



Affective Historiography: Archival Aesthetics and the Temporalities of Televisual Nation-Building

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In his study of nationalism, Benedict Anderson famously identified a notion of simultaneity across “homogeneous, empty time” as the temporal structure underpinning nationness as “imagined community.” Since the 18th century, Anderson argued, time was spatialized as newspapers and novels were the prime cultural forms of imagining a community across space. In the era of televisual nation-building, another kind of temporality has emerged as a form for thinking about and feeling the nation. Archival aesthetics, it is argued, is a mode of affective historiography that mobilizes a double temporality: While constructing chronologies in its remixing of archive footage, reproducing conventional narratives of epochs and events, it also engenders, via reappropriations of popular music and cinema, a transhistorical, even mythical notion of the nation as a community of feeling across time. Through a discussion of Finnish TV documentaries by Peter von Bagh, this article returns to Homi K. Bhabha’s theorizing of the pedagogical and the performative as the two, intertwined modes of narrating the nation.

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Television is the medium through which most of us learn about the past. In *Theatres of Memory*, the late British historian Raphael Samuel (1994) dubbed television a prime “unofficial source of historical knowledge” (p. 13). He saw television as a medium that was constantly looking toward the past, eagerly seizing every occasion—an anniversary, a commemoration, an obituary—to travel down memory lane, revisiting and recycling old film footage. Whereas media theorists earlier (e.g., Mellencamp, 1990) tended to discuss television as an amnesiac medium, caught in the perpetual present of liveness and now-time, recent scholarship contemplates television as a technology of memory and history (Bell & Gray, 2010; Edgerton & Rollins, 2001; Gray & Bell, 2013; Holdsworth, 2011; Koivunen, 2003; McArthur, 1978). Today,

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in the words of William Uricchio (2010), television is analyzed as a "time machine," like a library or a museum, and a characteristically "heterochronic" medium that, as "a temporal aggregate, an accumulation of visions" (p. 30), contains and enables multiple temporalities.

Such a shift in perspective has occurred alongside changes in the public perception of what counts as historical knowledge. Following what has been termed a *crisis in historiography*, historical narratives and perspectives have multiplied, and the concept of archive has undergone profound transformations. On the one hand, following Michel Foucault (1972) and Jacques Derrida (1996), archives are perceived as regulatory systems rather than repositories of given evidence about the past. The Foucauldian notion of archive as "the first law of what can be said" (Foucault, 1972, p. 129) emphasizes archive as a structure of power and mediator of what can be known and articulated. On the other hand, what counts as an "archival document" has changed, with audiovisual documents becoming increasingly common archival objects, often imbued with a special aura of indexicality (Baron, 2014). As a consequence, the earlier discussion of how television or other audiovisual media compromise historical accuracy and represent forms of "bad history" has been replaced by discussions on the specific modes and qualities of television history (Gray, 2013).

Importantly, television reads as a key site not only for the portrayal of the past and versions of history but also, as Jaimie Baron (2014) argues, for the production of "an experience of pastness" (p. 1). Through the appropriation of archival footage, "the past seems to become not only knowable but also *perceptible*" (Baron, 2014, p. 1). In discussing the genre of historical documentary in particular, John Corner (2006) has coined the notion of *archive aesthetics* to account for a distinctive audience address and a mode of "conveying viewers into history" (p. 293). In his analysis, documentaries use archival material to engender a "historical imaginary" that is both a site of historical knowledge and a "site for the reconstruction of historical experience and feeling and for the play of historical fantasy" (p. 294). Discussing "archivalness" as an "effect," Jaimie Baron proposes a significant ontological and epistemological shift: a redefinition of "'the archival document' as an experience of reception rather than an indication of official sanction or storage location" (p. 7). What is suggested is a shift toward *affective historiography* and reenactment as a popular mode of historical knowledge production. As a major vehicle of affective historiography, reenactment foregrounds the sensory dimension of conceptualizing the past, of feeling connected with and moved by the past (Agnew, 2007; Landsberg, 2015). Here, the concept of affect refers to the experiential mode of engagement and the valorizing of felt connection. Importantly, however, although an embodied experience, affect is not an individual psychological state, but a social and cultural force (Landsberg, 2015; cf. Koivunen, 2010, 2012).

In what follows, I examine archival aesthetics as another, yet equally important mode of affective historiography, highlighting the specific nexus of affect, historical TV documentary, and nation-building. Through a discussion of two Finnish TV documentaries and a particular documentary style, I investigate the effects of archival aesthetics on the temporality of nation-building, the mediation of a nation's time, and the temporalities of nationness, questions seldom pursued in affect studies or in discussions of "history's affective turn" (Agnew, 2007; see also Landsberg, 2015). The two documentaries studied here are not offered as representative of the genre of historical TV documentary, nor are they representative of televisual nation-building in general. Rather, they serve as a case study of a televisual history in a small

national TV market in the broadcasting era and call for a discussion of the affordances and limitations of the historical imaginaries the archival aesthetics mobilizes. Moreover, they occasion a revisiting of Benedict Anderson's (1993) important account of the temporality of the nation as an imaginary community.

Commemoration as Pedagogy of the Nation

The late Finnish writer, journalist, film critic, historian, and director Peter von Bagh (1943–2014) has been described as “a cultural institution” (Möller, 2014), an epithet signifying von Bagh's authorial voice in many arenas, including Finnish public service TV programming. Over four decades, from the early 1970s to the late 2000s, von Bagh was established as a distinctive popular historian through the sheer volume of his documentary oeuvre, particularly his high-profile commemorative series. In 1987, the Finnish Broadcasting Company YLE commissioned a three-part documentary, *Muisto—itsenäisen Suomen ensimmäisten vuosien kertomus* (*Memory—The Story of the First Years of Independent Finland*), to celebrate the 70th anniversary of Finnish independence, and 10 years later, an eight-hour series, *Oi kallis Suomenmaa 1–8* (*The Story of Independent Finland 1–8*, 1997), to commemorate the 80th anniversary. Further, in 2003–2004, a 12-part documentary series, *Sininen laulu 1–12* (*The Blue Song 1–12*, 2003–2004), was commissioned to depict the cultural history of Finland. Beyond these monumental series, von Bagh scripted and directed feature documentaries about key moments in Finnish history—*Vuosi 1952* (*The Year 1952*, 1980), *Viimeinen kesä 1944* (*The Last Summer 1944*, 1992), and *Vuosi 1939* (*The Year 1939*, 1993)—and about “Finnish icons” (Olavi Virta, Paavo Nurmi, Reino Helismaa, and Tapio Rautavaara, 1972–1981). He also directed some 20 “close-ups” of past and contemporary Finnish popular musicians (1982–1992) and documentary series on the history of Finnish popular music (*Suomi-Pop 1–5*, 1984–1985) and film production of the studio era (1991–1993).²

In his memoirs, reflecting his status as the preeminent popular historian of the day, von Bagh (2014) described the number of interviews he conducted for his documentaries as “a journey in the spirit of Lönnrot” (p. 345), comparing himself with Elias Lönnrot (1802–1884), the compiler of *Kalevala* (1835), the national epic of Finland. Moreover, von Bagh introduced a distinctive approach to historical narration, mobilizing popular culture as a key source of historical knowledge. Whereas he was known initially, in the 1960s, as a leftist cultural intellectual with a taste for high culture, he was by the 1980s most famous and celebrated for his encyclopedic knowledge of and serious scholarly interest in “low” culture. As a popular historian, importantly, von Bagh's signature denoted not the professional historian—despite him earning a PhD degree in economic and social history at University of Helsinki in 2002—but the distinguished connoisseur of popular music and cinema.

Out of his vast oeuvre, I have selected two examples, *Sininen laulu* (*The Blue Sky—A Journey Into the Landscape of Memories*, 1978), and *Oi kallis Suomenmaa 1–8* (*The Story of Independent Finland 1–8*, 1997), to exemplify von Bagh's distinctive mode of affective historiography. The two documentaries represent different phases of von Bagh's career: When making *The Blue Sky*, von Bagh framed himself as

² For a complete filmography, see Alanen and Möller (2013).

an outsider, as a critical historian from the margins, whereas *The Story of Independent Finland* presented his approach to Finnish history as authoritative.

Commemorative documentaries such as *The Story of Independent Finland* are not everyday television but, rather, like museums and monuments, rehearsals of national pedagogy that outline the nation's coming into being and articulate its developments by identifying key developments, moments, events, and persons. Narrating the nation equals its coming into being, and documentaries by von Bagh illustrate the need for and force of repetition. Lauren Berlant (1991) introduces the concept of "national symbolic" to describe how the pedagogy operates: Individuals are transformed "into subjects of collectively held history" and, through the mobilization of icons, metaphors, heroes, rituals, and narratives, "taught" to regard and appreciate such history "as part of their intrinsic relation to themselves" (p. 20). In this reading, the political space of a nation is a space of fantasy as "national culture becomes local—through the images, narratives, monuments, and sites that circulate through personal/collective consciousness" (Berlant, 1991, p. 5). In the words of Marita Sturken (1997), "the national symbolic is the capacity of a sense of nationalism to affect one's subjectivity pervasively" (p. 13). This is the purpose of commemorative television history such as *The Story of Independent Finland*, the cultural status of which was highlighted by its scheduling at Sunday evening prime time, following the main news program.

As Tony Judt (2006) suggests, broadcasting was the prime technology of nation-building in 20th-century Europe. Television in "the era of scarcity"—before the eras of competing multichannel systems and contemporary digitalization—operated as a "tool in the construction of the nation-state" (Ellis, 2000, pp. 49–50). In John Ellis's (2000) analysis, television schedules operated as a unifying force, much like railroads or clocks and calendars or the national press in Benedict Anderson's discussion of simultaneity. Anderson (1993) famously identified "meanwhile" and "the idea of simultaneity" (p. 24) as the temporal structure underpinning nationness as "imagined community." Since the 18th century, Anderson argues, newspapers and novels were the prime cultural forms of imagining, building on the sense of "temporal coincidence" and enabling a feeling of imagined community across space, strangers identifying one another as belonging to the same realm. As if prefiguring Jacques Rancière's (2004) idea of aesthetics preceding politics and the limits of what is thinkable, Anderson compellingly argues for understanding the structures of "meanwhile" and "simultaneity" as crucial prerequisites for modern nationalism. In spatializing time, the press and fiction enabled a sense of nationness by mobilizing a structure of simultaneous events, persons, and developments inhabiting the same "homogeneous, empty time"—a phrase Anderson (1993, p. 24) borrowed from Walter Benjamin (1969, p. 261). As Anderson argues, "the idea of a sociological organism moving calendrically through homogeneous, empty time is a precise analogue of the idea of the nation, which also is conceived as a solid community moving steadily down (or up) history" (p. 26). Commemorative documentary is a prime example of such national pedagogy.

Feeling Finland: An Archive Effect

As a grand narrative of national history, *The Story of Independent Finland* is structured conventionally by decade, with the Second World War getting an episode of its own. Told from the perspective of the late 1990s, the narrative is driven—even obsessed—by the question of national unity: how it has been created, threatened, and re-created. In December 1997, Finland had been a member of

the European Union for two years and was recovering from the severe economic recession of early 1990s, entailing a banking crisis, GDP dropping about 14%, and unemployment rising to almost 20%. As a dominant narrative strategy, then, the series examines and portrays the nation as a simultaneity of social classes, regional differences, and political ideologies. Interlacing newsreel footage with interviews with survivor-witnesses (who sometimes also appear on the strength of their professional roles as experts), the major events of the Civil War in 1918 and the Second World War, as well as the postwar eras of reconstruction and the modernization of the economy and cultural life, are portrayed as a narrative of progress (cf. Kettunen, 1994), albeit from divergent perspectives. What emerges out of the witness accounts, alternating between Whites and Reds, right- and left-wing, Swedish- or Finnish-speaking, working class and cultural elite, countryside and capital, or war front and home front, is a spatialized sense of "sociological organism" moving "through homogeneous, empty time" in the narrative of modernization. In this story of unity created, threatened, and re-created, class and political ideologies play main roles. By the late 1990s, the conflict-oriented historical narrative of von Bagh and his generation, once identified as leftist and oppositional, had become mainstream.

In *The Story of Independent Finland*, archive footage plays a significant, albeit not always clearly defined role. Although the eight-hour series would merit a careful close reading to study the narrative structure, here it suffices to note that archive footage is appropriated to evoke an era or a landscape and to serve as an illustration, contextualizing the witness accounts and supporting the voice-over script. As television history, the series prefers the narrative modes of commentary and testimony over presenter and reenactment modes (Corner, 2010, pp. 14–17). This style of compiling and reappropriating various archive materials, already adopted by von Bagh in his first TV documentaries in the 1970s, may justifiably be termed institutionally encouraged because its material base lies in the large amounts of film footage the Finnish Broadcasting Company YLE acquired in the early 1960s as the "old" film industry collapsed. As a result of these early and later acquisitions, YLE has a rich in-house archive of short films, newsreels, documentaries, and features (Sedergren & Kippola, 2015). It serves literally as the kind of "technological memory bank" that Anton Kaes (1989, p. ix) invokes when discussing the power of cinematic representations to shape how the past is known. "Images, fixed on celluloid, stored in archives, and reproduced thousands of times, render the past ever present" (p. ix), Kaes argues, highlighting the power of those who create the images and, by implication, control the archives. In documentaries commissioned by YLE, von Bagh has had unparalleled access to the archives, the material base of mobilizing the archive effect (Baron, 2014) and what he terms the "aesthetics of collage" (von Bagh, 2002).

On the one hand, *The Story of Independent Finland* cites iconic newsreel footage relating to particular, well-known historical events, such as the opening scene of the very first episode in the series, in which the flag of Finland is celebrated by the Whites in May 1920 at a site that, two years earlier, had been a killing field of the Civil War. On the other hand, archival footage is often cited to create, as Baron (2014) suggests, an experience of archivalness and a feeling of pastness without specific temporal referent. As a special case of the latter, von Bagh's trademark is to use footage of fictional events alongside documentary footage. Therefore, in the second episode, the class divisions, dreams of social mobility, sense of affluence, and nationalist impulses of the 1930s are invoked with quotes from a number

of popular Finnish fiction films and box office hits from the era.³ Although archival aesthetics combining radio footage and press clips with newsreels and literature quotes is common in Finnish television history (Koivunen, 2003), von Bagh is distinctive in his use of fiction footage.

Although affects are an essential part of audiovisual engagement with the past (Landsberg, 2015), most often they are discussed as a question of epistemology and ethics: whether affects distort historical knowledge or prevent critical insights. The issue that von Bagh's use of fiction footage—as well as his way of using popular music—raises concerns about another dimension of affective historiography: the particular mediation of temporality in archival aesthetics. John Corner (2012) distinguishes between three kinds of time in documentary film and television: the historical time at which the documentary material was recorded, the durational time of the documentary itself, and the phenomenological time of viewing. In the commentary mode of documentary (Corner, 2010), as in *The Story of Independent Finland*, the voice-over commentary—even if not continuous—provides the narrative shape for the heterogeneous image track. The voice-over marks the “now” of the narration (Corner, 2012), creating a sense of coherence out of the many historical times contained in the multitude of archive materials.

Time is both condensed and accelerated, with differences elided and collapsed, when footage is edited to evoke a sense of a decade (the 1930s), an event (a war), or a political movement (the right-wing activism of the 1930s). It is suggested here that the inclusion of fictional footage and quotes from fiction films with which audiences have some degree of familiarity adds a further flavor to this mix. The controlled structure of “meanwhile” operates on the level of grand narrative (the story of national unity), but fiction footage and the prolific use of popular music in the commemorative series and documentary features suggest a temporality different from sequencing and linear progression. Rather, they mobilize a synchronicity: a repetition and a sense of simultaneities.

Popular Culture as “The Hidden History of the People”

Sinitaivas (*The Blue Sky—A Journey Into the Landscape of Memories*, 1978), an example of nonmonumental television history, also rehearses national pedagogy in the sense that it maps the history of Finland from the 1930s to 1970s, the now-time of the film's narration. However, instead of focusing on dominant views on history, it presents itself as a counterhistory or “unofficial Finland,” as deciphered not from documentary footage and newsreels but from popular music and cinema. In the opening sequence, the voice-over narrator—here von Bagh himself—summarizes what can be termed the principles of affective historiography as practiced by von Bagh. Describing Finnish dance pavilion culture as a unique locus where nature and human culture coincide, epitomizing “the long journey of the people from countryside to the city,” the voice-over account continues,

³ *Siltalan pehtoori* (*The Inspector of Siltala*), 1934; *Juurakon Hulda* (*Hulda From Juurakko*), 1937; *Markan tähden* (*For a Mark*), 1938; *Herra Lahtinen lähtee lipettiin* (*Mr. Lahtinen Flees the Field*), 1939; *Avoveteen* (*Toward Open Waters*), 1939; *Runon kuningas ja muuttolintu* (*The King of Poetry and the Migratory Bird*), 1940.

Historians have examined the past, but the time lost and the life lived is more than exact knowledge: It is experiences, feelings, and glances exchanged. What do we know about Finland if we take the music records published in the country as our sole source? Or entertainment in general? Such an approach may be restrictive for writing history but, in exchange, what emerges before our eyes is a parade of Finnish entertainment from all times. Paying tribute to the newsreel of our hearts, some performers epitomize the emotions of the era. Cinema and the record have given them eternal life.⁴

As the camera pans a cornfield, the voice-over speech invokes a conception of landscape as encompassing not only what we can see and the real people in it but also "the figures of imagination to whom film actors have lent their appearance and their talent." In *The Blue Sky*, as well as in many other of his documentaries, von Bagh proposes an understanding of the silver screen as "the landscape of hopes and dreams" and of Schlager/pop music as "the hidden history of the people, its secret memory" (*salattu historia, kätkeyty muisti*; von Bagh, 2000, p. 5).

While voicing a leftist notion of popular culture as the repository of political resistance, these formulations first and foremost postulate the nation as the primary subject of culture. They echo, albeit unacknowledged, Siegfried Kracauer's (1947/2004) famous thesis that "the films of a nation reflect its mentality in a more direct way than other artistic media" (p. 5). In *From Caligari to Hitler*, originally published in 1947, Kracauer proposes a theory of popular cinema as an index of a nation's mentality. Owing to cinema's collective, nonindividual production mode and its ambition to address the people as "the anonymous multitude," Kracauer interprets "popular screen motifs" of an era as traces of "existing mass desires" (p. 5). Therefore, he argues, cinema has a unique capacity to provide "clues to hidden mental processes" and "deep layers of collective mentality which extend more or less below the dimension of consciousness" (pp. 6–7). For Kracauer, therefore, films were symptomatic not of their makers' minds but of the psychic structures of their time:

Films are particularly inclusive because their "visual hieroglyphs" supplement the testimony of their stories proper. And permeating both the stories and the visuals, the "unseen dynamics of human relations" are more or less characteristics of the inner life of the nation from which the films emerge. (p. 7)

This evaluation of fictional cinema as a source of historical knowledge is shared by von Bagh, who in a 2013 radio interview described fiction film as a truer historical document than documentary footage (Pulkkinen, 2013). As if citing Kracauer, von Bagh (2000) argued that it is the dialogue with contemporary viewers that forces a truthfulness into fiction features, "even the mediocre and the poor ones." Indeed, in an English-language guide to the history of Finnish cinema, von Bagh recommends Finnish popular cinema as an efficient introduction to the Finnish character, given that "old images generate a tangible world whose reality and resonances may be experienced no other way" (p. 5). Old Finnish films, he goes on, are "evidence of life once truly lived," a "unique colloquy" of the past that "continues to open up to us" (pp. 5–6).

⁴ This and other translations of quotes from Finnish documentaries are mine.

In many of von Bagh's documentaries, fiction footage is cited as a document of mentality, providing a sense of "this is what people were like back then" and "these were the concerns of people back then." Here, a sense of archivalness and pastness—an archive effect—meets a notion of fiction as a particular kind of indexical document. Thus, as a popular historian, von Bagh consciously disregards the classic virtues of source criticism and omits the importance of narrative conventions and genre rules in all fictional cinema in favor of reading it as accidental or involuntary index, evidencing not only styles of posture, speech, and clothing but also epochal mentality. While claiming and valorizing popular cinema as a source for historical knowledge, then, von Bagh simultaneously—and paradoxically—denies its specificity as historical products and regards it as raw footage indexing the past.

In *The Blue Sky*, the voice-over narrator (von Bagh) posits himself as a guide and interpreter for the viewer who encounters the footage of the past. He addresses the viewer, asking him or her to look at something in a film quote and to pay attention to selected important details. On the assumption that the viewer may find some aspects in the film quotes strange, the narrator offers explanations. For instance, the aesthetics and peculiarities of wartime cinema are explained as symptoms of "a mode of life becoming cracked" and a situation therefore "demanding an exceptionally strong portion of the deodorant of emotion." Echoing Kracauer (1947/2004), the film footage is repeatedly interpreted as a reworking of social issues. To that end, the voice-over narrator explains, at a time when the refrains of everyday were becoming increasingly tedious because of war, films insisted on representing work as play. In addition, at a time when the people were living on rations, the advertisement industry was celebrated in film as a creator of "blissful illusions." In these examples, the narrative voice-over guides the implicit modern viewer into the minds and emotions of people back then, using the film footage as the vehicle for time travel. Gradually, the tone of the narrator becomes both monumentalizing and mournful. Having illustrated how the mentality of the nation was reflected in masterful popular music and films of the 1930s, 1940s, and 1950s, the documentary turns to Olavi Virta, once a celebrated singer and film star, but by the early 1970s forgotten and marginalized. The general public has betrayed the masters of past popular culture, it is alluded, depriving them of the recognition and remembrance they deserve, and this documentary offers itself as both a reminder and rehabilitator.

A Double Temporality: An Affective Effect

In *The Blue Sky*, interestingly, the "meanwhile" structure is broken as the notion of "the people" as a unified subject emerges. Here, the narrative is not enacting the drama of national unity, negotiating the national narrative from various perspectives, as the subject is assumed as always already unified. Furthermore, the "collapsing of temporalities" (Agnew, 2007, p. 299) characteristic of affective historiography is literalized in the elliptic temporal arrangement of the narrative. In this documentary, the past is divided into three epochs: the prewar era, the war, and the postwar era. Mentally, it is suggested, this is the temporality of the nation. In some voice-over narrators' commentaries, an even more radical collapsing of linearity is suggested. When describing the importance of popular cultural icons, it is claimed that "they form a past that is present all the time, as real as close family members." In *The Blue Sky*, the archive footage and the film quotes are interlaced and framed with 1977 footage from a midsummer eve's party in a countryside dance pavilion. While the voice-over account adopts a melancholic tone in describing the monotonous lives of contemporary youth, dancing to "Money, Money, Money" by ABBA, the

narration—the montage of past and present music with nature imagery—suggests an overlapping of times, the past claimed as being present in the now of 1977. What emerges in this evocation of the past in the present is a nation beyond or across time, a mythic construction.

As examples of archival aesthetics, the documentaries directed and scripted by von Bagh demonstrate a double temporality. On the one hand, the documentaries (*The Story of Independent Finland* in particular) construct chronologies, reproducing conventional narratives of decades, epochs, events, and persons of significance. On the other hand, by citing popular music and cinema, they (*The Blue Sky* in particular) suggest a potential unofficial history, a counternarrative of mentality, feelings, and psychic layers transgressing the chronology. This double temporality reads as a tension between the structure of meanwhile and the momentary collapsing of temporalities in archival aesthetics, and it can be usefully reconceptualized, following Homi K. Bhabha (1990), as the tension between the pedagogical and the performative as the two, intertwined modes of narrating the nation:

In the production of the nation as narration, there is a split between continuist, accumulative temporality of the pedagogical, and the repetitious, recursive strategy of the performative. It is through this process of splitting that the conceptual society becomes the site of writing the nation. (p. 297)

According to Bhabha, importantly, the tension between the linear narration (the structure of meanwhile) and the transhistorical figure of the nation is in fact constitutive of modern nationalism. "To write the story of the nation," Bhabha (1990) argues, "demands that we articulate that archaic ambivalence that informs the time of modernity" (p. 294). In his analysis, the time of the nation is fundamentally disjunctive, "a knowledge caught between political rationality and its impasse, between the shreds and patches of cultural signification and the certainties of a nationalist pedagogy" (p. 294). The task of the narration is to "mediate between the teleology of progress tipping over into the 'timeless' discourse of irrationality," in other words, between the "sociological organism" moving ahead in the "homogeneous, empty space" and nation as a timeless and mythic construction, "something resembling the archaic body of the despotic or totalitarian mass" (p. 294).

Like Benedict Anderson, Bhabha draws on Walter Benjamin's "On the concept of history" (1969) and his critique of positivism to discuss the question of temporality. At the heart of Benjamin's discussion, Bhabha (1990) argues, is not so much the discarding of the positivist notion of history but the identification of a foundational tension between historical progress and "the here-and-now [*Jetztzeit*]" (pp. 308–309). This tension, in Bhabha's interpretation, is a "double narrative movement" between the pedagogical and performative or between "the continuist, accumulative" and the "process of signification" (pp. 308–309). Whereas Anderson reads Benjamin to identify the spatialization of time as the formal structure informing nationness, in Bhabha's discussion, nation is temporalized. For Bhabha, the Western nation represents "an obscure and ubiquitous form of living the *locality* of culture," and, for him, this "locality is more *around* temporality than *about* historicity" (p. 292). The focus on temporality "resists the transparent linear equivalence of event and idea that historicism proposes; it provides a perspective on the disjunctive forms of representation that signify a people, a nation, or a national culture" (p. 292).

In the deconstructionist revision of Benjamin's and Anderson's arguments, Bhabha (1990) offers a productive interpretive framework for discussing the temporalities of archival aesthetics in televisual history. The archival aesthetics of citations and compilation may result in a "ghostly time of repetition" (p. 295), ultimately confirming a mythical narrative of a nation's origin and telos and confirming what Benjamin (1969) termed "Messianic time" (p. 26), but the repetition and compilation also open the contingency for ambivalence. A similar analysis of the dynamic between linearity and disjunctive forms emerges from Lauren Berlant's (1991) discussion of the "national symbolic." In her argument, "the residual material that is not identical with the official meanings of the political public sphere" (p. 6), the material of popular memory or countermemory, often works in tandem with authoritative forms of memory. Rather than opposing each other, "their relation represents the dispersal of experience and knowledge that constitutes the realm of the 'social'" (Berlant, 1991, p. 6). The performative, thus, is productive for the pedagogical.

The temporality of affect in von Bagh's archival aesthetics results both from diachronic layering of citations over time—"I have seen and heard this before," "I recognize this as something that matters"—and from a synchronic sense of weight of signification, the effects of all previous citations and repetitions of footage, historical events, film scenes, or music (Koivunen, 2003, 2012). The archival aesthetics of von Bagh's documentaries entails at once an experience (pastness) and a reflection of it, rather like the mode of pastiche as discussed by Richard Dyer (2001):

Contrary to so much twentieth century cultural theory and pedagogic practice, awareness of the historicity and cultural specificity of feelings does not stop one feeling them. Pastiche suggests that we can be aware of where our feelings are coming from without thereby being embarrassed, ashamed or self-flagellating about them. (p. 87)

Such an understanding of pastiche as affective historiography highlights how affect and cognition operate in tandem and affectivity does not entail lack of critical potential. Indeed, and quite the contrary, von Bagh's aesthetics, while mobilizing idealization and nostalgia, also insisted on the value of affect as a form of critique.

Conclusion: The Nation as a Community of Feeling

When investigating, in his documentaries, what he terms "the Finnish syntax" (p. 21) through cinema and pop music, von Bagh (2002) engages in affective historiography. Introducing "hidden history" and "secret memories" as a historical corrective to authoritative versions of the history of the nation, von Bagh's rhetoric has framed the archival aesthetics as a path to *Erfahrung*—a reconfiguration of experience in the Benjaminian sense, pertaining "not only to the organization of sensory perception but crucially to—individual and collective, conscious and unconscious—memory, the imagination, and generational transmissibility" (Hansen, 2012, pp. xvii, 79). In other words, in the context of broadcast television in a small national TV market, the authorial voice—sometimes materialized and literalized as the voice-over account—has framed the documentaries as a reconnection with the past through a particular montage of archive footage and sounds.

Such is the framing von Bagh (2002) offers in his doctoral dissertation on the genre of compilation film and the wider aesthetics of collage. Ironically, while analyzing in detail the aesthetics of one of his YLE-produced documentary features, *Vuosi 1952 (The Year 1952, 1980)*, von Bagh proclaims 1970 as the closing date for a discussion of "cinema as a mirror with memory" (the title of the dissertation). This year, preceding his own documentary filmmaking, is posited "roughly" as marking the dividing line between the modern and postmodern eras, the era of cinema and that of television. Although the compilation form has continued to flourish, his own oeuvre included, von Bagh claims that the flow of television has entailed a "loss of clarity," resulting in the whole of programming becoming a "nightmarish" (pp. 23–24) collage. Echoing critiques of postmodernism, von Bagh suggests that in the golden era, images grasped the reality, whereas in the era of television, images primarily refer to other images. This, of course, is also the cornerstone of his own aesthetic and the aesthetic of archive at large. And it is by mobilizing images—and sounds—of past popular culture that his versions of television history offer *Erfahrung*, an escape from the nightmarish present within the medium allegedly caught in the present tense.

In a sense, one may argue, archival aesthetics as affective historiography addresses the nation as an "intimate public," foregrounding "affective and emotional attachments located in fantasies of the common, the everyday, and a sense of ordinariness" (Berlant, 2008, p. 11). As a temporal structure in TV nation-building, the narrative world constructed and the viewers are "perceived to be marked by a commonly lived history" and expected to "share a world-view and emotional knowledge that they have derived from a broadly historical experience" (p. 11). Intimate publics thus invoke "a porous, affective scene of identification among strangers that promises a certain experience of belonging and provides a complex of consolation, confirmation, discipline, and discussion about how to live as an x" (Berlant, 2008, p. 11). In this manner, then, the "unofficial," the hidden, and the secret support and supplement the nationalist pedagogy of nation-building. Calling forth a community of feeling, the time of the nation is the time of the affect. Through archival aesthetics, history returns as a historicism. At the same time, positivist linearity, the homogeneous, empty time of the modern nation, is transgressed by the Messianic Time of mythos.

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