



Kaunonen, Gary. (2009). *Finns in Michigan*. East Lansing: Michigan State University Press. ISBN: 978-087013844-7. Paperback. 123 pages with photos. Reviewed by Dr. Mika Roinila, Bethel College, Mishawaka, Indiana.

Gary Kaunonen has written a book that will make readers appreciate the varied and colorful history and influence of the Finns in Michigan. Part of the *Discovering the Peoples of Michigan* series, the book provides an excellent, although brief, introduction to the Finns in the state. The book starts by assuring the reader that his writing is a balanced attempt at a "broad survey of the social and labor history of the Finns in Michigan - inclusive of the good, the bad, and the ugly aspects of the Finnish experience..." (1). To his credit, Kaunonen is true to this claim, and is not afraid to use several examples throughout the book to emphasize the often neglected and forgotten history of the Finns in the state. The first indication of an attempt at a balanced review begins by dispelling the historically common held notion that higher education among Finnish-Americans was only attainable through Suomi College (Finlandia University). Kaunonen correctly identifies that "conventional histories ignore the Work Peoples College [Duluth, Minnesota] because it espoused and taught a radical proletarian curriculum" (2). Interestingly, in 1915 the Work Peoples College had as many students, faculty, and courses, as did Suomi College. Given this fact, it is intriguing that "the Work People's College's place has been omitted by some, perceivably because of ideological basis." (2). Although Work People's College was located in Minnesota, it exemplifies a rift that has existed among Finnish-Americans for decades. Possibly following the lead of Finland and Finnish historians today in dealing with historical matters of the early 1900s, a younger generation is more willing to delve into the intricacies and injustices that occurred among all Finns. Thus, research has become more open to scholarship that

looks at everything and tries to present a more accurate documentation of history.

Finns in Michigan contains six short chapters. Following the introductory chapter, the second chapter simply deals with the general migration patterns and settlements of Finns in the state. In the following chapters, Kaunonen focuses more on the work the Finns were engaged in. Separate chapters focus on heavy industry and traditional labor, which focus on mining, quarrying, logging, factories, farming, domestics and house operators, berry picking, moonshine, fishing and reindeer herding. Much is written about mining, forestry, and farming. More could have been written about the commercial fisheries on Lake Superior, Lake Huron, and Lake Michigan. The fifth chapter looks at the cultural organizations of the Finns. It is in this chapter that readers will learn of the Finns and their ideological differences that separates not only White and Red Finns from one another, but also the existence of various other categories. "These two colors (Red & White) have a basis, but vastly oversimplify the Finn organizational spectrum, to the extent that they obscure the fascinating waxing and waning of ideologies and philosophies." (58). There were radical, liberal, and conservative factions that existed in Michigan, and Kaunonen identifies these various groups using a "heuristic device" (59), that includes Black Finns, Red Finns, Yellow Finns, Pink Finns, and White Finns. Each maintained its own philosophical characteristics, and Kaunonen illustrates these differences nicely. I won't explain them here, and hope you will read it for yourself. All this supports the more balanced approach in looking at the Finns in Michigan, and will be an eye-opener for many who have not considered any other possibilities beyond the Red-White dichotomy. The book continues by looking at religious groups, Finn Halls, temperance groups, labor and political groups, co-operative groups, and the Knights and Ladies of Kaleva. Much is written about the major Lutheran denominations and the splits that took place over time, but something could have been written about often overlooked denominations. One example is the short lived Finnish Salvation Army that operated in Calumet in 1908-09 (Roinila, 2007).

The conclusions bring together the several different elements that Kaunonen introduces throughout the book. In analyzing the presence and cultural impact Finns had in Detroit, Kaunonen is critical of some

well known works that are often cited and recognized by historians. One example includes "The Finns in Michigan" (Wargelin, 1940). "Seemingly, Wargelin's disposition towards the Suomi Synod prevented his mentioning of the contributions of Finn labor, political, and cooperative organizations in Detroit. These organizations, the first Finnish immigrant institutions in Detroit, paved way for many future generations of Finnish American working-class families..." (90). The book ends by encouraging everyone to become engaged in collecting oral histories. There is much to be learned from the generations of the past, and before time runs out, "Sit down, and interview grandma or grandpa, burrow through the closet with them, and above all else, ask questions - the elders will dig it." (93).

The book is an easy read, and provides several sidebars with fascinating information. Material on Finns such as Big Louie Moilanen, the eight foot giant who lived in Copper Country; the settlement of Kaleva; Swede-Finns of Michigan; the development and use of "Finglish"; the Hanka homestead; and the impact of the Finnish immigrant press. Kaunonen provides two appendices, the first of which provides information on Finnish American cultural and historical societies in Michigan, while the second provides several Finn recipes, that ultimately encourage readers to try and make for themselves in order to experience what Finnish food is about. A very good bibliography of sources is provided at the end of the book, and this is one of the strengths of the text. Much of the material used is based on interviews and records found in the archives of the Finnish American Historical Archives located in Hancock, Michigan, where Kaunonen works as the archivist. As is noted by Kaunonen, many of the valuable resources available have not been used to date, and this book only uses a very small portion of the available materials. In fact, Kaunonen encourages more work to be done through interviews and the col-

lection of oral histories. Secondary sources dominate the resources used for the writing of this book, but this is understandable, since much has been written on this topic already. Kaunonen brings many of the sources nicely together in a short text that is attractive to the general public.

Still, *Finns in Michigan* could have been better. While the brief coverage of settlement is well done in the first chapter, more could have been said about the Swede-Finns who settled in the state, and sources such as Myhrman (1972) cannot be overlooked. The book mentions many places in Michigan where Finns have settled, worked, etc., but there are no maps to show where these locations are. A single map showing the distribution of Finns based on the 2000 census in the state is not enough. The book would be much better with the addition of more maps to illustrate the locations mentioned throughout the book. In the final analysis, the book is a wonderful addition to the growing literature on Finnish histories across the country. The book fits into the *Discovering the Peoples of Michigan* series very well, and based on the publishers' requirements, it has fulfilled its goal of revealing the unique contributions that different and often unrecognized communities have made to Michigan's historical and social identity. Get a copy of this book, read it, and appreciate the almost endless peculiarities that exist among the Finnish people of Michigan.

End Notes:

- Myhrman, Anders. (1972). *Finlandssvenskar i Amerika*. Svenska Litteraturselskapet i Finland, Helsingfors.
- Roinila, Mika (2007). "A Forgotten Outreach: The Finnish Salvation Army in North America", *Journal of Finnish Studies*, Vol.11: 1, pp.32-46.
- Wargelin, John (1940). "The Finns in Michigan", *Michigan History Magazine*. Vol.24, pp. 179-203.



Päivi Harinen & Veronika Honkasalo & Anne-Mari Souto & Leena Suurpää (toim.), Ovet auki! Monikulttuuriset nuoret, vapaa-aika ja kansalaistoimintaan osallistuminen. Nuorisotutkimusverkosto/Nuorisotutkimusseura Julkaisuja 91. Nuorisotutkimusverkosto/Nuorisotutkimusseura, Helsinki 2009-08-11. 226 s. ISBN 978-952-5464-53-5.

Käsillä oleva teos on vuonna 2004 käynnistyneen tutkimushankkeen *Monikulttuuriset nuoret, vapaa-aika ja kansalaistoimintaan osallistuminen* eräänlainen loppuraportti. Sen tarkoituksena on ”punoa yhteen mittavan tutkimushankkeen päätteleviä säikeitä”. Kirja koostuukin neljästätoista eri artikkelista ja lisäksi johdanto- sekä epilögiluvusta. Pääosin kirjoitukset ovat tutkimusartikkeleita, mutta mukana on myös katsauksen omaisia sekä omiin työkokemuksiin perustuvia kannanottoja.

Kirjoittajien runsaus ja tekstien sekakoosteisuus tuo kirjaan välttämättä sillisalaattimaista otetta. Esitystä on toki pyritty jäntevöittämään ryhmittelemällä tekstit kahden eri teeman alle: ensimmäinen teema keskittyy monikulttuurisiin nuoriin ja toinen nuorisotoimintaan. Sillisalaattia ei kuitenkaan ole saatu täysin hallintaan. Toisaalta sekakoosteisuus ja sen muassa tuoma moniperspektiivisyys voidaan nähdä myös vahvuutena. Sen kautta lukijalle voidaan tarjota useita eri näkökulmia kirjan aihepiiriin.

Tutkimusartikkelien keskiössä on ollut selvittää monikulttuurisista taustoista tulevien nuorten vapaa-ajan viettoa ja kansalaistoimintaa. Tämän tiedon varassa on pyritty myös luomaan suuntaviivoja siihen, miten ”nuorten vapaa-ajan kentille voisi luoda käytäntöjä, joiden avulla mahdollisuudet monipuolisiin harrastustoimintoihin ja kansalaisvaikuttamiseen au-

keaisivat tasavertaisesti kaikille Suomessa asuville nuorille”, kuten toimittajat johdantoluvussa kirjoittavat. Näin ollen kirjan teksteillä on sekä kuvaava ja analysoiva että myös tulevan toiminnan tapoihin ja muotoihin vaikuttamaan pyrkivä ulottuvuus.

Artikkelien lähdeaineistona on usein käytetty monikulttuurisille nuorille suunnatun laajan kyselytutkimuksen vastausaineistoa (n=1385). Kyselytutkimuksen ohella hanke on tuottanut tutkimusmateriaaliseen myös monikulttuuristen nuorten ja nuorisotyöntekijöiden haastatteluja sekä verkkokyselyillä koottua materiaalia kuntien nuorisotoiminnasta ja -työstä vastaavilta viranhaltijoilta ja nuorisotoimintaa tekevien järjestöjen keskus- ja paikallistason toimijoilta. Aineistoa on eri tutkimusartikkeleissa lähestytty sekä kvantitatiivisilla että kvalitatiivisilla menetelmillä, myös näitä menetelmiä yhdistäen. Menetelmällinen monipuolisuus tuo muassaan kokonaisvaltaisempaa näkemystä tutkittavaan asiaan sekä elävyyttä ja syvyyttä myös itse tutkimustekstiin.

Kirjan runsaasta aineistosta johtuen tässä ei voida esitellä teoksen kaikkia artikkeleita. Itseäni kiinnostivat eniten kirjan toisen osan artikkelit, joissa painotettiin poliittisen osallistumisen merkitystä ja mahdollisuutta kotoutumisen välineenä. Käsitykseni mukaan tähän asti tutkimuksen valtavirta on painottanut työn ja työllistymisen ensisijaista merkitystä. Poliittisen – siis kansalaistoiminnallisen – osallistumisen merkityksen esiintuonti avasi minulle uusia näköaloja. Niin ikään ajatus maahanmuuttajanuorten kotoutumisen tärkeydestä kirkastui. Voi nimittäin olla niin, että ensimmäisen polven maahanmuuttajia eivät koskaan täydellisesti kotoudu, vaan he saattavat tuntea ”vierautta” elämänsä loppuun asti – puhun tässä tietenkin yleisellä tasolla ja yleistäen. Sen sijaan nuorten kohdalla tulokset voivat olla parempia. Ja kääntäen: maahanmuuttajanuorten kotoutumis- ja sopeutustarpeiden laiminlyönti voi pahimmillaan johtaa hyvin huonoihin seurauksiin. Myös maahanmuuttajien lapsissa on nupullaan meidän suomalaisten yhteinen tulevaisuus.

Markku Mattila