



*Women journalists had entered newsrooms in greater numbers during the World War II. However, after the war news work was divided into masculine and feminine jobs from which the first ones were viewed as more prestigious. Foreign correspondence was one of the male bastions. In the picture, journalists of a local newspaper Kaleva are working with a piece in 1959. Source: Finnish Heritage Agency, photo number JOKAKAL3B:11504. CC BY 4.0.*

**Sammanfatning: Könsfördelning av utrikeskorrespondenters historia: Fallet med Helsingin Sanomats Maija-Liisa Heini.** Maija-Liisa Heini (1917–1988) var en stjärnreporter av sin tid som tillbringade de flesta åren av sin karriär på Finlands största nationella tidning, Helsingin Sanomat. I den här artikeln fokuserar jag på Heinis arbete under slutet av 1960-talet som tidningens skandinaviska korrespondent. Mer specifikt kommer jag att använda Heini som en fallstudie för att reda ut den könsrelaterade historien om utrikeskorrespondens genom att anta Lonsdales argument att tidiga kvinnliga korrespondenters utomstående status tillät dem att producera alternativa berättelser om utrikesaffärer. Genom att analysera nyheter och kronologiska artiklar skrivna av Heini hävdar jag att hon använde sin status som journalist av hög anseende för att störa befintliga idéer om vad som utgjorde bra utrikesjournalistik. Samtidigt som hon gjorde detta lyckades hon kombinera en så kallad feminin skrivstil med en professionell persona som omfamnade maskulina drag av journalistik.

**Nyckelord:** Maija-Liisa Heini, kvinnor i journalistiken, utrikesjournalistik, utrikeskorrespondent, Helsingin Sanomat, 1960-talet, Finland

Fagfellevurdert

# Gendering the history of foreign correspondents: The case of Helsingin Sanomat's Maija-Liisa Heini

**Abstracts:** *Maija-Liisa Heini (1917–1988) was a star reporter of her time who spent most of her career working at the biggest national newspaper in Finland, Helsingin Sanomat. In this article, I focus on Heini's work during the late 1960s as the paper's Scandinavian correspondent. More specifically, I will use Heini as a case study to unravel the gendered history of foreign correspondence by adopting Lonsdale's argument that early women correspondents' outsider status allowed them to produce alternative narratives of foreign affairs. By analysing news and feature articles written by Heini, I argue that she used her status as a journalist of high standing to disrupt existing ideas about what constituted good foreign news journalism. In doing so, she was successful in combining a so-called feminine writing style with a professional persona that embraced masculine traits of journalism.*

**Keywords:** *Maija-Liisa Heini, women in journalism, foreign news, foreign correspondence, Helsingin Sanomat, 1960s, Finland*



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Due to her excellent Swedish skills, Heini has specialised in Scandinavian matters, so to speak. *Dagens Nyheter* used Heini as their Helsingin Sanomat correspondent, i.e. a stringer, and for the last five years Heini has lived in Stockholm as the foreign correspondent of her own newspaper.<sup>1</sup>

The above quote is an excerpt from a personal portrait of Finnish reporter Maija-Liisa Heini (1917–1988) who spent most of her career working at the biggest national newspaper, *Helsingin Sanomat*, and was viewed as one of its star reporters. In this article, I focus on Heini's work during the late 1960s as

*Helsingin Sanomat's* Scandinavian correspondent. More specifically, I will use Heini as a case study to unravel the gendered history of foreign correspondence by adopting Lonsdale's argument that early women correspondents' outsider status allowed them to produce alternative narratives of foreign affairs.<sup>2</sup> Lonsdale focuses on freelance writers and journalists working for minor publications, and their working conditions were wholly different from those enjoyed by Heini, who worked for the most prestigious newspaper in Finland and had a steady position. However, like these women of the interwar period, Heini was one of the few women to work in the prestigious field of foreign correspondence in Finland in the 1960s.<sup>3</sup> What also connects Heini to the earlier women is the observation that they were not restricted by the rules of their media outlets.

In the analysis, I will complement Lonsdale's argument by drawing on the theorisation of the performative nature of both gender and journalism, as well

as their interconnections. Arguably, during the post-war decades, traditional gender norms influenced the behaviour of both female and male journalists who maintained professional norms and masculinist newsroom cultures in their daily work through constant repetition of gendered acts. However, individual journalists could also challenge those norms, as was the case with Heini. She followed the gender norms of the day, which valued masculine traits in journalism, but occasionally she managed to disrupt the writing conventions of her time.<sup>4</sup> This also applies to her years as a foreign correspondent in Stockholm. Here, Pauliina Penttilä's model of professional journalism as a field that is constantly performed through the repetition of journalistic practices is of particular value. Penttilä makes a distinction between sufficient, ideal and dynamic repetition, and it is the last of these three that is revelatory in Heini's case. While sufficient and ideal repetition maintain and support professional norms, dynamic repetition destabilises craft practices and ideas about what constitutes good journalism.<sup>5</sup>

In what follows, I will argue that Heini used her status as a star reporter to destabilise the prevailing writing conventions of her time, i.e. she practiced dynamic repetition, and in doing so she redefined what foreign news could look like. I will show this by first describing the social and other capital Heini had to advance her career. Afterwards, I will move on to analyse her work as a foreign correspondent. I will ask whether her articles differed from the other material published in *Helsingin Sanomat's* foreign news section. How did her gender influence her manner of writing? What kind of strategies did she use to maintain or disrupt the then-current practices of foreign news journalism?

The primary material for this article consists of Heini's articles published in *Helsingin Sanomat* between 1965 and 1970. I collected the data from *Helsingin Sanomat's* digital archive, where a basic keyword search using her name resulted in 3,599 hits.<sup>6</sup> The

interface does not allow advanced searches, nor are there any options to organise the hits or limit the time period viewed. Consequently, I have not analysed the entire pool of data from these years in depth. Instead, I selected a sample of articles, on which I have based my interpretations. I also used interviews with Heini published in various magazines, as well as short news items that mention her. I collected this material from the National Library of Finland's digital interface, where a keyword search using her name produced 1,626 hits. Thus, this article has greatly benefited from the digital turn in historical research.<sup>7</sup> Specifically, it would have been impossible to identify contemporaneous comments made by Heini in interviews or journalism seminars without the availability of digitised media texts. Instead of computer-assisted distant reading, the data analysis, however, includes the contextual close reading of media texts.<sup>8</sup> By this I mean that Heini's career and her articles are analysed as part of the wider

historical context of professional journalism in late 1960s Finland. This includes craft practices, particularly those related to foreign news journalism, and the gendered composition of the profession.

### Becoming a star reporter

Individual women had worked in Finnish newsrooms since the late 19th century, but their numbers remained rather low until the 1960s, when women entered into professional journalism in greater numbers.<sup>9</sup> However, the number of women in *Helsingin Sanomat's* workforce had been rising gradually since the late 1920s. This was partly due to the size of the newsroom: the greater number of specialist beats compared with other newspapers created opportunities for women journalists. For instance, women could advance their careers by beginning as newsgatherers and then demonstrating their skill as reporters. Additionally, their better language skills opened certain areas of work to them, such as 'harbour journalism'. At that time, ships were an important channel through

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*Majja-Liisa Heini was a seasoned expert who was able to combine light writing style with prominent newsroom positions. In the late 1960s, she worked as the Helsingin Sanomat's Scandinavian correspondent after which she was nominated to the Ilta-Sanomat's second editor-in-chief. Both positions were rare for women journalists at that time. Source: Majja-Liisa Heini's archive, The National Archives of Finland.*

which foreign news travelled to Finland, and women journalists such as Vappu Roos managed to make this into their special niche.<sup>10</sup>

Nevertheless, the profession remained dominated by men, and cultural expectations limited the career trajectories of women journalists throughout the early 20th century, including at *Helsingin Sanomat*. This status quo was disrupted by the outbreak of World War II. When men were called up to the front, newsrooms allowed more women to enter the profession, and Majja-Liisa Heini was one of them. In 1941 she started work in *Helsingin Sanomat*'s local office in Lahti as a 24-year-old, university-educated woman with brief experience from the world of advertising. After a couple of months, she was moved to the main newsroom in Helsinki, where she

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was assigned more demanding tasks. For instance, she served as a subeditor on the paper during the war.<sup>11</sup> Thus, she is a model example of the opportunities the war opened up for women in working life. She also received various opportunities that were rare for women after the war, and by the early 1950s she was being hailed as 'one of the two real women journalists' in Finland by her male colleagues in the Helsinki area. Alongside her work as a reporter, Heini published magazine columns under the pseudonym 'Ksantippa', and it was in this role that she became a household name in cultural and political circles in post-war Finland.<sup>12</sup>

During the immediate post-war years, the issue of gender became manifest in the profession as male journalists returned to the newsrooms. Although not



*Helsingin Sanomat's Scandinavian correspondent had been based in Stockholm since 1943. Maija-Liisa Heini worked there between 1965 and 1970. The tram was photographed in Slussen in September 1967. Photographer: Lennart af Petersens. Source: Stockholm city museum, photo number DIA 17009. CC-BY-NC.*

all of the women working in journalism withdrew from the profession, the normative understanding of journalism as a masculine job remained intact. Women were seen as suitable for reporting when they were young, but a middle-aged woman reporter was regarded as 'a sad phenomenon'. Furthermore, more advanced jobs such as subediting were seen as too demanding for women. These ideas were to some extent shared by women journalists themselves, but they were not ready to give up their professional lives. As a result, in 1946, the Club of Women Journalists was founded, at first serving as a forum for discussion of women's status in the profession.<sup>13</sup> Heini was active in the club. In 1947, she was one of the speakers at an event for young women with aspi-

rations to enter professional journalism, and in 1956 she presented her ideas about women journalists' opportunities for newspaper work.<sup>14</sup> Both events were organised by the Club of Women Journalists, and as her participation in them suggests, Heini's expertise as a journalist was valued by her peers.

In professional circles Heini was known for two things: her boldness in news work and her light writing style.<sup>15</sup> The former is of course highly appreciated by professional journalists, and indeed can be seen as an essential quality for 'a proper news journalist'.<sup>16</sup> This probably explains why Heini was recognised as one of Finland's two eminent women journalists, as briefly mentioned above. However, a light writing style was still considered feminine, and thus regarded as inferior by distinguished journalists. Interestingly, this did not apply to Heini: the lightness of her style did not diminish her star quality. For example, she was nominated for the position of foreign correspondent in spite of her reputation as 'a pioneering gossip columnist'.<sup>17</sup>

One explanation for Heini's special status can be found in the manner in which she distanced her light journalism from the specialist area of women's journalism. Even though her texts displayed a lightness of touch that was seen as feminine in 1960s Finland,<sup>18</sup> she was outspoken in her view that fact-based journalism could be written in such a way as to be enjoyable. In particular, she did not question prevailing news values, and she saw serious news work as more valuable than the tasks that continued to be assigned to women, such as reporting on women's organising. Additionally, her interest in Scandinavia and her ability to speak fluent Swedish constituted a form of cultural capital that made her suitable for the correspondent position, as evidenced in the opening quote. However, her promotion can also be viewed as a reward for a journalist whose 'brand' (to use today's terminology) was profitable for the newspaper. This was the case in 1970, at least, when Heini was further promoted to the position of second editor-in-chief of the tabloid *Ilta-Sanomat*, published by the Sanoma corporation. Arguably, both promotions indicate that Heini had secured her position as 'one of the guys' among her male colleagues, which made them per-

ceive her as less female than other women journalists in the newsroom.<sup>19</sup>

Even if Heini clearly embraced her role as 'one of the guys', the ways in which gender affected her choices as a journalist were more complex. Candi S. Carter Olson has used the concept of 'gender judo' to show how US war correspondent Ruth Cowan took advantage of feminine stereotypes in her reporting to support women's expanding roles during World War II. More precisely, Cowan played with gender stereotypes to undermine them while advancing her own career.<sup>20</sup> To some extent, this chimes with Heini's light and humorous writing style. Heini did not use her texts for women's advancement per se, but her own professional career served as an inspiration for many women in post-World War II Finland.<sup>21</sup> More importantly, she managed to combine her 'feminine' writing style with more masculine work traits to become equal to her male colleagues. Consequently, Heini's texts, which were distinctively descriptive, a trait that was viewed typical for women in journalism textbooks of this time,<sup>22</sup> propelled her success within the profession. Simultaneously, she liked to distance herself from women's issues, and she often emphasised that she felt more comfortable with men than with women.<sup>23</sup> Indeed, her professional persona can be seen as a combination of feminine and masculine traits. On the one hand, she embraced feminine qualities in writing and helped to feminise journalism, as can be seen in the following quote, which discusses the role of women's pages in journalism:

It is not easy to write light columns. Consequently, they are often assigned to women journalists: a woman works hard, wants to be recognised, and has the ability to approach minor news items in a casual manner; she is better at typing text that is superficial enough (it has been said, according to a pioneer in this field, Maija-Liisa Heini, that superficiality is a virtue).<sup>24</sup>

On the other hand, as we saw above, Heini distanced herself from her female colleagues and fully embraced her role as 'one of the guys'.<sup>25</sup> Thus, in Heini's work, doing gender and doing journalism were intertwined,

but a focus on the latter reveals the ways in which she managed to displace the working practices of 1960s foreign correspondence, as I will now show.

## Reporting from Stockholm

According to my ideology, news work must be as objective and factual a communication as possible. But there are always things that cannot be presented in this way. Sometimes one needs to go against the grain and use playfulness to deconstruct overstimulation. In my opinion, causerie allows this, says Maija-Liisa Heini.<sup>26</sup>

The quote that opens this section is taken from a personal portrait of Heini that was published in 1973, when she was working as editor-in-chief on *Ilta-Sanomat*. In the quote, Heini makes a clear distinction between objective news work and the subjective genre of causerie. Nonetheless, in the following, I will argue that to some extent, the lighter style with which readers were familiar from her causeries was also present in her news work. This was the case during her early career as a domestic reporter in particular, when she wrote on various topics ranging from the funeral of the King of Sweden to ski sports in Lahti.<sup>27</sup> Traces of the same style can be found in the articles from her years as a Scandinavian correspondent.

*Helsingin Sanomat* had established a steady correspondent position for Scandinavia in 1943 based in Stockholm. As Finland's leading national morning paper, *Helsingin Sanomat* had a well-developed network of correspondents in different countries, but it seems to have placed more importance on the Nordic region than its rivals: the only other morning paper with a correspondent in a Scandinavian country was the leading Finnish-Swedish *Hufvudstadsbladet*, whose correspondent also worked in Stockholm.<sup>28</sup> Heini was nominated for the position in 1965, which can be seen as an indication of her prestige in the newsroom. Interestingly, however, Heini had not worked in *Helsingin Sanomat*'s foreign section prior to her nomination, suggesting that foreign news reporting was not a necessary background for foreign correspondents. At that time, foreign news reporters,

who were located in their newspapers' Finnish offices, mostly relied on news provided by the biggest international agencies, such as Reuter<sup>29</sup> and United Press International, although the job also included more demanding tasks, as can be seen in the following passage from a Finnish journalism textbook published in 1961:

He is [...] both a newsman who takes care of event news and a political reporter who has specialised in foreign politics. The first task does not need a lot of special skills [...]. On the contrary, reporting on world politics [...] requires simple professionalism, and also a wide knowledge base and a perspective deriving from this. It is also useful to know foreign languages.<sup>30</sup>

A sophisticated understanding of world politics was required of foreign correspondents too, but these correspondents were seen first and foremost as seasoned experts who could offer an insider's view of issues in the countries where they were based. After returning to Finland, they often took up leadership positions, as was the case with Heini.<sup>31</sup>

During her five-year post in Stockholm, Heini wrote a steady flow of news relating to Sweden, infrequently publishing texts that focused on other Scandinavian countries.<sup>32</sup> Her reporting also included Nordic collaboration in general and the late 1960s political effort to create an all-Nordic economic area (Nordek) in particular.<sup>33</sup> As this suggests, Heini's reporting emphasised the political aspects of the Nordic region, which is characteristic of foreign news reporting.<sup>34</sup> It was also typical of Heini that her reports relied on Nordic media. When she reported on events for a Finnish audience, it was based on something she had either read in a morning paper or tabloid or heard on the radio.<sup>35</sup> Additionally, the Finnish perspective can be identified in her many reports on Finnish immigrants in Sweden, or on Finland's various economic and

cultural interests within the Nordic region.<sup>36</sup> Often her daily output in the paper consisted of a number of small news items,<sup>37</sup> and most of her reports were published in the paper's foreign news section. However, from time to time they appeared in the paper's day-to-day or family sections, as was the case, for instance, with an article about a kitchen fair held in Stockholm in 1968.<sup>38</sup>

Arguably, Heini's articles about various events and political developments of Scandinavian origin adhered to the conventions of political news writing, a news beat that tends to invite a masculine writing style.<sup>39</sup> However, occasionally we find news items written by Heini that differ from this general trend. One illustrative example of the entertainment value found in some of Heini's articles is her report on the divorce of the businessman Axel Broström.<sup>40</sup> A few years later, her article about a Swedish woman who had given birth to quadruplets was accompanied by a picture of the happy couple.<sup>41</sup> As a curiosity, Finnish readers were also informed about a Swedish environmentalist who had built a memorial for crows.<sup>42</sup>

At other times, the topic was not entertaining per se but included a human interest angle: for example, a story about a two-year-old who had frozen to death because of her mentally ill Finnish-born mother, and an article on

the pointlessness of soaking laundry.<sup>43</sup> Heini could also use tabloid news as a source, as was the case in 1966 when she summarised a news story from the Swedish *Expressen*. According to Heini, the day of publication was 'the date that included the most number sixes in the century, when anyone could date their letters by using only this number'.<sup>44</sup>

Although it was certainly not her main area of interest, every now and then Heini did pay attention to topical women's issues. For instance, she wrote about strong female figures, including a 1968 article about the new female leader of Stockholm city council.<sup>45</sup> Additionally, she made a few remarks on gender roles, a hotly debated topic in Finland at the time.

*Heini was able to find newsworthiness in small and seemingly irrelevant topics*



She also reported on discussions relating to sexual morality, such as the so-called Stockholm marriages and students' calls for gender-neutral saunas,<sup>46</sup> themes that may not have belonged very obviously to foreign news journalism in the late 1960s. Similarly, she reported in detail on the discussion regarding the line of succession to the Swedish throne.<sup>47</sup>

To some extent, such small news items contradicted the guidelines for foreign news journalism offered by Antero Okkonen in his 1961 journalism textbook. According to him, 'a foreign reporter on a prestigious morning paper should avoid filling the foreign section with small entertaining news from abroad, i.e. curiosities that are repeatedly offered. Their place is not in the foreign section. Instead, the light page, i.e. the fluff, is the correct place for them'.<sup>48</sup> Although this comment was probably aimed at the foreign celebrity news that was relatively common in Finnish newspapers at the time,<sup>49</sup> it also reveals the old-school attitudes towards news work that Heini was questioning with her 'journalistic counter-strategies', to use Luostarinen's concept.<sup>50</sup> More specifically, Heini's small news items, with their human interest framing, offered a variety of lighter material for the paper's foreign news desk and simultaneously redefined what foreign news could look like. Heini's manner of destabilising the prevailing understanding of foreign news journalism was particularly meaningful in *Helsingin Sanomat* in which human interest stories had accounted for only 13.7 per cent of the foreign material in 1961, a considerably smaller percentage than was found in many other Finnish newspapers of the time, such as the local newspapers *Aamulehti* and *Kansan Lehti*.<sup>51</sup> What is more, her human interest items were often published alongside serious political news, which diversified the entire outlook of the paper's foreign news section.

One example of these changing practices is Heini's article on the fishing industry in Iceland. The article followed fact-based reporting conventions, but it included a twist in its use of a picture and caption. The article was illustrated with a picture of a young girl who held a piece of dried cod in her hands. The caption said: 'Even though the cod is dry, the girl is fresh. Thus, a girl and a cod are a natural choice

when an Icelandic photographer wants to stage the proper background for the cover girl. 90 per cent of Iceland's exports come from the fishing industry'.<sup>52</sup> It is impossible to know who selected the picture and wrote the caption, but the example shows that the leading national newspaper's foreign news section was not afraid to combine entertaining elements with serious news work. It also demonstrates that Heini was not the only one to challenge prevailing journalism practices.

This chimes with the findings of Esko Keränen, according to whom the job of foreign correspondent underwent major changes during the post-war years. The original interest in political information from the host country later paved the way for more news-oriented reporting. From the mid-1960s onwards, the accelerating speed of news flows through television and radio, as well as through international news agencies, demanded further changes of emphasis. Background and feature articles were placed at the centre of correspondents' work, as indicated by the human interest framing used in *Helsingin Sanomat*.<sup>53</sup> Similarly, the radical left morning paper *Kansan Uutiset* wanted its Moscow correspondents to cover the everyday lives of Soviet citizens alongside their political articles.<sup>54</sup> Nevertheless, Heini's texts seem to have been the only ones that blurred the lines between feature writing and news texts, both of which bear her feminine style. Arguably, there was the opportunity for this kind of dynamic repetition since Aatos Erkko, the editor-in-chief of *Helsingin Sanomat*, was updating working practices at that time.<sup>55</sup> For Heini, one way of doing this was to use narrative storytelling, as I will show next.

### Narrativising the news

The dynamic repetition of craft practices is most visible in some of the news items and articles where Heini distanced herself from news writing conventions through her use of narrativisation and language typical of her causeries. These texts, or parts of them, adopted a somewhat subjective point of view while telling the reader a story, imitating the byline subjectivity – to use Steensen's concept – that was characteristic of the work she published under the pseu-



donym 'Ksantippa'. She had used this writing style from the beginning of her career, and her causeries in particular were a model of narrative journalism. Her pieces from Stockholm thus replicated her personal writing style rather than representing the 'new journalism' that was emerging in the US in the 1960s.<sup>56</sup> This was not atypical for female correspondents of that time. Like Heini, the New York correspondent of *Sydney Morning Herald*, Margaret Jones sent her paper 'elegantly written features' alongside her news stories.<sup>57</sup> However, the topic of these pieces was firmly in the political beat whereas Heini was able to find newsworthiness in small and seemingly irrelevant topics as indicated in the previous section.

Many of the more subjective pieces Heini wrote as a correspondent were reportages, and they belonged to a genre of journalism that cultivated subjectivity. A prominent example can be found in a major article about the wedding of the Danish Princess Margrethe, which Heini depicted in a lively manner:

What a day! All the expectations Danes had for 10 June were fulfilled when Crown Princess Margrethe promised to love, in sickness and in health, the French duke [...] who a day later would turn 33 years old.<sup>58</sup>

The article followed the conventions of wedding reporting, and thus it did not reform foreign reporting per se. Similar reports from Heini had appeared previously – her report on the funeral of King Gustaf V in 1950,<sup>59</sup> for example. Indeed, this almost radio-style reporting was typical of Heini during her early career. However, her way of including small oddities in the report is worth mentioning. Alongside the main article, for instance, Heini depicted one of Margrethe's wedding gifts as follows:

Copenhagen provos [members of a 1960s Danish counterculture movement] have remembered Margrethe and Henrik with a wedding gift. [...] The bikes were decorated with small Danish flags

and paper hearts [...]. A group of provos began their journey from the fountain in Amelie market square by walking with the gift bikes, which had no back lights or locks [...]. In honour of Danish humour, one must mention that the provos' arch-enemies, a window cleaner from Ströget and his friend, gave them the signal to begin with Italian starting pistols and wearing red Turkish hats on their heads.<sup>60</sup>

Similarly rich descriptions can also be found in articles about the nuptials of the Norwegian royals Sonja and Harald. In an article published before the wedding, Heini depicted how political tensions were casting a shadow over the upcoming festivities.<sup>61</sup> In places, the style was almost gossipy as she informed the readers about Sonja's childhood friends, the line-up of her bridesmaids, and the details of the wedding gifts.<sup>62</sup>

Heini also used narrativisation in some of her news stories. In some cases, this meant that she played with words, as in an article about a scientific conference on mercury and its dangers. The lead text ended as follows: 'Already at this point it is worth mentioning that there is a lot of gunpowder residue in the air relating to the dangers of mercury'.<sup>63</sup> Other articles would include whole episodic narratives; an example is a news item about a parliamentary decision concerning trade between East Germany and Sweden. The first two paragraphs focused on pure fact, but the last paragraph went on to present a funny incident that happened inside the parliament building:

A more or less Christmassy situation was experienced in parliament by the speakers and speedwriters on Wednesday. They were forced to work in the second chamber by candlelight. The disturbance was caused by a malfunction in the electricity. [...] Doorkeepers had to run around the house in search of the representatives since the division bells did not function either.<sup>64</sup>

These examples illustrate Heini's strong suit: building

entertaining narratives. Even though the texts were published alongside more traditional foreign news articles, they nevertheless disrupted prevailing journalistic practices and offered another idea of what foreign news could be. Arguably, the readers of the foreign news sections found themselves being entertained, and her texts thus paved the way for a new understanding of journalism. Traces of this shift can be found in a news item about a seminar on changing journalistic practices that was held in 1984. Heini was one of the keynote speakers, and according to the report, her speech argued as follows:

One can discuss journalism and literature in the same sentence. In fact, there has always been journalism that recalls literature due to its personal content and form. Previously, this kind of journalism belonged to causeries, but nowadays a more personal style of writing has also found its place on other pages, in reports, interviews and even news stories.<sup>65</sup>

## Conclusion

In this article, I have sketched a rough portrait of Maija-Liisa Heini as a journalist, and of the texts she wrote as *Helsingin Sanomat's* foreign correspondent. The article argues that Heini was successful in combining a so-called feminine writing style with a professional persona that embraced masculine traits of journalism. This helped her to navigate in the masculinist newsroom culture of post-war Finland and to advance to the prestigious position of a foreign correspondent. In this role, Heini was occasionally able to disrupt existing ideas about what constituted good foreign news journalism and, arguably, it was her status as a journalist of high standing that made this possible. Heini's work thus resembles that of the post-war female television producers in Australia whose expertise and seniority, according to Andrews, gave them wider opportunities to define the field if they did not confront the masculinist working culture as such.<sup>66</sup>

Maija-Liisa Heini did not disrupt the prevailing conventions of foreign reporting in all of her pieces. Instead, most of her texts from Sweden and other Scandinavian locales followed the traditional style of

news writing, i.e. they adhered to the conventions of objective reporting, or, to use Penttilä's vocabulary, they participated in the sufficient repetition of the journalistic practices of the time. However, *Helsingin Sanomat* occasionally published texts by Heini that widened the understanding of what foreign news could look like. Because there are no ego-documents by Heini in the archives, it is impossible to say whether this was a conscious strategy. Nevertheless, the data reveals two different ways in which she did this: either the topic of the news was more entertaining than was typical of foreign news stories or the way she wrote the story distanced it from fact-based reporting. In other words, she shifted from sufficient to dynamic repetition, and it is these texts in particular that are of value for the history of journalism.

## Notes

- 1 Riitta Pyysalo, Maija-Liisa Heinin romu ei ruostu eläkepäivilläkään. Suomen Kuvalehti 10/1982, 66.
- 2 Lonsdale 2022: 388–389, 401.
- 3 Hess 1996: 15–19, 23; Kurvinen 2013: 301; Uskali 2003: 37, 265; Lennon 2018: 123–126. In Finland, Sisko Kiuru, another female correspondent, worked for the radical left newspaper *Kansan Uutiset* in Moscow during the late 1960s, and in the early 1970s Eeva Lennon was hired as *Uusi Suomi's* correspondent in Paris, but all the other full-time correspondents at this time were men.
- 4 About doing gender in professional journalism see e.g. Jenkins & Finneman 2018. About doing journalism see e.g. Bogaerts 2011; Penttilä 2021; Aşık 2019. All these scholars engage with Judith Butler's theory of gender performativity. See Butler 1990.
- 5 Penttilä 2021.
- 6 *Helsingin Sanomat's* digital archive is available to subscribers of the paper. The number of hits also include some false positives i.e. hits in which the OCR recognition has resulted in a false identification of the name. However, there are only few of these cases in the material.
- 7 E.g. Salmi 2020: 30–32.
- 8 *Ibid.*
- 9 Kurvinen 2013: 16–19.
- 10 Jensen-Eriksen, Mainio & Hänninen 2020: 165–170; Hänninen 2019; Kurvinen 2013: 290.
- 11 Kurvinen 2015; Jensen-Eriksen, Mainio & Hänninen 2020: 186–188; Teronen & Vuolle 2016: 295–297.
- 12 Kurvinen 2013: 208, 324, 329, 424; Jensen-Eriksen, Mainio & Hänninen 2019: 174–175, 186–187; Teronen & Vuolle 2016: 292–293, 295–296, 298–299.
- 13 Kurvinen 2009: 172–176.

- 14 Minutes of meeting held 27 October 1946. Archive of Women Journalists in Finland. Ca:1. City Archives of Helsinki; Sanomalehtialalle aikoville naisille luentoja. Vapaa Sana 30 April 1947, 8; Naistoimittajain Kerho. Suomen Sosialidemokraatti 29 November 1956, 7.
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- 16 Examples of craft practices appear in the first journalism textbooks published in Finland during the post-war decades. Routavaara 1944; Okkonen 1961. See also Kurvinen 2013: 187–188, 271–272.
- 17 Kurvinen 2013: 424; Mikko Haljoki, Juorutadin kova elämä. Suomen Kuvalehti 32/1973, 39.
- 18 Okkonen 1961. See also Kurvinen 2013.
- 19 Kurvinen 2013: 204–206, 208–209, 343, 369, 402–403, 424.
- 20 Carter Olson 2017.
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- 25 Kurvinen 2013: 208–209.
- 26 Riitta Tulusto, Vaikuttavia naisia. Suomen Kuvalehti 10/1973, 12.
- 27 Koko Tukholma suruasussa. Helsingin Sanomat 1 November 1950, 5; Etelän miehet eksyvät ja Italian miehet juovat vain maitoa raittiissa Lahdessa. Helsingin Sanomat 1 March 1958, 19.
- 28 Keränen 1984: 137–138.
- 29 In the 1960s, the news agency was referred to as Reuter instead of Reuters in Finnish newspapers.
- 30 Okkonen 1961: 158–159.
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