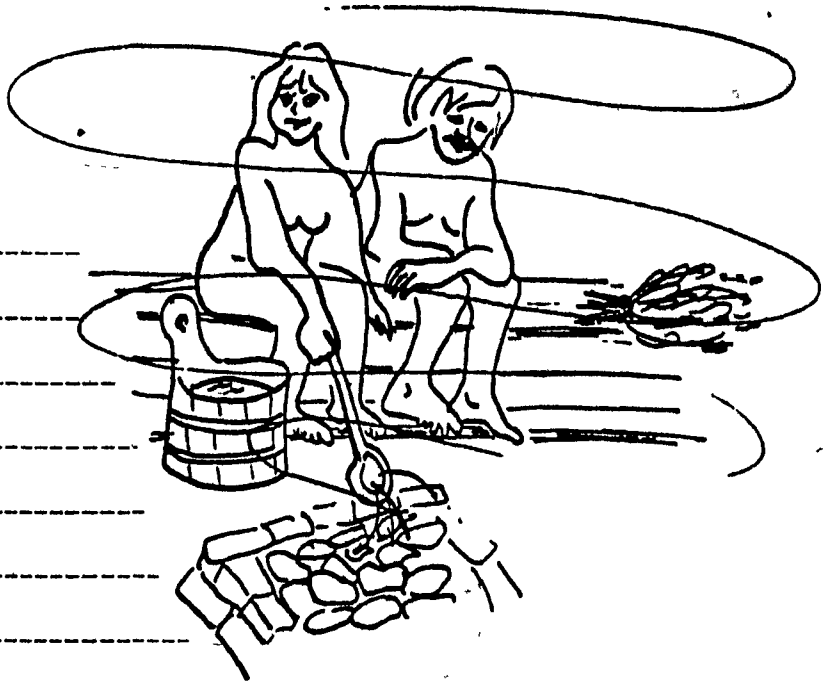
2._____

3._____

4._____

(B) Kirjoita lyhyt tarina tästä kuvasta. Tarinan tulisi sisältää vastaus ainakin seuraaviin kysymyksiin:

Missä?
Mitä?
Miten?
Kuka?
Milloin?
Miksi?



(C) Missä mielessä saunominen eroaa suihkussa tai kylvyssä olemisesta?

(D) Kuinka usein käyt saunassa? _____

Miten elämäsi olisi erilaista ilman saunaa?

(E) Miksi käyt saunassa?

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

4. _____

5. _____

6. _____

7. _____

8. _____

9. _____

10. _____

(F) Miksi <u>suomalaiset</u> käyvät saunassa?

Tässä on lista joistakin mahdollisista syistä. Merkitse ne kaikki ruksein seuraavasti:

hyvin tärkeä syy	XXX
vähemmän tärkeä syy	XX
ei sovi syyksi	X

"<u>Suomalaiset</u> käyvät saunassa, koska he haluavat...

_____ "tuntea itsensä puhtaaksi."
_____ "tuntea itsensä ennemän kuin puhtaaksi."
_____ "päästä eroon huolistaan."
_____ "tuntea olonsa lämpimäksi talvella."
_____ "tuntea olonsa paremmaksi silloin kun he tuntevat olonsa huonoksi."
_____ "käydä saunassa ennen sukupuolista kanssakäymistä."
_____ "käydä saunassa sukupuolisen kanssakäymisen jälkeen."
_____ "tuntea läheisyyttä perheeseensä ja ystäviinsä."
_____ "valmistautua pyhäpäivää tai juhlaa varten."
_____ "olla yksin."
_____ "oppia paremmin tuntemaan työkavereitaan ja tuttaviaan."
_____ "hoitaa liikeasioita saunassa."
_____ "pitää hauskaa ja mellastaa saunassa."
_____ "tuntea olonsa paremmaksi ruumiillisesti."
_____ "tuntea mielensä paremmaksi."
_____ "tuntea olonsa paremmaksi sielullisesti."
_____ "rentoutua saunassa."
_____ "nauttia olutta tai alkoholia saunanlauteilla."
_____ "intiimin paikan sukupuoliselle kanssakäymiselle."
_____ (naiset) "tuntea olonsa puhtaaksi kuukautisten jälkeen."
_____ "tuntea itsensä suomalaisiksi."
_____ "seurata vanhoja tapoja."

(G) Missä suhteessa sauna (tai saunominen) muistuttaa...

...kotia? _____

_____

...kirkkoa? _____

_____

...työpaikkaasi? _____

_____

...syntymäpäiväjuhlaa? _____

_____

...urheilua? _____

_____

matkustamista? _____

_____

(H) Jos sinulla on muita kommentteja ja mielipiteitä saunasta ja tästä kyselystä, kirjoita ne tähän.

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

_____

LIST OF RESPONDENTS

Personal information on all respondents included in the statistical analysis is listed here for reference. A few respondents were eliminated from the statistical analysis, and consequently from this list, due to random programming errors (net total, 195); all respondents are nevertheless included in the qualitative analysis (total, 218).

Key to Abbreviations

Column one, RESP#, indicates the respondent number and corresponds to the numbers used throughout the text of the thesis in referencing quotations taken from the questionnaires.

Column two, AGE, indicates the age of the respondents (as of February 1987 when the questionnaires were distributed); respondents who did not give their ages are marked with a dash (-).

Column three, NON-F, indicates by an asterisk (*) the non-Finns in the sample, respondents who immigrated to Finland and have resided there for varying lengths of time (r90 - 3 years; r91 - 30 years [deleted from the quantitative sample]; r92 - 2 years at time of response).

Column four, M/F, indicates the sex of the respondents or is marked with a dash (-) where not given.

Column five, LOC, indicates the residency of the respondent: V = village (includes isolated homes, *maaseutu*), T = towns, defined as all urban areas except greater Helsinki, Turku and Tampere which are defined as cities = C.

Column six, FREQ, indicates frequency of sauna bathing: A = more than twice weekly, B = once or twice weekly, C = one to three times monthly, D = less than monthly. Only the Finnish language questionnaires requested this information, thus the large number of blanks in this column.

Column seven, STUD, indicates with an X which of the respondents are students.

LIST OF RESPONDENTS

RESP#	AGE	NON-F	M/F	LOC	FREQ	STUD
1	21		M	T		X
2	22		M	T		X
3	22		M	T		X
4	23		M	T		X
5	24		M	T		X
7	24		M	T		X
8	23		M	C		X
9	23		M	V		X
11	21		M	T		X
12	-		M	T		X
13	23		M	T		X
14	22		M	T		X
15	22		M	T		X
16	23		M	T		X
17	21		M	T		X
18	22		M	T		X
19	23		M	T		X
20	24		M	T		X
21	25		M	T		X
22	25		M	T		X
23	24		M	T		X
25	25		M	T		X
26	22		M	T		X
28	22		M	T		X
29	23		M	T		X
30	24		M	T		X
31	23		M	T		X
32	23		M	T		X
33	23		M	V		X
34	24		M	T		X
35	24		M	T		X
36	24		M	V		X
37	22		M	T		X
38	21		M	T		X
39	22		M	T		X
40	23		M	T		X
41	23		M	T		X
42	25		M	T		X

RESP#	AGE	NON-F	M/F	LOC	FREQ	STUD
43	24		M	V		X
44	23		M	V		X
45	22		M	T		X
46	20		M	T		X
47	21		M	T		X
48	21		M	T		X
49	22		M	T		X
50	22		M	T		X
51	21		M	T		X
52	21		M	T		X
53	22		M	T		X
54	22		M	T		X
55	22		M	T		X
56	21		M	J		X
57	21		M	T		X
58	22		M	T		X
59	22		M	T		X
60	24		M	T		X
61	23		M	-		X
62	23		M	T		X
63	-		M	T		X
64	23		M	T		X
65	24		M	T		X
66	22		M	T		X
67	23		M	T		X
68	23		M	T		X
69	22		M	T		X
70	23		M	V		X
71	24		M	T		X
72	24		M	T		X
73	23		M	T		X
75	59		M	T		
77	19		F	T		X
78	22		F	V		X
79	22		F	T		X
80	22		F	T		X
81	24		F	T		X
82	24		F	T		X
83	20		F	T		X
84	21		F	V		X
86	22		F	T		X
87	22		F	T		X
88	21		F	T		X

RESP#	AGE	NON-F	M/F	LOC	FREQ	STUD
89	21		F	T		X
90	27	*	F	T		
92	21	*	F	T		X
93	27		F	C		
94	27		M	C		
95	69		F	C		
96	26		M	T		
97	18		F	V	A	
98	28		F	C	B	
99	27		F	C	D	
100	14		F	T	B	X
101	27		F	C	B	
102	83		F	V	B	
104	55		F	T	A	
105	65		F	V	A	
106	6		F	C	B	
107	11		F	C	B	X
108	38		F	V	B	
109	29		F	V	B	
112	35		F	C	C	
113	26		F	C	B	
114	32		F	C	B	
115	34		-	C	A	
116	28		F	C	B	
117	22		F	T	B	
118	21		F	V	B	
119	22		F	V	B	
120	21		F	V		X
						X
121	45		F	V	B	X
122	30		F	T	B	X
123	57		F	V	A	
124	45		F	C	B	
126	27		F	C	B	
128	15		F	C	B	X
129	26		F	T	C	
130	25		F	C	D	
131	48		F	V	B	
132	40		F	V	B	
133	17		F	T	B	X
134	14		F	T	B	X
135	40		F	T	B	
136	41		F	T	A	
137	61		F	C	B	

RESP#	AGE	NON-F	M/F	LOC	FREQ	STUD
138	31		F	T	A	
139	47		F	T	B	
141	41		F	C	B	
142	28		F	T	B	
143	26		F	C	B	
144	21		F	T	A	X
146	43		F	C	C	
147	22		F	C	A	
148	37		F	C	B	
149	35		F	C	B	
150	14		F	C	B	X
151	28		F	V	B	
152	28		F	C	B	
153	19		F	V	B	X
154	45		F	V	B	
155	34		F	V	A	
157	42		F	C	A	
158	33		F	V	A	
159	34		F	V	C	
160	26		F	V	B	
161	38		F	C	B	
162	31		F	V	B	
163	34		F	C	A	
164	36		F	V	A	
165	27		F	C	B	X
166	27		F	C	C	X
167	27		F	C	D	
168	27		F	C	C	
171	30		F	C	D	
172	23		F	V	B	
173	48		F	T	B	
174	25		F	T	C	
175	48		F	T	B	
176	25		M	V	B	X
177	25		M	V	C	
178	56		M	V	B	
179	29		M	C	B	
180	21		M	V	B	X
181	21		M	V	A	
182	46		M	V	B	
183	27		M	T	C	
184	32		M	T	A	B

RESP#	AGE	NON-F	M/F	LOC	FREQ	STUD
185	30		M	C	B	
186	23		M	T	B	X
187	16		M	T	B	X
189	32		M	T	B	
190	31		M	T	A	
191	25		F	V	A	X
192	46		M	T	B	
193	27		M	V	B	X
194	24		M	T	A	
196	57		M	C	B	
197	44		M	C	B	
198	48		M	T	B	
199	32		M	V	B	
201	32		M	C	B	
202	33		M	V	A	
203	23		M	C	A	X
204	26		M	C	C	X
205	42		M	V	A	
208	31		M	C	B	
209	28		F	C	B	
210	29		F	C	B	
211	26		F	C	C	
212	42		F	V	B	
213	36		F	V	B	
214	45		M	V	B	
215	49		F	V	B	
216	28		F	V	C	
217	23		F	C	B	

SUM: 195

The sauna is important to me and going to the sauna is a great pleasure. The questions were drafted in a difficult way.

Sauna on minulle tärkeä ja saunominen suuri nautinto. Kysymykset oli vaikeasti asetettu.

(103)

Many of the questions were incomprehensible, but questionnaires and this type of research is generally foreign to my world of thinking, so that this questionnaire is no exception.

Monet kysymykset ovat käsittämättömiä, mutta yleensäkin kyselyt ja tämän tapaiset tutkimukset ovat vieraita minulle ajatusmaailmaltaan, joten tämä kysely ei tee poikkeusta.

(108)

A poor questionnaire -- the answers took too much time and effort.

Huono kysely -- vastaajalta vaaditaan liikaa aikaa ja paneutumista.

(117)

The point of the research is not obvious from this form.

Tutkimuksen tarkoitus ei ilmene tästä lomakkeesta.

There are some unclear questions in this questionnaire.

Kyselyssä jotkut kysymykset epäselviä.

(119)

In section F the wording was difficult. Slightly different wording would have produced exactly the opposite response, for example, (X = not relevant) to escape from one's problems, (XXX = very important reason) distance oneself from one's problems.

Kohdaan F sanamuodot olivat hankalia, mikäli lauseet olisi muotoiltu toisin olisivat vastaukset olleet päinvastaisia, esim. (X) päästä eroon huolistaan, (XXX) irrottautua huolistaan.

(120)

The questions were not very easy. Nowadays people are so used to "check the boxes" -- to being prompted, that this type of answers can be a lot of work. Section F could have had one more category, "somewhat important reason."

Kysymykset eivät olleet kovin helppoja. Nykyisin ihmiset ovat niin tottuneita "rastiruutuun" -= Kyselyihin, etta tällaiseen vastaaminen saattaa olla työlästä. -F- kohdassa olisi voinut olla vielä kohta "melko tärkeä syy."

(122)

The subject could be covered with many fewer questions -- Nowadays one gets far too many "check the boxes" inquiries!!

Asia selviäsi paljon vähemmillä kysymyksillä -- Nykyään tulee ihan liikaa kaiken maailman rasti ruutuun tiedusteluja!!

(135)

[I wish you] Success in your work!
Menestystä työllesi!
(143)

What kind of sexual emphasis is meant [in this questionnaire]? Is it that there are still prejudices (in a university???!) about the sauna being like a brothel (or something like that)? Actually, half of the people to whom I gave the questionnaire laughed as soon as they got to "in an intimate place"!
Mitäs seksuaalisuuden korostus tarkoittaa? Sitäkö että (yliopistossa???!) ennäkköluulot vieläkin liittävät saunaan bordellin maineen (tai jotain siihen suuntaan)? Itse asiassa puolet ihmisistä joille annoin kyselyn, nauraa ratkatti suoraa päätä "intiimille paikalle"!
(145)

A representative sample?
Otoksen edustavuus?

I didn't understand question G.
En ymmärtänyt kysymystä G.

What does this (questionnaire) mean?
Mikä tämän tarkoitus on ollut?

I didn't understand question (G).
En ymmärtänyt kysymystä (G).
(174)

The questionaire is confusingly and poorly set out (the reason may be the language difficulties). The foundation of the form is that it is useless to [or -- the form is based on a useless attempt to] make any far reaching conclusions. [Let us concede??] that the subject is <u>difficult</u> especially to people who don't understand the subject.
Kyselylomake on jöhdättelevä ja tökerasti laadittu (syy voi olla kielitaidossa). Lomakkeen perusteella on turha tehdä mitään pitkälle meneviä johtopäätoksiä. Myönnettäköön, että aihe on <u>hankala</u> varsinkin ihmiselle, joka ei asiaa ymmarrä.
(180)

The questions are designed in a difficult way.
Kysymykset ovat aika hankalasti muotoiltu.
(181)

What was the point of this questionnaire?
Mikä lienee [kyselyn] tarkoitus?
(186)

I didn't know how to fill in every question and you would have liked me to give detailed responses to them.
If you need more information, you can write to me [address follows].

Kaikista kysymyksistä en tiennyt miten tyhjentävästi ja yksityiskohtaisesti olisit halunnut minun vastaavan niihin....
(194)

The questions were difficult to answer because they were not very specific.
Kysymyksiin oli vaikea vastata, koska ne olivat epätäsmällisesti muotoiltuja.
(204)

A nice questionnaire all around! Thanks.
Kiva kysely kaikinpuolin! Kiitos.

An extremely illuminating and useful questionnaire.
Erittäin valaiseva ja hyödyllinen kysely.
(187)

Some Finns don't go to the sauna, and some don't even like it, so my opinions aren't representative of all Finns.
Jotkut suomalaiset eivät käy saunassa eivätkä edes pidä siitä joten minun mielipiteeni ei edusta kaikkia suomalaisia.
(100)

In my opinion, overlapping questions, difficult to answer.
Mielestäni päällekkäisiä kysymyksiä, vaikkea vastata.
(102)

APPENDIX B

QUANTITATIVE ANALYSIS

All questions except section F were used primarily as qualitative data. Although all sections of all questionnaires were coded for statistical analysis, finally only section F was used in this analysis as the other sections were too unstructured to provide consistent results. (These codes were used, however, to categorize respondents according to expressions of the sauna as a necessity or as a symbol of Finnishness.) This analysis supports the hypothesis that the Finnish sauna not only is common in Finnish culture, but is commonly valued, although with minor and quite specific sub-cultural variations (eg. student culture and gender differences).

KEY TO SUMMARY TABLE OF STATISTICAL DATA

Question numbers refer to section F of the questionnaire as shown below.

The range of responses are:
0 = no response
1 = X
2 = XX
3 = XXX

****

(F) Why do FINNS (in general) go to the sauna? Listed below are a number of possible reasons. Please rank them as very important (XXX), less important (XX), or not relevant (X).

"FINNS go the sauna because they like to....

#1	_____	"feel clean."
#2	_____	"feel more than clean."
#3	_____	"get away from their troubles."
#4	_____	"feel warm in the winter."
#5	_____	"get well when feeling sick."
#6	_____	"go to the sauna before sex."
#7	_____	"go to the sauna after sex."
#8	_____	"feel close to their family and friends."
#9	_____	"go to the sauna to prepare for a special occasion or holiday."
#10	_____	"be alone."
#11	_____	"get to know workmates or strangers better."
#12	_____	"do business in the sauna."
#13	_____	"party and drink and have fun in the sauna."
#14	_____	"feel better physically."
#15	_____	"feel better mentally."
#16	_____	"feel better spiritually."
#17	_____	"relax in the sauna."
#18	_____	"enjoy a beer or liquor in the steam."
#19	_____	"make love in the sauna."
#20	_____	(women only) "feel clean after menstruating."
#21	_____	"feel Finnish."
#22	_____	"follow the traditions."

SUMMARY TABLE OF RESULTS
From Questionnaire Section F

SAMPLE: ALL n=195

QUESTION:		#1	#2	#3	#4	#5	#6	#7	#8	#9	#10	#11	#12	#13	#14	#15	#16	#17	#18	#19	#20	#21	#22
AVG		2.67	2.40	2.05	2.16	1.73	1.26	1.16	2.21	2.23	1.64	1.82	1.66	1.56	2.47	2.46	1.96	2.89	1.42	1.14	0.67	1.67	1.65
FREQ	0	2%	2%	2%	2%	3%	5%	5%	3%	2%	3%	8%	4%	3%	3%	2%	3%	2%	4%	7%	49%	4%	5%
	1	3%	16%	18%	19%	39%	69%	76%	15%	19%	45%	32%	40%	51%	8%	8%	31%	1%	60%	73%	37%	48%	38%
	2	23%	22%	52%	40%	39%	21%	17%	41%	32%	37%	45%	42%	33%	29%	31%	33%	5%	27%	17%	11%	26%	43%
	3	73%	60%	27%	39%	18%	5%	2%	42%	47%	15%	20%	14%	13%	61%	58%	33%	93%	9%	2%	3%	23%	14%

SAMPLE: MALES n= 100

QUESTION:		#1	#2	#3	#4	#5	#6	#7	#8	#9	#10	#11	#12	#13	#14	#15	#16	#17	#18	#19	#20	#21	#22
AVG		2.66	2.56	2.19	2.02	1.61	1.37	1.27	2.31	1.99	1.70	2.06	1.75	1.83	2.55	2.50	1.94	2.91	1.66	1.30	0.15	1.62	1.58
FREQ	0	1%	1%	1%	1%	1%	1%	1%	1%	1%	1%	1%	2%	1%	1%	1%	2%	1%	1%	3%	89%	2%	3%
	1	3%	13%	13%	25%	49%	67%	73%	13%	31%	44%	22%	40%	35%	7%	7%	31%	1%	48%	68%	7%	51%	45%
	2	25%	15%	52%	45%	38%	26%	24%	40%	36%	39%	47%	39%	44%	28%	33%	38%	4%	35%	25%	4%	30%	43%
	3	71%	71%	34%	29%	12%	6%	2%	46%	32%	16%	30%	19%	20%	64%	59%	29%	94%	16%	4%	0%	17%	9%

SAMPLE: FEMALES n=93

QUESTION:		#1	#2	#3	#4	#5	#6	#7	#8	#9	#10	#11	#12	#13	#14	#15	#16	#17	#18	#19	#20	#21	#22
AVG		2.68	2.23	1.90	2.32	1.87	1.13	1.04	2.09	2.48	1.57	1.56	1.54	1.28	2.39	2.42	1.99	2.87	1.16	0.98	1.23	1.72	1.71
FREQ	0	2%	3%	3%	3%	5%	10%	10%	5%	3%	5%	5%	6%	5%	4%	3%	4%	2%	6%	12%	8%	5%	8%
	1	2%	19%	24%	12%	28%	72%	78%	17%	8%	46%	43%	41%	67%	10%	10%	30%	1%	73%	78%	68%	45%	32%
	2	22%	29%	53%	34%	41%	14%	10%	41%	27%	34%	42%	45%	24%	29%	29%	28%	4%	18%	10%	19%	22%	42%
	3	74%	48%	20%	51%	26%	4%	2%	37%	62%	14%	10%	8%	5%	57%	58%	38%	92%	2%	0%	5%	28%	18%

SAMPLE: FEMALE WORKERS n=88

QUESTION:		#1	#2	#3	#4	#5	#6	#7	#8	#9	#10	#11	#12	#13	#14	#15	#16	#17	#18	#19	#20	#21	#22
AVG		2.67	2.22	1.88	2.31	1.86	1.15	1.06	2.10	2.49	1.58	1.56	1.55	1.30	2.36	2.39	1.99	2.86	1.17	0.99	1.22	1.67	1.67
FREQ	0	2%	3%	3%	3%	6%	9%	9%	5%	3%	5%	6%	7%	6%	5%	3%	5%	2%	7%	11%	7%	6%	8%
	1	2%	19%	24%	13%	28%	72%	78%	18%	7%	47%	43%	40%	65%	10%	10%	30%	1%	72%	78%	69%	47%	33%
	2	22%	30%	55%	34%	40%	15%	10%	40%	27%	35%	41%	45%	24%	30%	31%	28%	5%	19%	10%	19%	23%	43%
	3	74%	48%	18%	50%	26%	5%	2%	38%	63%	14%	10%	8%	6%	56%	56%	38%	92%	2%	0%	5%	25%	16%

SAMPLE: UNDER 21 YEAR-OLDS n=13

QUESTION:		#1	#2	#3	#4	#5	#6	#7	#8	#9	#10	#11	#12	#13	#14	#15	#16	#17	#18	#19	#20	#21	#22
AVG		2.69	2.54	2.08	2.54	1.77	1.00	1.00	2.23	2.08	2.15	1.69	1.38	1.69	2.46	2.62	2.08	2.85	1.38	0.77	1.15	2.00	1.62
FREQ	0	0%	0%	0%	0%	8%	31%	31%	0%	0%	0%	8%	15%	8%	8%	0%	8%	0%	15%	38%	31%	8%	15%
	1	0%	8%	15%	8%	38%	46%	46%	23%	38%	15%	23%	46%	38%	0%	0%	23%	0%	46%	54%	31%	31%	31%
	2	31%	31%	62%	31%	23%	15%	15%	31%	15%	54%	62%	23%	31%	31%	38%	23%	15%	23%	0%	31%	15%	31%
	3	69%	62%	23%	62%	31%	8%	8%	46%	46%	31%	8%	15%	23%	62%	62%	46%	85%	15%	8%	8%	46%	23%

SAMPLE: 21 TO 29 YEAR-OLDS n=124

QUESTION:		#1	#2	#3	#4	#5	#6	#7	#8	#9	#10	#11	#12	#13	#14	#15	#16	#17	#18	#19	#20	#21	#22
AVG		2.69	2.49	2.09	2.15	1.68	1.29	1.18	2.25	2.15	1.84	1.89	1.69	1.72	2.50	2.44	1.87	2.93	1.54	1.25	0.55	1.69	1.67
FREQ	0	1%	1%	1%	1%	1%	2%	2%	1%	1%	1%	1%	2%	1%	1%	1%	1%	1%	1%	2%	58%	2%	3%
	1	2%	15%	19%	21%	45%	72%	80%	15%	24%	48%	32%	40%	42%	10%	11%	39%	1%	56%	73%	30%	48%	39%
	2	26%	19%	52%	41%	40%	23%	18%	44%	35%	37%	44%	47%	42%	28%	31%	33%	3%	32%	23%	11%	30%	46%
	3	72%	65%	29%	37%	15%	4%	1%	41%	40%	14%	23%	12%	15%	61%	57%	27%	95%	11%	2%	1%	20%	12%

SAMPLE: OVER 30 YEAR-OLDS n=55

QUESTION:		#1	#2	#3	#4	#5	#6	#7	#8	#9	#10	#11	#12	#13	#14	#15	#16	#17	#18	#19	#20	#21	#22
AVG		2.65	2.15	1.95	2.11	1.85	1.22	1.15	2.07	2.47	1.55	1.69	1.58	1.13	2.42	2.47	2.13	2.82	1.13	0.98	0.85	1.56	1.60
FREQ	0	4%	5%	5%	5%	7%	7%	7%	9%	5%	9%	7%	7%	7%	5%	5%	7%	4%	7%	11%	33%	7%	7%
	1	4%	22%	18%	16%	25%	69%	75%	15%	4%	42%	33%	42%	75%	7%	4%	15%	2%	75%	80%	55%	51%	40%
	2	16%	25%	53%	40%	42%	18%	15%	36%	29%	35%	44%	36%	16%	27%	29%	36%	4%	16%	9%	7%	20%	38%
	3	76%	47%	24%	38%	25%	5%	4%	40%	62%	15%	16%	15%	2%	60%	62%	42%	91%	2%	0%	5%	22%	15%

SAMPLE: VILLAGERS n=46

QUESTION:		#1	#2	#3	#4	#5	#6	#7	#8	#9	#10	#11	#12	#13	#14	#15	#16	#17	#18	#19	#20	#21	#22
AVG		2.76	2.30	1.98	2.28	1.72	1.37	1.22	2.22	2.43	1.63	1.72	1.61	1.37	2.39	2.41	1.96	2.93	1.24	1.13	0.96	1.83	1.83
FREQ	0	0%	2%	2%	2%	4%	2%	2%	4%	2%	4%	4%	7%	4%	2%	2%	2%	0%	4%	7%	35%	4%	4%
	1	2%	20%	17%	11%	35%	67%	76%	11%	13%	46%	37%	39%	63%	13%	9%	30%	2%	72%	74%	41%	39%	33%
	2	20%	24%	61%	43%	46%	22%	20%	43%	24%	33%	41%	41%	24%	28%	35%	37%	2%	20%	20%	17%	26%	39%
	3	78%	54%	20%	43%	15%	9%	2%	41%	61%	17%	17%	13%	9%	57%	54%	30%	96%	4%	0%	7%	30%	24%

SAMPLE: TOWN DWELLERS n=100

QUESTION:		#1	#2	#3	#4	#5	#6	#7	#8	#9	#10	#11	#12	#13	#14	#15	#16	#17	#18	#19	#20	#21	#22
AVG		2.58	2.47	2.11	2.08	1.54	1.27	1.19	2.21	2.00	1.63	1.86	1.70	1.77	2.47	2.46	1.96	2.86	1.61	1.19	0.42	1.61	1.50
FREQ	0	3%	3%	3%	3%	4%	7%	7%	3%	3%	3%	3%	4%	4%	3%	3%	3%	3%	4%	8%	70%	5%	8%
	1	3%	15%	16%	21%	50%	64%	70%	15%	30%	44%	29%	39%	35%	8%	8%	32%	1%	46%	68%	19%	50%	44%
	2	27%	14%	48%	41%	34%	24%	20%	40%	31%	40%	47%	40%	41%	28%	29%	31%	3%	35%	21%	10%	24%	38%
	3	67%	68%	33%	35%	12%	5%	3%	42%	36%	13%	21%	17%	20%	61%	60%	34%	93%	15%	3%	1%	21%	10%

SAMPLE: CITY n=47

QUESTION:		#1	#2	#3	#4	#5	#6	#7	#8	#9	#10	#11	#12	#13	#14	#15	#16	#17	#18	#19	#20	#21	#22
AVG		2.79	2.34	1.98	2.21	2.15	1.09	1.02	2.21	2.53	1.68	1.85	1.62	1.28	2.55	2.53	2.00	2.91	1.19	1.02	0.94	1.68	1.81
FREQ	0	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	4%	4%	2%	0%	2%	2%	2%	0%	2%	0%	4%	0%	2%	6%	19%	0%	0%
	1	2%	15%	23%	21%	19%	83%	89%	17%	4%	45%	32%	43%	68%	4%	9%	26%	0%	79%	85%	70%	51%	32%
	2	17%	36%	55%	36%	47%	13%	6%	38%	38%	36%	45%	47%	21%	30%	30%	36%	9%	17%	9%	9%	30%	55%
	3	81%	49%	21%	43%	34%	0%	0%	43%	57%	17%	21%	9%	2%	64%	62%	34%	91%	2%	0%	2%	19%	13%

SAMPLE: STUDENTS n=104

QUESTION:		#1	#2	#3	#4	#5	#6	#7	#8	#9	#10	#11	#12	#13	#14	#15	#16	#17	#18	#19	#20	#21	#22
AVG		2.70	2.57	2.16	2.17	1.57	1.33	1.20	2.31	2.05	1.75	1.93	1.71	1.88	2.53	2.49	1.92	2.92	1.62	1.24	0.41	1.71	1.63
FREQ	0	0%	0%	0%	0%	1%	4%	4%	0%	0%	0%	1%	3%	1%	1%	0%	1%	0%	2%	6%	70%	2%	5%
	1	3%	13%	16%	20%	53%	66%	74%	14%	31%	41%	26%	38%	34%	9%	10%	36%	1%	51%	68%	18%	47%	41%
	2	24%	18%	51%	42%	35%	23%	20%	40%	34%	42%	52%	45%	42%	27%	32%	34%	6%	31%	22%	12%	29%	40%
	3	73%	69%	33%	38%	12%	7%	2%	45%	36%	16%	21%	14%	23%	63%	59%	30%	93%	16%	4%	0%	22%	13%

SAMPLE: NON-STUDENTS n=90

QUESTION:		#1	#2	#3	#4	#5	#6	#7	#8	#9	#10	#11	#12	#13	#14	#15	#16	#17	#18	#19	#20	#21	#22
AVG		2.63	2.20	1.92	2.14	1.93	1.18	1.11	2.09	2.43	1.51	1.68	1.59	1.19	2.41	2.44	2.01	2.84	1.19	1.03	0.97	1.61	1.68
FREQ	0	3%	4%	4%	4%	6%	7%	7%	7%	4%	7%	6%	6%	6%	4%	4%	6%	3%	6%	9%	26%	6%	6%
	1	2%	20%	20%	18%	22%	72%	78%	16%	7%	49%	39%	43%	71%	8%	6%	24%	1%	71%	79%	58%	50%	36%
	2	22%	27%	54%	37%	46%	18%	13%	40%	30%	31%	38%	38%	22%	30%	31%	33%	3%	22%	12%	11%	22%	44%
	3	72%	49%	21%	41%	27%	3%	2%	38%	59%	13%	18%	13%	1%	58%	59%	37%	92%	1%	0%	6%	22%	14%

SAMPLE: MORE THAN TWICE WEEKLY n=23

QUESTION:		#1	#2	#3	#4	#5	#6	#7	#8	#9	#10	#11	#12	#13	#14	#15	#16	#17	#18	#19	#20	#21	#22
AVG		2.65	2.30	2.00	2.35	1.96	1.48	1.39	2.26	2.39	1.78	1.57	1.52	1.30	2.52	2.39	2.04	2.87	1.30	1.13	0.96	1.70	1.61
FREQ	0	0%	4%	4%	0%	4%	0%	0%	4%	4%	4%	4%	4%	4%	0%	4%	4%	0%	4%	4%	35%	4%	4%
	1	4%	17%	13%	9%	30%	65%	65%	9%	9%	35%	43%	52%	65%	13%	9%	22%	4%	65%	78%	48%	43%	39%
	2	26%	22%	61%	48%	30%	22%	30%	43%	30%	39%	43%	30%	26%	22%	30%	39%	4%	26%	17%	4%	30%	48%
	3	70%	57%	22%	43%	35%	13%	4%	43%	57%	22%	9%	13%	4%	65%	57%	35%	91%	4%	0%	13%	22%	9%

SAMPLE: ONCE OR TWICE WEEKLY n=66

QUESTION:		#1	#2	#3	#4	#5	#6	#7	#8	#9	#10	#11	#12	#13	#14	#15	#16	#17	#18	#19	#20	#21	#22
AVG		2.71	2.17	1.88	2.24	1.94	1.14	1.08	2.21	2.52	1.61	1.74	1.58	1.29	2.52	2.45	2.02	2.86	1.15	0.98	0.95	1.82	1.71
FREQ	0	3%	3%	3%	3%	5%	11%	11%	5%	3%	5%	5%	8%	5%	5%	3%	6%	3%	6%	14%	27%	5%	8%
	1	2%	18%	23%	18%	26%	68%	74%	14%	6%	44%	35%	39%	65%	5%	8%	24%	0%	76%	76%	53%	41%	29%
	2	17%	38%	58%	30%	41%	18%	12%	38%	27%	38%	42%	41%	27%	26%	30%	32%	5%	15%	9%	17%	23%	48%
	3	79%	41%	17%	48%	29%	3%	3%	44%	64%	14%	18%	12%	3%	65%	59%	38%	92%	3%	2%	3%	32%	15%

SAMPLE: ONE TO THREE TIMES MONTHLY n=12

QUESTION:		#1	#2	#3	#4	#5	#6	#7	#8	#9	#10	#11	#12	#13	#14	#15	#16	#17	#18	#19	#20	#21	#22
AVG		2.58	2.08	1.83	1.75	1.83	0.92	0.83	1.67	2.00	1.33	1.67	1.50	1.00	2.08	2.50	1.83	2.75	1.08	1.00	0.75	1.17	1.50
FREQ	0	8%	8%	8%	17%	17%	17%	17%	17%	8%	17%	17%	17%	17%	17%	8%	8%	8%	17%	17%	33%	17%	17%
	1	0%	25%	25%	25%	17%	75%	83%	33%	25%	42%	25%	25%	67%	8%	0%	42%	0%	58%	67%	58%	58%	33%
	2	17%	17%	42%	25%	33%	8%	0%	17%	25%	33%	33%	50%	17%	25%	25%	8%	0%	25%	17%	8%	17%	33%
	3	75%	50%	25%	33%	33%	0%	0%	33%	42%	8%	25%	8%	0%	50%	67%	42%	92%	0%	0%	0%	8%	17%

SAMPLE: LESS THAN MONTHLY n=4

QUESTION:		#1	#2	#3	#4	#5	#6	#7	#8	#9	#10	#11	#12	#13	#14	#15	#16	#17	#18	#19	#20	#21	#22
AVG		2.75	2.25	1.75	2.25	2.50	1.00	1.00	2.00	2.75	1.50	2.25	1.75	1.00	2.25	2.00	1.75	2.75	1.50	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.50
FREQ	0	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%
	1	0%	25%	50%	0%	0%	100%	100%	25%	0%	75%	0%	25%	100%	0%	25%	50%	0%	50%	100%	100%	100%	50%
	2	25%	25%	25%	75%	50%	0%	0%	50%	25%	0%	75%	75%	0%	75%	50%	25%	25%	50%	0%	0%	0%	50%
	3	75%	50%	25%	25%	50%	0%	0%	25%	75%	25%	25%	0%	0%	25%	25%	25%	75%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%

SAMPLE: FINNISHNESS n=97

QUESTION:		#1	#2	#3	#4	#5	#6	#7	#8	#9	#10	#11	#12	#13	#14	#15	#16	#17	#18	#19	#20	#21	#22
AVG		2.68	2.49	2.10	2.13	1.80	1.28	1.21	2.19	2.25	1.59	1.87	1.81	1.70	2.58	2.51	1.91	2.97	1.51	1.20	0.59	1.84	1.84
FREQ	0	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	1%	1%	1%	0%	1%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	1%	0%	0%	3%	56%	1%	2%
	1	3%	14%	16%	21%	37%	73%	78%	15%	22%	52%	35%	37%	47%	7%	9%	33%	1%	61%	76%	31%	44%	31%
	2	26%	22%	57%	45%	45%	23%	20%	47%	32%	35%	43%	44%	35%	28%	31%	40%	1%	28%	19%	12%	25%	48%
	3	71%	64%	27%	34%	18%	3%	1%	36%	46%	12%	22%	19%	18%	65%	60%	26%	98%	11%	2%	1%	30%	19%

SAMPLE: NO FINNISHNESS n=98

QUESTION:		#1	#2	#3	#4	#5	#6	#7	#8	#9	#10	#11	#12	#13	#14	#15	#16	#17	#18	#19	#20	#21	#22
AVG		2.66	2.31	1.99	2.18	1.66	1.23	1.11	2.22	2.21	1.68	1.78	1.50	1.42	2.37	2.42	2.01	2.81	1.34	1.09	0.76	1.51	1.47
FREQ	0	3%	4%	4%	4%	6%	9%	9%	5%	4%	5%	6%	8%	6%	5%	4%	5%	3%	7%	11%	43%	6%	8%
	1	2%	17%	20%	17%	41%	65%	73%	14%	17%	39%	29%	43%	54%	9%	7%	29%	1%	59%	70%	43%	52%	46%
	2	20%	22%	48%	35%	34%	18%	14%	34%	32%	39%	47%	40%	32%	30%	32%	27%	8%	27%	16%	10%	27%	37%
	3	74%	56%	28%	44%	19%	7%	3%	47%	47%	17%	18%	9%	8%	56%	57%	40%	88%	7%	2%	4%	15%	9%

SAMPLE: NECESSITY n=37

QUESTION:		#1	#2	#3	#4	#5	#6	#7	#8	#9	#10	#11	#12	#13	#14	#15	#16	#17	#18	#19	#20	#21	#22
AVG		2.73	2.51	2.03	2.27	1.78	1.32	1.24	2.00	2.19	1.68	1.73	1.70	1.62	2.49	2.49	2.00	2.95	1.35	1.27	0.54	1.65	1.54
FREQ	0	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	5%	5%	3%	0%	3%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0%	3%	5%	57%	3%	5%
	1	0%	14%	19%	11%	38%	65%	68%	22%	24%	46%	49%	49%	49%	11%	11%	35%	0%	65%	70%	32%	57%	46%
	2	27%	22%	59%	51%	46%	22%	24%	49%	32%	32%	30%	32%	41%	30%	30%	30%	5%	27%	16%	11%	14%	38%
	3	73%	65%	22%	38%	16%	8%	3%	27%	43%	19%	22%	19%	11%	59%	59%	35%	95%	5%	8%	0%	27%	11%

SAMPLE: NO NECESSITY n=158

QUESTION:		#1	#2	#3	#4	#5	#6	#7	#8	#9	#10	#11	#12	#13	#14	#15	#16	#17	#18	#19	#20	#21	#22
AVG		2.66	2.37	2.05	2.13	1.72	1.24	1.14	2.25	2.24	1.63	1.84	1.65	1.54	2.47	2.46	1.95	2.87	1.44	1.11	0.70	1.68	1.68
FREQ	0	2%	3%	3%	3%	4%	5%	5%	3%	3%	3%	4%	5%	4%	3%	3%	4%	2%	4%	8%	47%	3%	5%
	1	3%	16%	18%	21%	39%	70%	78%	13%	18%	45%	28%	38%	51%	8%	8%	30%	1%	59%	74%	38%	46%	37%
	2	22%	22%	51%	37%	38%	20%	15%	39%	32%	38%	49%	44%	32%	28%	32%	34%	4%	27%	18%	11%	28%	44%
	3	73%	59%	28%	39%	19%	4%	2%	45%	47%	14%	20%	13%	13%	61%	58%	32%	92%	10%	1%	3%	21%	15%

APPENDIX C

QUALITATIVE DATA

Although quotations from the questionnaires were incorporated into the body of the thesis text, the richness and expressiveness of the Finns' responses impressed me enough to feel that these were inadequate. I have here collected, with minimal commentary, additional excerpts from the questionnaires (all sections except F) in order to better present the sauna in the words of the Finns themselves; the selection presented here in no way exhausts the data I was able to collect through the questionnaires. Where the respondent wrote in Finnish, the original Finnish is presented after the translation. The English versions have been edited for spelling and basic punctuation and sentence structure for ease of reading; where some interpretation was necessary to render the response comprehensible, this is given in square brackets ([...]). The numbered referencing corresponds to the list of respondents above (Appendix B).

ONE: THE SAUNA

THE SAUNA

The sauna is always an experience.
Sauna on aina elämys.
(140)

There is no other feeling so good as after the sauna when you put clean clothes on and go to bed, where there are also clean sheets. (78)

In the evening when the sauna is warm, you have to go to the sauna. (46)

So they, husband and his wife, have heated their own smoke-sauna in order to enjoy that feeling that always exists in the sauna. (13)

My childhood sauna illustrates, in my opinion, the Finnish holy attitude to the sauna:
"Come to the steam, God,
Father into the warm air,
Oh, give health,
oh, build peace."
Lapsuuteni saunaloru kuvaa mielestäni suomalaisten pyhää suhtautumista saunaan:
"Tule löylyhyn, Jumala,
iso ilman lämpimähän.
Tekemähän terveyttä
rauhoa rakentamahan."
(157)

[How is the Finnish sauna different from a bath or shower?] Please try it yourself. You can see the differences! (34)

[How would your life be different without a sauna?] I can't imagine, because I've been going to the sauna since I was a child.
En osaa kuvitella, koska olen lapsesta saakka käynyt saunassa.
(103)

And why is the sauna so famous? ...You notice, that after bathing in the sauna you have relaxed and you think, "It's a very good place and thing!" So, the sauna has become your hobby; without it, you can't live any more...
(28)

Most of the Finns love the sauna. (30)

They have come to the sauna to enjoy the peace of the weekend evening. However, they have chosen the time so that there is nothing interesting on television at the same time.
Saunaan on tultu nauttimaan viikonlopun illan rauhasta. Pariskunta on kuitenkin valinnut saunomisaikansa siten, että televisiosta ei tule heitä kiinnostavaa ohjelmaa samaan aikaan.
(204)

I can't imagine life without a sauna. I think that if you have been used to going to the sauna you whole life it would be quite hard to think of living without it. I think that a part of my life is taken away when I don't have an opportunity to go to sauna. Of course, it is not necessary but it belongs to Finnish style of life. (13)

[How would your life be different without a sauna?] It would be ... very difficult. Besides, it could never happen. (41)

[Why do you go to the sauna?] I love it. (1)

It's a habit ... We are used to going to the sauna and if you want to get rid of it, I suppose it would be very hard work. (43)

At times when I have not had sauna facilities in my own apartment, I have always gone elsewhere to have a sauna, such as at the swimming hall.
Sillä kun omassa asunnossani ei ole ollut saunomismahdollisuutta, olen aina mennyt muualle saunaan vaikkapa uimahallille.
(119)

You enjoy your life when you are sweating in the sauna. (9)

To go to the sauna is an event most Finns look forward to. I would miss it if I didn't have the opportunity to go to a sauna. (30)

Now when I am used to going to the sauna I can't imagine a situation where there were no saunas. (3)

The sauna means quite a lot to me. I lived in a very comfortable highrise apartment where I had my own bath and sauna time once a week [i.e., in the communal sauna of the building]. Nearby some row-house apartments were built which had their own sauna. Quickly I did some business. I sold my old apartment and bought a new one.
Minulle sauna merkitsee melko paljon. Asuin erittäin mukavassa kerrostalokaksiossa, missa oli asuntooni kuuluva kylpyhuone ja kerran viikossa saunomismahdollisuus. Lähistölle valmistui rivitalo asunnoissa oma sauna. Tein kiireestä asuntokaupat. Myin vanhan kaksion ja ostin uuden.
(125)

[How is the sauna (or going to the sauna) like a church?] Some go to church every week, it is a tradition, [similarly] nearly everyone goes to sauna regularly. (13)

The sauna is truly a fine invention.
Sauna on tosi hieno keksintö.
(137)

The sauna has a very great importance as a source of pleasure and relaxation and my life would truly be dull without it.
Saunalla on erittäin suuri merkitys mielihyvän tuottajana ja rentouttajana ja elämäni olisi tosi tylsää ilman saunaa.
(137)

I've lived in a house without a shower [just a sauna] for 12 years. (6)

People who have never been in the sauna can not understand how wonderful it is. (70)

Maybe you could live without a sauna of your own, but in Finland there are so many saunas, in your friends' and relatives', that you cannot avoid the sauna even if you want to. (42)

The nearest sauna is never far away. (46)

I can't imagine life without a sauna. When you go inside the sauna you can feel how the dirt is removed and you get lighter and get the power of life. (34)

[How would your life be different without a sauna?] It might be more difficult, and perhaps I wouldn't feel so lively anymore. Maybe I would get more headaches. I don't really know since I've never had to be without a sauna for very long periods of time.

Saattaisin olla rasittuneempi, enkä ehkä olisi niin virkeän tuntuinen enää. Saattaa olla että minulle tulisi enemmän päänsärkyä. En oikein tiedä, sillä en ole joutunut olemaan ilman saunaa kovin kauan aikaa. (100)

UNIQUENESS OF THE SAUNA

[How is the sauna different from a bath or a shower?] In my opinion, there is no way that these two things can be considered equal. The difference between them is like night and day. It is true that I get clean in both, but the sauna is completely different from a shower.

Ei mielestäni näitä kahta asiaa voi rinnastaa toisiinsa. Ero on kuin yöllä ja päivällä. Tosin tulen puhtaaksi molemmissa, mutta sauna on aivan toista kuin suihku. (124)

The differences between the Finnish sauna and a shower are rather big. You take a shower because you want to clean yourself [but this] is just one part of the effects of the sauna. Taking a warm bath has many of the same effects on your body and mind as sitting in a sauna, but it isn't the same thing. (22)

[Without the sauna] I wouldn't know where to go to have myself "washed" clean. (89)

One goes to the shower or bath to wash, but to the sauna to have a sauna.

Suihkussa ... kylvyssä käydään pesulla ... mutta saunaan mennään saunomaan. (145)

The sauna is worthwhile/valuable in itself, the shower and the bath have only a functional value!

Sauna on arvo sinänsä, suihkulla ja kylvyllä on vain välinearvo! (145)

The sauna has a very important social function aside from cleaning yourself, e.g., you can go to the sauna even when you are clean already (parties). (93)

The Finnish sauna is not just for washing yourself, in fact it is an experiment or some kind of ritual. (49)

They also wash themselves [in the sauna], which is not the most important part of going to the sauna. (47)

Going to the sauna is only indirectly used for cleaning.
Saunominen on vain välillisesti puhdistumista varten.
(101)

KIUAS

There are different kinds of saunas, for example, the steam from electric saunas is not as pleasant as that from a normal, wood-burning sauna.
Saunoillakin voi olla eroja esim. sähkösaunan löylyt eivät ole yhtä mukavat kuin tavallisen puulämmitteisen saunan.
(119)

Those black spots on their skin come from smoked walls [of the smoke-sauna], but that isn't dirty. (76)

A wood-burning sauna gives much better steam than an electric sauna.
Puilla lämmitettävä sauna antaa paljon paremmat löylyt kuin sähkösauna.
(175)

It is often often too dry in electric saunas.
Sähkösaunassa on usein liian kuiva.
(175)

The way of heating the sauna has gone through many changes in the last decades. Starting from the smoke sauna, then the smoke was drawn out by the addition of a chimney. The sauna was heated for many hours before throwing on the first steam for bathing, the damper closed and then bathing. This was followed by a wood-heated, continuous-heating sauna and after that a continuous-heating, thermostat-regulated, electic sauna stove with timer-regulated heating.
Saunan lämmittämistävässä on tapahtunut valtava muutos muutaman vuosikymmenen aikana savusaunasta aloitettiin, sitten ruvettin savu johtamaan ulos hormia pitkin, saunaa lämmitettiin monta tuntia ennen saunomista heitettiin häkälöylyt, pantiin pellit kiinni ja saunomaan. Tätä seurasi puilla lämmittettävä jatkuvalämmitteinen sauna ja tämän jälkeen jatkuvalämmitteinen, termostaatilla ohjattava sähkökiuas, jonka lämmittämisenkin voi ohjata ajastimella.
(205)

For a "sauna specialist" it's very important how the rocks of the oven are heated. Most of them think that the *löyly* [sauna steam] of an electrical oven is too dry. (59)

Our wood heated sauna gives good, moist steam.
Oma puulammitteinen sauna antaa hyvät, kosteat löylyt.
(101)

LÖYLY

The children have already left the sauna and the parents enjoy the best steam, which is absolutely at the end of sauna-ing, because there is more moisture in the air, and the steam is soft. (80)

The steam must be hard, so that you can really get to relax properly.
Löylyn täytyy olla kova, jotta oikein kunnolla päässisi rentoutumaan.
(143)

The atmosphere in the sauna is very soft and hot. The heat doesn't bother them [the sauna bathers] because the humidity is quite high. (24)

VASTA or VIHTA

In the sauna, you can *vihtoa*. (78)

The birch twigs are waiting on the benches, then you have to hit yourself with them so that your skin gets red. Oh! how enjoyable.
Vihta odottaa lauteilla, sillä sitten hakataan niin, että iho punoittaa, ah, mikä nautinto.
(168)

Matti Savolainen has made clean, new, birch sauna switches and oh!, how good it feels now to sit and switch each other in the delightful warmth.
Matti Savolainen ole tehnyt puhtaasta koivusta sauna vihtat ja voi, miten hyvältä tuntuikaan, nyt istua ja vihtoa toisiaan tuossa suloisessa lämmössä.
(97)

And of course the birch switch always belongs to a real sauna -- with it you switch your body until you feel languid and so clean.
Ja tietysti kunnon saunomiseen kuuluu aina vasta -- sillä kun oikein läpsyttelee kehoaan niin johan on raukea ja on niin puhdas olo.
(99)

Birch leaves are also used in the sauna to "beat" oneself. (8)

Sauna switches are not used as much nowadays because most people live in more densely populated areas where you can't break branches from the trees.
Vihtoja ei nykyaikana enää paljoa käytetä, koska ihmisistä suurin osa asuu taajamissa, missä puita ei saa repiä.
(114)

REAL SAUNAS

There are fine tastes [fragrances] in wood heated saunas and there are specially [special] lights [lighting] and atmosphere. (17)

In the lake-side sauna, I gaze at the birch trees and the lake and I get into a good, celebration mood.
Rantasaunassa, katsellen koivuja ja järveä, tuntee olonsa juhlalliseksi ja hyväksi.
(128)

It didn't feel like a waste to carry wood and fetch water from a difficult place. In the warm steam, the whole week's pressures felt like they were disappearing like ashes in the wind, while the birch switch that smelled of summer added its own aroma to this enjoyment.
Ei tuntunut turhalta puiden kanto ja veden haku melko hankalasta paikasta. Koko viikon työnraskaus tuntui kaikkoavan kuin tuhka tuulen lämpimässä löylyssä kesän tuoksuisen koivuvihdan tuodessa oman aromin sa nautintoon.
(125)

I know people for whom the only real sauna is the noted smoke sauna.
Tiedän ihmisiä, jotka noteeraavat savusaunan ainoaksi oikeaksi.
(175)

I don't use the word 'sauna' nowadays to refer to the common electrically heated "spaces"; these are called electric saunas, so that they are not confused with the real saunas!
Minä en pidä oikeana käyttää sanaa sauna nykyisin niin yleisistä sähköllä lämpiävistä "tiloista"; niitä on kutsuttava sähkösaunoiksi eikä mitä tule sekoittaa todellisiin saunoihin!
(171)

In Finland nowadays there are very few "real saunas" (smoke saunas). The electrically heated sauna is not a sauna in the "real" meaning of a sauna.
Suomessa on nykyään hyvin vähän "oikeita saunoja" (savusaunoja). Sähkölämmitteinen sauna ei ole sauna saunan "oikeassa" merkityksessä.
(201)

Bathing in the smoke sauna is much more moving [than other kinds of saunas]. It brings childhood times to mind, the scent is enjoyable.
Savusaunassa saunominen on paljon tunnelmallisempaa, tuo lapsuus ajat mieleen, tuoksu on "nautinnollinen."
(148)

In an apartment sauna, one doesn't get the right sauna feeling.

Kerrostalosaunassa ei saa oikeata saunatunnelmaa.

(175)

The real Finnish sauna is wood heated and is situated by a body of water. The electric saunas of the cities are substitutes copied from these. The sauna is anyway a very good thing and one hopes that it will spread around the world, the Finnish version, that is, without sex or excessive drinking on the side.

Todellinen suomalainen sauna on puulämmitteinen ja sijaitsee vesistön aarella. Kaupunkien sähkösaunat ovat näiden laihoja korvikkeita. Sauna on kuitenkin ihan hyvä asia ja sen toivoisi leviävän maailmalle nimenomaan suomalaisena tuotteena ilman seksikäyttöön tai juopotteluun liityviä sivuvaikutuksia.

(115)

It is unfortunate that any kind of couple of square metre closets have gotten the name of the sauna. Likewise sauna bathing and the sauna feeling in no way are a part of rushing around, or (the horror!) business negotiations, alcohol, rowdiness, etc. The Finnish proverb: "In the sauna one must be like in church," that is, respectful.

On välitettävää, että kaikenkarvaiset parin neliön kopit ovat saaneet saunan nimen. Samoin saunomiseen ja saunatunnelmaan eivät missään tapauksessa kuulu kiire eivätkä (voi kauhistus!) liikeneuvottelut, alkoholi, remuaminen jne. Suomalainen sananlasku: "Saunassa ollaan niin kuin kirkossa", siis hartaasti.

(164)

SUMMER COTTAGE SAUNAS

The best way to spend summer holidays is to go to the summer cottage and to the sauna. (17)

Sauna is also a traditional way of spending an evening, especially during summertime. (8)

Here is Mäkinen's family spending their holiday on their summer cottage somewhere near Lake Saimaa. This 3-4 week holiday is their normal way to spend free time. Maybe they sometimes travel to the south of Europe -- to Spain or maybe to Greece, but they always spend a couple of weeks in the countryside. And when they are in their summer cottage, they have sauna-time at least 3-4 times a week. Sometimes with neighbours, but usually with the whole family. This is a part of Finnish culture: summer cottage, lake, sauna and summer. What else could you hope for? That's what most Finns think. (31)

And a summer evening in the country by a lake wouldn't be the same without a sauna. It's really nice to go to the sauna and then dive into a clean Finnish lake. (30)

I cannot imagine my life without a sauna, especially in summer time. (42)

[Without a sauna] I will [would] miss those summer weekends and extremely [especially] evenings with having a swim and taking a bath in the sauna when the moon is shining. (32)

The back of winter has just been broken [i.e., it is past the winter solstice and the days are getting longer and spring-like].... It took rather a long time to heat the sauna, it's been really cold for many months. But now the warmth is delightful. Mr. and Mrs. Lottonen have earned their sauna-time. The switch, too, was taken from the freezer, and now it feels just like summer.

Talven selkä on juuri taittunut.... Saunan lämmitys kesti melko kauan, onhan se ollut kylmänä monta kuukautta. Mutta nyt lämpö on sitäkin suloisempaa. Hra ja rva Lottonen ovat saunahetkensä ansainneet. Vihtakin otettiin mukaan pakkasesta, ja tuntuu nyt aivan kesäiseltä. (111)

At the summer cottage I long for a sauna. In the winter, I don't go to the sauna, and I am not in any way "saunacrazy."

Kesämökillä kaipaan saunomista. Talvisin en käy saunassa, enkä muutenkaan ole n.s. "saunahullu." (110)

The greatest pleasure they get is by going to their summer cottage's sauna by the sea. (74)

[Without the sauna] also our summer cottage culture would suffer. (88)

In the countryside is a smoke sauna, which is without a doubt part of summer.

Maalla on savusauna, joka ilman muuta kuuluu kesään. (148)

Matti and Maija are a typical Finnish couple, who have saved for many years in order to have a summer cottage and sauna where they can go to relax on weekends and breathe fresh air. In the sauna, your overwrought brain cells start to work again, so that you can make it to work again on Monday.

Matti ja Maija on tyypillinen suomalainen pariskunta, joka monta vuotta on säästänyt mökkiä ja saunaa varten, mihin voivat lähteä viikonloppuisin rentoutumaan ja saamaan raitista ilmaa. Saunassa rasittuneet aivosolut taas pääsevät toimintaan niin että jaksaa lähteä töihin taas maanantaiaamuna. (100)

[How would your life be different without a sauna?] Well, it probably wouldn't influence by day to day life at all, except in extremely cold weather. Going to the sauna warms up your body and calms the spirit.

No, ei vaikuta mitenkään ihmeellisesti jokapäiväiseen elämääni, päitsi kovilla pakkasilla, saunominen tuo lämpöä ruumiillisesti ja henkisellä tasolla. (97)

A swim in the lake after the sauna crowns the whole event.
Uinti järvessä saunan jälkeen kruunaa koko touhun.
(175)

THREE: SAUNA AS RITUAL

WORLDS APART -- Separateness

In Finland, somewhere in the deep forest, two ordinary Finns go to the "sauna." It is a little space for relaxation between hard work and sleep. They talk abut something not relevant. They simply enjoy a steam and the atmosphere of friendly people. They don't necessarily know each other. They simply are in the "sauna". The "sauna" is no place for anger. After they have had enough steam they wash and return to their ordinary life. (41)

The rush of the city is centuries past.
Kaupungin kiire on vuosisatojen päässä.
(113)

It's Saturday evening [in the sauna] and the stress of the work week is left outside. (71)

Here in the *löyly* [steam] room they can forget the outside world and devote their time to each other. They do what they feel like. Maybe they just sit quietly and think nothing, maybe they talk about little things or big problems that bother them. (77)

Would anyone bring a book to the sauna, even for a frantic moment!! No!
Voisiko kukaan viedä saunaan kirjaa edes hurjimpana hetkenään!! Ei!
(145)

You can't have a sauna in a hurry. The sauna is somehow something you are looking forward to; you usually know beforehand when you are going to have a sauna. To the shower, you just *go*. (89)

[Why do you go to the sauna?] There's no hurrying or rushing for anything.
"Ei ole mihinkään kiire."
(97)

You miss the [don't have any] sense of time. (88)

WORLDS APART -- Emotion

The feeling [in the sauna] can be very devout.
[Saunassa] olo voi olla tosi harras.
(137)

[How would your life be different without a sauna?] I don't know any other place to relax. (66)

[How is going to the sauna like travelling?] When the travelling is pleasant, one acquires a heightened sense of enjoyment at the end of the trip. Perhaps this is like the feeling one gets at the end of a sauna ritual. (90)

Sometimes, when taking a sauna alone, it can feel like [a birthday party].
Joskus yksin saunominen voi tuntua [syntymäpäiväjuhlalta].
(128)

Coming from a sauna you can feel invigorated, like after a trip.
Saunomasta tultua voi tuntea itsensä yhtä virkistyneeksi kuin matkan jälkee.
(128)

You must not hurry, just enjoy that feeling and your life. (13)

It is possible to get rid of disturbing thoughts. (88)

When the stove's black organ begins to play its music, daily sorrows are forgotten.
kun soivat kiukaan mustat urut, unhoittuvat arjen surut.
(124)

WORLDS APART -- Sacred

Many Finns regard both of them as Holy institutions. (4)

One must put the secular sauna in context -- to show that the sauna is *not* secular, by comparison with, for example, these meanings

*the secular song	"light, secular; far from holiness"
*the secular hope	"such kind of thinking which is only concerned with the material."

Pakko pistää maallinen saunan yhteydessä -- merkkeihin, sillä sauna ei ole maallinen, jos verrataan esim. merkityksiin

*maallinen laulu	"kepeä maailmallinen; kaukana pyhästä"
*maallinen toive	"ajallinen, sellainen joka koskee vain aineellista."

(145)

The sauna is (or at least has been) also a holy and respected place.
Sauna on (ainakin ollut) myös pyhä ja kunnioitettu paikka.
(117)

The Finnish sauna is a very holy place. There are even rules, which were made a few hundred years ago, about how to act and behave in the sauna.
(73)

The sauna is holy.
Sauna on pyhä.
(120)

The sauna is the church of the ancient Finns. It is holy.
Sauna on muinaissuomalainen kirkko. Se on Pyhä.
(113)

Sauna has some kind of spiritual aspect, too. (66)

The sauna is a welcoming place, a "harbour of peace."
Sauna on mieluisa paikka, "rauhan satama."
(122)

Sauna is a place of peace, [like a church]. (3).

Sometimes being alone and quiet in sauna is nice, a bit like in church, I guess. (11)

The silence is the same [as in a church], if you bathe alone. (7)

The sauna has rituals and habits. It is an institution like a church. (27)

Going to the sauna is a serious thing often connected to (previous non-Christian) traditions. There are a lot of rituals in going to the sauna.
(94)

To go to sauna is some kind of ritual for us Finns. (24)

After a whole week's hard work, they want to start the weekend with something that makes them feel that now, after this, there is nothing they *have to* do. (89)

When you go up to the sauna benches, you feel that all the week's cares are forgotten.
Saunan lauteille kun nousee, niin silloin tuntee kaikki viikonhuolet unohdetuksi.
(102)

When your work is done (Friday or Saturday) you want to relax and start your own weekend and your own time. A good way to start is to go to sauna and spend a while and a quiet moment [there] and enjoy. (21)

It's Saturday evening [in the sauna] and the stress of the work week is left outside. (71)

[In the sauna] I forget about my job.
[Saunassa] unohdan työpaikkani.
(123)

All the work must be done before the sauna: often the table for coffee after the sauna is even set and prepared beforehand!
Kaikki työt pitää tehdä ennen saunaa: usein laitetaan saunakahvipöytäkin valmiiksi!
(145)

"You feel that the week's dirt is gone."
"Viikon likа tuntuu nyt lähtevän."
(126)

They have had a hard week at work and now they want to relax and be together. (79)

Mr. and Mrs. Virtanen are bathing in the sauna to start the weekend clean and relaxed. They have had a tiring week and by going to the sauna they want to forget the rush for a moment and enjoy the heat of 85 degrees Celcius. (74)

[Why do you go to the sauna?] It's a part of the weekend.
Se on osa viikonloppua.
(119)

The sauna is opposite [to the workplace]. It makes one feel at home. (94)

Sauna is a tradition which ... starts the weekend. (72)

When in the sauna, pressures are forgotten.
Saunoessa kiireet unohtuvat jonnekin.
(99)

Nowadays the sauna is not a holy place.
Sauna ei ole nykyään pyhä paikka.
(133)

"The sauna is a holy place," the old people used to say.
"Sauna on pyhä paikka" sanoivat vanhat ihmiset ennen.
(124)

The sauna is (or at least has been) also a holy and respected place.
Sauna on (ainakin ollut) myös pyhä ja kunnioitettu paikka.
(117)

I don't feel the sauna [to be] a very holy place, but maybe just a little.
(85)

The sauna and the home are both private places!
Sauna ja koti ovat yksityispaikkoja molemmat!
(145)

They are in the sauna to calm down from the hectic way of life and formally the reason why they are in the sauna is because they need to wash themselves. (46)

The rush of the city is centuries past.
Kaupingin kiire on vuosisatojen paassa.
(113)

I can feel how the dust of the [past] days leave out of my skin when I sweat. (68)

WORLDS APART -- Reflection

[How is going to the sauna like travelling?] Maybe in that your thoughts are free to flow (mentally) -- travelling in your mind. (46)

I have to admit that I often think "noble" thoughts in the sauna.
Täytyy myöntää, että ajattelen monta kertaa "yleviä" ajatuksia saunassa.
(123)

[How is the sauna like a church?] Sometimes you want to be alone, feel warm and safe and just think. (77)

[Why do you go to the sauna?] To talk about "different" ideas. (8)

It is easy to dream in a warm sauna. (29)

[How is going to the sauna like travelling?] You get new ideas to think about and a feeling that you have really done something. (13)

[Without the sauna] I would have to think of some other place where I could think in peace. (89)

In the sauna it's also nice to just sit and let your thoughts soar.
Saunassa on muutenkin kiva istua ja antaa ajatusten liidellä.
(99)

In the sauna ... you can see the best even in bad things.
Saunassa ... näkee parhaimmat asiat huonoissakin asioissa.
(100)

In the sauna one can be in touch with one's feelings, one's own self, like at home.
Saunassa ollaan omien tunteiden kanssa, omansa itsena, niinkuin kotona.
(123)

In the sauna you feel yourself. (96)

It's a warm, comfortable and relaxing place where you can be just what you are. (85)

In the sauna one can be in touch with one's feelings, one's own self, like at home.
Saunassa ollaan omien tunteiden kanssa, omansa itsena, niinkuin kotona.
(123)

BEHAVIOUR

Then one had to, and still has to, behave properly [in the sauna].
Siellä oli, ja on edelleen, käyttäydyttävä siivosti [saunassa].
(124)

In the sauna one doesn't make noise. It's a holy place.
Saunassa ei meluta, se on pyhä paikka.
(136)

[How is going to the sauna like church?] It is common to sit still in the sauna. (22)

One respects the sauna like a [church] service (no bad words allowed). (93)

In the sauna, you don't make a ruckus.
Siellä ei mellastella.
(113)

There [in the sauna], licentious behaviour, swearing, and passing gas are inappropriate.
Sauna on pyhä; siellä ei sovi irstailla, ei kiroilla, ei piereksia.
(120)

Anyway, in most cases I think the sauna is not a place for sex. Usually men and women use the sauna separately. (39)

[Finns go to the sauna before/after sex.] There are no taboos against it, but the sauna is in no way an inherent part of sexual games or intercourse.
Ei mikään kiellä, mutta ei sauna mitenkään *liitty* seksuaaliseen leikkiin tai yhdyntään.
(145)

The Finnish sauna doesn't have anything to do with sex, like it has in some other countries where sauna is considered to be a doubtful place. (30)

Actually, the sauna is used [for sex] (so says the literature) as a hiding place, but cold (!), not during bathing!
Itse asiassa saunaa on käytetty [sukupuoliselle kanssakäymiselle] (kertoo kirjallisuus) piilopaikkana, mutta kylmänä (!) ei kylpemisen aikaan!
(145)

SAUNA AND SISU

If you go with your friends to the sauna, it is some kind of test of "how [much of a] man you are". (26)

People do sometimes even compete in being a heavier sauna-goer (standing more heat or the "vasta" (beating oneself with a bunch of birch twigs). (94)

The sauna is a place to relax, not to compete. (72)

A Finn always beats a Swede in staying in the sauna heat.
Suomalainen aina ruotsalaisen voittaa löylynsietämisessä.
(168)

CLEANLINESS

After the sauna you feel fresh and clean inside as well as outside. (49)

When I go to foreign countries and stay there a few weeks, I usually miss the sauna. After one week, I feel very dirty, even if I take a shower once or twice a day. (73)

They are sitting and sweating in the heat so that all dirty things from their skin will get off and after that they will wash it away. (76)

Because we don't have a modern bath room in our apartment, the sauna is indispensible.
Koska meillä ei ole erityistä kylpyhuonetta nykyisessä asunnossamme, sauna on välttämätön.
(162)

If you are in a hurry, you can always take a shower, but for us Finns, the sauna is something special. (24)

In the bath or shower you only wash your skin. But in the sauna the sweating brings the dirt out from those very small holes that we all have in our skin. And the shower after sauna takes all that dirt away. (20)

Nowhere else can you get so clean.
Missään muualla ei tule niin puhtaaksi.
(116)

I can't imagine life without a sauna. When you go inside the sauna you can feel how the dirt is removed and you get lighter and get the power of life. (34)

They say that a woman is most beautiful two hours after sauna bathing. (77)

Sauna makes me feel cleaner. When I am sweating in a sauna it takes away all my dirtiness. When you take only a bath or shower, you cannot sweat. (29)

It is hard to imagine life without a sauna. It is one of the basic things in my life. It is nice to know that every Wednesday and Saturday there is something that is always there, no matter what happens. It is also a very important way of getting myself clean. I don't feel clean if I don't have a possibility to go to the sauna at least once a week, no matter how many times you take a shower. (24)

I can feel how the dust of the [past] days leave out of my skin when I sweat. (69)

Firstly, the sweat, which comes "artificially" because otherwise in Finland's cold weather, a person seldom sweats. The pores open and the wastes are gotten rid of. A person is "deep" cleaned.
Ensinnakin hikoilu, joka tulee "keinotekoisesti" koska muuten ihminen Suomen kylmässä ilmastossa harvoin hikoilee. Ihohuokoset aukeaa ja kuona-aineet lähtevät pois. Ihminen puhdistuu "syvältä."
(108)

In a bath or shower, people don't sweat and a part of the dirt is still in the skin, but in a sauna all the dirt comes out with the sweat. (70)

Cleanliness is certainly possible even without a sauna.
Peseytyminen on toki mahdollista ilman saunaakin.
(112)

PURIFICATION

Going to the sauna doesn't just mean cleaning one's skin, although that is certainly done most effectively in the sauna. In the sauna, one cleans the soul and relaxes the mind.
Saunomisen tarkoitus ei ole pelkkä ihon puhdistaminen, vaikka se toki saunassa on tehokkaampaa. Saunassa puhdistuu sielu ja rentoutuu mieli.
(111)

[Why do you go to the sauna?] I have a habit of saying that I drive the evil spirits away from myself.
Minulla on tapana sanoa, että ajan pahat henget pois itsestäni.
(123)

You're like a new person again.
On taas kuin uusi ihminen.
(104)

I can feel how the dust of the [past] days leave out of my skin when I sweat. (68)

To the sauna bather comes a purifying heat, one is tested.
Saunojalle tulee puhdistava kuume, on tutkittu.
(108)

Earlier, one went to the sauna on Saturday and on Sunday one went, clean, to church.
Ennen on lauantaina saunottu ja sunnuntaina menty puhtaina kirkkoon.
(115)

The sauna relaxes and renews the person.
Sauna rentoutua ja uudistaa ihmisen.
(145)

And of course, they want to feel clean for Sunday. (79)

HEALING

An old saying says, 'If liquor, the sauna and tar don't help, then it's [the disease is] the person's death.
Vanha sanonta sanoo, 'Jos ei viinä, sauna ja terva auta, niin se [tauti] on ihmisen kuolemaks'.
(104)

[Why do you go to the sauna?] To cure a flu or ache.
Flunssan ja särkyjen parannukseksi.
(125)

After...really straining my brains, there's no other way to really relax than in a good sauna. (93)

CYCLES

[How would your life be different without a sauna?] What shall I do then on Saturday evening? (28)

Saturday Night Fever! (70)

The sauna belongs to our natural weekly [-ly rhythms of] life. (20)

Saturday night fever in Finland. (9)

They have the habit of always taking a sauna on Saturday night. It crowns the weekend, they think.
Heillä on tapana aina lauantai-iltana saunoa, se kruunaa viikonlopun, heidän mielestään.
(109)

FOUR: REVEALING THE SHY FINN

SAUNA FELLOWSHIP

I would have less fun evenings with my friends. Perhaps I wouldn't get so many friends. (40)

[Without the sauna] our meetings with friends would be shorter and they would have one part missing. Maybe I would talk less with my boy friends, because at my age a sauna is a place where we can talk straight without being disturbed by girlfriends or parents. (31)

Sometimes I can feel the sauna like a party (if I had a beer with me). (29)

Going to the sauna is a way of leading a social life, like at a party. (4)

People usually [go to the sauna] together and talk much, even more than usually. (27)

The sauna is a nice way to start a party. It gets people closer and after a sauna it is easy to get in a good mood. (24)

The feeling of togetherness is nice in the steam.
Yhdessäolo on mukavaa löylyssä.
(115)

I have had many nice moments in the sauna with my friends. (74)

If there weren't any saunas we should invent a new way to spend time and relax with friends. (77)

They have had a hard week at work and now they want to relax and be together. (79)

Bathing in the sauna with the family; a feeling of togetherness, closeness.
Saunominen perheen kanssa; yhteinen läheinen tunnelma.
(138)

It is hot and steamy. You can go there with your friends, relax, talk about everything in the world and elsewhere. (88)

[Without the sauna] I would have to find some other places to talk about the dearest thing in life with my girlfriends and other ways to relax. (88)

There on the benches of the sauna, it was comfortable to visit and talk about the events (results) of the year and prospects for the future harvest....
Siinä saunan lauteilla oli mukava käydä keskustelua vuoden tulosta ja satotoiveista....
(146)

The sauna has a very important social function aside from cleaning yourself, e.g., you can go to the sauna even when you are clean already (parties). (93)

One goes to the sauna in the company of other people (friends/relatives) rather than alone. One goes to the bath/shower alone (except in situations with a sexual context).
Saunassa käydään mielellään toisten ihmisten (ystävien/sukulaisten) seurassa. Kylvyssä tai suihkussa käydään yksin (poikkeuksen tilanteet joihin liitty seksuaalista latausta).
(204)

In the sauna it's easy to talk and tell stories with other people.
Saunassa on helppo päästä juttuun toisten ihmisten kanssa.
(100)

To the sauna, you seldom go alone. (58)

FELLOWSHIP -- Special Ties

Here in the *löyly* [steam] room they can forget the outside world and devote their time to each other. They do what they feel like. Maybe they just sit quietly and think nothing, maybe they talk about little things or big problems that bother them. (77)

I and my wife don't have to say anything, we just feel. (68)

It is natural to go to sauna together. (24)

It's easy to forget all your troubles and forgive everything there. (85)

[Why do you go to the sauna?] To "wash" my anger away. (85)

[How is the sauna like a home?] Everybody is equal. (88)

It is a place where people can relax and can be equal to each other because they are naked -- just what they are. (39)

Hatred and anger do not survive in the sauna: if one goes to the sauna when angry, it will be appeased just by sitting on the benches!
Viha ja vihaisuus eivät viihdy saunassa: jos saunaan menee vihäisenä, lauteilla jo istuu leppyneenä!
(145)

Being relaxed, fresh and naked makes you open and happy. (56)

[Why do you go to the sauna?] To wipe out prejudices [grudges] between friends. (56)

It is a good place to meet friends and get to know them better. Without a sauna it would be more difficult. (44)

For example, in public saunas you easily talk with strangers. That does not happen often in the streets. I think that we are more open when we are naked. It is easier to make contact in business negotiations. (42)

[In the sauna,] people feel closer to one another.
[Saunassa] tuntee läheisyyttä toisiinsa.
(151)

If there are both sexes [going to the sauna], they usually go separately expect [except] families, good friends or if you are having a party. (14)

[How is a sauna like a home?] [It's a] closed, warm circle.
Suljettu, lämmin piiri.
(131)

Maybe the man and woman are married, not necessarily, but they must know each other well because they are naked. (54)

WHO GOES TOGETHER? -- Home and Family

The sauna is the legacy of the home.
Sauna on kodin perintöä.
(103)

In the sauna every one [in the family] is together.
Saunassa kaikki ovat yhdessä.
(107)

[How is going to the sauna like a home?] It's a family event.
Perhetapahtuma.
(109)

The sauna is often most closely connected to the home, the family, the things which are closest to one. Going to the sauna is something "intimate", every-day, familiar and safe, like home.
Sauna liittyy usein läheisesti juuri kotiin, perheeseen, läheisiin.
Saunominen on "intiimiä", arkista, tuttua, turvallista, kuin koti.
(111)

Families usually go to the sauna together; the children with their parents, the married couples together.
Perheet käyvät yleensä yhdessä saunassa; lapset vanhempien kanssa, pariskunnat keskenaan.
(114)

[How is the sauna like a home?] It's a part of family life.
Kuuluu perhe-elämään.
(115)

The sauna is an important part of my home. (72)

[The sauna is] a very homey and warm, safe place; it's the family's meeting place.
[Sauna] on hyvin kotoinen ja lämpimän turvallinen paikka; perheen kokoontumispaikka.
(120)

The sauna is a natural part of a home. (24)

The sauna is so usual to the Finns, it's like a home. (13)

[The sauna is like a home, because] it is familiar, one feels safe. (7)

You feel very secure in the sauna like at home. (4)

[SONG:] "On the homey sauna's benches, in the evening the sauna bath will be enjoyed again..."
"Lauteilla saunan kotoisen, taas illalla kylpy maittaa."
(123)

Families go to their own saunas together and there are also public saunas. Public saunas have two parts--for men and women. (12)

It's always good and secure to go to the sauna like it is to go home. (6)

In the sauna you feel relaxed like at home. (8)

[How is the sauna like a home?] Every person should have one. (16)

The best sauna is [one's] own sauna at home. (78)

Any house cannot be a home without a sauna. (29)

In a home, there must be a sauna. (70)

[How is the sauna like a home?] feeling cozy and safe. (14)

Without a sauna, life wouldn't be homey!
Elämä ilman saunailtaa ei olisi kotoista!
(131)

Bathing in the sauna with the family; a feeling of togetherness, closeness.
Saunominen perheen kanssa; yhteinen läheinen tunnelma.
(138)

[Why do you go to the sauna?] Whenever I visit my parents...whenever I want to spend a nice, homey night. (88)

[How is the sauna like a home?] Everybody is equal. (88)

A home and a sauna belong together -- there are no homes without saunas (there are some exceptions!)
Koti ja sauna kuuluvat yhteen -- ei saunatonta kotia (on poikkeuksia!)
(145)

The sauna is a place where the family gets together, just like at meals. (93)

WHO GOES TOGETHER? -- Hospitality

[Why do you go to the sauna?] It's polite to go if somebody asks. (77)

It's a kind of ritual -- you can, for example, ask your guests to go together [with you] to the sauna. (46)

The sauna is heated specially for guests.
Vieraalle lämmitetään varta vasten sauna.
(145)

And now about the relationship of the sauna to receiving guests! (1) Guests can be invited especially to go to the sauna. (2) If the sauna is hot/heating, every welcome guest (whether invited or not) is asked to the sauna. (3) The sauna is heated specially for welcome surprise guests. Generally first the people go to the sauna and then afterwards are served first a sauna drink, and then coffee / tea / a meal / wine (alcohol) -- or everything!
Entas saunan suhde vieraanvaraisuuteen! (1) Vieras voidaan kutsua nimenomaan saunomaan. (2) Jos sauna on lämmin/lämpimässä, jokainen mieluinen vieras (kutsumatonkin) pyydetään saunaan. (3) Mieluisalle yllätysvieraalle lämmitetään varta vasten sauna. Yleensä ensin saunotaan ja vasta sitten tarjotaan ensin saunajuomaa, sitten kahvia / teetä / ruokaa / viiniä (viinaa) -- tai kaikkia!
(145)

Offering a sauna is one important way of showing hospitality in Finland.
Saunan tarjoaminen on yksi ja tärkeä vieraanvaraisuuden osoittamisen muoto Suomessa.
(175)

[Why do you go to the sauna?] To introduce Finnish customs to foreign friends. (93)

A very polite form of expressing kindness and hospitality is to invite one's guests to the sauna. (94)

WHO GOES TOGETHER? -- Social Groups

I think in a good party there should always be a sauna. (66)

[I go to the sauna] after academic parties, because it's a custom.
[Menen saunaan] akateemisen juhlan jälkeen, koska se on tapana.
(165)

[Why do you go to the sauna?] To follow "academic traditions" = morning after sauna parties. (93)

FIVE: THE SAUNA IS FINNISHNESS

FINNISHNESS

Every Finn knows the sauna and most of the people go to the sauna one or two times a week. (20)

The sauna is such an important part of the Finnish way of life that it's difficult to avoid it here. (93)

The sauna is a part of every Finnish dwelling and leisure-time summer place.
Sauna kuuluu lähes jokaiseen suomalaiseen asuntoon ja vapaa-ajan kesäpaikkaan.
(200)

It's our way of life. I can't think of life without sauna. If I go to live in a foreign land, where there is no sauna, I would build a sauna of my own. (23)

[The sauna] is a part of every-day Finnishness.
[Sauna] kuuluu jokapäiväisen suomalaisuuteen.
(113)

As a Finn, it is difficult to analyze sauna bathing/saunas, because it is a part of our way of life.
Suomalaisena vaikea analysoida saunomista/saunaa, koska se kuuluu osana elämäntapaan.
(114)

People go to the sauna 1 - 2 times a week in order to relax, but also because it is a part of the Finnish way of life.
Saunassa käydään 1 - 2 kertaa viikossa sen rentouttavan vaikutuksen vuoksi, mutta myös siksi että se kuuluu suomalaiseen elämäntapaan.
(114)

The sauna is too often thought of as a Finnish invention. Even though the Finns are sauna crazy, the sauna or similar sweat baths were invented in may other places before Finland.

Sauna on liiaksi mielletty suomalaiseksi keksinnöksi. Vaikkakin suomalaiset ovat saunahulluja, keksittiin sauna tai sitä muistuttava hikoilulaitos monessa paikassa ennen Suomea.

(186)

[Why do you go to the sauna?] To introduce Finnish customs to foreign friends. (93)

[How would your life be different without a sauna?] The sauna is part of Finnish life and taking part of life away is like taking one's wife away. (70)

[How would your life be different without a sauna?] My life would be a disaster. (25)

To a foreigner, the sauna reminds [one] of Finland. (38)

If I weren't a Finn, I wouldn't miss the sauna. But, as I have been accostomed to going to the sauna since I was a child, it would definitely take some time to get used to being without a it now.

Jos en olisi suomalainen, en kaipaisi saunaa. Mutta kun olen lapsesta asti tottunut saunomaan, veisi ilman saunaa olemiseen tottuminen varmaan jonkin aikan.

(122)

The sauna is so usual to the Finns, it's like a home. (13)

Going to the sauna means to most Finn. more than to foreigners, it is a part of our "ideology". (4)

The sauna belongs to our natural weel [-ly rhythms of] life. (20)

If I were living in a country without saunas, my life would hardly change at all. Something else would come to fill the place of it.

Jos asuisin saunattomassa maassa, tuskinpa elämäni juurikaan muuttuisi. Tulisi jotain muuta vastaavaa tilalle.

(141)

[How would your life be different without a sauna?] I would live somewhere else, not in Finland, in a different cultural atmosphere. Here it would be painful without a sauna. (93)

[How would your life be different without a sauna?] One of the pleasures of my life would be gone, but wouldn't there be something there to take its place (if I moved to a foreign country, for example).

Elämästäni olisi yksi nautinto pois, mutta eiköhän jotakin muut vastaavasti olisi tilalla (siis jos esim. muuttaisi ulkomaille).

(114)

The sauna has been a holy ritual for centuries.
[Sauna] on pyhä rituaali vuosisatojen takaa.
(113)

Sauna bathing is not "history" in the sense that it has dropped out of general use (weaving, on the other hand, is "history," since only a few of the whole population learn to do it anymore).
Saunominen ei ole "historiaa" siinä mielessä, että se osittainkaan olisi jäänyt pois yleisistä tavoista (vrt. kutominen on "historiaa," sillä harvat koko väestöstä opettelevat enää kutomaan).
(145)

And when returning back to Finland after a journey in Europe, I always [go to the sauna]. It is a pleasure. (31)

Sometimes, when I have been somewhere else (not in Finland), I have missed the sauna a lot. (79)

When travelling I am always longing for a sauna.
Matkoilla minun tulee aina ikävä saunaa.
(147)

If you are abroad, [going to the sauna] makes your homesickness easier.
(42)

After a long trip, first to the sauna. (6)

After a journey, it's nice to wash the dust off in the sauna.
Matkan jälkeen on mukava pestä pölyt pois saunassa.
(186)

The sauna is an essential part of the Finnish way of life and probably the first thing that a Finn misses abroad. (94)

When you come home after a trip abroad, the first thing you want to do is to go to the sauna. (89)

When travelling, the home sauna always comes to mind.
Matkoilla tulee aina kotisauna mieleen.
(138)

They are Finns -- that's why when travelling around nations and continents and places, what they always miss is, of course, the sauna.
He ovat suomalaisia -- silti matkustaneet mäitä ja mantereita ja paikka mihin kaipaavat aina on tietenkin sauna.
(98)

While in foreign countries, the one thing I missed was the sauna.
Ulkomaille oleskellessa kaipasi nimenomaan saunaa.
(101)

The meaning of the sauna is not well enough known or understood in other countries.
Ei tarpeeksi tunnettu eikä ymmäretty saunan merkitystä ulkomailla.
(183)

A KEY TO MEANING

[How would your life be different without a sauna?] I can't imagine, because I've been going to the sauna since I was a child.
En osaa kuvitella, koska olen lapsesta saakka käynyt saunassa.
(103)

A sauna bath is a small celebration.
Saunominen on pieni juhla.
(123)

Saturday evenings are a recurring joy! (91)

If I cannot bath in the sauna at least once a week it feels like something is missing. (54)

Sauna bathing gives space for feelings.
Saunominen antaa tilaa tunteille.
(117)

It is hard to imaging life without a sauna. It is one of the basic things in my life. It is nice to know that every Wednesday and Saturday there is something that is always there, no matter what happens. It is also a very important way of getting myself clean. I don't feel clean if I don't have a possibility to go to the sauna at least once a week, no matter how many times you take a shower. (24)

It is not only cleaning but it is a way of living. (86)

The sauna is not a necessity, but it helps to make life more peaceful and it is a deeply rooted custom.
Sauna ei ole välttämättömyys, mutta se helpottaa ja rauhoittaa elämää ja on syvälle juurtunut tapa.
(191)

My life would be boring and more dirty without the sauna. The sauna is some kind of tradition in Finnish life. Saturday doesn't feel like Saturday without the sauna. (78)

The sauna is important to me and going to the sauna is a great pleasure.
Sauna on minulle tärkeä ja saunominen suuri nautinto.
(103)

There aren't any alternatives or substitutes to the sauna. (46)

I feel that life without a sauna for a long time [would] make me mad. (73)

Saturday without a sauna would feel empty.
Lauantai ilman saunaa olisi tyhjän tuntuinen.
(121)

In truth, it feels like life without a sauna would be unthinkable.
Tosinaan tuntuu ettei voisi ajatella elämää ilman saunaa.
(124)

The sauna is an essential part of every-day life. A person's sauna tells a lot about his attitude to life, too. (94)

[How would your life be different without a sauna?] It wouldn't really change so much anymore, now that I have moved away from my childhood home and go to the sauna only about once every two months. For myself, however, I feel that I enjoy the sauna noticably more now than when I went to the sauna once a week.
Eipä se ole erilaisemmaksi muuttunut nyt kun asun poissa lapsuuden kodistani ja käyn vain noin kerran kahdessa kuukaudessa saunomassa. Itse saunomisesta nauttii kuitenkin huomattavasti enemmän kuin silloin kun kävin saunassa kerran viikossa.
(99)

Without a sauna, life wouldn't be homey!
Elämä ilman saunailtaa ei olisi kotoista!
(131)

You have around you the most important people, or then you can be quite alone.
Ympärilläsi on sinulle tärkeitä ihmisiä tai sitten voit olla aivan yksin.
(99)

The sauna should be guaranteed by law to be everyone's right.
[Sauna] pitäisi olla lakisääteisesti jokaisen oikeus.
(194)

Without a sauna, life would be missing an important morale giving ritual.
Ilman saunaa elämästä puuttuisi tärkeä ryhtiä antava rituaali.
(131)

Without the Finnish sauna, [life] would be as empty as a house without a woman's step on the sauna path.
Ilman suomalaista saunaa olisi yhtä tyhjää kuin talo ilman emäntää astelevana saunapolulla.
(104)

You cannot be without a sauna!
Ilman saunaa ei voi olla!
(131)

My life wouldn't be the same without the sauna. I couldn't think of my life without a sauna, it's so important to me. (36)

Earlier, the sauna was not very important to me. In the last years I have really begun to appreciate the sauna.
Aiemmin ei sauna ollut minulle kovin tärkeä. Viimeisen vuoden aikana olen todella alkanut arvostaa saunaa.
(143)

[Without a sauna] I would feel that I had lost something. (71)

[Life would be] more boring [without a sauna]. (48)

To live without a sauna in Finland would be awful -- one would have to be seriously ill in a hospital or sick with some skin disease that doesn't tolerate the sauna. I hope such things never happen to me. (93)

[How would your life be different without a sauna?] Dismal.
Ankeaa.
(108)

Without a sauna, a part of my life would die. (43)

APPENDIX D

STATEMENTS CONTRARY TO HYPOTHESES

Statements from the qualitative parts of the questionnaire which are contrary to the hypotheses are presented here. These statements are few and apparently do not form any systematic challenge to my thesis.

My life would be just as comfortable without the sauna. Perhaps even more comfortable. I hate an obligatory sauna during visits. If you don't go to the sauna and if you don't have a really acceptable reason for it, the host and hostess will be easily offended.
Elämäni olisi ihan yhtä mukavaa ilman saunaa. Ehkä vähän mukavampaakin, inhoan pakkosaunomista vieraillessa. Jos et mene saunaan ja jos sinulla ei todella ole pätevää syytä tähän, isäntäväki loukkaantuu helposti.
(r175)

[How is the sauna like church?] Not so holy (phony). (r67)

In my opinion, sauna bathing is becoming more ordinary and is less of a meaningful event than what the writer of the questionnaire seems to understand.
Saunominen on mielestäni arkipäiväisempi ja vähemmän merkityksiä sisältävä tapahtuma kuin kaavakkeiden laatija tuntui sen ymmärtäsisiä.
(r162)

[Why do you go to the sauna?] Sex. (r42)

[How would your life be different without the sauna?] Not at all.
Ei mitenkään.
(r111)

The sauna is not indispensible to me.
Sauna ei ole minulle välttämätön.
(r158)

[How would your life be different without a sauna?] It wouldn't be different, there just wouldn't be a sauna.
Ei olisi eriläistä, ei vain olisi saunaa.
(r160)

The sauna almost gets forgotten and is not much used when there is so much else to do.

Sauna melkein unohtuu käyttämättä kaiken muun puuhan keskellä.

(r169)

The sauna is to Finns as much of an everyday and usual thing as going to the toilet. It's useless to make something holy or extraordinary of it.

Sauna on suomalaiselle yhtä jokapäiväinen ja tavallinen asia kuin vessassa käynti. Siitä on turha tehdä mitään pyhää tai eriskummallista asiaa.

(r180)

Sometimes I stay for hours in the sauna, I read.

Oleskelen joskus saunassa tuntikausia, luen.

(r108)

[What do you think would *best* represent Finland and Finnish culture to a foreigner?] Very, very hard to say....I may be expected to say sauna, but I won't.

(r11)

[How would your life be different without a sauna?] I surely would have managed without a sauna -- it doesn't mean so much to me! (r4)

For most people steambathing is not a ritual, but a devise to keep them clean during cold weather. (r67)

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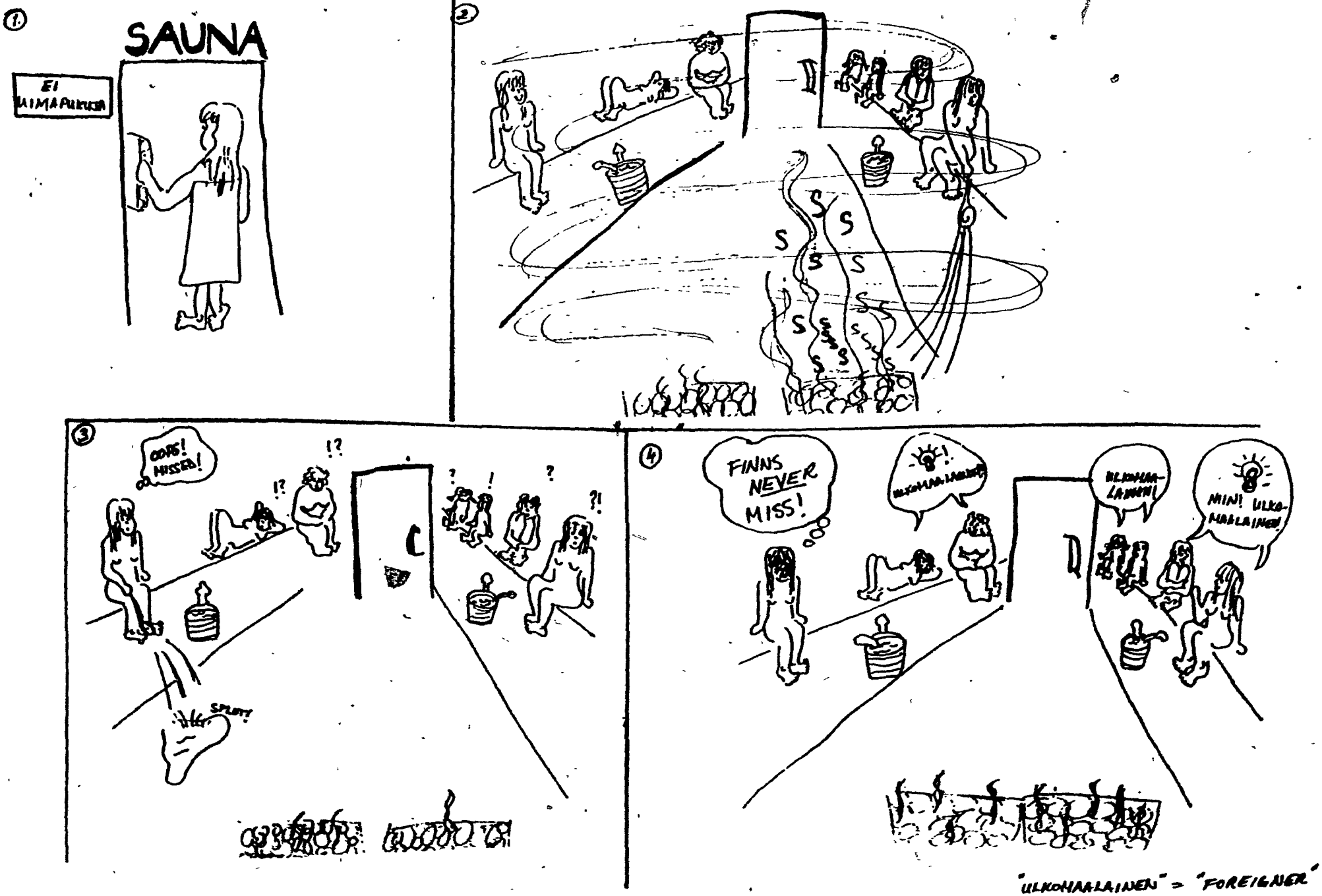

"ULKOMAALAINEN" = "FOREIGNER"