The Grand Duchy of Finland

From Princely Power to National Statehood

Edited by
Ilkka Liikanen and Jani Marjanen

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Preface

Our research on the historical conceptualizations of the Grand Duchy of Finland was carried out amidst two major crises that dramatically uncovered how tightly politics is curtailed by state boundaries and yet, in essence, interlinked globally. For our study of Finland as part of early modern and modern empires this setting had manifold bearings. The COVID-19 pandemic severely affected our everyday work as researchers, restricted our international contacts and forced us to rethink how to implement our comparative research design. Russia's full-scale invasion of Ukraine cut our research cooperation with the European University at St Petersburg and affected more widely on how Finland's historical relations to Russia were portrayed in public discourse. While a reassessment of history is an ever-ongoing process, the wartime political debate proved a challenging, but also thought-provoking context for writing a historical account of how the Grand Duchy of Finland was understood as a political unit in the imperial context and how the different understandings form layers of meaning that are still present.

The project "Grand Duchy of Finland as Political Space: A Conceptual History" was funded by the Research Council of Finland (Decision number 324778). Due to the pandemic, we had to redesign the working modes of our project in many ways. We ended up using biweekly online seminars as the main forum for discussing the chapters of this book. Unexpectedly, the shared responsibility of reading and commenting on the work of one another proved a pleasant working method and helped us to collectively reach many of the findings of this book. Apart from the project meetings, we benefitted from presenting our work at both online and onsite conferences. We would in particular like to thank the participants of the "Conceptualizing the Borderlands of the Russian Empire" conference held in Joensuu in December 2023, as well as friends and colleagues at our respective institutions for support and encouragement. For financial support to our final conference we want to thank the Borders, Mobilities and Cultural Encounters Research Community of the University of Eastern Finland and the Joensuu University Foundation. We would also like to thank Antti Härkönen, Samuel Brander, Jarno Ojala and Ville Ahokas for contributing to the project and producing invaluable material for some of the chapters in this book. Rupert Moreton kindly helped us with English editing. We are also grateful to the suggestions of the anonymous readers who assessed the manuscript for the Finnish Literature Society. It is an honour to have the book included in the series of the Finnish Literature Society.

Ilkka Liikanen and Jani Marjanen

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Changing Historical Conceptualizations of the Grand Duchy of Finland

An Introduction

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The concept of grand duchy stems from archaic forms of princely power that did not separate the concept of the state from the person of the ruler. In the Finnish case its use goes as far back as the sixteenth century. Paradoxically, in nineteenth-century Finland the grand duchy became code for imagining what Finland ought to be as a modern nation state. As a political concept, the Grand Duchy of Finland thus came to refer as much to political horizons of expectation as it did to a legal status codified in official statutes and constitutional documents.

What kind of political entity the Grand Duchy of Finland was, has been discussed since the late nineteenth century primarily in terms of the dispute about Finnish constitutional laws: whether its founding ceremonies in Porvoo in 1809 were orchestrated according to Russian autocratic traditions or the principles of eighteenth-century Swedish constitutional laws.[1] This binary setting – often boiled down to the question of whether Finland was a province or state – has directed attention to conflicting views between Finns and Russians and the related internal political division between constitutionalism and compliance. The focus on questions related to Finland's status has overshadowed the internal dimensions of its 'grand duchy-ness' and largely disregarded its connections with the evolving European discussion on the concept of the state.[2]

In an important sense the concept of grand duchy was at the heart of this transformation. Traditionally, it had been associated with the most antiquated conceptions of statehood, which were not separated from the person of the ruler. During the Napoleonic period, however, it was coupled with emerging ideas of constitutional rule and the modern notion of the territorial state as a political body holding sovereign power in a given territory – and in the most radical visions representing the nation and the people.[3]

In this period, many of the existing names of political units within European empires became uneasy categories for defining political institutions. The number of

1. See Marja Jalava's chapter in this volume. For the frontlines of the historical strife see e.g. Jussila 2007 and Soikkanen 2009, 13–86, Kalleinen 2023 and Rasilainen 2024.
2. Skinner 1989, 3–25.
3. Breuilly 2019, esp. 168–177.

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different principalities, duchies, grand duchies, protectorates, and colonies, to only name a few was considerable, but it was unclear how they related to one another and, perhaps even more importantly, how they related to new notions of statehood that were divorced from the person of the ruler. To some extent, this complexity has been lost to us in the present due to a more fixed position the state has in our present day political imaginary. The myriad of expressions was further complicated by the translations of these different units.[4] In this volume we will illustrate briefly the peculiarities of the genealogy of the Swedish *storfurstendöme*, the Finnish *suuriruhtinaskunta* and to a limited degree the Russian *velikoie kniazhestvo* but we are not able to offer a complete analysis of related concepts in different European languages and political cultures. Nevertheless, the richness of expressions and translations is indicative of the complexity of the conceptualization of state at this time and is consequently at the heart of our investigation of the Grand Duchy of Finland.

Ultimately the story of how contemporary actors perceived the Grand Duchy of Finland does not speak only of the conflicting views of Finland's status in the imperial context. The history of Finland as a separate entity called a grand duchy is as much a story of political ambitions, past futures, and forgotten horizons of expectation that Finnish historiography has overlooked. It includes old layers of meaning stemming from the early modern period as well as novel nineteenth-century ideas about what representative forms of government could be in an age of empires and nationalism.[5] Much of the historiography on the matter has either emphasized a long continuity of traditions of princely rule in the Grand Duchy of Finland or stressed the rupture of 1809 as the birth of a modern state.[6] In a sense it would be tempting to write the conceptual history of the Grand Duchy of Finland as a story of transformation from old notions of princely power to the grand duchy as a container in which the nation state could develop. While such a development does take place, we believe both these conceptions should instead be seen as simultaneously present layers of meaning. They were tools in an on-going political struggle of what Finland was to be. Some historical actors chose to emphasize the first meaning while others preferred the latter one, and in most of the rather unreflected everyday discourse it is not entirely clear which aspects are in the fore, making the political use of the notion of grand duchy in itself intriguing.

Interpreting lineages of princely power and national statehood

Despite a wealth of studies on Finland's status within the Swedish and Russian realms, historical research fails to offer a concise picture of the continuity and transformation of the Grand Duchy of Finland's position. Even studies with titles suggesting a focus

4. Gschnitzer, Werner, Schönemann & Koselleck 1978, 304. Storfurstendömet Finland could be translated into Russian, German, English, again to name just a few possibilities, in at least a few different ways. Different names of political units could draw on ideas about certain peoples, certain residence cities or castles or ancestral houses of families, among other things.
5. For layers of meaning see Koselleck 2000, 349–375.
6. For a detailed analysis see Marja Jalava's chapter.

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on Finland's status as a grand duchy omit a systematic analysis of the significance of this standing for Finnish state making and nation building.[7]

Studies of Finland's Swedish history have traditionally tended to perceive its status as a grand duchy from the perspective of the shaping of a separate national political entity, whereas the nineteenth-century grand duchy has been examined in the first place in terms of the constitution of an autonomous political unit, a modern state. Since the 1960s the question of the significance of the status of grand duchy has in both cases been pushed more to the margins. Finland's status as a grand duchy during the Swedish era has since been understood in scholarly historiography mainly in terms of a relic stemming from old listings of royal titles that had little value without the existence of a separate political and administrative unit. Concerning the nineteenth century, it has become customary to emphasize that achieving modern statehood was less a consequence of the defence of Finland's constitutional status as a grand duchy than an outcome of the resolute state making and nation building that continued throughout the century.[8]

One dimension of this lack of nuance in understanding Finland's position concerns a simplistic view of the Russian (or Romanov) Empire. While many historians have emphasized the role of an imperial perspective regarding Finnish history[9], few have adopted a perspective that draws on the new imperial history that focuses on the Russian Empire as a multi-ethnic and diverse body of varying political units.[10] Finnish historiography has tended to present a kind of centre-periphery history, with the key relationship being with the imperial centre, whether in Stockholm or St Petersburg. A new perspective instead emphasizes the cooperation and conflicts that also happen between empires and the 'peripheries' of empire.[11] It involves a comparison of how different parts of the empire were related to the centre, but also requires an understanding of the geopolitical context and how peripheral historical actors conceptualized themselves in relation to other political sub-units.

In recent decades new studies have actualized the question of Finland's status as a grand duchy. Concerning the Swedish period, the view of Finland as a separate entity has been critically reassessed and complemented by uncovering the strategies and motivation of the actors involved.[12] At the same time studies on nineteenth century Finland have re-emphasized the legal foundations of the autonomous status of the grand duchy and challenged the dominant revisionist interpretations concerning

7. For example, Osmo Jussila's comprehensive *Suomen suuriruhtinaskunta 1809–1917* excludes both the analysis of the contemporary Finnish and Russian understandings of the term 'grand duchy' as well as its use elsewhere in Europe (Jussila 2004). (This is surprising, given Jussila's lifelong engagement with the analysis of the concept of constitution, which he initiated in 1969 (Jussila 1969). Similarly, the popular textbook *From Grand Duchy to a Modern State: A Political History of Finland since 1809* (Jussila, Hentilä, & Nevakivi 1999) fails to trace the development highlighted in its title systematically or to summarize this transformation's key features and turning points.
8. See the historiographical reviews in Katajala's and Jalava's chapters in this volume.
9. The best examples are Jussila 2004 and Klinge 1997.
10. Kappeler 2011; see also Engman 2000.
11. For a programmatic statement and important overview see Gibson & Kotenko 2025; cf. Berger & Miller 2015.
12. Katajala 2023; Marjanen 2022; cf. Manninen 2000.

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Finland's position.[13] Together, these distinct lines of enquiry have firmly restored Finland's status as a grand duchy to the research agenda. Underlying this remains the old detachment between interpretations of the Swedish- and Russian-era grand duchies, however. The question of breaks and continuities in understanding what being a grand duchy meant remains to be interpreted in the context of the evolving European concept of the state.

To what degree was the grand duchy seen in terms of the medieval conception of the state as inseparable from the person of the ruler and the people as a passive community living under his reign? When and how was the concept of the grand duchy connected with a new understanding of the state as a sovereign territorial body and the people as a society participating in the common government? In the Finnish case there is an obvious need to clarify how these distinct traditions of conceptualizing princely power and national statehood evolved and coexisted. How were they used politically as part of the strategies of the contemporary actors engaged in governing, reforming, or resisting the political system known as the Grand Duchy of Finland?

A multi-layered grand duchy

Each of this volume's chapters has its own theoretical and methodological starting points. Yet their common methodological inspiration draws especially on the tradition of conceptual history, in particular the work of Reinhart Koselleck and Quentin Skinner.[14] Skinner's work on the genealogy of the state has been a shared reference point in interpreting changes in European political language. At the heart of his interpretation is the notion of the state as 'a double abstraction' that is gradually separated from both the ruler's person and those ruled. This conceptual shift can be summarized as a transition from a notion of the estates of the ruler ('*estato*') to an apparatus of sovereign rule over a defined territory ('*stato*').[15] Taken literally, the concept of the grand duchy linked the state inseparably to the person of the ruler, but especially since the Napoleonic period it was also given meanings related to the constitutional government of autonomous political entities. Our task is to illuminate how this conceptual change was understood and actively employed as part of the rhetorical strategies of contemporary actors defining the political status and imagining the future of the Grand Duchy of Finland.

The concept Grand Duchy of Finland was employed in full form mainly in official documents and ceremonies and in texts reporting or commenting on them. More seldom was it explicitly used in texts visioning the future of Finland or defining immediate political tasks. Yet new meanings were constantly given to the concept without directly challenging or commenting on its earlier definitions. Finland's special position as a part of the Russian Empire probably restrained its use especially in texts of radical opposition groups. During the nineteenth century Finland's status as grand duchy was not openly attacked as a remnant of the ancient regime, and for most

13. Soikkanen 2009; Rasilainen 2024; cf. Kalleinen 2023.
14. Koselleck 1972; 1979; Skinner 2002; Marjanen & Ihalainen 2025.
15. Skinner 1989; Skinner 2009. See also Pulkkinen 2003.

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political groupings it served until the collapse of the empire as an unchallenged frame for different visions and strategies of building the Finnish state.

The main sources vary across the chapters, but a new layer of source material consists of digitized Finnish and Swedish newspaper collections, available printed and digitized Russian and selected European digitized newspapers. We have utilized Finnish, Swedish, and Russian archival sources, and carefully analysed the conceptual choices of previous Finnish historical studies. The new data sources have been used to enlighten the perceptions of the Grand Duchy of Finland among contemporary actors, and to uncover how official political documents were read and used in enhancing or opposing princely power and national statehood. The written sources that we use are predominantly produced by the elites. It is crucial to note that while notions of the grand duchy were held by all members of society, large segments of those voices are not represented in our material. The chapters still capture conceptualizations stemming from different political positions as well as a variety of different elite groupings. We hope that by bringing together different voices from different periods, the volume contributes to a better understanding of the breaks and continuities in Finland's constitution as an administrative and political entity, a separate state and nation.

As this book will show, the meanings given to 'grand duchy' were far from uncontested. This volume's chapters will uncover the breadth of its political use by different groups representing distinct conceptions of state and nation. As an introduction to the chapters studying historical actors' use of the concept, this introductory chapter presents a brief summary of the key official documents and statements that added new layers of meaning to the concept of grand duchy, opening new horizons of expectation for contemporary actors. The introduction is followed by a historiographical analysis on the scholarship that has discussed, sometimes bitterly, the politico-legal status of the Grand Duchy of Finland, by Marja Jalava. Jalava's chapter provides a detailed account of what has been at stake for historians involved in debates on the issue.

It is against this backdrop, the book turns to the early modern period with chapters by Kimmo Katajala and Jenni Merovuo. Katajala provides the most up-to-date account of the adoption of the title of grand duke during the time of Sweden's great power. Merovuo uncovers the changes in conceptualizing the grand duke and the grand duchy in the period of Swedish consolidation of a unitary state and shows how Finland was routinely presented as a grand duchy, although the Grand Duke of Finland was no longer included in the royal titles of the Swedish monarch. Another, almost self-evident transformation in the notion of the grand duchy took place around the French Revolution and the Napoleonic Wars. With Sweden's loss of remaining Finnish parts of its realm, the political significance of the Grand Duchy of Finland grew. This process is discussed by Jani Marjanen based on Swedish and Finnish sources which relate the grand duchy to fatherland and native land, and by Natalia Potapova based on Russian sources, which illuminate the ways Finland as a divided grand duchy (Russian and Swedish Finland) was perceived in the late eighteenth century and later rethought as a Grand Duchy of Finland after 1809.

The final four chapters in the book discuss nineteenth century conceptualisations of the grand duchy. Ilkka Liikanen's chapter examines perceptions of the grand duchy as a state and nation through the history of reception of Alexander I's speech about

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Finland among the rank of nations. Jani Marjanen studies another nineteenth-century phrase, of which one variation goes 'We are not Swedes, we do not want to become Russians, let us be Finns' and relates the notion of grand duchy to the issue of language and ethnicity in the country. Alina Kuusisto further nuances the picture by relating the articulation of regional interests in late nineteenth-century North Karelia to the conceptualization of Finland as a grand duchy. As the notions of Finnish statehood had, at least in Finland, become more established in this period, there was more space for actors to present their own regions as alternative spaces of political identification. Finally, Jussi Kurunmäki's chapter investigates parliamentarism as an argument in debates about political representation in the late nineteenth and the early twentieth century. In asking how historical actors saw the role of the grand duke in conjunction with political representation in a political system that was archaic to its roots, Kurunmäki returns to the core issue of the very beginning of the story of the Grand Duchy of Finland. Kimmo Katajala shows in his chapter that the Grand Duchy of Finland came about in the sixteenth century as a byproduct of adding the title of the grand duke to the royal titles. Kurunmäki points out that by the time of the end of the Russian Empire, Finnish actors would again turn to the figure of the grand duke, by suggesting that it was questionable if Finland's imperial connection was with Russia or if it was with the grand duke. In 1917 with the grand duke removed, Finland's ties to Russia became even less evident. For sure, Finland's independence from Russia was not a mere byproduct of the adding and removing royal titles, but it seems that the connection to the monarch's person made it easier to conclude that the story of the Grand Duchy of Finland was over and to envision independence.

The self-appointed grand duke

Overviews of Finnish history today regularly avoid exaggerating Finland's status as a grand duchy within the Swedish realm. Instead, historians commonly emphasize that Finland did not form a separate administrative or political entity during the Swedish era.[16] This corresponds indubitably with the fact that Swedish legislation never explicitly defined the Grand Duchy of Finland's constitutional status and only seldom specified it in practice. Considering that Finland's status remained officially largely unstated, it is striking that the concept of the Grand Duchy of Finland was nevertheless constantly used in official documents during the Swedish period and given multiple different meanings in public discussion in changing political conjunctions.

The concept's introduction was certainly a highly exclusive episode, concerning only a narrow circle of the political elite. When King John III adopted the title of Grand Duke of Finland in 1581, the new concept was primarily a tool in the dynastic geopolitics of the day. It was intended to remind Tsar Ivan IV of the Swedish king's power. During the continuous wars that followed the new title can also be read as a symbolic reinforcement of the claim for an area belonging to the Swedish crown, but this geopolitical move did not entail the establishment of a new administrative and political entity. Even less can its main motive be seen as organizing internal power

16. See e.g. Engman 2000; Meinander 2006.

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relations within a new territorial political unit.[17] With the experience of the short-lived Duchy of Finland (1556–1563) in mind we can even ask whether by adopting the title of grand duke the king was actually seeking to put an end to the feudal vassal structures the earlier duchy had epitomized. The title of the Grand Duke of Finland was therefore not necessarily intended to create new political structures but actually to promote the constitution of a centralized Swedish state under a single sovereign ruler.

The symbolic grand duchy

In 1583 the new political notion received a further layer of meaning when the coat of arms of the Grand Duchy of Finland was unveiled as part of Gustav I's grave monument (Fig. 1). Notwithstanding the fact that Finland did not form a territorially defined administrative structure within the Swedish state, the emblem was thereafter continuously used officially with the coats of arms of the other Swedish provinces.[18] The Grand Duchy of Finland thus also came symbolically to manifest the Swedish king's power internally in relation to his subjects. During the seventeenth century the Grand Duchy of Finland became a much-used concept in Finnish-language royal announcements and proclamations read in all churches. The Proclamations of Days of Prayer signed by the king and announcements of the succession to the throne and deaths and births in the royal family certainly did not clarify the Grand Duchy of Finland's legal status but evidently made it a meaningful concept for the different layers of the population.[19] As Kimmo Katajala concludes, by the beginning of the 1620s at the latest the custom of using the concept of a grand duchy for the Finnish territory had become established practice.[20] Although sporadically mentioned explicitly in official documents, the concept of a grand duchy worked primarily in the traditional sense as a symbolic frame for personal bonds of loyalty between the ruler and his Finnish subjects.

The grand duchy as a territorial body

As is commonly stressed, it was in the most limited sense that the Grand Duchy of Finland had any recognized status in Swedish administration or related constitutional documents. Starting with the first Swedish Instrument of Government ('*Regeringsform*') of 1632, however, explicit mention was regularly made of the Grand Duchy of Finland. As part of the Swedish system of Courts of Appeal, the Grand Duchy of Finland was indicated as the sphere of activity of the Turku Royal Court of Appeal.[21] Although almost trivial in the constitutional makeup of the system of

17. For related documents and their historical interpretation see Katajala's chapter in this volume.
18. Katajala 2023, 273–298; Katajala in this volume.
19. For the Proclamations of the Days of Prayer and other Finnish language documents mentioning the Grand Duchy of Finland, see the Doria archive collection maintained by the National Library of Finland.
20. See Katajala in this volume.
21. Willgren 1934, 283–291. For the digitized text see https://arkivkopia.se/bok/runeberg-reggform.

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government, this recognition still credited the Grand Duchy of Finland with an acknowledged official role. Given that the courts of law were the administrative institutions with which ordinary people most often had business, we can conclude that the Grand Duchy of Finland was certainly not an unknown governmental unit for the Swedish king's subjects living on the eastern side of the Gulf of Bothnia.

How much this administrative role promoted an idea of a modern territorially operating state structure and distanced the image of the Grand Duchy of Finland from the person of the ruler is less obvious, however. The Royal Court of Appeal was, after all, based on the ancient idea of submitting the decisions of the lower courts for the king's personal judgment. As an administrative structure, the grand duchy could thus still be viewed in the spirit of the old principles of princely power as a frame of personified relations between the ruler and his subjects.[22] Similarly, the governors and field marshals who were later appointed to rule the Grand Duchy of Finland in wartime may also have appeared to the population more as trusted representatives of the king than as modern government officials in charge of an administrative unit. Like the seventeenth-century provincial estate assemblies organized in Finland, Finland's wartime governors served to strengthen ties to the ruler and only to a limited extent to the constitution of the modern territorial administration.[23]

The grand duchy of European geopolitics and economic patriotism

Internationally, Finland's position as a grand duchy was recognized early. Apart from diplomatic correspondence the Grand Duchy of Finland appeared in seventeenth-century maps (see Fig. 5) as a token of the Swedish king's power and glory. During the eighteenth century, geopolitical maps of Europe began to observe the Grand Duchy of Finland as a separate territorial entity from another angle (see Fig. 6). With other fringe areas of empires, it was becoming an object of European dynastic rulers' power games.[24]

Following the peace negotiations after the Great Northern War, Russia pressed the Swedish monarchs to drop 'Grand Duke of Finland' from their official list of titles. The peace treaties of Uusikaupunki (Nystad) in 1721 and Turku (Åbo) in 1743 explicitly mentioned the Grand Duchy of Finland. This meant that its existence and division between Sweden and Russia was recognized by the emerging international law.[25] During the wars of 1740–41 and 1789–91 Russian manifestos and propaganda further promoted the idea of the Grand Duchy of Finland as a separate political entity which, under Russia's protection, was even called to enjoy self-government. These ideas found only limited support in Finland[26] and were refuted by most of the Finnish

22. See Katajala in this volume. It is perhaps in this spirit that Gustav III included this definition in the 1772 Instrument of Government after his coup, which reinforced autocracy in Sweden.
23. Grotenfelt 1916, 1–10; Karonen 1999, 234–239.
24. See Potapova's chapter in this volume.
25. See Merovuo's chapter in this volume.
26. The few known cases include Major G. M. Sprengtporten, who moved to Russian service in 1786, and some of his fellow officers and members of the gentry of south-eastern Finland. Vainio-Korhonen 2020, 120–125.

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elite.[27] The speculations concerning Finland's position were in any case known to the majority of politically active Finns and affected attitudes among the political elite when Finland was incorporated into the Russian Empire.

In addition to official statements and international agreements, the concept of the Grand Duchy of Finland began to acquire new meaning in public discussion and practical programmes for promoting regional interests, economic development, and education. Notions like Turku as the capital of the Grand Duchy of Finland started to appear in Finnish scholarly writings and in the first voluntary associations' documents. By the nineteenth century Finland began to be viewed in a new sense as a nation, a separate field of economic, social, and cultural activity. The rise of a new kind of economic patriotism promoted the view of the Grand Duchy as a separate territorial entity. However, the aim was not to strive for an independent position but to promote Finnish regional concerns within the Swedish realm.[28]

By the time of the separation of Finland from Sweden the concept of grand duchy was thus familiar to both the Finnish elite and the bulk of the population. For more than two hundred years it had been used mainly in line with medieval conceptions of princely power as a symbolic frame of personified relations between ruler and population. In the context of eighteenth-century European geopolitics, however, it received new layers of meaning as a separate territorial unit. In Russian statements and manifestos, the concept of grand duchy was even given political significance as a separate self-governing entity. Although largely rejected in Finland as wartime propaganda, this use of the concept later became relevant in the context of the political changes in Napoleonic Europe. In the process of redrawing the political map of Europe the concept of grand duchy became a sign of a separate political status, codified rule, and sometimes even of political representation (see Fig. 8).

The American and French Revolutions had paved the way for new thinking about independence and statehood, and one part of this story was the reassessment of the status of many sub-imperial political units in Europe. Old grand duchies like the one in Finland or Tuscany were looked at in a new way, and many new grand duchies were established as a consequence of the Napoleonic Wars and the dissolution of the Holy Roman Empire. In the first decades of the nineteenth century Baden, Hessel, Frankfurt, Luxembourg, Lower Rhine, Oldenburg, Berg, and Posen all gained status as grand duchies. Some were short-lived: only Luxembourg survived after the First World War. The nineteenth century was thus an age of grand duchies in Europe and consequently an age during which the potential statehood of many sub-imperial political units was discussed, envisioned, and questioned. Finland was no exception. British, French, and German newspapers and other public outlets made the Grand Duchy of Finland part of the geopolitical discussion of the time. This discussion also found its way to the Romanov Empire, in which debates on Finland's role and status gradually became more topical.[29]

27. Manninen 2000, 219. For example, the reaction of Professor H. G. Porthan, who was among the first scholars interested in Finnish language and culture, is famous.
28. Marjanen 2022.
29. See Natalia Potapova's chapter.

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The Imperial grand duchy

The concept of grand duchy came to play a central role in the project for seeking legitimacy for the Russian conquest of Finland. Alexander I had already unilaterally proclaimed himself the Grand Duke of Finland in January 1809 before summoning the representatives of the Finnish estates to Porvoo.[30] The Porvoo Diet of 1809 was staged ceremoniously as the founding act of the grand duchy as a separate administrative and political entity within the Russian Empire.[31] Notably, however, Alexander referred to the Grand Duchy of Finland as an entity that already existed in his Act of Assurance signed on the opening day (see Fig. 2 and 3). He presented the existence of the Grand Duchy of Finland as a given, thanking providence for awarding it to him, thus referring to a longer Russian tradition of understanding Finland's position.

> Providence having placed Us in possession of the Grand Duchy of Finland, We have desired hereby to confirm and ratify the Religion and the Fundamental Laws of the Land as well as the privileges and rights which each class in the said grand duchy in particular, and all the inhabitants in general, be their position high or low, have hitherto enjoyed according to the Constitution. We promise to maintain all these benefits and laws firm and unshakeable in their full force.[32]

As a document signed by the emperor and disseminated in every Finnish church, the Act of Assurance of the Monarch became the best-known and most influential written account of Finland's position. It was later included in nineteenth-century collections of Finnish laws and considered a fundamental constitutional assessment of the Grand Duchy of Finland's position and political order within the Russian Empire.[33] As such it could thus be read as a one-sided princely announcement, but as it was simultaneously part of a ceremony of mutual assurances of loyalty, it also had features of a modern treaty between the ruler and the estates representing the people.[34] Whether it was

30. Tommila 1984, 37–38.
31. The English word Diet circumvents the long and sometimes heated discussion about choosing between the words *landtdag/riksdag* or *maapäivät/valtiopäivät*. See Pekonen 2021. The first connotation of Diet might bring to mind modern forms of parliamentary representation, but actually the French concept of diète that Alexander I used had a long history before the French Revolution and was used in connection with archaic forms of gatherings summoned by the ruler. Both interpretations may also be motivated by the use of the concept of diète in the context itself: *riksdag/valtiopäivät* for summoning the representatives of the Grand Duchy of Finland, a political entity of which Alexander had named himself the ruler; *landtdag/maapäivät* as the Porvoo Diet basically represented an antiquated form of representation that as a gathering of the representatives of the estates could also be understood as a traditional confirmation of loyalty to the new ruler. cf. e.g. Kalleinen 2023, 31–32; Rasilainen 2024, 49–53.
32. Translation in Fisher 1901. For the original Finnish and Swedish versions see https://www.eduskunta.fi/FI/naineduskuntatoimii/kirjasto/aineistot/eduskunta/historiallisia-dokumentteja/Sivut/valtiopaivat-1809-porvoo.aspx
33. During the nineteenth century the Act of Assurance was regularly included in listings of Finnish constitutional documents with the Swedish-era Instrument of Government 1772, its supplement of 1789 and the Diet Act confirmed by Alexander II in 1869. See e.g. Mechelin 1877.
34. Rasilainen 2024, 49–53.

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more one than the other was at the time relevant for only a few, and it was perhaps more important for the future that both readings were possible and could later be mobilized as political arguments.[35]

As the brief announcement did not specify the exact status of the grand duchy, it is understandable that clarification was sought from references to fundamental laws and the constitution that were later the object of continuing political twists and scholarly debate.[36] Amid the continuing war and European geopolitical turmoil, however, it was perhaps understandable that those involved avoided taking a fixed position on Finland's status.[37] At Porvoo Alexander I recognized in his statements Finland's status as a grand duchy and confirmed its fundamental laws; more importantly, however, he abstained from specifying them in written form. Unlike the Grand Duchy of Warsaw handled by Napoleon two years before, the Grand Duchy of Finland was left without a modern written constitution.

Limited international recognition

The 1809 Hamina peace treaty between Sweden and Russia did not include statutes concerning Finland's internal affairs. Finland's position as part of the Russian Empire was recognized, but the grand duchy was mentioned only in passing, and Sweden was given no role in defining the foundations of its present position – or future. The deepening conflict with Napoleon and, before long, open war put Alexander's plans for Finland on hold, and no firm declarations were made concerning Finland's position during what remained of his reign. In these conditions the Finnish elite adopted a pragmatic approach, preserving Swedish-era administrative structures and practices. The old administrative practices were also partly officially confirmed in the statutes establishing the new Governing Council of the Grand Duchy of Finland in 1809 (after 1816 the Imperial Senate of Finland) and the founding of the institutions presenting Finnish affairs to the ruler in St Petersburg.

In the spirit of the Swedish Gustavian epoch the Finnish elite held the old principles of princely power in high regard, emphasizing the monarch's dual role as Emperor of Russia and Grand Duke of Finland as the cornerstone of Finland's special position within the Russian Empire.[38] This dual strategy upheld the old principles of princely

35. Tandefelt 2009.
36. Klami 1977. Without delving more deeply into the continuing historical strife concerning the significance of the Porvoo Diet and the meaning of the constitutional laws confirmed there, it is fair to say that the question goes beyond contrasting the Russian and Swedish traditions of understanding fundamental laws. The conquest of Finland had been agreed by Alexander and his ally Napoleon in Tilsit in 1807 when constitutional rule in the newly formed Grand Duchy of Warsaw was introduced. Accordingly, the establishment of the Grand Duchy of Finland in 1809 can best be understood in the context of the topical discussion of the geopolitical map of Europe and its future forms of government. Klinge 2009 205–208, 269–274.
37. Tandefelt 2009; Tommila 1984, 76–79. If there were different views behind the scenes, it was not between Russian and Finnish (Swedish) conceptions of state and constitution but between advocates of old principles of princely rule and those influenced by modern constitutional ideas among both Finnish and Russian leading figures.
38. Kalleinen 2017; Kalleinen 2023.

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power to secure the Finnish administration's separation from the authority of Russian ministries. At the same time principles of modern statehood were applied in practice to frame Finland as a distinct territorial political entity. The 1812 imperial degree merging 'old Finland' with the grand duchy implicitly confirmed this.[39] Confirmation of Finland's status as a separate grand duchy essentially remained an internal affair of the Russian Empire, as Finland's position was not brought to the Vienna Congress, and it thus remained outside the discussions that confirmed the constitutions and state forms of most reorganized European states.

Constitutional reform plans of 1819 and the grand duchy as state and nation

There was practically no public discussion of Finland's status as a grand duchy during the first decades after Finland's incorporation into the Russian Empire. The emperor's declarations at Porvoo were perhaps not considered something that could be publicly interpreted and commented on; alternatively, it was simply understood that any attempt in this direction would not evade the strict censorship of the time. Not even the administrative elite openly discussed Finland's status before the emperor himself took up the issue in 1819 by preparing to summon the Finnish Diet in the post-Vienna Congress spirit of stabilizing the European political system. The Committee for Finnish Affairs had a memorandum drafted for the emperor that summarized the foundation of Finland's constitutional position and suggested its specification by a written constitution. The memorandum was motivated by the argument that upon becoming part of Russia, Finland 'became a state that is subordinate to this empire and independent in its inner administration'.[40] The suggestion attempted to find recognition of Finland's political existence in two directions. First of all it presented the grand duke as the embodiment of Finnish statehood and, secondly, suggested recognition of the principles applied in creating Finnish state institutions and administrative practices in the form of a written constitution.

However, the Committee's work was soon put on hold, as Alexander started to prioritize plans for reforming first the Russian Empire as a federative constitutional monarchy. Leading Finnish figures abandoned constitutional reform initiatives, seeing in written codification of Russian constitutional legislation a greater threat than opportunity for strengthening the grand duchy's position.[41]

No information about the constitutional initiative was made public in Finland. When the project was abandoned, however, the radical journalist and scholar A. I. Arwidsson published a series of articles that without mentioning the project discussed its key issues. The country's leading civil servants saw their mere scrutiny dangerous, but Arwidsson exacerbated the situation by combining his constitutional considerations with radical new ideas of state and nation. Arwidsson presented

39. This did not prompt public reaction at the time, but it certainly did not go unnoticed by later Finnish historians defending the Grand Duchy of Finland's status as a separate political entity. Danielson-Kalmari 1894.
40. Kalleinen 2017, 122–126; Danielson-Kalmari 1914.
41. Korhonen 1963, 323–328; Kalleinen 2017.

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the nation as an independent historical agent and raised the will of the people as the cornerstone of national statehood.[42] Particularly the fear that this kind of argumentation would raise demands that the constitution ought to satisfy the 'rights of the people' upset the high civil servants. Arwidsson was expelled from the university and moved to Sweden.[43] For decades the incident was to mark the limits of public discussion of Finland's status as a grand duchy, and it was later made a symbol of the language-based ethnopolitical conflict in the country.[44]

When Nicholas I ascended the throne in 1825, he restated Alexander I's declaration to the Finnish estates in 1809, confirming the basic parameters of Finland's position as a grand duchy. Otherwise, Finland's constitutional status was neither further specified nor explicitly affected by codification of Russian imperial legislation during Nicholas's autocratic reign. His authoritarian bureaucratic rule prolonged the silent discrepancy in the Finnish governmental system between the old principles of princely power, the grand duke as the embodiment of Finnish statehood, and the practices of Swedish-era administrative procedures that were used to build up the grand duchy as a self-governing bureaucratic apparatus.

Opening speech of the 1863 Diet and the Grand Duchy of Finland as a 'constitutional monarchy'

Alexander II's accession and the renewal of the Oath of the Monarch in 1855 gave Finland's status new formal recognition after Nicholas I's thirty-year bureaucratic and authoritarian rule. With the easing of censorship and civic freedom public discussion of Finland's position gained momentum, culminating in the call for the reconvening of the Diet in 1863 after 54 years. Alexander's opening address to the Finnish Estates further encouraged expectations of an official redefinition of the grand duchy's status in modern constitutional terms. In his speech Alexander explicitly acknowledged that many provisions of the Fundamental Laws of the grand duchy had not been applicable since its union with the empire, and that others lacked clarity and precision. He promised to have a proposal prepared for explanatory and supplementary provisions to be submitted to the Estates at the next Diet in three years, and that he would do so by maintaining the 'constitutional monarchical principle'.[45]

Alexander's commitment to clarifying Finnish fundamental laws did not materialize in the form of a written constitution. Instead, the Constitutional Committee of 1863–1865 contributed to the preparation of the Diet Act of 1869, marking a significant step towards modern constitutional government. The act clarified the practical working modes of the governmental system by institutionalizing regular Diet sessions and specifying the procedural relationships between the governing bodies, the emperor, senate, and diet. At a more principled level the act's first paragraph declared that the Finnish Estates assembled in the Diet 'represented the Finnish people'. While seemingly in line with the principles of modern political representation, the formulation retained

42. See Liikanen's chapter in this volume.
43. Kalleinen 2023, 119–120.
44. See Marjanen's chapter in this volume.
45. See Kurunmäki's chapter in this volume.

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elements of the old princely rule. The role of the Estates was emphasized in a way that could still be read as referring to their traditional loyalty-based personal ties with the ruler. As the promised clarification of the constitution was otherwise withdrawn, interpretations of Finland's status further diverged, allowing readings that emphasized traditional principles of princely power and modern constitutional monarchy.[46] The new key documents, Alexander II's 1863 opening speech and the 1869 Diet Act, had great significance for the emerging political mobilization and opened horizons for alternative political imaginaries of the grand duchy's future. The emerging opposition parties capitalized on this. In the Fennoman rhetoric of the 1870s representing the Finnish people became the leading political principle, while liberals conceptualized the political system in terms of constitutional monarchy based on a representative system and even parliamentarism.[47]

The Constitutional Committee of 1885 – modern statehood through a nationalizing empire?

During the last decades of the nineteenth century the Grand Duchy of Finland's status and the interpretation of Finnish constitutional laws became objects of heated political discussion between Finnish and Russian politicians and scholars. The core of the debate, however, was no longer new reform suggestions that would have clarified Finland's constitutional status. The constitutional question was triggered by Alexander III's imperial manifestos, which followed plans to codify Russian imperial legislation, curbing Finnish autonomy and prompting protests in Finland concerning their lawfulness. The conflict was preceded by the work of the Constitutional Committee of 1885–1886, which sought to reform the Finnish constitution and codify it with imperial legislation. The committee's work failed, but the propositions and statements of the Finnish and Russian members of the committee reveal that a fundamental change in the discussion of the grand duchy's constitutional status had occurred. Finns were no longer driven by optimistic expectations of reforming and clarifying the constitution in the spirit of modern constitutional monarchy. Instead, they were forced into a defensive position, facing proposals for codifying Finnish legislation and administrative practices with the Russian system and strengthening the emperor's powers over Finnish state institutions.[48]

On the eve of the new century the discrepancy between Russian imperial rule and Finnish political actors' ideals became so obvious that it was next to impossible to

46. The summoning of the Diet led to the publication of several studies that strove to clarify Finland's constitutional status by cataloguing and analyzing historical documents that could be counted among the fundamental laws of Finland. See e.g. Palmén 1861, Mechelin 1877. Russian nationalist newspapers' interest in Finland also increased, and articles were published that tended to deny the Grand Duchy's special status (especially by Mikhail Katkov). These Russian interventions were understandably also noted in the Finnish press. See e.g. *Helsingfors Dagblad* 22 June 1881.
47. For diverging liberal and Fennoman strategies and conceptions of nation and state, see Liikanen in this volume; for conceptions of representation and parliamentarism see Kurunmäki in this volume.
48. Jussila 1979, 27–41.

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reform the grand duchy's political system through cooperation between the emperor and the Finnish Diet. Instead, the imperial government adopted repressive methods curbing civil and political rights. In 1899 Nicholas II signed the so-called February manifesto which sought to alter Finland's position within the empire by enabling the Russian government to impose laws on Finland without the Diet's consent. The manifesto was met with protests and demonstrations.[49]

The deepening conflict led Finnish political actors to change their strategies. The old Fennomans and liberals abandoned the immediate task of reforming the system in the spirit of constitutional monarchy and national self-determination, adopting policies of compliance and passive resistance to protect existing political institutions. This left room for new party groupings that continued to promote reform claims for broader political participation. The Young Fennomans, liberals favouring active resistance, and the emerging labour movement initially built their politics on new forms of civic organization and political platforms outside the grand duchy's administrative structures. For the new political forces, the grand duchy was still the central political framework, but Estate representation was considered mainly as a channel to articulate particular interests and regional concerns.[50]

Republican ideas of national statehood based on political representation and civic engagement were set against the realities of a system that had been built on the principles of princely power and Estate representation. Notwithstanding the debate on Finland's status within the Russian Empire, the concept of grand duchy – but not grand duke – almost disappeared from the new political groupings' vocabulary, and their political visions saw Finland above all as a nation state with a representative political system following the principles of constitutionalism and even parliamentarism.[51]

The 1906 parliamentary reform and the grand duchy as a frame of representative politics

At the time of the 1905 Russian revolution a general strike in Finland forced the emperor to cancel imperial manifestos curbing the Finnish legal system, restore civil and political rights, and promise a reform of the system of representation. In 1906 a new Diet Act replaced the old four-chamber Estate Diet with a unicameral parliament based on universal suffrage. The notion of representing the people was conceptualized as a constitutive element of the political system. In the 1907 elections the Social Democratic Party became the biggest party, and republican-minded politicians constituted a majority in parliament. Strong social and political mobilization promoted political radicalization, and in electoral campaigns the rhetoric of representing the people and its will came to dominate the political scene.[52] In Russia the 1905 revolution was soon followed by the restoration of the old authoritarian rule and the new Duma came to serve as an instrument of the 'nationalizing' Russian Empire. As a consequence, Russian and Finnish views concerning the grand duchy's political

49. Tommila 1999.
50. See Kuusisto's chapter in this volume.
51. Kurunmäki in this volume.
52. Haapala et al. 2008.

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system diverged more than ever. The emperor fortified his authoritarian rule with new imperial legislation that reduced the rights of Finnish political institutions and by fully deploying the repressive apparatus. Parliament and the political parties responded by underlining their role as the people's representatives. The emperor complemented the political limbo by repeatedly dissolving parliament and ordering new elections, paralyzing the grand duchy's political system.[53]

The outbreak of the First World War gave the Russian government further impetus to tighten political control. As few results were to be expected of parliament's work, it became more a platform for agitation, and the political centre of gravity began to move towards civil society and arenas outside the official political system. Finnish political actors found it difficult to see the Grand Duchy of Finland as a functioning political system, and active and passive resistance gained further ground. The Russian government countered this with repressive new measures that openly targeted the elimination of Finland's special status. In response Finnish parties began to link their visions of Finland's future with Russia's defeat and a potential revolution in Russia.

End of princely rule and the question of supreme power

By the time of the 1917 February Revolution scarcely any major Finnish political force saw Finland's future as best safeguarded by its position as a grand duchy within the Russian Empire. When imperial power ended in February 1917 and the emperor no longer personified Russian – and Finnish statehood, the question of alternative futures was actualized. The first attempt to redefine Finland's position was made in July 1917, when the Finnish parliament, which then had a Social Democratic majority, passed the so-called Power Act. The Act transferred the power that had previously belonged to the Russian emperor to the Finnish parliament. By so doing it sought to solve once and for all the old dilemma of the discord between traditions of princely rule and representative forms of government. The Power Act was never ratified, however, as the Russian provisional government dissolved parliament and announced new elections. It was now the turn of the provisional government to declare itself (with the Finnish Senate's consent) the holder of the powers that had previously belonged to the emperor, which meant that the Grand Duchy of Finland continued its existence though the grand duke had fallen.[54]

When the Bolsheviks took power in Russia in November, this game of thrones came to an end. Neither the Finnish government nor the Bolsheviks could imagine the antiquated form of the Grand Duchy of Finland as a functioning framework for future politics and relations. The Finnish government, now formed by centre and right-wing parties, proclaimed itself through a new Power Act the holder of supreme power and immediately afterwards declared Finnish independence. The Bolshevik government recognized the new Republic of Finland. Although there were doubts of what their calculations were about organizing future relations with Finland, resurrecting the Grand Duchy of Finland was certainly not part of them.

53. Kujala 2016; Kujala 1997, 213–226.
54. Ketola 1987; Vares 2000, 220–235.

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Conclusions: Independence and the grand duke's long shadow

In December 1917 Finland was declared an independent republic. The main arguments of the Finnish declaration of independence relied mainly on principles of popular sovereignty and the Finnish people's right to decide its own destiny. At the same time the government was determined to carefully follow the old judicial procedures in order to preserve the image of the lawful holder of the powers that had previously belonged to the Swedish king and the Russian emperor as the Grand Duke of Finland.[55] By continuing to rule according to the old administrative principles and practices, the government transplanted the old balancing between principles of princely rule and modern statehood in the foundations of the Finnish governmental system. This legacy of the Grand Duchy of Finland came to play a role when the government's legitimacy was challenged in the revolution of the spring of 1918 and again later in the autumn when the republican system of government was planned to be transformed into a monarchy with the election of a German prince as king of Finland (see Fig. 4). Finally, the exceptionally strong role the republican Act of Government of 1919 granted the president meant the traditions of princely power characteristic of the Grand Duchy of Finland were baked into the Republic of Finland's system of government – to be arguably erased from the law books as late as the 1999 codification of the Finnish constitution.[56]

Even today it is not uncommon to claim that after more than a hundred years of republican rule Finnish political life is still characterized by 'tsarist' attitudes and practices.[57] Based on the Grand Duchy of Finland's 300-year history, it is surely plausible to assume that a certain continuity of authoritarian traditions can be identified. But can the long shadow of the Grand Duke of Finland be associated with a tsarist mentality? The concept of grand duchy was for a long time seemingly above criticism in Finland: it was seldom rhetorically confronted as a symbol of the declining old order; but nor was it a synonym for a loyalist conception of the 'Emperor's Finland'. Instead, during the nineteenth century the concept's meaning was stretched in opposite directions as a frame for princely rule and loyalty to the Russian emperor and as a self-governing national political body and arena for representing the people. During its long history the Grand Duchy of Finland came to signify both Finland's imperial dependence and its status as a separate state and nation – until the overstretched concept was shattered in 1917 from without and within. Perhaps instead of a tsarist mentality, this more multifaceted shadow of the grand duke, with its conflicting ideals of princely rule and national self-determination, still fashions Finnish political life.

55. Jussila, Hentilä & Nevakivi 1999, 101–106.
56. Riepula, Kultalahti & Pohjolainen 2019.
57. The notion of 'tsarist' (or 'czarist') as a negatively laden term became common in Finland only after 1917 although isolated uses occur already earlier. In general, the Emperor's different roles were kept separate according to the ruler's different titles: Emperor of Russia, tsar of Poland, Kazan and other places, Grand Duke of Lithuania, Finland and other places. The full title was often on display in official news. See e.g. *Finlands Allmänna Tidning* 20 March 1834, 1. By the end of the nineteenth century, the emperor was sometimes referred to as tsar, thereby deploying a more critical tone, but it is only after 1917 that the distinction between tsar and emperor became properly blurred.

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Figure 1. Finland's status as a grand duchy was first manifested symbolically with the emblem introduced in the grave monument of the Swedish king Gustav I in 1583. Photograph of the coat of arms of Finland on the tomb of Gustavus I in Uppsala cathedral, Sweden. Image source: Wikipedia.



Figure 3. When Finland's Government Council (Regeringskonseljen) was reorganized in 1816 as the Imperial Senate of Finland, the symbolism of its seals and stamps was also changed. In the new seal of the Imperial Senate, the old Swedish emblem of the Grand Duchy of Finland was incorporated into the emblem of the Russian Empire. Image source: Wikimedia Commons. CC BY-SA 4.0.



Figure 2. The coat of arms of the throne backrest at the Diet in Porvoo / Borgå in 1809. The emblem used already in the Swedish era was tailored in the seat of the emperor symbolizing the new political existence of the grand duchy under the imperial crown. Image source: The National Museum of Finland.



Figure 4. Amid the project of inviting a German prince as the king of Finland in 1918, the crown of the grand duke was included in the official state flag as a symbol of the historical continuity that accentuated the legitimacy of the new independent state institutions. The emblem of the presidential flag of Finland 1918–1920. Image source: Finnish Heritage Agency.

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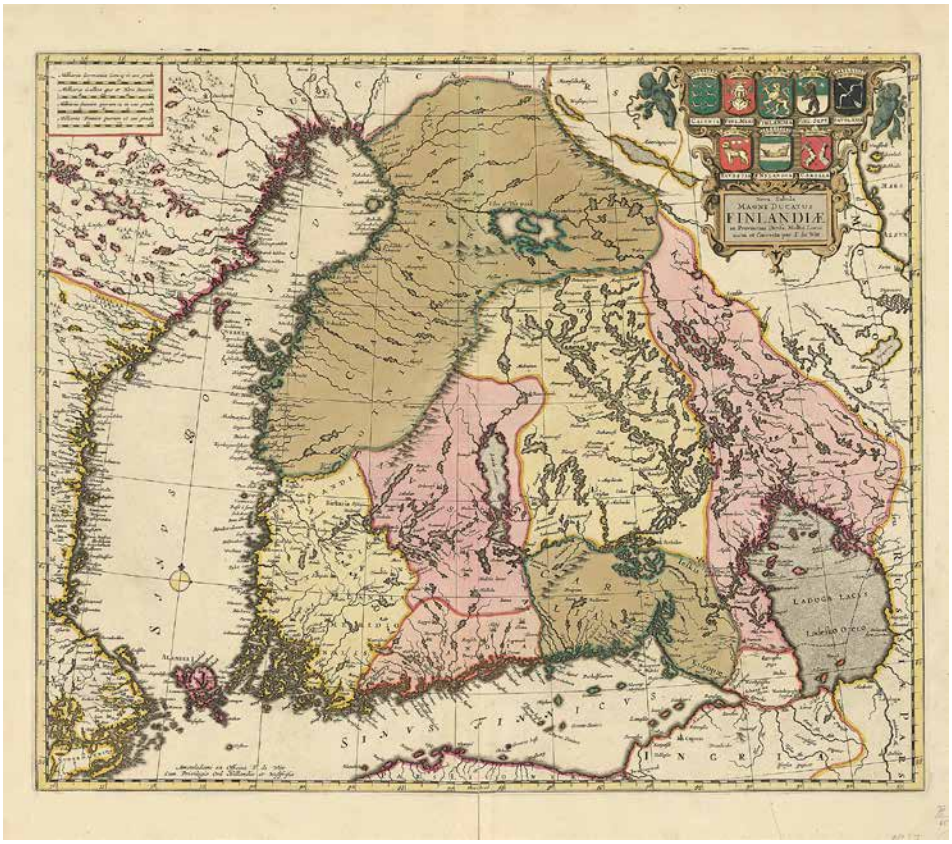


Figure 5. In the seventeenth century the Grand Duchy of Finland appeared on European maps symbolizing the might and glory of the Swedish king – notwithstanding the fact that Finland did not form a separate entity in the political structure of Sweden or an administrative frame for the Swedish counties on the eastern side of the Gulf of Bothnia. *Nova tabula magni ducatus Finlandiae in provincias divisa, multis locis aucta et correcta pre F. de Witt*. Frederick de Wit, [Amsterdam] (1680). Image source: National Library of Finland.

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Figure 6. In the eighteenth century the Grand Duchy of Finland was at times recognized in the geopolitical maps of Europe indicating the strained rivalry between European dynastic rulers. The 1742 map on 'the theater of war' markedly draws the name *Duché de Finlande* over the border to cover also areas on the Russian side. *Théâtre de la Guerre en Finlande: pour l'Intelligence des mouvements des troupes suédoises et moscovites*. Le Rouge, Georges-Louis (1742) A Paris: par et chez le S.r le Rouge Ing.r Geographe du Roy rue des Augustins A.P.D.R., 1742. Image source: National Library of Finland.

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Figure 7. The 1811 adaptation of a Swedish map from the late eighteenth century depicted the grand duchy as a separate political unit of the Russian Empire with borders preceding the unification of Old and New Finland. *Charta öfver Stor-Furstendömet Finland*. Carl Jean Thuneberg (1811). Image source: National Library of Finland.

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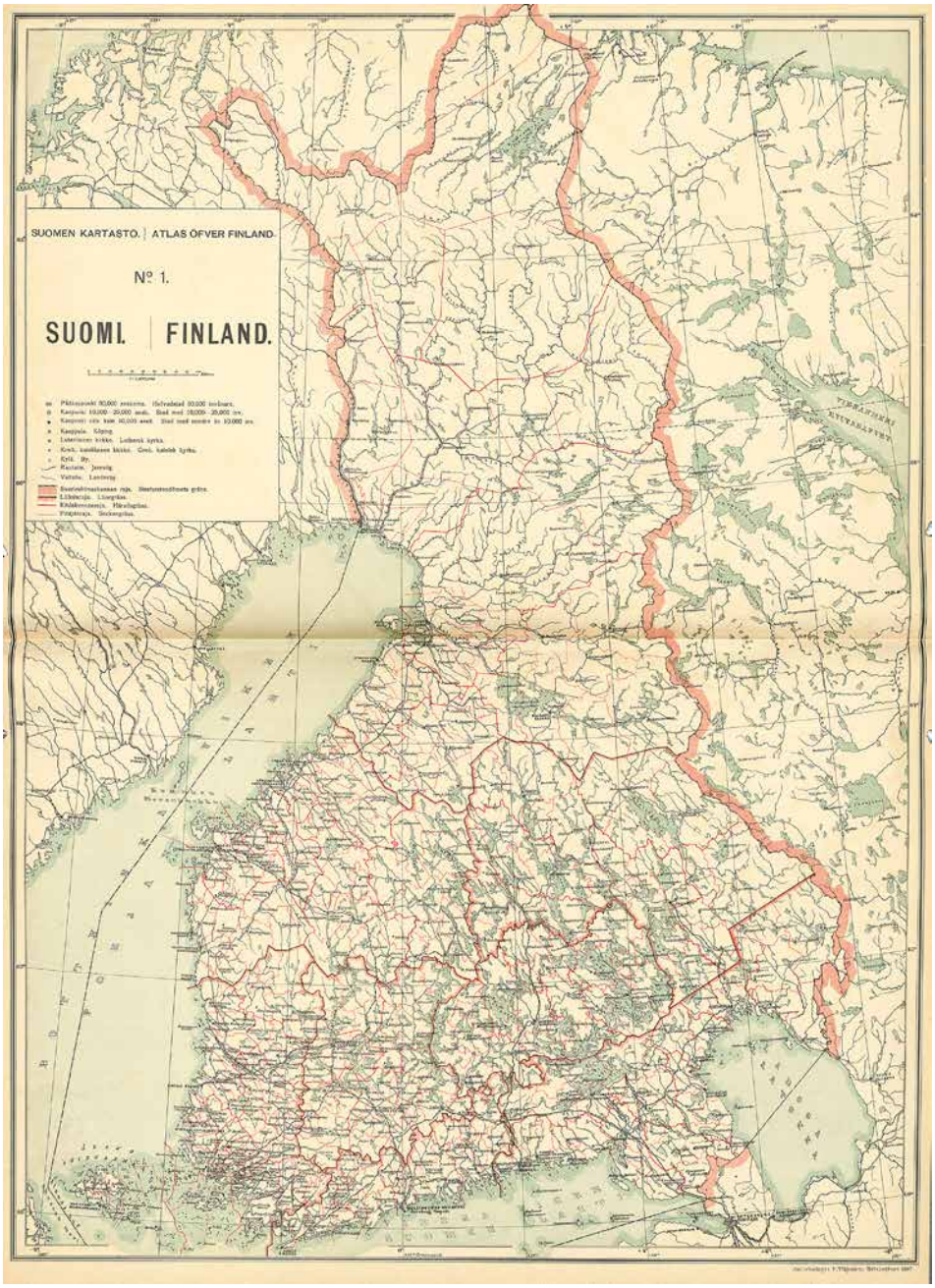


Figure 8. The atlas of the Geographical Society of Finland, which belonged to the main projects of the Finnish nation-building elite, pictured Finland without naming its status as a grand duchy with thick red borderlines typical for illustrations of independent nation states. *Suomen kartasto*, Suomen maantieteellinen seura, [Helsinki] 1899. Image source: National Library of Finland.

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A State, a Province, or Both?

Finnish Historiography on the Politico-Legal Status of the Grand Duchy of Finland within the Russian Empire

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In 1963 the 29-year-old doctoral researcher Keijo Korhonen (1934–2022) defended his PhD thesis in Finnish History at the University of Turku. It focused on the first Committee for Finnish Affairs, which functioned in St Petersburg between 1811 and 1826 and dealt with issues concerning the Grand Duchy of Finland, from routine matters to large-scale proposals to restructure its administrative and juridical apparatus. At first glance the thesis seemed a somewhat unexciting examination of certain bureaucratic arrangements that was unlikely to arouse strong emotions. Nevertheless, it greatly angered Korhonen's opponent Vilho Niitemaa (1917–1991), the professor of general history. Rumour had it that Niitemaa had hired several assistants to discover the thesis's smallest flaws. Its public defence lasted six hours, as he examined each page without even getting to the main arguments. The reason for this public humiliation was Korhonen's introductory chapter, in which he briefly discussed Finland's new status within the Russian Empire, arguing that early nineteenth-century historical actors considered it a Russian province with some privileges. This argument challenged the dominant view in Finnish historiography, according to which Finland had already become an autonomous state with its own constitution in 1809. The stage was thus set for a debate that continues even today.[1]

This chapter examines the Finnish historiography of the Grand Duchy of Finland's politico-legal status after its separation from the Kingdom of Sweden and incorporation into the Russian Empire in 1808–1809. I focus on academic historians' use of their professional authority and knowledge to justify their arguments in debates on the topic. The Russian Empire's annexation of Finland and the ensuing Finno-Russian/Soviet relations are among the most thoroughly studied themes in Finnish history, so I concentrate chiefly on those contributions that have presented qualitatively new interpretations regarding the Grand Duchy of Finland's status.[2] In addition to the work of historians, legal scholars have written abundant literature on this topic.[3] In the scope of this chapter, however, it is possible to take legal history into account only to the extent that it has significantly affected historians' views, or when

1. Korhonen 1963, 19–29. See, for example, Jussila 2007, 235–236; Soikkanen 2009, 23; Rasilainen 2024a; Juntunen & Kalleinen 2025; Rasilainen 2025.
2. In the scope of this chapter foreign historians' contributions cannot be discussed. See, for example, Thaden 1984; Schweitzer 1996; Nesemann 2003; Sandström 2009.
3. The first volume of *Bibliografia juridica Fennica* (1809–1948) alone includes a 19-page list of publications on the topic. Klami 1977, 162 n. 44.

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legal scholars have explicitly participated in historians' disputes. The main sources therefore include the leading scholarly journals of history in Finland, *Historiallinen Aikakauskirja* and *Historisk Tidskrift för Finland*, as well as other articles, edited volumes and monographs that have played a critical role in defining the Grand Duchy of Finland's politico-legal status.

In the history of Finnish historiography the historians Sune Jungar, Toivo Nygård, Timo Soikkanen and Max Engman have previously examined this topic at length.[4] Moreover, the historian Osmo Jussila has analysed the works of his predecessors and contemporaries with a special emphasis on whether they have agreed or disagreed with him.[5] Although I have used these studies in this chapter, I have adopted a more pronounced conceptual history approach. Of special interest in my reading of the sources is the semantic field concerning the Finnish and Swedish terms *Suomen suuriruhtinaskunta*/*Storfurstendömet Finland* (the Grand Duchy of Finland), which includes such key concepts[6] as *valtio/stat* (state), *maakunta/provinssi/provins* (province), *autonomia/autonomi* (autonomy) and *perustuslaki/grundlag/konstitution* (fundamental law, constitutional law, constitution). By analyzing the changing uses and meanings of these concepts and the conceptual clusters they form, I aim to show how and why Finnish historians' understanding of the Grand Duchy of Finland's politico-legal status has varied and changed, as well as how these changes are related to the paradigmatic changes within historical scholarship and broader historical transformations.

My purpose is not to take a final stand on the accuracy of Finnish historians' sometimes opposing interpretations of the topic. Instead, I focus on the continuities, ruptures and changes in their argumentation, which I analyse in their past political and scholarly contexts.[7] I argue on the one hand that political conditions have both enabled and constrained historians' disciplinary knowledge practices so that certain scholarly positions, conceptualizations and arguments have emerged from this historically conditioned field of possibilities, whereas others have been excluded or marginalized. On the other hand, however, I do not suggest that there is a straightforward relationship between political conditions and the adherence to certain conceptualizations that means historians' knowledge production has been deterministically dictated by politics. Ultimately, my focus is on conceptualizing as an act of historians, in which, to paraphrase the historian Reinhart Koselleck, what has 'actually' occurred in the past remains an academic construction.[8]

In what follows I start with a brief exploration of the emergence of two opposing views of the Grand Duchy of Finland's politico-legal status within the Russian Empire, which I call the constitutional view and the imperial view. This binary division

4. Jungar 1984; Nygård 1998; Soikkanen 2005; Soikkanen 2009; Engman 2009. See also the brief historiographical summary in Kalleinen 2023, 313–314. For other relevant historiographical contributions see, for example, Torvinen 1965; Tommila 1989; Meinander 2000.
5. Jussila 2007.
6. By the term 'key concept' I mean concepts that have become so important that they have played a key role in situations characterized by change and contestation in the Finnish historiography of the Grand Duchy of Finland's politico-legal status within the Russian Empire. At a general level see Ifversen 2011, 74–76.
7. At a general level see Koselleck 2002, 24–29; Koselleck 2011, 17–18.
8. Koselleck 2002, 33.

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should be understood merely as an analytical tool, for there have been many inner variations within both main lines of interpretation.[9] Moreover, I show how and why the constitutional view kept its position as the national master narrative[10] in Finnish academic historiography until the 1960s. In the second section I discuss the post-war historiographical revision, which resulted in the 1960s in the abandonment of the constitutional view and the adoption of the imperial view in Finnish historiography. In the penultimate section I analyse the new wave of criticism of the imperial view since the 1990s. I conclude by suggesting that although the revision of Finnish historiography on this subject has been motivated by changes in disciplinary practices, the dominant conception of the Grand Duchy of Finland's status has largely been in line with the various phases of Finno-Soviet/Russian relations and a more general critique of Finnish nationalism.

The constitutional view as the Finnish national master narrative

The Grand Duchy of Finland was among the territories that were incorporated into the Russian Empire between the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. Although there were already some projects to radically assimilate these newly acquired areas into the empire proper during the 1820s, the historian Alexei Miller maintains that the imperial elite considered most of them non-Russian imperial borderlands. They were thus controlled through the system of indirect rule, based on loyal local elites who were allowed to run their own local affairs. A major change, however, took place in the latter part of the nineteenth century. Concerned by the emergence of a unified and powerful Imperial Germany after 1871 and pressed by Russian nationalists, the emperors Alexander III (reign 1881–1894) and Nicholas II (reign 1894–1917) decided to promote the empire's nationalization, centralization and unification, which they combined with autocratic principles and a conservative political agenda.[11] Finland then had several features that set it apart from the empire proper. In addition to its own administrative system, laws, religion, Diet, taxation, currency, army and agency for presenting matters for the emperor's attention, the grand duchy maintained a customs boundary against the rest of the empire, Russian subjects were not allowed to settle freely in Finland and Russian language was seldom used. As Russia now sought to integrate imperial borderlands more closely into the empire, a critical question concerned the legal basis of Finland's separate position.

In the discussion that gathered steam in the late 1880s the focus was the Diet between 25 March and 19 July 1809 in the town of Porvoo (in Swedish Borgå) on the southern coast of Finland, to which the emperor Alexander I (reign 1801–1825) had summoned the representatives of the four Finnish estates (nobility, clergy, burghers and peasants). In the charter, given in French on 27 March 1809, the emperor

9. See also Soikkanen 2009, 13–18, 73–78.
10. I use the term 'national master narrative' to refer to a dominant account of the past which defines a bandwidth in which historians can legitimately tell (parts of) national history, see Thijs 2008, 60, 72.
11. Miller 2015, 327–339. For the rise of imperial nationalism in late nineteenth-century Europe see also, for example, Leonhard 2013, 12.

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confirmed and ratified 'the Religion and fundamental Laws of the Land, as well as the privileges and rights, which each class in the said Grand Duchy, in particular, and all the inhabitants in general, be their position high or low, have hitherto enjoyed according to the Constitution'.[12] Although he did not specify these 'fundamental laws' and 'the Constitution', the Finnish leading elite commonly assumed that he meant the Swedish Civil Code of 1734 and the Gustavian constitution,[13] above all, the Form of Government of 1772 and the 1789 Act of Union and Security, which were thereby confirmed as Finland's constitution and defined its status within the empire.[14]

To the best of my knowledge, the first Finnish historian who publicly supported this constitutional view was Reinhold von Becker (1788–1858). In 1821 he argued in *Turun Wiikko-Sanomat* that the emperor had promised to maintain the 'constitutional decrees' (*perustusasetukset*) of King Gustav's time, by which he clearly meant the Gustavian constitution.[15] Moreover, he gave a lecture on the topic at the Imperial Academy of Turku (today's University of Helsinki) in the early 1820s.[16] In the printed sources this view was also expressed in 1832 by the historian, journalist and librarian Adolf Ivar Arwidsson (1791–1858). In his *Lärobok i Finlands historia och geografi* ('Textbook of Finland's history and geography') he argued that 'Finland's fundamental laws (*grundlagar*) are the Swedish Form of Government of 1772 and the 1789 Act of Union and Security, both confirmed by His Majesty the Emperor'. Although Arwidsson called the Diet of Porvoo *allmän landtdag*, he stated that it had been convened in accordance with the Swedish form of government (*Svenska riksdagsordningen*) that had long been in force in Finland.[17] Arwidsson's book was used for several decades in Finland's schools, so it set the standard for subsequent textbooks.[18] In 1839–1840 the clergyman and amateur historian Johan Fredrik Cajan (1815–1887) disseminated the constitutional view to the Finnish-speaking public in the first book-length description of Finland's history written in Finnish. In accordance with paragraph 40 of the 1772 Form of Government Cajan emphasized that the ruler had no power to change

12. '[…] la Religion et des Lois fondamentales du Pays ainsi que les privilèges et droits, dont chaque classe dans le dit Grand-Duché, en particulier, et tous les habitants en général, qu'ils aient une position élevée ou inférieure, ont joui jusqu'ici selon la Constitution.' Cited in Mechelin 1889, 6.
13. The term 'Gustavian' refers to the era from 1772 to 1809 in the history of the Kingdom of Sweden. After his coup d'état in 1772 King Gustav III (reign 1771–1792) decreed a constitution in which the powers of the Swedish *Riksdag* and the nobility were significantly diminished, while his own position developed towards absolutism. This constitution was in force when Russia conquered Sweden's Finnish territories in 1808. It was replaced in Sweden in 1809 by the Instrument of Government, which curtailed the king's powers, strengthened the *Riksdag*'s authority and guaranteed significant civil liberties for the people.
14. See, for example, Major Berndt Aminoff's note in April 1809, translated and published in English in Kirby (ed.) 1975, 19–20. See also Kalleinen 2004, 423; Soikkanen 2009, 44–45; Kalleinen 2017, 51–52.
15. Becker 1821, 87. See also Becker's brief comment in *Turun Wiikko-Sanomat* 23 1821, 92.
16. Becker 1999, 114–116.
17. Arwidsson 1832, 88, 115.
18. Mylly 2002, 117–119.

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Finland's laws without the consent of the Finnish estates, which limited the Russian emperor's power in the Grand Duchy of Finland.[19]

Nevertheless, as the emperor Alexander II (reign 1855–1881) remarked in his speech at the opening of the second Diet of Finland in 1863, 'many provisions of the fundamental laws (*lois fondamentales*) of the Grand Duchy are no longer applicable to the state of affairs existing since its union with the Empire; others lack clarify and precision'. Thus, although he announced that he still wished to maintain 'the principle of constitutional monarchy (*le principle Monarchique constitutionel*) essentially involved in the character of the Finnish people', it was obvious that the former Swedish laws could not be followed to the letter.[20] Due to the failure to establish a new codified written constitution for the Grand Duchy of Finland during the nineteenth century, however, it remained unclear exactly what laws the emperor Alexander I had confirmed at the Diet of Porvoo in 1809 and how binding this solemn promise made by him and reassured by his successors was.

This issue became a major point of contention in the debate that began in the late 1880s between the Finnish legal scholar Leo Mechelin (1839–1914) and the Russian imperial chamberlain, the amateur historian Kesar F. Ordin (1835–1892). According to Mechelin Alexander I had promised on his accession to the throne of the Grand Duchy of Finland to maintain the inviolability of its fundamental laws. In doing so the emperor had wished to pacify Finland as soon as possible, for the war was still raging in Europe. Yet he had also acknowledged 'the liberal principles which had taken root in the minds and habits of the citizens'. He had therefore preferred 'an act of union' instead of a mere conquest and had confirmed the former Swedish constitution for Finland. The grand duchy's political organization was thus that of a 'constitutional monarchy', which is why the emperor's authority as the grand duke was limited by statute and had to be exercised in the manner established by Finland's constitution.[21]

Quite the contrary, Ordin argued that Sweden had ceded the Finnish territories to Russia as conquered provinces in the 1809 Treaty of Hamina (in Swedish Fredrikshamn). As the Russian emperor was not a constitutional but an autocratic monarch who derived his authority from God, he had made no agreement of any kind with the Finns at the Diet of Porvoo. Instead, because the entire Swedish constitution had become both logically and practically incapable of realization, Alexander I had

19. Cajan 1839–1840, 209–210. Cf. Articles of the New Form of Government established in Sweden at the Revolution of MDCCLXXII, para. 40. See also the historian Gabriel Rein's *Föreläsningar öfver Finlands historia. Senare delen* (1871, 616), which repeats verbatim Alexander I's charter of 1809 about Finland's fundamental laws and the constitution, yet without specifying what they are.
20. Alexander II's Speech to the Diet of Finland, 18 September 1863, published in Kirby (ed.) 1975, 51–53; the French original speech cited in Danielson 1890, 199. The unsuitability of the 1772 Form of Government for the situation of the Grand Duchy of Finland was already clear in its first article. It dictated that the ruler of the realm should profess the 'pure and evident word of God' as revealed in the Catechism of Luther and the unchanged Confession of Augsburg, whereas the Russian emperors were members of the Russian Orthodox Church; see the Articles of the New Form of Government established in Sweden at the Revolution of MDCCLXXII, para. 1.
21. Mechelin 1889, 13–15, 20, 32–33; see also Danielson 1890, 1–4, 132–133, 154. For an overview of the debate see Nygård 1998, 186–187.

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promised only to preserve the religion and privileges of each estate in Finland, such as the personal liberty of the peasants and the right of all to own land. In Russian legal terms, according to Ordin, these rights and privileges were called 'basic laws' (*korennye zakony*), which referred to a set of ancient and immutable principles that were often unwritten. The 'fundamental laws' (*osnovnye zakony*) of the Swedish constitution, instead, were much more recent and had a much more limited scope. As the transfer of such a constitution to a Russian province would have been directly contrary to the emperor's sacred duty towards Russia and inimical to the empire, Ordin insisted that whatever laws, rights and privileges Finland might enjoy depended solely on the emperor's will.[22]

The debate on the Grand Duchy of Finland's politico-legal status gained new urgency in the 1890s, with the introduction of the measures to strengthen Russian control of Finland. First, in 1890, an imperial edict merged the Finnish postal system with that of the empire proper. This was already considered on the Finnish side part of 'the Russification of Finland', intended to assimilate it into the empire.[23] This was followed in 1898 by the appointment of Nikolay Ivanovich Bobrikov as the governor general of Finland, a hardliner who drafted an extensive programme against 'Finnish separatism', which, 'alien to its benefactor, Russia […] openly seeks to establish its rights as a constitutional state'.[24] The situation reached a critical point in 1899 with the publication of the February Manifesto about imperial legislation. The manifesto reserved it for the emperor to decide which laws came within the scope of the empire's general legislation so that no consent of the Finnish Diet was required for them to enter into force in Finland.[25] A case in point was the dispute about the Finnish army. It had been established by the Conscription Act, passed by the Finnish Diet in 1878 and confirmed by Alexander II, which Nicholas II now wanted to cancel.[26]

In the following years several prominent Finnish scholars actively participated in what they considered 'the defence of Finland' against such 'unconstitutional illegality', or even 'a coup d'état', as the 1899 February Manifesto and the abolition of the Finnish army by the emperor in 1901.[27] In the ranks of historians the 'Legal Battle' (*oikeustaistelu*) was led by Johan Richard Danielson (1853–1933; from 1906 Danielson-Kalmari), who served from 1880 to 1913 as the professor of general history at the Imperial Alexander University (today's University of Helsinki). Danielson had studied the relations between Sweden, Russia and the Finnish territories during the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries in both the Finnish and Russian archives, so he was well acquainted with sources related to the Grand Duchy of Finland's status.

22. Kesar F. Ordin, *Pokorenie Finlyandii*, vol. 2. St Petersburg, 1889, 335–337, translated and published in English in Kirby (ed.) 1975, 28–31.
23. Pseudonym Joukko maalaisia (A group of Countrymen), 'Kehoitus'. *Uusi Suometar*, 18 September 1890. Translated and published in English in Kirby (ed.) 1975, 61.
24. Undated extract from N. I. Bobrikov's diary in the late 1890s, translated and published in English in Kirby (ed.) 1975, 77–78.
25. The Gracious Manifesto of the Imperial Majesty 1899. See also Kirby 2006, 74–75, 124–130.
26. Raunio 1999, 193–194.
27. For these Finnish conceptualizations, see, for example, Brotherus 1948, 73–74.

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Moreover, he was able to use these sources selectively to support his view, inseparably combining the roles of academic historian and nationalist politician.[28]

On closer examination Finnish scholars did not fully agree about the Grand Duchy of Finland's politico-legal status. For example, in 1890 Danielson rejected Mechelin's interpretation that Finland had entered a 'real union' (*reaaliunioni*) with Russia in 1809, understood as a union of two states that shared certain state institutions. Instead, he suggested that Finland had come permanently under Russia's command and belonged to the empire.[29] As he remarked, however, these differences of opinion resulted in part from the vagueness of the official documents concerning Finland's status. In the French and Swedish versions of Alexander I's speech at the Diet of Porvoo, the critical term 'constitution' had been written in the singular, whereas it was used in the plural in the Russian translation. This terminological inconsistency had given such Russian ultranationalists as Ordin grounds for claiming that instead of a modern constitution that limited the emperor's autocratic powers, Finland had 'constitutions' or 'basic laws' (*korennye zakony*), which, as already mentioned, merely referred to a set of ancient, immutable and often unwritten principles.[30] As Danielson's colleague, the historian Magnus Gottfried Schybergson (1851–1925) admitted, it had been regrettably common for early nineteenth-century actors to use such terms as 'constitution', 'state' and 'the form of government' in an undefined way, with the result that Finland's 'status was in many respects unclear'.[31]

Finnish scholars agreed even less about the best strategy to tackle 'the Russification of Finland', which they also called 'the years/period of oppression' (*sortovuodet*, *förtrycksperiod*, *ofärdsåren*). While Danielson supported the policy of compliance up to a point, for he assumed that a categorical resistance simply provoked the Russians to use harder measures, Mechelin and Schybergson preferred strict constitutionalism and refused to obey any laws and decrees they considered to have been illegally imposed. Despite these disagreements, however, their common understanding was that Finland's continued existence as a separate entity within the empire required the firmest possible foundation. It was thus essential to prove that Alexander I had confirmed the former Swedish constitution as Finland's constitution in 1809, and in doing so, because of his and his closest adviser's – the State Secretary Mikhail Speransky – interest in constitutional reformism, he had been fully aware that this meant *the* constitution in the modern sense of the term. Therefore, as Finnish historians put it, although Finland depended on Russia in foreign policy and military affairs, its constitution set limits to Russia's exercise of the powers of government in the grand duchy and granted it the status of a non-sovereign state with 'inner independence' (*sisäisesti itsenäinen*; *libre dans l'intérieur*) instead of being a Russian province or governorate.[32]

28. See, for example, Danielson 1888; Danielson 1890; Danielson 1891; Danielson-Kalmari 1920; Danielson-Kalmari 1922. For an analysis of Danielson's historical research in relation to his nationalist political activities see Torvinen 1965; Tervonen 1991, 86–92; Nygård 1998, 184–189.
29. Danielson 1890, 167; Danielson 1891, 5–13, 16. For contemporaries' criticism of Danielson's interpretation see Torvinen 1965, 163–164.
30. Danielson 1890, 135–143.
31. Schybergson 1899, 9.
32. Danielson 1890, 167; Danielson 1891, 27, 30; Schybergson 1899, 7; Rauhala 1915, 32.

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After Finland's independence in 1917 the constitutional view of the grand duchy's status became the national master narrative, which functioned for decades as the dominant framework in Finnish historiography. It was considered to convey objective historical knowledge, which historians, legal scholars and political scientists echoed as an axiomatic fact.[33] This consensus strengthened after the 1918 Finnish Civil War, in which the bourgeois White troops, aided by Imperial Germany, crushed the leftist Red forces, supported by Soviet Russia. As a result of the war almost all Finnish academic historians adopted a right-wing interpretive framework that highlighted Finland's national struggle for survival against Russia/the Soviet Union.[34] Hence, they concerned themselves with military and medieval history to show that Finland had been the last outpost of western civilization against the barbaric east since ancient times. Although Swedish-speaking historians in Finland distanced themselves from an ultra-Finnic, irredentist and expansionist ideology that sought to unite all Finno-Ugrian 'kindred peoples' in a Greater Finland, they shared the negative attitude towards Soviet Russia.[35] The controversial issue between historians in interwar Finland regarding 'the Russian rule' in Finland's history was not therefore the validity of the constitutional view, but whether the most characteristic feature of this period had been the progress of the Finnish linguistic national identity or the regress of western civil liberties in comparison to the former 'Swedish rule'.[36]

The constitutional view was further consolidated by Danielson-Kalmari's position as 'the grand old man' of Finnish historiography. Despite his almost complete blindness, he was still dictating several multi-volume books in the 1920s on 'the era of Alexander I'.[37] As he held his professorship in history for more than thirty years, influential younger historians like Uno Ludvig Lehtonen (1870–1927) and Erkki K. Osmonsalo (1894–1949) were respectively his student and his student's student, continuing their master's work.[38] In their studies examining Alexander I's foreign policy they aimed to show, like Danielson-Kalmari, that the emperor had deliberately established Finland's new status as an autonomous state, which, to cite Osmonsalo, had begun 'the development of our people towards political nationhood'.[39]

The constitutional master narrative was also disseminated in popular presentations of Finnish history such as schoolbooks, encyclopaedias and radio programmes. They often drew a straightforward teleological line from Finland's 'inner independence',

33. For the term 'master narrative' see Thijs 2008, 71–72; for the dominant role of the constitutional conception in interwar Finland see, for example, Jutikkala & Pirinen 1984, 208; Nygård 1998, 189; Soikkanen 2009, 15–19.
34. A noteworthy exception from the bourgeois hegemony was the social historian Väinö Voionmaa (1869–1947), a reformist socialist and active member of the Social Democratic Party. However, even he shared the strong anti-Russian sentiment, considering the chasm between Finland and Russia 'the deepest one in the world' and Russia 'the age-old archenemy of Finland'; Voionmaa 1919, 321–327.
35. For an overview of Finnish interwar historiography see Tommila 1989, 177–198; Jalava 2019, 199–201.
36. See, for example, Anthoni 1928, 138–140.
37. See especially Danielson-Kalmari 1920; Danielson-Kalmari 1922. See also Vares 2003.
38. This line of 'academic descent' was explicitly drawn by Osmonsalo in Osmonsalo 1947, VII–VIII; see also Nygård 1998, 189.
39. Lehtonen 1908, 206–209; Osmonsalo 1947, 436–437, citation on page 448.

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gained in 1809, to its sovereign statehood after 1917.[40] As the historian Kimmo Katajala has pointed out, the narrative about the birth of the Finnish state in 1809 at the Diet of Porvoo thereby became an essential part of a logical continuum which viewed the unification policy of the Russian Empire after the 1890s as 'oppression' to enable the 1918 Finnish Civil War to be considered 'the war of liberation' from the yoke of Soviet Russia.[41] It was difficult to remove any part of this narrative without shaking the entire construction.

At the conceptual level the solidification of the constitutional view was manifested by the spread and politicization of the concept of 'autonomy' and the derived adjective 'autonomous' in both Swedish- and Finnish-language discussions of the Grand Duchy of Finland's status. The concept as such had begun to mean the political or national economic self-determination that was characteristic of a state by the 1850s.[42] Although it was first used in Finland in the context of foreign countries,[43] the expression 'Finland's autonomy', which referred to its 'self-government' (*sjelfstyrelse*) 'built on the constitutional laws of 1772 and 1789' (*byggt på grundlagarne af 1772 och 1789*), was introduced in 1859 in a newspaper article in *Helsingfors Tidningar*. Although the article was anonymous, it was probably written by Zacharias Topelius (1818–1898), who was the newspaper's editor-in-chief and had been appointed as the professor extraordinary of the history of Finland in 1854.[44] In 1875 the historian Georg Zacharias Forsman (1830–1903; from 1882 Yrjö-Koskinen, also known by his pen name Yrjö Koskinen) used the term in the sense of Finland's political self-determination. In his reasoning, which sought to demonstrate that Finland was a state with an inner independence based on its own national spirit, he admitted that Finland's autonomy was 'to a certain extent limited'. Yet he hastened to add that all nations in the world, even the mightiest, were somehow constrained by factors that were not fully within their power. Thus, autonomy was not an either/or concept; it had different degrees.[45] A major breakthrough in the concept of autonomy occurred around 1890 along with 'the Russification of Finland', when the Finnish press began to use it to denote Finland's 'political autonomy as a state' (*den statliga autonomi*).[46] The concept then began to spread in historiography. It was used several times in *Historiallinen Aikakauskirja* around 1910[47] and became common after Finland's independence in 1917.[48] In the historian M. G. Schybergson's summary of 1923, the

40. For example, Sarva 1930. See also Nygård 1998, 187; Karonen & Räihä 2014.
41. Katajala 2017.
42. Kalleinen 2023, 91–92. According to *Svenska Akademiens ordbok* the word 'autonomy' had first appeared in Swedish in the late eighteenth century in the context of Immanuel Kant's philosophy, referring to the self-determination of the will. See https://www.saob.se/artikel/?unik=A_2573-0148.O76V&pz=3 [accessed on 9 February 2022].
43. Karonen & Räihä 2014, 37; Kalleinen 2023, 91–92.
44. 'Den 2 Oktober', *Helsingfors Tidningar* no. 79, 5 October 1859. See also Kalleinen 2023, 92.
45. Koskinen 1876, 7–9.
46. See, for example, Schybergson 1890, 346, 353.
47. According to Karonen & Räihä (2014, 38) the first author to use the term in *Historiallinen Aikakauskirja* was the historian K. W. Rauhala. However, the initials of the author in question, K.V.H., belong to the lawyer Karl Viktor Holma; see *Historiallinen Aikakauskirja* 7:4/1909, 148.
48. A keyword search (in March 2022) with the word autonomi* in the Digital Collections of the National Library of Finland (https://digi.kansalliskirjasto.fi/) from 1918 to 1939 resulted in 62

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Grand Duchy of Finland had been 'an autonomous state that belonged to Imperial Russia'. This autonomy had been based on Finland's constitution and had included all its internal affairs.[49]

The rise of Realpolitik *after 1945*

As in many other European countries that had been allied with Nazi Germany, the defeat in the Second World War gave rise in Finland to a re-evaluation of its recent past and foreign policy. At the same time Finland's delicate geopolitical position in the Soviet sphere of interest caused widespread anxiety about the future, for it was uncertain at first whether Finland would follow the Czechoslovak or Hungarian path to a so-called People's Democracy. Within historical scholarship these shaky conditions encouraged Finnish historians to adopt a pronouncedly anti-theoretical and neo-empiricist approach that considered source criticism the only required method and theory in historical research. Gone were the days when they had depicted the supposedly age-old antagonism between east (Russia/the Soviet Union) and west (Finland) with stark contrasts and intense tones. On the contrary, they now emphasized the detached, 'objective' nature of their research and toned down the east-west conflict in favour of a more pragmatic matter-of-fact way of dealing with Russian/Soviet power politics.[50]

Among the historical narratives that underwent critical scrutiny after 1945 was the constitutional view of the Grand Duchy of Finland. Although the transformation was initially slow and gradual, the first signs of a historiographical revision were already evident in the publications of the historian Lolo Krusius-Ahrenberg (1909–2003). Krusius-Ahrenberg was of German descent and had received her master's degree in 1932 from Goethe University Frankfurt, where she had studied with such distinguished political and social scientists as Hans Morgenthau, Karl Mannheim and Herbert Marcuse. Since her doctoral dissertation in 1934 at the University of Helsinki, which dealt with the breakthrough of nationalism and liberalism in mid nineteenth-century Finland, she had examined the history of Finland from an international perspective and had distanced herself from excessively Finno-centric approaches.[51]

In her studies published in 1945 and 1946, Krusius-Ahrenberg examined the development of Finland's position during the reign of Nicholas I from 1825 to 1855. She called the Diet of Porvoo *en lantdag* (a Landtag, that is, the legislative assembly of a non-sovereign self-governing entity) and supported the conception that Finland had become a non-sovereign state with a constitution of its own in 1809.[52] Nevertheless, she argued that Finland's new political existence was initially a mere external

hits in *Historiallinen Aikakauskirja* and 19 hits in *Historisk Tidskrift för Finland*, which mostly refer to 'Finland's autonomy' or 'autonomous Finland'.

49. Schybergson 1923, 42, 45.
50. For a general level in European historiography see Iggers and Wang 2008, 250–316; for Finland see Virrankoski 1991; Ahtiainen & Tervonen 1996, 120–123, 166–167; Aronsson et al. 2008, 273–274; Jalava 2019, 200–201.
51. Krusius-Ahrenberg 1934; see also Bergmann-Winberg 2007.
52. Krusius-Ahrenberg 1946, 179. See also Krusius-Ahrenberg 1981, 11, in which she repeats this view and argues that in the context of the Diet of Porvoo in 1809, the Swedish term *lantdag*

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framework, for Finland still required the inner formation of national consciousness to become aware of itself as a state.[53] Thus, according to her, when Russian nationalists pushed for the Russian Empire's unification after the 1825 Decembrist Revolt, it was ultimately the emperor Nicholas I's rigid legalism that had made the further development of Finland's autonomy possible.[54] With this interpretation she started a positive re-evaluation of the reign of Nicholas I, which Finnish historians had thus far described as a reactionary period. She also overturned the conventional perspective from which her predecessors and colleagues had studied the history of Finland. Although she did not entirely deny the importance of the Finnish elite in strengthening Finland's nascent autonomy – Finnish historians were in the habit of emphasizing the merits of national 'great men' in this matter – she stated that it was conditioned and enabled above all by Russian imperial politics. This meant that the Grand Duchy of Finland's status had to be examined from an imperial perspective.[55]

A similar emphasis was nascent in the two-volume *Suomen historian käsikirja* ('Handbook of Finland's history', 1949), which, according to its editor-in-chief, the historian Arvi Korhonen (1890–1967), was 'the codification of the current state of the art of research on Finnish history'.[56] In this handbook the historian Erkki K. Osmonsalo dutifully repeated the constitutional master narrative that Alexander I had founded the state of Finland and confirmed the Finnish constitution at the Diet of Porvoo in 1809.[57] Moreover, Osmonsalo stated that the autocratic Russian emperor was a constitutional monarch in his role as grand duke of Finland.[58] However, like Krusius-Ahrenberg, Osmonsalo did not present the Finns as the main agents in the events of the past. On the contrary, somewhat analogously to the infamous 'driftwood theory' of Finland's helpless situation in the mighty tide of the Second World War, he considered Finland to have been at the mercy of the European great powers in the Napoleonic Wars.[59]

By the early 1960s the notion of the Grand Duchy of Finland's initially fragile position was already part of the historiographical mainstream. An example is the historian Aimo Halila's (1912–1986) description of the events of Porvoo, published in 1962. To begin with, he restated that Finland had acquired its own constitution in 1809, which restrained the emperor from enacting new laws or amending old ones without the consent of the Finnish Diet. He then pointed out, however, that the concept of 'law' had been so undetermined that the emperor had been left with considerable room for manoeuvre. This interpretation revised the constitutional master narrative. It was now argued that Alexander I had confirmed the Gustavian constitution for Finland precisely because it guaranteed him such significant power,

was the equivalent of the Finnish term *valtiopäivät* (the diet of the realm or state), because the Finnish word *valtio* (state) refers to both non-sovereign and sovereign states.

53. Krusius-Ahrenberg 1946, 167–168, 177–180.
54. Krusius-Ahrenberg 1945, 247–255.
55. Krusius-Ahrenberg 1945, 255; see also Kettunen 2019, 237.
56. Korhonen 1949a, VI.
57. Osmonsalo 1949a, 48–51.
58. Osmonsalo 1949b, 65, 78–79.
59. Osmonsalo 1949a, 48–50; see also Korhonen 1949b, 662–663 on Finland's position in WWII. Cf., however, Puntila 1963, 28–29, who continued to stress the role of Finnish civil servants in determining Finland's future after 1809.

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not because of his respect for liberal principles.[60] Moreover, Halila admitted that the Russian authorities had called the meeting of the Finnish Diet in 1809 *maapäivät* (*lantdag*, i.e. a provincial assembly of the estates) because Finland was not a sovereign state and therefore could not have the proper *valtiopäivät* (*riksdag*, i.e. the diet of the realm). Yet, like Krusius-Ahrenberg, he hastened to add that the Diet of Porvoo was 'factually fully comparable to the diet of the realm' (*valtiopäivät*, *riksdag*) because Finland as a state was founded in Porvoo without for even a moment being a Russian province or governorate.[61] In Halila's words 'during the era when so many European nations were still only striving for constitutional rights, Finland already had its own constitutional form of government (*perustuslaillinen valtiosääntö*)'.[62]

Towards the new paradigm

As we have seen, a transformation had been bubbling under the surface of Finnish historiography since 1945. However, anxious about Finland's future, historians obviously did not want to undermine its sovereignty by arguing that the country had been merely a Russian province as late as 1917. A more comprehensive switch therefore occurred only in the 1960s with the advent of a new phase in Finnish eastern policy that focused on the maintenance of good relations with the Soviet Union. Simultaneously, Finland experienced a leftist domestic policy current. This coincided with a tendency towards centre-left government coalitions that included representatives of the People's Democratic Union (SKDL), of which the Communist Party constituted an important part.[63] In the field of historical research the new era manifested itself in the comprehensive and critical revision of the 1918 Finnish Civil War and the ensuing nationalist right-wing extremism in interwar Finland.[64] As the narrative of the birth of the Finnish state in 1809 at the Diet of Porvoo had been an essential part of the logical continuum, in which the unification policy of the Russian Empire was interpreted as 'oppression', and the 1918 Civil War as 'the war of liberation' from Soviet Russia, the entire historiographical construction was now called into question.[65]

The first harbingers of the paradigm shift in the Grand Duchy of Finland's status were the doctoral dissertations of the historians Tuomo Polvinen (1931–2022) and Päiviö Tommila (1931–2022), published in 1962. In his thesis Polvinen analysed the military motives behind the Russian railway policy in the Grand Duchy of Finland, whereas Tommila dealt with the position of Finland in European politics from 1809 to 1815. In both studies the conventional conception of Finno-Russian relations was seen

60. Halila 1962, 451–452. See also Brotherus 1948, 46–47, 59; Teljo 1949, 22–23; Puntila 1963, 23–24; Jutikkala & Pirinen 1984, 168–169; Virrankoski 2012, 206.
61. Halila 1962, 497–499, 539–540; cf. Krusius-Ahrenberg 1946, 179; Krusius-Ahrenberg 1981, 11.
62. Halila 1962, 578.
63. See, for example, Ahtiainen & Tervonen 1996, 120–123; Kirby 2006, 246–247, 270–271; Pernaa 2008, 183–184.
64. See, for example, Tommila 1989, 243–244.
65. For this logical continuum see Katajala 2017.

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as too narrowly nationalist and one-sidedly based on domestic sources.[66] Tommila later explained that the profound changes caused by the Second World War had moderated Finnish attitudes towards Russia/the Soviet Union, meaning that in the new political situation launched by the 1948 Finno-Soviet Agreement of Friendship, Cooperation and Mutual Assistance, there were better preconditions for unbiased research that was not charged with emotion and old prejudices. As Tommila put it in 1989, while the older generations of Finnish historians had described Finland's status during 'the era of autonomy' from the constitutional perspective, younger researchers were attempting to discern what the politico-legal basis of Finno-Russian relations had really been.[67] Furthermore, the ongoing improvement in Finno-Soviet relations allowed historians to study Russian sources in Soviet archives after a break of several decades.[68] It is therefore obvious that these new conditions fostered a tendency to consider the imperial view of the Grand Duchy of Finland as a fresh and internationally oriented alternative, whereas the Finnish constitutional master narrative had lost much of its credibility with the growing criticism of introspective right-wing nationalism.

Tommila's dissertation is of special interest for my topic, for it explicitly examined the Grand Duchy of Finland's status as entangled with the power struggle between the Kingdom of Sweden and the Russian Empire, which was further studied as part of a more general European conflict. Tommila therefore emphasized Alexander I's *Realpolitik* urge to ensure the north-western border of his empire and the safety of St Petersburg as the main reasons for the conquest of Finland, without ascribing much significance to the emperor's allegedly liberal ideals, which historians like Krusius-Ahrenberg had still emphasized in the 1940s.[69] At the same time he relativized the idea of Finnish exceptionalism within the empire by comparing the Grand Duchy of Finland with the Congress Kingdom of Poland. As the scale of Poland's autonomy had been even bigger than Finland's until the Polish uprisings of the 1830s and the 1860s, Finland, with its nascent autonomy, had not been an exception among Russian provinces. This had also made it easier for Russian nationalists to accept Finland's separate position during the first part of the nineteenth century.[70]

Moreover, while examining the foundations of the Grand Duchy of Finland's status, Tommila shifted his emphasis from the Diet of Porvoo in 1809 to the events of the previous year. He argued that Finland's position as an autonomous Grand Duchy (*un Grand-Duché autonome*) was launched by a committee report that had suggested a privileged status for Finland, which Alexander I had further modified and accepted on 1 December 1808. Among other things the emperor ordered that all affairs pertaining to Finland were to be presented directly to him, bypassing the Russian ministries

66. Polvinen 1962; Tommila 1962. See also Meinander 2000, 233–234.
67. Tommila 1989, 241–243.
68. See Tommila's (1962) and Polvinen's (1962) extensive list of the sources in the major archives in Moscow and Leningrad.
69. Tommila 1962, 20–23; cf. Krusius-Ahrenberg's (1946, 179–186) suggestion that Alexander I had had an enlightened 'dream project' in the 1810s of making Russia a constitutional federation, for which Finland and Poland served as models. See also Jungar 1984, 152–153; Soikkanen 2009, 20.
70. Tommila 1962, 421–434. Cf., for example, Brotherus 1948, 56–57, according to whom it was difficult to find any equivalents to the political order that was created in Finland in 1809.

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and the Senate, and that the Governing Council for Finland (renamed the Imperial Finnish Senate in 1816) was to be assembled solely of Finnish men. According to Tommila this alone was insufficient to create a Finnish state, but it did create a nucleus around which Finland as an autonomous entity, separated from the rest of the Empire, could be built during the 1810s.[71] As Finland had been 'an ordinary province' (*une province ordinaire*) of the Kingdom of Sweden until the Russian conquest despite its centuries-old title of grand duchy, the prefix 'autonomous' was necessary to convey Finland's qualitatively new kind of 'grand duchy-ness' within Russia.[72]

Tommila's interpretation did not come out of the blue, for in 1947 Osmonsalo had already noted the preparatory work undertaken in 1808 to arrange Finland's position within the Russian Empire.[73] Tommila's real novelty was that he emphatically downplayed the significance of the Diet of Porvoo, which he considered a mere ceremonial event for propaganda purposes. Hence, when Alexander I had publicly declared in his speech in Porvoo that Finland was 'placed from now on amongst the rank of nations' (*placé désormais au rang des nations*), according to Tommila, this simply meant that Finland was annexed to Russia and was one of its peoples – and certainly not one of the independent nations of Europe, as Finnish nationalist historians like Yrjö Koskinen had claimed. In line with this reasoning Tommila also stated that although Alexander I had already in January 1809 added the title of grand duke of Finland to his long list of titles, it was no more significant for the existence of Finland as an autonomous entity as the same title used by Swedish kings since the sixteenth century had been.[74]

As one might expect, older historians were puzzled by Tommila's claim that the Diet of Porvoo had played a minor role, as well as by his imperial interpretation of the concept of nation.[75] In 1964 the historian Aira Kemiläinen (1919–2006) discussed both issues in detail to demonstrate that Tommila's argumentation lacked conceptual accuracy. Kemiläinen had just published her research on the historically and regionally varying meanings of such key concepts as 'nation' and 'people',[76] so she insisted that more attention be paid to them. Moreover, as Danielson-Kalmari had already observed in the 1890s, the case of Porvoo was further complicated by the parallel use of French, Swedish, Russian and Finnish. Based on her detailed conceptual analysis, it was obvious to Kemiläinen that Alexander I had known the modern meaning of nation, which after the French Revolution had begun to refer to an individual national unit or a nation-state with national sovereignty. As Finland was already a nation in 1809 in the ethnic sense of the word, it would have been meaningless in Porvoo to place Finland in this category. Moreover, if Alexander I had intended to place the Finns among the ranks of the Russian peoples, as Tommila claimed, he certainly would have mentioned Russia or said 'au rang de mes peuples', not ambiguously 'au

71. Tommila 1962, 25–27, 435–436. See also Tommila 1984, 37–38, in which he repeats this argument.
72. Tommila 1962, 19–25, 35–36; see also Tommila 1984, 74.
73. Osmonsalo 1947, 436–437.
74. Tommila 1962, 25–35, especially n. 50 on page 34. For Finnish nationalist historiography on the topic see, for example, Koskinen 1933 [1881], 721–731; see also Ilkka Liikanen's chapter in this volume.
75. Suolahti 1962, 136; see also Soikkanen 2009, 22–23.
76. Kemiläinen 1964a.

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rang des nations'. The only plausible alternative for Kemiläinen was therefore that Alexander I had pointed to an improvement in the position of Finland, requiring the term 'nation' to be interpreted as the 'national state'.[77] For the supporters of the new imperial view Kemiläinen's argumentation exemplified how the emerging conceptual history approach could be harnessed for the defence of nationalist historiography.[78] For her part, however, she was still adhering to this in 1999. In her opinion, although some Finnish historians had found it unrealistic in 'the Machiavellian atmosphere of the Cold War' to admit that Alexander I had acknowledged Finland's constitution and its right to national self-determination in 1809, this did not mean they were correct.[79]

As a whole, however, Tommila's dissertation was quite well received, for even his older colleagues welcomed his attempt to examine Finland's history from an international perspective.[80] Moreover, although he downplayed the significance of the Diet of Porvoo, he did not fully dissociate himself from the constitutional view. In fact, his thinking became closer to it as the years passed. As he summarized his view in the 1980s, it had been evident to the emperors and the Finnish elite that Finland had a constitution that included the Gustavian Form of Government of 1772 and the 1789 Act of Union and Security. Both Alexander I and Nicholas I had therefore reigned over the grand duchy in accordance with these fundamental laws. Tommila believed the main reason the Russian emperors had not codified Finland's constitution was not therefore their unawareness of the post-Enlightenment meaning of a modern constitution. Instead, it was a calculated strategy because the lack of precision offered them more scope for flexible politics.[81]

A Russian province with privileges

As already mentioned in the introduction, the heated debate about the Grand Duchy of Finland's status began in 1963 with the historian Keijo Korhonen's doctoral thesis on the first Committee for Finnish Affairs. Although the events at the Diet of Porvoo in 1809 were beyond the scope of his study, he analysed the terms 'province', 'state' and 'constitution' in early nineteenth-century Russian political thinking to understand the circumstances that had led to the committee's founding. Korhonen took as his starting point the view that Alexander I and his adviser Speransky had used the term 'state' (état, stat) differently from late nineteenth-century liberals. In principle, there was a clear difference between a sovereign state and a province (*maakunta, la province,*

77. Kemiläinen 1964b, 290–304.
78. Klinge 1998, 21.
79. Kemiläinen 1999. Based on Kemiläinen's footnotes, her criticism at this point targeted Osmo Jussila especially. Meanwhile, Tommila had adopted a slightly more conciliatory attitude to Kemiläinen's view, suggesting that although Finland had been incorporated in 1809 into 'the peoples under the Russian emperor', it had received its own administration that it had previously lacked, increasing its status; see Tommila 2008, 73–75.
80. Suolahti 1962. As Tommila's PhD thesis was written in French and belonged to the subfield of general history, it is also possible that it went unnoticed by many Finnish nationalist-minded historians, whose strongest foreign language was German, and who focused on the subfield of Finnish history.
81. Tommila 1984, 76–79; see also Tommila 2008, 79–80, 103–106.

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provins), for the latter was a mere administrative district (*hallintoalue*) established by the will of the ruler. Concerning Finland's politico-legal status, however, the terminology had not been settled by the 1820s. Instead, the Committee for Finnish Affairs used both terms alternately and side by side. This conveyed to Korhonen that they lacked in the eyes of the committee and the emperor any constitutional value that would have made a difference to defining Finland's status within the empire.[82]

Instead, Korhonen argued that all relevant parties, that is, the Russian authorities, the committee members and Finland's elite, had a common understanding that Finland, as a conquered land, had received its privileges at the Diet of Porvoo through 'the mercy of the Tsar'.[83] This alone entailed a break with the constitutional view, according to which the emperor and the Finnish estates had concluded an agreement in Porvoo in 1809.[84] More was to come, however. Korhonen continued by stating that Finland had not been an autonomous state within the Russian Empire but a 'privileged province'. Its 'political existence' (*l'existance politique, politisk existence*) had therefore been based on the privileges given by the emperor instead of Finland's own form of government. Hence, when Alexander I and Speransky mentioned, as they frequently did, that Finland had a constitution (*la constitution, konstitutsiia*), they did not mean a modern aggregate of super-legal principles that in the emperor's role as the grand duke of Finland would have made him a constitutional monarch. Quite the contrary: they were merely referring to a legal order that defined the administrative apparatus and the most important principles of the duty of administration, which in no way limited the emperor's sovereignty. As Korhonen summarized it, the Grand Duchy of Finland had thus had a constitution only in the sense that its administration was rationally organized, its civil servants were competent and it had the Diet, which could be summoned at the emperor's order. At the same time Korhonen dealt a fatal blow to the idea of Finland's special status within the empire by arguing that Finland had not been an exceptional testing ground for liberal institutions. It had simply been one of the imperial border regions (*reuna-alue*), which all had certain privileges and administrative bodies of their own. As the autocratic emperor was free to command his empire as he pleased, Korhonen's summary was that Finland's political existence as a grand duchy had ultimately been based on its own administrative apparatus and not on its supposed constitution.[85]

Although the historian Vilho Niitemaa, the opponent of Korhonen's PhD thesis, allegedly humiliated the young doctoral candidate for six hours by pointing out all his insignificant minor mistakes,[86] Niitemaa presented harsh and explicit criticism of Korhonen's main arguments in his review report. Referring to such milestones of the constitutional view as Danielson-Kalmari's research from the 1890s, Niitemaa claimed that Alexander I had known perfectly well what the Swedish Gustavian constitution included. The emperor had thus frequently repeated on various occasions that Finland had in 1809 become a state (*l'État*) with *its own* constitution, not just a province with certain ancient laws and privileges. As Korhonen had made some references in his

82. Korhonen 1963, 28–29, 192–193.
83. Korhonen 1963, 28–29.
84. See, for example, Brotherus 1948, 45–46.
85. Korhonen 1963, 19–20, 28–29, 192–193, 304–305.
86. Jussila 2007, 236.

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thesis to the Russian 'tsarist' emigrant historians George Verdansky and Marc Raeff, Niitemaa even claimed that Imperial Russia's ultranationalist and anti-Finnish ideas, combined with their emotionally charged language, were seeking to make a comeback from the west.[87]

Departing from custom, Korhonen wrote a public response to Niitemaa in which he aimed to show that Niitemaa was guilty of an anachronism in his understanding of such concepts as the constitution (*la constitution, konstitutsiia*) as something absolute, historically immutable and generally applicable. Niitemaa had therefore misunderstood Korhonen's research problem, which was *not* to study what certain concepts meant as such, that is, as 'absolutely true', which was irrelevant for historical enquiry. Instead, Korhonen had examined how certain early nineteenth-century actors had understood and used these concepts. To cite Korhonen, it was not his fault that his Russian sources had managed to upset Niitemaa by interpreting the emperor's words differently from Niitemaa.[88] The latter naturally did not give up but cited in his 'response to the response' several original sources and previous research that seemed to support his claim that the former Gustavian constitution of 'Sweden–Finland' had been the basis of Finland's 'life as a state' (*valtioelämä*, 'political life'). In basing his analysis on Russian interpretation of what had happened at the Diet of Porvoo, Korhonen had in Niitemaa's eyes 'opened the gates to all kinds of arbitrariness, including the falsification of history'.[89]

In retrospect we can say that both Korhonen and Niitemaa had a point. On the one hand, despite the inherent fuzziness of concepts such as 'constitution', 'state' and 'province' in early nineteenth-century sources, Niitemaa appeared to think they only had one correct meaning, which historians could find if they just delved sufficiently deeply into the sources. He thus missed Korhonen's point about studying the various uses of these key concepts instead of presenting statements of their external historical reality. As was typical of the post-war neo-empiricist approach, Korhonen's dissertation lacked methodological and theoretical sections. With some reservations, however, we can say that his emphasis on the historicity of concepts could be taken as a faint sign of the emerging linguistic turn in historical research in the sense that he seemed to argue that historians could not study (or at least he himself was not studying) the past outside its textual representations.[90] Alternatively, he merely wished to cover his back by emphasizing that the Grand Duchy of Finland's status as a privileged province was not his own opinion but that of the Committee for Finnish Affairs and other early nineteenth-century actors.[91]

On the other hand, however, Korhonen was clearly excited about the Russian archival sources, which had opened a new perspective for him on the Grand Duchy of Finland's status. This Russian imperial view differed significantly from the conventional Finnish conception, which led him to question the constitutional master narrative entirely. Yet the mere difference between Russian and Finnish sources was ultimately insufficient to prove that the latter view was incorrect – or vice

87. Niitemaa 1963, 314–316.
88. Korhonen 1964, 184–185.
89. Niitemaa 1964, 188.
90. For a general level see Paul 2015, 92–93.
91. This interpretation has been suggested by Jussila 2007, 238.

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versa, of course. Rather, this disparity could just as well have indicated the built-in ambiguity of historical phenomena and key concepts themselves, rather than simply providing evidence of older Finnish historians' nationalist narrow-mindedness. For other younger historians, however, who were sympathetic to Korhonen's iconoclastic interpretation, it was evident that the true issue at stake was not only his historiographical revision but also his active membership of the centrist Agrarian League. There he supported President Urho Kekkonen's Soviet-friendly foreign policy doctrine, which was disagreeable to the old-school 'Russophobic' nationalists, for whom Russia/the Soviet Union was the 'Evil Empire'.[92] Be that as it may, Korhonen's PhD thesis received an exceptionally low grade, and his first applications for postdoctoral funding were denied, which his sympathizers considered a punishment for dismantling 'the constitutionalist myth of the Finnish state'.[93]

Into the eye of the storm

Thus, the historians Päiviö Tommila and Keijo Korhonen had initiated a major revision in Finnish historiography. As the Grand Duchy of Finland's politico-legal status had not been their main object of investigation, however, the historian Eino Jutikkala (1907–2006), the professor of Finnish history at the University of Helsinki, gave his doctoral student Osmo Jussila (1938–2019) the task of discovering what had really happened at the Diet of Porvoo, what the Grand Duchy of Finland's status had been after 1809, and how the concepts of 'fundamental laws' and a 'constitution' had been understood in Russia and Finland. Jussila's PhD thesis was completed in 1969, after which he gradually became a leading Finnish historian of the Grand Duchy of Finland's status after 1809 by repeatedly returning to this theme in subsequent decades.[94]

At the level of historical scholarship Jussila's study was informed by the ongoing linguistic turn, for he used the historical analysis of concepts inspired by Anglo-American linguistic semantics as his research method. Typically of the Finnish historians of his generation, however, he did not further elaborate his theoretical and methodological approaches after his 1969 dissertation, and even in his PhD thesis the theoretical discussion was mostly limited to the introduction.[95] Hence, as in the case of Korhonen, it is fair to say that Jussila's ground-breaking interpretation was mostly inspired by the Russian sources available to him rather than a new theoretical or methodological framework. Indeed, in some respects, his effort to discover the 'true meaning' of the contested key concepts in defining Finland's status resembled Niitemaa's conviction that there had been only one correct way of understanding them in the early nineteenth-century Russian Empire.

According to Jussila, the seeds of future disputes were sown at the Diet of Porvoo in 1809, when Alexander I ambiguously confirmed to the Finnish people

92. Klinge 1998, 20–22; Engman 2009, 336–337.
93. Jussila 2007, 235–238.
94. See, for example, Jussila 1969a; Jussila 1969b; Jussila 1985; Jussila 1987; Jussila 1996; Jussila 2004; Jussila 2007; Jussila 2010.
95. Jussila 1969a, 16–17; Jussila 1969b.

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the 'religion of the country', its 'fundamental laws' (*perustuslait, korennye zakony*), and 'those privileges and rights' that the people had hitherto enjoyed 'in accordance with constitutions' (*po konstitutsiiam*). It is noteworthy that Jussila focused especially on the Russian translation of the key concepts, whereas scholars like Mechelin and Danielson-Kalmari had preferred French, which was the main language of diplomacy in early nineteenth-century Europe and was used by Alexander I at the Diet of Porvoo in 1809.[96] As some sections of the old Swedish laws were unsuitable for Finland's new conditions, Jussila noted that they could not be ratified as such. For him the Grand Duchy of Finland's politico-legal status therefore resembled the endorsement of rights that Russia had given to other 'privileged' parts of the Empire in the west, that is, the Baltic provinces, Poland and Bessarabia.[97] In the first case Jussila was making a novel comparison, for Finnish historians had hitherto considered Finland's position both before and after 1809 fundamentally different from the Baltic region.[98]

In his analysis Jussila observed that the influence of the Enlightenment had led to the demand in Russia that the tsar's absolute rule should be based on conformity with the law (*zakonnost'*). Nevertheless, Jussila argued that this was interpreted as meaning the emperor should voluntarily respect the laws he or his predecessors decreed because the ultimate power of legislation belonged solely to him. In accordance with this view the fundamental laws (*korennye zakony*) were seen as consisting of ancient unchanging principles that were often unwritten, as Kesar Ordin had argued in 1889. The Finnish elite, instead, gradually adopted a more western idea of a written super-legal constitution that was based on the supremacy of law and was also considered to limit the sovereign's power. During the nineteenth century the concept of 'fundamental law' (*grundlag, perustuslaki*) in Swedish and Finnish thus became increasingly limited and specialized. In Russia, however, a new term (*osnovnoi zakon*) emerged for this modern usage, whereas the old term (*korennoi zakon*) used in Porvoo in 1809 retained its former meaning. In concluding, Jussila argued that the late nineteenth-century 'Legal Battle' between the Russians and Finns was ultimately caused by this terminological disparity because 'the Finns had begun to interpret the term *korennoi zakon* as if it were *osnovnoi zakon*'.[99]

As the question about Finland's constitution was intertwined with its statehood, Jussila also discussed this theme in his dissertation. Starting with the *ancien régime* conception of the state, he argued that the issues between Russia and Finland at the Diet of Porvoo were still settled more as traditional matters of privileges and rights between groups of subjects than as modern questions of justice between two states. He therefore defined the Grand Duchy of Finland's status within the Russian

96. Jussila 1969a, 264–265. See also Kemiläinen 1999.
97. Jussila 1969a, 18–21, 264–265, 277.
98. See, for example, Brotherus 1948, 46–47. According to the historian Alex Snellman (2025, 145), Finnish discourse has sometimes been characterized by self-aggrandizement, for example, in comparison to Estonia, Poland or Ukraine, because Finns were considered to have survived as part of and neighbors to the empire better than other borderlands thanks to their own common sense.
99. Jussila 1969a, 37–49, 232–236, 266–279. cf. Rasilainen 2004a, 318–319, who points out that Alexander III's Declaration of Sovereignty over Finland in 1881 had taken this change in Russian constitutional vocabulary into account, replacing *korennye zakony* with *osnovnye zakony*, which Jussila ignored.

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Empire 'as a province with special rights'.[100] He further elaborated this view in his later publications. Referring to Korhonen, he observed that the concepts of 'province' and 'state' had been used interchangeably in official documents. However, Jussila maintained that when Speransky famously wrote that Finland was a state instead of a province in his 1811 report for the emperor, he was merely referring to the fact that Finland's affairs created so much work that they could not be handled in passing but required their own administrative apparatus because of Russia's constant lack of competent civil servants. In summarizing, Jussila suggested that Finland had been considered a state only in the limited sense of a 'financial state' (*finanssivaltio*), a medieval type of feudal *Staat* with its own budget and taxation system, but not in the sense of a modern state.[101]

Jussila believed Finland's nominal status as a grand duchy was insignificant because Finland had already been called a grand duchy for centuries in the Swedish Realm without any kind of autonomy or statehood. He therefore claimed that when Alexander I had added the title of grand duke of Finland to his list of titles in 1809 already before the Diet of Porvoo, it had merely been a manifestation of the emperor's power and his decision to keep this newly conquered territory in his possession. Jussila therefore rejected the constitutional view of the two thrones, which was based on the claim that Alexander I had founded the throne of the grand duke of Finland in 1809 as separate from the throne of the Russian tsar. An important piece of evidence had allegedly been the decorative chair with the Finnish emblem that the emperor had used when visiting Finland as grand duke. Although Jussila admitted that Finland and Poland had possessed a stronger politico-legal status than other provinces of the empire, he emphasized that the emperor always exercised imperial power in his role as the grand duke. While it was certainly true that Alexander I had de facto limited his despotic rights by confirming the laws and privileges of his Finnish subjects in 1809, nevertheless, he had done it as a despot. He and his equally despotic successors could therefore also cancel these laws and privileges if they wished, for unlike the constitutional view, there was no agreement that would have bound the emperors to respecting Finland's alleged constitutional form of government.[102]

According to Jussila the idea of Finland as a modern state had been invented and began to gain support in Finland only from the 1840s. Finns had therefore gradually rejected the former conception of Finland as a privileged province and claimed that it had already become an autonomous state in 1809.[103] For Jussila 1861 was Finland's political history's 'annus mirabilis'. During that year, as part of the preparations for the 1863 meeting of the Finnish Diet after a break of more than fifty years, the conception of Finland as a separate state made its real breakthrough in the minds of politically

100. Jussila 1969a, 166–185, 274.
101. Jussila 1987, 45–65; Jussila 1996, 79–84; Jussila 2004, 25, 42–43. The argument that Russia could not assimilate Finland closer within the empire in the early nineteenth century due to Russia's inefficient and undeveloped administrative machinery has also been supported by the historian Heikki Ylikangas (b. 1937). According to him, the main reason why Russia launched its assimilation policy in Finland as late as in the 1890s was the fact that it simply was not able to do it at an earlier stage; Ylikangas 1995, 307–308.
102. Jussila 1987, 45–48; Jussila 2004, 76–77, 547–548, 560–567. See also Jussila 1984, in which he once again compares the status of Finland with the Baltic provinces.
103. Jussila 1987, 66–107.

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aware Finns.[104] This led Jussila critically to reassess the late nineteenth-century 'Legal Battle' between the Finnish Constitutionalists, who had defended Finland's separate position, and the Russian nationalists, who had demanded Finland's assimilation into the Russian Empire. As he had already argued in his 1969 dissertation, he found both sides of the 'Legal Battle' guilty of a biased, anachronous and tendentious reading of historical sources.[105] Nevertheless, in his 832-page magnum opus published in 2004 he ultimately admitted that 'swallowers of Finland' (*Suomi-syöjät*) like Ordin had been 'more correct' when they had denied Finland's status as a constitutional state and had considered it a mere province. Not only had they been able to use Russian-language sources, but they had also possessed a wider imperial (*valtakunnallinen*) view of the issue, which, to cite Jussila, 'is already logically more correct than the Finns' restricted, "provincial" (*paikallinen*) view'.[106] Hence, the entire conflict known as the 'Legal Battle' was ultimately caused by the Finns, who had gradually developed the doctrine of a separate Finnish state during the nineteenth century that was allegedly in a mere union with Russia.[107]

In Finnish historiography Jussila's interpretation continues to represent the most comprehensive break from the constitutional view. It is therefore unsurprising that it has met severe criticism ever since he completed his PhD thesis in 1969. For example, Jussila's supervisor and opponent[108] Eino Jutikkala argued that although the use of the concept of 'fundamental law' was not fully clear in Russian and Finnish sources, this did not mean the content of the Gustavian constitution was unclear to Alexander I or unbinding on him and his successors.[109] Moreover, as we have already seen in the case of Korhonen, in the polarized political climate caused by the Cold War and the centre-left current in Finnish domestic politics, historical research into Finno-Russian relations was often read through quotidian political lenses. Jussila was therefore labelled both a 'late tsarist' and 'communist', who, by exploiting historical analogies and adding weight to the imperial view, justified the ongoing Soviet interference in Finland's affairs.[110] As some Marxist-Leninist Soviet historians in the 1970s admitted that Nicholas II and Alexander III had furthered an unacceptable 'imperial-chauvinist Russification' of Finland, it almost seemed the positions of the 'Legal Battle' had been overturned.[111] A similar disagreement continued after the collapse of the Soviet Union. At the Finnish-Russian historians' symposium in 2009 Jussila again argued that Ordin's camp had had the more correct view in the 'Legal Battle', while the Russian

104. Jussila 2004, 270–272, 280–283. According to Jussila (2004, 566), it was also as late as in the 1860s that the Finnish constitution was defined in Finland to mean particularly the 1772 Form of Government and the 1789 Act of Union and Security.
105. Jussila 1969a, 263.
106. Jussila 2004, 590–592.
107. Jussila 2007, 249.
108. In the 1960s a dissertation's supervisor could still act as its opponent in Finnish universities.
109. Jutikkala 1969, 330–332; see also Jutikkala & Pirinen 1984, 204–205, 218–219; cf. Jussila 1969a, 236.
110. Klinge 1998, 26–43.
111. Torvinen 1985, 26; Soikkanen 2009, 26–27. According to Engman (2009, 331–334) it should be noted, however, that despite his support for the Russian imperial view, Jussila was not an uncritical Russian or Soviet sympathizer but was considered by the Finnish communists an anti-Soviet scholar.

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historian Andrey Nikolayevich Sakharov, Director of the Russian History Institute, supported the constitutional view.[112] Jussila's sardonic language did not help; a trait that increased over the years, culminating in his *Suomen historian suuret myytit* ('The great myths of Finnish history', 2007), in which he bluntly classified his predecessors and colleagues as those who were 'right' and those who were 'wrong' about the history of Finland.[113]

By the 1980s, however, the older generation of Finnish historians had retired, whereas Jussila and other supporters of the new paradigm, who were born in the 1930s, firmly held professorships in history. In this new situation their views were no longer considered politically questionable but scholarly well-grounded, internationally oriented and culturally progressive revisions of their predecessors' musty ultranationalism and emotionally charged 'national idealism'.[114] At the same time the imperial view of the Grand Duchy of Finland's status began to assume the position of the new master narrative in Finnish historiography – so much so that even Jutikkala is said to have admitted shortly before his death in 2006 that Jussila had been right after all.[115] It is worth emphasizing, however, that the attempts to understand the Russian imperial view did not necessarily mean its acceptance as the most correct historical interpretation of past events. For example, in his study of the governor general Nikolay Bobrikov's programme to unify Finland with the Russian Empire from 1898 onwards, the historian Tuomo Polvinen emphasized that this imperialist programme sought to extend the Russian autocratic principle to Finland and entailed the Russification of Finnish administration, without attempting to downplay the issue's epoch-making nature.[116] Nevertheless, as Jussila's polemical arguments indicated, the line between understanding and acceptance was sometimes very fine.[117]

The emperor's Finland

A case in point was Matti Klinge (1936–2023), the professor of history (Swedish-language chair) at the University of Helsinki from 1975 to 2001. Like Tommila, Polvinen, Korhonen and Jussila, Klinge had been at the forefront of questioning the nationalist perspective in Finnish historiography in the 1960s. As he saw it, his generation had been children during the Second World War, so unlike 'the war generation', they were not stuck in the old trenches. Instead, the strengthening of Finland's international position during the presidency of Urho Kekkonen since 1956 had allowed scope for a more broadminded discussion of the eastern neighbour, while simultaneously directing attention to the global world order with its crises

112. Jussila 2010, 119–120; Saharov 2010, 97–100.
113. Jussila 2007.
114. For the 'normalization' of the imperial view see, for example, Ylikangas 1995, 305–308; Klinge 1998, 37–43; Engman 2009, 331–344; Soikkanen 2009, 62–63, 71–72.
115. Jussila 2007, 243; Kalleinen 2019, 228. Jussila has also been an important authority in foreign historiography on the Grand Duchy of Finland. See, for example, Natalia Potapova's chapter in this volume.
116. Polvinen 1984, 340–345. See also Jungar 1984, 162–163.
117. Cf. Jussila 2007, 249.

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and détente.[118] President Kekkonen was himself interested in historical research and encouraged historians to analyse Finnish foreign policy in an international context.[119] As the historian Henrik Meinander has remarked, it is no coincidence that Finnish historians began to use the empire's continental power priorities to explain Russian policy towards the Grand Duchy of Finland at the same time as the Paasikivi-Kekkonen foreign policy approach emphasized that the Finns could better defend their national interests if they understood that the Russian/Soviet treatment of Finland was essentially a function of the relations between the great powers.[120] In Klinge's opinion many Finns in the nineteenth century had had – and many continued to have – enduring difficulties in understanding that 'everything that Russia did was caused by factors outside Finland'.[121]

Klinge was already taking his own way in his doctoral dissertation in 1967. While Korhonen and Jussila especially represented a somewhat conventional top-level political history with a meticulous study of strictly defined themes, Klinge moved smoothly between political, intellectual and cultural history and expressed his thoughts in essay style, striving for a broad syntheses. Moreover, he had an interest in the symbolic, rhetorical and performative aspects of power, as well as the elite networks and personality cult of the Russian emperors. His approach thus indicated a shift from a neo-empiricist 'how things really were' in the past to how past actors had perceived and constructed them. This was already evident in Klinge's PhD thesis, which dealt with the emergence of the modern public sphere and national identity among Finnish university students between 1853 and 1871. It was part of his four-volume history of the Student Union of the Imperial Alexander University (from 1917 the University of Helsinki). In this study, covering some 130 years in total, he argued that Finnish national identity, like the modern concept of 'Finland' itself, was a relatively recent construction and was conditioned by international intellectual currents and power politics and above all Russia, meaning Finland's independence in 1917 was anything but a historical necessity.[122]

In the scope of this chapter, a detailed analysis of Klinge's oeuvre is impossible, for he was one of the most prolific Finnish historians, focusing particularly on nineteenth-century history. I shall therefore content myself only with his main arguments that concerned the Grand Duchy of Finland's politico-legal status. Like many other Finnish historians, Klinge noted that it was unclear what Alexander I had meant by Finland's 'constitution' which he had confirmed in Porvoo in 1809. As Klinge pointed out, it was only in 1869 that Alexander II had openly accepted the interpretation that this constitution included the 1772 and 1789 Gustavian forms of government. Yet unlike Tommila, Korhonen and Jussila, Klinge emphasized the importance of the Diet of Porvoo. In his view the events of Porvoo were critical in a broader political sense, for the Grand Duchy of Finland was allowed to keep the Lutheran religion and the laws

118. Klinge 1998, 20–29.
119. Meinander 2000, 232–233. Klinge was also among the younger intelligentsia whom President Kekkonen invited to his residence for parties, nicknamed 'Kekkonen's children's parties' (*Kekkosen lastenkutsut*), which he arranged in the 1960s for future opinion leaders; see Kaskikari 1996.
120. Meinander 2000, 232–233; see also Engman 2009, 344.
121. Klinge 1996, 466.
122. Klinge 1967–1968.

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and judicial system that had been in force in the Finnish territory during the Swedish era.[123] Moreover, the ceremonies related to the Diet introduced the first and decisive symbols on which Finland's 'identity of a separate internal statehood' (*erillinen sisäisen valtiollisuuden identiteetti*) was quickly built. The key figure in this development was Alexander I, whose personality and moral commitment to cooperating with the loyal Finnish elite were crucial. Hence, the Grand Duchy of Finland's status was characterized by duality from 1809 to 1917: the Diet of Porvoo, which Klinge called *maapäivät* or *lantdag*, signified Russia's symbolic acknowledgement of Finland's statehood in its internal affairs, whereas the lack of a precisely defined constitutional status conveyed that in foreign and military policy Finland was 'a conquered province' that belonged to Russia.[124]

Like Jussila, Klinge argued that Russia's measures to integrate Finland more closely into the empire after the 1890s should not be seen as 'oppression' or 'Russification'. While Jussila justified his argument legally by stating that the Grand Duchy of Finland lacked a constitution, which meant that the emperor's power was not limited by law, Klinge emphasized Russia's continental power priorities and above all the rise of Imperial Germany, which forced Russia to secure its safety. As Finland's politico-legal status had remained unclear because the efforts for legal codification had failed during the nineteenth century, the 1899 February Manifesto was ultimately Nicholas II's attempt to resolve this prolonged problem in a situation characterized by the increasing German threat. Thus, in Klinge's eyes, the manifesto did not mark a major watershed in Finland's status. As he put it, the emperors Alexander III and Nicholas II had in fact been 'led by their sympathy for Finland', and Russia had tolerated Finland's exceptional position within the empire as long as the Finns had remained loyal to Russia's defence and foreign policy interests. It was this loyalty that the Finnish elite now broke because of their inability to understand Russia's imperial needs.[125] Although more than half a million Finns opposed the 1899 February Manifesto by signing the Great Petition against it, according to Klinge they did not really know its background and were therefore made to believe that it was bad for Finland and threatened their legal and civil rights.[126]

More generally, Klinge argued that the claim of an age-old antagonism between Finland and Russia was a myth that was born during the 1918 Finnish Civil War, in which hostility to Soviet Russia had been intermingled with opposition to communism. Russophobia had therefore not yet existed in the Grand Duchy of Finland. Quite the contrary: with the rise of socialism from the 1890s, the Finnish bourgeoisie had considered the Russian Empire a stabilizing force in Finnish society. Like other spokesmen for the imperial view, Klinge thereby challenged the logical continuum from the Diet of Porvoo in 1809 to Finland's sovereign statehood in 1917 by arguing that most Finns had actually wished to stay within Russia even after the

123. Klinge 1997a, 17.
124. Klinge 2009, 205–217, 269; inverted commas around the term 'conquered province' in the original.
125. Klinge 1996, 344–347, 466; Klinge 2012, 331–334 (original article published in 1975). In line with this argumentation Klinge also accepted the Russian occupation of Crimea in 2014 and insisted even after Russia invaded Ukraine in 2022 that Finns should take the Russian view more into account; see Klinge's short interview in Onninen 2022; Snellman 2025, 142.
126. Klinge 1969, 201.

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1917 February Revolution. It was only the Bolshevik October Revolution that had made the Finnish Parliament accept the Senate's declaration of independence on 6 December 1917.[127]

All in all, Klinge emphasized the advantages Finland had gained within the Russian Empire in culture, science, the economy, international contacts and so on. As this progress had in his view depended on the Russian emperors' benevolence, he called the period from 1809 to 1917 'the era of the emperor' (*Kejsartiden, Keisarin aika*), which in Finnish historiography had previously referred mainly to the Roman Empire. Simultaneously, he rejected the term 'era of autonomy' (*autonomitiden*, *autonomian aika*), which had become historians' favoured periodization for 1809–1917 in Finland's history. First, he argued that Finland's status had solely been a Russian internal issue that had not been discussed at the Congress of Vienna in 1814–1815, so the term 'autonomy' falsely suggested that the Grand Duchy of Finland's existence was somehow independent of Russia.[128] Moreover, he considered 'the era of autonomy' a teleological term that served as a function of its end by seeing the nineteenth century as a mere preliminary phase of Finland's independence in 1917. As Finland's autonomous position had taken shape only gradually during the nineteenth century, it was anachronistic to extend the term to the entire period from 1809 to 1917.[129]

The imperial view challenged

Since the 1960s the question of the Grand Duchy of Finland's status had been a dividing line between the older and younger generations of Finnish historians. Broadly speaking, the constitutional view was labelled by prominent younger historians a narrowly nationalist and conservative conception, whereas the imperial view seemed to offer a more international and progressive option. It is therefore unsurprising that the newly critical voices against the imperial view were first heard outside the ranks of historians. The trailblazer was the legal scholar Hannu Tapani Klami (1945–2002), the professor of jurisprudence at the University of Helsinki, who, as a 25-year-old doctor of jurisprudence in 1970, had already challenged Osmo Jussila's interpretation.[130] In his monograph on the history of Finnish legal scholarship during 'the era of Russia's rule' (*Venäjän vallan aika*), published in 1977, Klami elaborated his criticism. He suggested historians like Keijo Korhonen and Osmo Jussila had overemphasized

127. Klinge 1996, 465; Klinge 2012, 103–129 (original article published in 1972).
128. Klinge 1996, 465–466; Klinge 1997a; Klinge 2009, 269. The first Finnish reference that I have found to 'Russia's era of the emperor' (*Venäjän keisariaika*) is in *Helsingin Sanomat* on 11 February 1905 in connection with the Russo-Japanese War ('Yleiskatsaus sotaan', 6). The first historian to use the term *kejsartiden/keisariaika* in the context of Finland's history was the social historian Sven-Erik Åström (1921–1989) in his history of the city of Helsinki, published in 1957. The term was popularized, however, only by Klinge in the 1990s. For example, in his review of Åström's book Eino Jutikkala (1958, 329) used *keisariaika* with inverted commas to highlight its peculiarity, whereas 'an autonomous Grand Duchy' (*autonominen suuriruhtinaskunta*) seemed a neutral term to him.
129. Klinge 1997b.
130. Klami 1970. This criticism was repeated in more detail in Klami 1977.

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empiricist epistemology without considering that the historical truth was always relative. In Klami's view it was pointless to ask whether the Finnish side of the 'Legal Battle' had been right or wrong about the issue because legal arguments were valid only in relation to a certain judicial system, and there were therefore no objective standards according to which this question could have been solved.[131]

Klami admitted that the Russian concept of *korennye zakony* was ambiguous because it could refer to ancient basic laws, fundamental laws and fundamental rights (in Russian *fundamental'nye prava*). However, Jussila's mistake was that he analysed Alexander I's statements at the Diet of Porvoo in 1809 as if they had been directed at the Russian-speaking audience within the Russian judicial system. Instead, Klami argued that they had to be interpreted in their proper communication context. Both Alexander I and his adviser Mikhail Speransky had been aware that in Porvoo the emperor was speaking to the Finns who associated themselves with the Swedish constitutional judicial system and therefore self-evidently assumed that the concepts of 'fundamental laws' and 'constitution' referred to the Civil Code of 1734 and the Gustavian constitution respectively. Although some members of the nineteenth-century Finnish elite downplayed the importance of the constitution in their private correspondence, this did not mean, as Jussila claimed, that their public support for the constitutional conception was merely a partisan pretence. On the contrary, the Finns had simply realized that the protection the constitution offered was worth little compared with Russia's superiority in the use of brute force.[132] This became obvious after the 1899 February Manifesto, which, according to Klami, extended the general imperial legislation to Finland and thereby launched 'the period of oppression'.[133]

In his review of Klami's monograph in 1978, Jussila declared that 'scholarship that discards its belief in one truth simultaneously discards itself'. It was therefore fully legitimate to ask whether the Finnish side of the 'Legal Battle' had been right or wrong. Moreover, Klami did not seem to understand the true nature of the general imperial legislation, for according to Jussila it had already been extended to Finland in 1808–1809. The February Manifesto therefore only specified the formerly unclear role of the Finnish estates in the legislative process instead of violating rights Finns did not even have, because the Grand Duchy of Finland's privileged position was merely based on certain administrative arrangements, not on a modern constitution that was legally binding on both parties. Jussila's general impression was that Klami had 'an almost completely oppositional attitude' based on the subjective selection of topics close to his heart. As Klami was known for his eager drafting of responses, Jussila ended his review by announcing that he was not going to continue the discussion.[134]

Twenty years later, however, Jussila was forced to do so because another legal scholar, Aki Rasilainen (b. 1962) raised the same controversial issues in more detail and more pointedly. The debate started in 1999 and culminated in a dispute about imperial legislation and the true meaning of the 1899 February Manifesto. Like the situation in the 1940s and 1960s, this re-evaluation of the Grand Duchy of Finland's status was related to the ongoing changes in Finno-Soviet relations. In the 1990s Finns

131. Klami 1977, 107–108; see also Klami 1980, 339.
132. Klami 1977, 109–113; cf. Jussila 1969a, 14–15.
133. Klami 1977, 136–138.
134. Jussila 1978, 290–291.

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were faced with the entirely new political situation resulting from the dissolution of the Soviet Union in 1991, the disappearance of the 1948 Finno-Soviet Agreement of Friendship, Cooperation and Mutual Assistance, and Finland's accession to the European Union in 1995. As Finland's deepening western integration raised questions about its national sovereignty and conflicts between international, EU and national law, a new kind of political and scholarly interest in the legal system and practices within the Russian Empire arose.[135]

In the debate on the Grand Duchy of Finland's legal status, Rasilainen agreed with Jussila that between 1808 and 1898 there had been around 200 laws or decrees with identical content in the statute books of Russia and Finland. However, he argued that this alone did not qualify as general imperial legislation because the legislative process of these laws and decrees had recognized Finland as a separate sphere of legislation (*erillinen lainsäädäntöpiiri*) so that even in cases where the Russians had prepared a law the Finns had the power to decide on its content when it entered into force in Finland. Indeed, in this sense the nineteenth-century Finnish judicial system had been more independent than the system in the European Union because all Russian-derived laws and decrees had required separate Finnish enactment. The 1899 February Manifesto, instead, aimed to eliminate the decision-making power of the Finnish Diet and the minister state secretary for Finnish affairs in St Petersburg (an official who presented most Finnish affairs to the emperor). It only reserved for the Finnish estates an opportunity to give an opinion on legislative issues, whereas the emperor was free to decide which laws came within the scope of the general legislation of the empire, meaning no Finnish consent was required for them to come into force in Finland. The manifesto was therefore not a minor clarification of the already existing legislative procedure, as Jussila claimed, but a dramatic attempt to destroy the autonomous Finnish state based on the Gustavian constitution, to degrade it to the position of a Russian province and to extend Russian autocracy to Finland.[136] After Jussila had published his magnum opus about the Grand Duchy of Finland in 2004 without taking Rasilainen's criticism into account, the latter stated that the number of Jussila's juridical misconceptions was equivalent to his book's massive proportions. As Rasilainen put it, psychohistorical analysis was required to understand whether Finnish historians' unsound attempts to erase the conception of the autonomous Finnish state from the national historical consciousness had been caused by a sheer lack of judgement, an awareness of its pro-Soviet foreign policy aspects, or both.[137]

For his part Jussila did not budge an inch on the issue. Although he willingly admitted that Finland had formed a separate sphere of legislation within the Russian Empire, he argued, contrary to Rasilainen's reasoning, that this sphere had always existed only in addition and parallel to the general imperial legislation. It was therefore

135. See also Soikkanen 2005, 46–47; Rasilainen 2009, 409–412, 418–419.

136. Rasilainen 1999, 360; Rasilainen 2004, 32–38; Rasilainen 2005; Rasilainen 2009, 397–401, 409, 413–414; Rasilainen 2024a, 382–392; Rasilainen 2025, 366. According to Rasilainen's juridical interpretation the Grand Duchy of Finland did not need a written constitution because the fact that the Russian emperors had in practice followed the Gustavian constitution until the 1899 February Manifesto indicated that the constitution had been in force in a de facto sense (*oikeuden voimassaolo tosiasiallisessa mielessä*). See Rasilainen 2005, 339–340.

137. Rasilainen 2005, 339, 348.

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'almost a total lie' that he had denied Finland's status as an autonomous state within the Russian Empire, for his extensive monograph in 2004 about the Grand Duchy of Finland had described how this territory, which had initially been a Russian province, had gradually developed into an internally independent modern state. As in the debate with Klami, Jussila also insisted that it was a fruitful research task to judge which side of the 'Legal Battle' had been more in the right, for historians had to explain and weigh the statements and motives of both sides without offhandedly accepting the Finns' premises. In Jussila's eyes Rasilainen had presented 'an unprecedentedly malicious libel' and 'groundless accusations laced with juridical jargon' against him, so he got his revenge by ruthlessly ridiculing Rasilainen's methodological and theoretical formulations.[138]

In retrospect, from the conceptual history perspective, these debates leave the impression that Jussila and the legal scholars were mainly talking past each other. An example is the repeated accusation that the opposing side did not understand the historicity of key concepts. In Jussila's opinion, Klami and Rasilainen seemed to think that concepts like 'law', 'constitution' and 'state' had had only one correct (constitutional) meaning throughout the nineteenth century. Klami and Rasilainen maintained that Jussila had instead erroneously claimed that such Russian concepts as *korennye zakony* could refer in the context of the Diet of Porvoo only to the *ancient régime* system of rights and privileges.[139] Indeed, if Klami and Rasilainen were in Jussila's eyes guilty of anachronism, that is to say, of attributing modern constitutional concepts to an earlier period to which they did not belong, Jussila in a sense reversed the order by interpreting post-Enlightenment modern political concepts in the terms of a feudal *Herrschaftsvertrag* (*herruussopimus*; in English 'domination contract'), as the historian Timo Soikkanen has observed.[140]

Although most historians did not intervene in this debate, Rasilainen received some support from the ranks of academic historians. Referring to Rasilainen, the historian Juhani Mylly (1942–2024) stated in 2002 that the 1899 February Manifesto had been an epoch-making event in Finno-Russian relations because it had left the scope of Finland's own legislature's competence vis-à-vis the general imperial legislation to be arbitrarily defined by the emperor. Rasilainen was therefore correct to consider the manifesto a major threat to Finland's autonomous status rather than a minor formal clarification.[141] Moreover, although Mylly did not mention Matti Klinge by name, he also questioned Klinge's claim that Alexander III and Nicholas II had been led by their sympathy for Finland. According to Mylly both emperors had fully accepted and advanced the Russification of imperial borderlands without paying any attention to the rights of minority nationalities like the Finns.[142]

Simultaneously with the legal debate, a more wide-ranging dispute about the enduring Russian/Soviet influence on Finland began in the late 1990s.[143] This debate consisted of two separate lines of argumentation. First, the historian Martti Häikiö

138. Jussila 2005; Jussila 2007, 258–260.
139. Klami 1977, 109–113; Rasilainen 2004, 23–26; Jussila 2005, 494–495.
140. Soikkanen 2009, 38–39. Cf. Jussila 1987, 55–56.
141. Mylly 2002, 214–216. See also Soikkanen 2005, 88–90; Soikkanen 2009, 70–71.
142. Mylly 2002, 217–219; cf. Klinge 1996, 345.
143. For a detailed discussion about this debate, see Engman 2009, 337–344.

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(1949–2025) questioned Klinge's suggestion that Finland's incorporation into the Russian Empire had been a blessing because of the multiple advantages and broader views the empire offered. Hair-splitting about the Grand Duchy of Finland's formal status was for Häikiö beside the point: the Russian emperors had in any case acted as firm dictators. Their authoritarian rule sank Finland into a lethargic state that froze its internal development for half a century. A comparison of Finland with Norway, which had been united with Sweden in 1814 with a liberal constitution, made it obvious that Finland would have done much better if it had remained within Sweden after 1809. Häikiö said he understood Klinge's attempt to break away from the narrowly nationalist historiography that had depicted the 'era of autonomy' only in gloomy colours. This had led Klinge to another extreme, however, for his imperial view lacked any respect for the Finnish national perspective or the rights of minority nationalities within the Russian Empire. As 'the unfortunate new ice age' after the Second World War had again slowed Finland's progress, according to Häikiö, it was only Finland's membership and chairing of the European Union in the 1990s that indicated the beginning of a real success story.[144]

Second, the journalist and moral philosopher Mårten Ringbom (1934–2012) made a frantic effort to show that the 1899 February Manifesto had been 'a coup d'état' that had launched 'the years of oppression', as the constitutional view had stated since the 1890s. In his book depicting the reign of Nicholas II from a Machiavellian perspective, Ringbom scolded both Klinge and Jussila for their excessive sympathy with Russian imperial interests, which had continued in the post-war era in the form of the Paasikivi-Kekkonen Soviet-friendly foreign policy line. In Ringbom's eyes, however, Klinge was guilty of much more than this. Not only were his selection of sources biased, his opinion about nineteenth-century Swedish-speaking constitutionalists dismissive and his partiality disguised as scholarly neutral empiricist positivism; he also cherished a nihilistic societal view that considered the courtier's flattery of and loyalty to his ruler the highest virtues. In this idealization of empires and emperors small nations appeared to lack the right to rebel against the foreign authorities who had betrayed their trust with an unethical and illegal policy, or even denied their right to exist. Klinge's positive attitude towards Finland's ongoing European integration was further evidence of this. Like Häikiö, Ringbom found a remarkable parallel between Imperial Russia and the Soviet Union in their lack of fundamental human rights. 'In his criticism of the constitutionalists' Legal Battle during the years of oppression, "the courtier" Klinge [is] therefore in good company with the Bolsheviks,' Ringbom concluded.[145]

144. Häikiö 1997; see also Häikiö 2008, 23–34. Häikiö's polemical opinion piece 'Finland during the emperor's era was not only a success story' (Häikiö 1997) was initially a comment on the highly positive book review by Jaakko Numminen (1928–2022), former Permanent Secretary of Ministry of Education and Culture, who eulogized Klinge's restoration of the 'honour of the imperial era' in Finland; see Numminen 1996.

145. Ringbom 1999, 91, 176–177, 229–239. As the historian Max Engman has argued, the harsh criticism of Klinge was partly caused by his polemical personality, but it also contained an element of identity politics. Ringbom and some other critics of Klinge, who all belonged to the Swedish-speaking minority in Finland, therefore ruminated about whether Klinge's background was too strongly connected with 'St Peterburg's cosmopolitanism' and/or the Fennoman movement. See Engman 2009, 339–341.

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In the discussion that followed there was no sign of rapprochement between the two sides. Instead, Klinge and Jussila repeated their well-established interpretations of Finland's incorporation into the Russian Empire in 1809 as its foundation as a separate entity (Klinge) or an embryo (Jussila) that had only gradually developed into a modern state with its own currency, administration, Diet, a flourishing academic life and the Finnish language and culture. To cite Klinge, it was only separation from Sweden that had enabled Finland to evolve from an insignificant and isolated periphery with recurrent famines and chimneyless huts into an industrializing and urbanizing European country with high education, hygiene and health levels.[146] This progressive assessment of the era of the grand duchy was supported by historians like Max Engman (1945–2020), Pertti Haapala (b. 1954), Timo Vihavainen (b. 1947) and Heikki Ylikangas (b. 1937), though for quite different reasons.[147] For example, while Haapala reminded that Finland's development had been possible because of its increasing western contacts,[148] Vihavainen suggested that 'the Russian intermediate stage' and the post-war Paasikivi-Kekkonen Soviet-friendly foreign policy approach had successfully delayed Finland's western integration, which, as he observed ironically, 'would have saved us from our own parliament, army, currency and citizenship; and even Finnish would have been spoken only on frontier reservations'. Vihavainen viewed this as the happy end for people like Häikiö, who now wished to see Finland as a fully equal part of the European Union, the European Monetary Union and even the North Atlantic Treaty Organization.[149] Although the economic historian Ilkka Nummela (b. 1950) of the University of Jyväskylä sought to question the view that Finland's incorporation into Russia had ushered in new opportunities and significant economic progress in the grand duchy compared to Sweden, such critical voices remained marginal.[150]

It is obvious that the absence of a large-scale sustained opposition to the imperial view was partly the result of the fact that scholars such as Häikiö and Ringbom were not considered serious rivals to Jussila and Klinge. As Klinge put it, Häikiö was not a specialist in nineteenth-century history, so he knew neither the issue's latest historical research nor its sources. Instead, Häikiö simply condemned the Russian emperors and their era in a populist manner that resembled that of the Soviet Union's Bolshevik historians.[151] Moreover, while Häikiö himself accused several of his distinguished colleagues of overly pro-Soviet or East German Marxist-socialist history writing, other historians' public support for Häikiö could easily have been interpreted as an indication of a positive stance towards the politically conservative historiography that aimed to revive the narrative of 'the years of oppression' in order to allow the 1918 Finnish Civil War to be called 'the war of liberation'.[152] Ringbom, meanwhile, was not a historian at all. To cite Jussila, Ringbom's 'peculiar work' would therefore not even have been accepted in an undergraduate history seminar, for it consisted of a limited,

146. Klinge 1997b; Jussila 1997; Jussila 1999.
147. See, for example, Ylikangas 1997; Vihavainen 1997; Haapala 2008; Engman 2009.
148. Haapala 2008, 390.
149. Vihavainen 1997.
150. Nummela 1997.
151. Klinge 1997b.
152. Cf. Häikiö 2008, 65–71, 80, 86–87, 98–101.

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highly subjective and haphazard selection of sources, knowledge of previous research was lacking, and scholarly arguments had been replaced by loose suggestions which were further intermingled with a strong personal animus against Klinge. In both cases a lack of profound historical knowledge was considered to have been peppered with a moralism that anachronistically evaluated past actors based on the historian's own moral values.[153]

Finally, a more scholarly and organized counterblow to the imperial view appeared in 2009 in the form of an edited volume. It was written by scholars affiliated with the discipline of contemporary history at the University of Turku, whereas most of the previous debaters had been based at the University of Helsinki or complited their doctorate there. The volume's contributors included familiar names like Rasilainen and Mylly, who had already criticized the imperial view in their previous publications. Rasilainen continued to argue for the neo-constitutional view, aiming to prove that historians like Jussila lacked a sufficient knowledge of jurisprudence, which led them to make serious errors concerning the Grand Duchy of Finland's legal status.[154] Mylly focused on the nineteenth-century transformation of Finnish identity from regional patriotism to political nationalism. Although he again passed over Klinge's name and research in silence, he stated that 'Finland' and 'the Finns' were less recent constructions than 'the current critical scholars' had argued for decades.[155] The Finnish perspective was further enriched by several chapters focusing on the international conceptions of Finland within the Russian Empire. For example, the historian Vesa Vares (b. 1963) offered a detailed analysis of the German legal discussion since the 1880s. He showed that German scholars had presented a broad spectrum of contradictory ideas about Finland's status because they had used the Finnish case as a means of debating the German states' status within Imperial Germany. Meanwhile, the Russian and Finnish actors had selectively picked out those German arguments that best suited their needs.[156]

Moreover, the volume's editor, Timo Soikkanen (b. 1947), the professor of contemporary history at the University of Turku, reviewed Finnish historiography on the Grand Duchy of Finland's status.[157] Broadly speaking, he placed the main debaters into coordinate axes, formed by the 1809 Diet of Porvoo and the 1899 February Manifesto. Klami, Rasilainen and particularly Ringbom were 'archetypical' neo-constitutionalists, who emphasized the importance of the Diet of Porvoo as the grand duchy's foundation as an autonomous state and saw the manifesto as a treasonous deed. On the other extreme Jussila was the obvious archetype, whereas Klinge represented the third position by underlining the Diet of Porvoo but diminishing the manifesto's significance.[158] Soikkanen himself could be positioned on the middle ground, with

153. Jussila 1999; Klinge 1997b.
154. Rasilainen 2009, 396–398.
155. Mylly 2009, 87–88.
156. Vares 2009.
157. Soikkanen's chapter was largely based on another book chapter that he had already published in 2005 (Soikkanen 2005). At that time, however, the book reviews had focused more generally on the role of social, cultural and economic factors in political history, without focusing on issues related to the Grand Duchy of Finland's politico-legal status; see Hämäläinen 2005.
158. Soikkanen 2009, 73–75.

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an inclination to the constitutional view. On the one hand he agreed with Jussila and Korhonen that the administrative apparatus had played an important role in the grand duchy's development. In other words the Diet of Porvoo in itself was an insufficient condition for Finland's statehood. On the other, however, Soikkanen stressed that the legislation derived from the Swedish era had restricted the emperor's authoritarian rule in the grand duchy by dictating that the ruler had no power to change Finland's laws without the consent of the Finnish estates. Hence, in Soikkanen's eyes, the Diet of Porvoo marked a watershed between eastern despotism and the western law-based system. When Alexander I had decided to confirm Finland's fundamental laws, privileges and rights in 1809, he had simultaneously tied his and his successors' hands in the grand duchy in a manner that the emperor's will alone could not subsequently cancel.[159]

Soikkanen therefore also pondered Jussila's question of which side of the 'Legal Battle' had been more correct and had had a broader view of the issue. As Soikkanen wryly stated, when Nicholas II had linked the Finns and the Boers in his letter to the king of Britain, his view had certainly not only been imperial but downright global. Yet it was a completely different question whether this view was in a legal, ethical or any other sense of the word 'more correct' than the Finns' 'restricted, "provincial" view', as Jussila claimed. Although historians had to understand the Russian imperial view to be able to historically explain the development of Finno-Russian relations and the conditions in the grand duchy, the argument that this imperial view was in itself a more legitimate, accurate and correct perspective on past events was highly problematic. Ultimately, such an approval of the imperial view led to the acceptance of power politics and was sceptical about the relevance of ethical norms and the rights of small states or nations in international relations.[160]

Among the 'Turku dissidents' Aki Rasilainen continued his struggle against the imperial view in 2024. After Russia's full-scale invasion of Ukraine in 2022 and Finland's NATO accession the following year the political environment for historical research had again changed dramatically. Relations between Finland and Russia had deteriorated rapidly, and Russia was widely perceived as a threat to Finland's existence. In Rasilainen's case this change was not directly reflected at the level of the basic arguments, for he supported his earlier view that the Russian emperors had actually complied with Finland's constitutional laws quite well until the 1899 February Manifesto, so the manifesto marked a major break and an autocratic coup d'état. His evidence, however, was much more detailed than before. At the same time he sought to show in equal detail that Osmo Jussila's imperial view was not only incorrect but also deliberately biased. According to Rasilainen it had been motivated by rebellion against the older generations but especially by the pro-Soviet foreign policy's requirements, which had been perceived as legitimate during the decades of the 'Finlandization of Finland'. Jussila had thus wanted to show that the Finns should already have bowed to their eastern neighbour in the nineteenth century. The popularity of the imperial view among younger historians was explained by the fact that it had come to be seen as a well-founded critique of a narrowly national historiography and methodological nationalism. As Rasilainen put it, this was why 'even the most recent Finnish historical

159. Soikkanen 2009, 55–57, 75–78.
160. Soikkanen 2009, 63–64, 71–72; cf. Jussila 2004, 590–592.

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research is trying to undermine the historical tradition of the Western constitutional state in our country and replace it with a pro-Russian authoritarian narrative', even though 'in these days of war in Ukraine such a view should no longer be tolerated, at least not in Finnish historiography'.[161]

When my chapter was finalized in October 2025, professional historians had responded to Rasilainen's latest study in a variety of ways. The critical line was continued by Alpo Juntunen (b. 1944), the professor emeritus of Russian military policy, and the historian Kristiina Kalleinen (b. 1959), a specialist in the period of the Grand Duchy of Finland and a former doctoral student of Osmo Jussila. According to them, Rasilainen examined legal conceptions of the past from a narrow legal perspective without taking into account the political situation of the time, geopolitics, Russian legal history, or developments in Russian state and society. They found it particularly confusing that Rasilainen ultimately agreed in his new study with Jussila's assertion that the emperor had had the final say in matters concerning the grand duchy.[162] However, as Rasilainen pointed out in his response, the fundamental issue remained: had this behaviour been in accordance with Finland's legal system, as Jussila claimed, or had it been an intentional violation, as Rasilainen argued?[163]

A more positive attitude was presented by Timo Vihavainen, the professor emeritus of Russian studies at the University of Helsinki. He found Rasilainen's criticism largely justified, seeing it as the beginning of a new way of examining the issue. At the same time, however, he rejected the claim of the 'Finlandization of Jussila'. Instead, knowing Jussila, his uncompromising character and his research skills, Vihavainen argued that Jussila's only intention had been to restore the historical truth. In Jussila's eyes this had made contradictions of his hypothesis look like insignificant anomalies, which he had tried to explain away on partly questionable grounds. In general, Vihavainen warned against over-politicizing historical research, saying that historical studies and interpretations could and should not be judged based on the purpose for which they could be used.[164]

To summarize the debate on this topic over the past decade, since the 2010s Finnish historians' views of the Grand Duchy of Finland's politico-legal status had again entered a state of flux. Undoubtedly, the position of the imperial view as the dominant narrative still was strong.[165] For example, in his review of the 2009 edited volume by Soikkanen and other Turku-based scholars, the historian Panu Pulma (b. 1952) argued that their return to the late nineteenth-century ideas of Finland's autonomy had failed to advance a proper understanding of the era and its events or to disprove Jussila's research findings.[166] Particularly among younger historians, however, one could find a more positive attitude towards the latest historiographical revisionism. As

161. Rasilainen 2024a, 408–415; Rasilainen 2024b, 32–33. 'Finlandization' refers to a foreign policy strategy where a smaller state adapts its policy to the interests of a bigger neighbouring country, typically a Great Power. During the Cold War, Finland's relations with the Soviet Union exemplified this kind of adjustment. See Forsberg & Pesu 2016, 474.
162. Juntunen & Kalleinen 2025, 246–247.
163. Rasilainen 2025, 365–366.
164. Vihavainen 2025a; Vihavainen 2025b.
165. See, for example, Kalleinen 2023, 93, 305; Juntunen & Kalleinen 2025.
166. Pulma 2009. Soikkanen (2005, 80–81; 2009, 62–63) in turn had criticized Pulma for adopting and supporting the imperial view.

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the historian Kati Katajisto (b. 1974) put it, Soikkanen and his colleagues had made an interesting initiative, which challenged other historians to undertake a more balanced and rigorous analysis of the issue. Moreover, she remarked that they did not present the question about the Grand Duchy of Finland's status as an either/or choice between the constitutional and the imperial view. Instead, they were calling for more scope for different interpretations, all of which had their pros and cons.[167] A more balanced overall conception between the Finnish national perspective and the Russian imperial view was also being sought in the Imperial Era Network that was established in 2016. For researchers in the network, the main issue was the imperialism of the Russian Empire, interpreted through the lens of international imperialism theories, not the grand duchy's legal position. As the historian Alex Snellman (b. 1978), the network's longtime coordinator, noted in 2025, the most appropriate concept for the era of the grand duchy might be 'period of contradiction' (*ristiriitakausi*), as this captures its multifaceted nature.[168] Indeed, while Jussila had declared that 'scholarship that discards its belief in one truth simultaneously discards itself',[169] there now seemed to be greater willingness in the ranks of Finnish historians to discard the belief in Truth with a capital T.

Conclusions

In this chapter I have followed the emergence and consolidation of the constitutional view of the Grand Duchy of Finland's politico-legal status within the Russian Empire and shown how and why it became the master narrative in Finnish academic historiography. Although the Second World War brought about changes in this view, it was seriously challenged only in the 1960s by the imperial view. This view in turn soon gained support among the younger generations of Finnish historians, and achieved the position of the new master narrative by the 1980s. A decade later, however, it was called into question by scholars who sought to restore the foundations of the constitutional view. As a result, since the early 2000s, a slowly growing number of Finnish historians attempted to arrive at a compromise of some sort.

In this chapter's introduction I have argued that these changes in Finnish historiography were partly related to the paradigmatic changes within historical scholarship. Broadly speaking, the transformation can be described as a gradual shift from the correspondence theory of truth to the relative plausibility of historical statements.[170] In general, until well into the 1960s, historians shared the presupposition that the truthfulness of their research could be judged by its correspondence to 'the real past as it had actually happened'. Although they often favoured arguments that strengthened Finland's position vis-à-vis Russia/the Soviet

167. Katajisto 2010, 67. For an intermediate view see also Tandefelt 2009, 23, who argues that the Form of Government of 1772 and the 1789 Act of Union and Security formed the basis on which Alexander I built his 'New Finland', even though he did not mention these laws as constitutional in any documents.
168. Snellman 2025; see also Snellman & Kalleinen 2022.
169. Jussila 1978, 290–291.
170. At a general level see Bevir 1999; Paul 2015, 92–93, 111–122, 142–151.

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Union, their scholarly authority was based on this commonly accepted concept of truth. In the latter part of the twentieth century, however, historians began to adopt a more constructivist view. It was now considered that historical knowledge was always a construction based on interpretations extracted from the sources. This led to an increasing emphasis on language and concepts, known as the linguistic turn, instead of a presentation of statements of historical reality outside its textual representations. Nevertheless, this paradigmatic change was so slow that it is fair to say that the imperial view's breakthrough in the 1960s was above all the result of the availability to historians of new sources in the Soviet archives. The truth of historical reality was thus most often displaced by the true meaning of historical concepts, whereas a more theoretically and methodologically oriented discussion of how to undertake conceptual history remained marginal. It was only at the turn of the new millennium that the evaluation of the historical statements in the either/or terms of 'true' and 'false' gave way to more pluralistic or relativistic perceptions. At the same time changes in historians' interpretations became more related to the new ways of reading old sources than finding new source materials, which attracted more attention to their own positioning and ethical choices. The current imperialism of the Russian Federation is a prime example of this, making it difficult to adopt a morally neutral and detached geopolitical-realist view of the Russian Empire.[171]

Indeed, regarding broader historical transformations, the dominant account of the Grand Duchy of Finland's status has complied quite closely with the various phases of Finno-Soviet/Russian relations and their entanglements with international and domestic politics. To simplify a long and complicated story, Finnish historians supported the constitutional view as long as Finland's position was considered to face a significant Russian/Soviet threat. The 1960s were instead marked by the consolidation of the new Soviet-friendly foreign policy approach and the centre-left turn in Finnish domestic politics, which was parallel with the breakthrough of the imperial view in historical research. This change was further combined with a critique of the wartime generation's 'Russophobia' and their biased nationalism, expressed in historiography as methodological nationalism. In the 1990s a new phase began after the collapse of the Soviet Union and Finnish membership of the European Union, which was in turn accompanied by more rightist domestic politics and a 'revision of the revision' of historiography in the form of the neo-constitutional view. While the relations between Finland and the Russian Federation have sought new shape in recent decades, historians' conceptions of the Grand Duchy of Finland's status have also entered a state of flux.

It is obvious that the intense historical debates about the Grand Duchy of Finland's status cannot be separated from political and moral relations with the past. For example, the accusation that the revisionist historians who adopted the imperial view in the 1960s played into the hands of the Soviet Union is related to a broader question about whether Finns have sometimes gone too far in their understanding of the traditionally imperialist neighbouring superpower, or whether it is essential for a small country like Finland to reckon with harsh *Realpolitik* realities. From the opposite direction constitutionalist historians have easily appeared to be politically conservative nationalists, for whom the perspective of their own nation-state is the

171. See also Snellman 2025, 144–146.

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only relevant context for the study of history. As competing historical interpretations have been further entangled with the competition for academic posts, research funding and scholarly authority, it may have become necessary to support a certain historical narrative – like the imperial view since the 1970s – to be considered a serious member of the community of academic historians. It is therefore hardly surprising that Finnish historians have often had difficulties in constructively approaching their rivals' perspectives. Moreover, as the disciplinary power in this subfield of Finnish history was at least until the 1980s in the hands of the professors of history at the University of Helsinki, Finland's oldest and most distinguished university, the dominant narrative's challengers have often represented emerging younger generations, smaller universities or other academic disciplines.

Yet it certainly does not follow that historiography on the Grand Duchy of Finland has been subjugated to a mere vehicle for promoting historians' political interests, moral preferences or career aspirations. When different conceptions and arguments are examined within a timespan of some two hundred years, it is evident that major changes in historians' own lifeworlds have given rise to new research questions, frameworks and perspectives that pursue new kinds of historical knowledge and understanding. It is therefore understandable that major turning points like the Second World War or the collapse of the Soviet Union have brought about substantial reconsiderations of Finland's history. As historians' statements about the past are unavoidably intermingled with present conditions and future expectations, it will be interesting to see what revisions the most recent epoch-making events like Russia's full-scale invasion of Ukraine in 2022 and Finland's ensuing membership of NATO may bring in the near future to historical research on the Grand Duchy of Finland's politico-legal status. My assumption is that the ground may be more favourable to the neo-constitutionalist view or at least to the views that emphasize contradictions.

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The Grand Duchy of Finland as Part of the Swedish Great Power in the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries

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In 1581 King John III of Sweden decided to add the Grand Duke of Finland to his list of royal titles. Contemporary sources do not explain the grounds for his decision, which is why historians have presented different interpretations of the matter.[1] In any case, with short exceptional periods, the Grand Duke of Finland subsequently appeared in the Swedish ruler's list of royal titles until the 1720s.[2] By the beginning of the 1620s at the latest the custom of also using the concept of a grand duchy of the Finnish territory had become an established practice.[3] This chapter's main purpose is to determine how the use of the title of Grand Duke of Finland and the territorial concept of the Grand Duchy of Finland were used during the Swedish era of the Great Power – that is, at the end of the sixteenth and during the seventeenth centuries.

Many territories were annexed to the Swedish Kingdom from the 1560s onwards. At its widest the kingdom's territory extended from the Norwegian border in the west to Lake Ladoga in the east, and from Lapland in the north to the border with Denmark by the Sound and to German Pomerania, Livonia, and northern parts of Estonia in the south. In this patchwork of the Swedish Empire's territories, the Grand Duchy of Finland was the 'eastern half' (*östra rikshalvan*) of the old territories of Sweden that with Sweden proper formed the core lands of the realm.[4] Although the early modern Swedish realm remained a jigsaw puzzle of territories with different backgrounds and of several peoples speaking different languages, each owning a characteristic culture and even confessing different Christian beliefs, the more or less declared goal was to create a united and uniform state – according to Johan Skytte (1577–1645) 'One King, one law and united subjects' (*Unus Rex, una lex et grex unus*).[5] A reading this chapter must keep in mind concerns the discussions about early modern states' territorializing processes, the evolution from fragmented medieval realms to early modern states, and early modern state-building processes in general.[6] Another relevant discussion

1. The background of John III's decision to adopt the title of grand duke is discussed in Katajala 2023.
2. Juva 1951, 24; Eng 2006, 127–128.
3. Juva 1951, 24–29; Katajala 2023, 274.
4. See Gustafsson 1998, 189–213; Gustafsson 2001, 25–27; Eng 2000, 41–52; Katajala 2005, 13–21.
5. Citation according to Eng 2001, 301. The word '*grex*' in Latin is directly translated as 'flock'. It is evident that Skytte's aim was to refer to the unity of all the different groups of the Swedish king's subjects.
6. For discussions of territorialization and early modern state building see, for example, Anderson 1996; Giddens 1985; Tilly 1990; and for the application of these theories to the early

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took place in the 1990s and early 2000s among Nordic historians about the nature of early modern realms as conglomerate states: combinations of differently governed territories and regions around the old core lands and under one crown.[7]

The main research task is therefore to discover what the concept of the Grand Duchy of Finland meant when it was used in different contexts during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. This task cannot be separated from the question of how the concept of Finland was understood in the medieval and early modern periods. Did the early modern contemporaries of King John, princes, and other men in power refer to Finland only as one province of Sweden or an agglomeration of overseas counties or provinces, or as a specially defined part of the realm? Did they give political content or meaning to the concepts of Finland and the Grand Duchy of Finland? When John III adopted the title of grand duke, his conception of what a grand duke was, and especially what Finland was, naturally formed the basis for this solution. This understanding of Finland was based on his experiences when he held the title of Duke of Finland and had his court in Turku Castle in the late 1550s and early 1560s, but also on the learned writings of the sixteenth and preceding centuries. Before attempting to analyse the seventeenth-century sources, it is therefore necessary to begin by characterizing how Finland was perceived before the 1580s.

Finland before the Grand Duchy of Finland

As early as the first century the Roman historian Cornelius Tacitus, in his work '*Germania*' (98 AD), writes of the wild Fenni people (lat. *Fennorum nationes, Fennis*) in the north.[8] A millennium later the Finns appear in the written sources as '*Phinni*' (1172) in papal letters.[9] The spatial concepts '*Finlandia*' (1209) and '*Finland*' (1221) appear almost at the same time.[10] The concept of Finland was subsequently established in various written sources as the designation for the country[11] on the peninsula east of the Åland Islands. We must always remember that 'Finland' and 'Finns' were concepts

modern Swedish Kingdom Katajala 2006; Katajala 2011.

7. See esp. Gustafsson 1998; Gustafsson 2000; Nordin 2000; Eng 2001; Katajala 2005; Katajala 2008, Katajala 2023.
8. In 1915 K. J. Hidén translates Tacitus's 'Fenni' as 'Finns' (F. *suomalaiset*). See Tacitus 1915, 41–42; Edwin Linkomies suggests that Tacitus has confused the Finns with the Sámi and keeps the name 'Fenni' in his translation: see Linkomies 1976, 7–8 and Tacitus 1976, 71–72; Tuomo Pekkanen agrees with Linkomies, Pekkanen 2018, 9, 150–156; Tacitus 2018, 61. Pasi Ockenström has recently suggested a new but not widely accepted interpretation of Tacitus's 'Fenni': see Ockenström 2010.
9. Juva 1951, 32.
10. von Törne 1921, 11; Eng 2001, 127.
11. The concept of 'country' is used here to mean a landed territory which is understood, with its specific population, as a separate unit. We must draw a distinction with the modern definition of a country, which refers strongly to the stately organs. See Oxford Learner's Dictionary: 'country: an area of land that has or used to have its own government and laws'. https://www.oxfordlearnersdictionaries.com/definition/english/country (accessed 11.9.2023).

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given to the land and its inhabitants from outside by others. The medieval 'Finns' did not use these labels themselves.[12]

The appearance of the concept of 'Finland' in literary sources is connected with the spread of Western Christianity to the north and to the extension of the power of the Swedish king across the Åland Sea and the Gulf of Bothnia to the east in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries. In about 1280 King Magnus Ladulås sent one of his noblemen to Finland as a Stadtholder of Finns (*præfectus Finlandes*).[13] In the thirteenth century 'Finland' was used for all the territories annexed to the Swedish realm in the east. The title of these stadtholders had already become territorial (*præfecto Finlandiæ*)[14] in the fourteenth century. However, the stadtholders governed only the southwestern parts of the Finnish peninsula. The counties of Tavastia (Swedish *Tavastland*), Satakunta (Swedish *Satakunda*), Uusimaa (Swedish *Nyland*), and the Karelian Isthmus, with Viipuri (Swedish *Viborg*) Castle as its centre, were understood as regions separate from Finland.[15] The bishops appointed to the east of the Åland Sea were called Bishops of Finland up to the middle of the thirteenth century, when the diocese was moved to Turku (Swedish *Åbo*). The title now used was Bishop of Turku.[16] Around 1300 Finland, Tavastia, and the Karelian Isthmus were already integral parts of the Swedish realm, which was indirectly confirmed by the rival power of Novgorod in the Peace Treaty of 1323.[17] A network of Catholic parishes covered the whole of Southern Finland, and the ecclesiastical administration was consolidated by Turku Cathedral, which was built for the newly established diocese in 1300.

Swedish rule came to Finland not only through the influence of the church, but especially in the form of the stone castles built in Turku, Hämeenlinna (Swedish *Tavastehus*), and Viipuri.[18] The Swedish judiciary and its provincial laws also began to have an impact in Finland. Finland had its own *lagman* (the highest regional representative of the judiciary, literally 'lawman') by the beginning of the 1300s at the latest. Although the Law of the Land of King Magnus Eriksson, compiled around 1350, did not yet mention Finland as its own judicial *lagman* region,[19] in 1362 the *Lagman* of Finland was given the right to participate in the election of the King of Sweden. The

12. von Törne 1921, 10. A modern approach on how the names of medieval peoples were used is presented in Korpela 2004, 20–32.
13. Juva 1951, 40.
14. FMU I 1910, 1.6.1303. No. 242, 97. '*Nicolao Andersson, præfecto Finlandiæ*'.
15. von Törne 1921, 12. I use here the names of Finnish counties in their received form in English. The counties were '*Häme*' – Tavastia, '*Savo*' – Savonia, '*Pohjanmaa*' – Ostrobothnia, and '*Karjala*' – Karelia (these translated names are based on Latin), and '*Lappi*' is Lapland in English, but the counties of Satakunta and Uusimaa are used according to the practice in their Finnish form. To be clear for Scandinavian readers, the first mention of the county is also in its Swedish form. Note that the name Finland Proper (Swedish *Egentliga Finland*, F. *Varsinais-Suomi*) for the most southwestern county of Finland dates only to the eighteenth century and is not used here. The town names are also given in their Finnish form, and the Swedish form (if it exists) is given in brackets when it is first mentioned.
16. von Törne 1921, 11.
17. See Korpela 2008, 265–267; Katajala 2010, 24, 35–41.
18. Juva 1951, 36–37; Tarkiainen 2008, 158.
19. The Law of the Land of 1350 mentions seven bishoprics and ten judicial districts (*lagmansdöme*). The last mentioned is the Turku bishopric without any reference to jurisdictional districts. Holmbäck & Wessén 1962, 3.

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Law of the Land of 1442 mentions that the realm consists of seven dioceses and eleven jurisdictional districts, the last of which were the Turku bishopric and the judicial districts of North Finland and South Finland.[20] The division into these two judicial districts had happened in 1435.[21]

Since the thirteenth century some Swedish aristocrats had received the title of Duke of Finland (*Dux Finlandiæ*) from the king and a donation of land from Finland.[22] Because Finland meant only the southwestern part of the Finnish peninsula, and the territory of the realm had expanded far to the east, a new concept was needed to describe the areas of the Swedish realm east of the Åland Sea. From the 1320s onwards the concept of 'Eastlands' (first in the plural, Lat. *partes orientales*, literally 'eastern parts', Swedish *Österlanden*) began to be used of Finland.[23] This concept was also reflected in titles: the *Lagman* of Finland began to be called the *Lagman* of eastern parts (*legifer parcium orientalium*) and the governor the stadtholder of eastern parts (*parcium orientalium prefectus*).[24] In a well-known king's letter from 1362 the *Lagman* Nils Thuresson was given the right to participate in the election of the king of Sweden on behalf of all the common people of Eastland (in the singular). In the same letter Eastland is territorially defined as consisting of one bishopric and one judicial district.[25] The title of the Duke of Finland was also changed to the Duke of Eastland (*Österlandiæ dux*).[26] In the middle of the fifteenth century Eastland in the singular (Swedish *Österlandet*) seems to have been a consolidated territorial concept meaning the unity of all the eastern regions in the Finnish Peninsula belonging to the Swedish realm.[27]

After the second half of the fifteenth century, however, the practice developed of calling the territories east of the Åland Sea and the Gulf of Bothnia Finland, that is, the area that had been called Eastland for a half a century.[28] As early as the 1470s Ericus Olai, known as the 'father of Swedish historiography', uses the concept of Finland as a general term for all the Swedish realm's eastern counties in his 'History of Swedes and Goths' (*The Swenskes och Göthes Historia*). He begins his description of the area of the Swedish realm as follows:

> This vast country, which of course extends and borders many great seas, used to be divided into five kingdoms and was ruled by five mighty kings: the first kingdom, which is closest to Russia, is Finland with its constituent provinces, namely Tavastia, Karelia, Lapland, Uusimaa, Ostrobothnia, and Åland, as well as a few other smaller parts and jurisdictional

20. Ulkuniemi 1978, 27.
21. von Törne 1921, 14.
22. See Suvanto 2003, 529–530; Suvanto 2003, 530–531; Suvanto 2007, 253–254.
23. von Törne 1921, 12; Juva 1951, 43; Eng 2001, 127–128.
24. FMU I 1910, 11.3.1347. No. 518, 200. 'Jachobus Andrisson, legifer parcium orientalium iuris finnonici'; FMU I 1910, 12.5.1343. No. 479, 182. 'Dan Niclisson, parcium orientalium prefectus.' Cf. von Törne 1921, 13.
25. FMU I 1910, 15.2.1362. No. 695, 289. 'Niclis Thureson som lagman j Österlande ær', 'aff aldz almogensh wægna j Österlande till konungavalet', 'Österland thæt ær eth biscops döme oc eth lagmandzdöme'; Cf. von Törne 1921, 13.
26. von Törne 1921, 13; Eng 2001, 127–129.
27. Tarkiainen 2008, 158.
28. von Törne 1921, 14–15; Eng 2001, 128–130.

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districts (*härader*) between the Russian border and the Baltic Sea and extending from south to north.[29]

In Ericus Olai's proposal Finland is clearly an umbrella concept covering the kingdom's entire eastern part, the area defined by its parts, counties, and smaller engagements. We can thus see a process in which Finland was first used as the name for the annexed region of the southwesternmost part of the Finnish peninsula in the east. When the other eastern counties were annexed to the realm, these counties, including Finland, were gathered under the concept of Eastland. In the latter half of the fifteenth century, Finland then superseded Eastland.[30] Although we occasionally find the old name of Eastland until the 1520s, Finland was generally the common concept used for the eastern part of the Swedish realm in official and private documents from the beginning of the sixteenth century.[31]

Ericus Olai explains that the Swedish realm consisted of five kingdoms, of which Finland was the first, but Sweden the most important. The other three kingdoms were Helsingland, Götaland, and Värmland.[32] Indeed, Olai is considered the founder of Swedish romanticist, 'Gothicist', historiography, which sought to create a glorious past for the realm. In any case, Ericus Olai established the notion that Finland was an old kingdom, which had long been annexed to the Swedish realm. This notion was supported in the 'Chronicle of the Swedes' (*En Svensk krönika*), published in the 1530s, albeit more cautiously, by the Swedish Reformer Olaus Petri (1492–1552).[33]

The sixteenth century's most important Swedish historians were the Catholic bishops and brothers Johannes and Olaus Magnus, who had been expelled from the country in the tumult of the Reformation.[34] During his stay in Italy Olaus Magnus drew up a famous map of the Swedish Empire, known as '*Carta Marina*' (1539). In the text on the map Olaus Magnus describes Finland in the spirit of Ericus Olai as an old kingdom (*Finlandia vel Finningia Olim Regnvm*).[35] In his book on the history of Swedish kings (1554) Johannes Magnus goes even further than previous historians, suggesting that the rulers of Götaland in Sweden were descended from the ancient King Magog who had previously ruled Finland.[36]

29. Olai 1678 (1470s), 13. 'Thetta widt begrepne / doch in til många stora haff uthstråckte och uthgående Land / war i förtijden uthi Fem serdeles Konungarijken fördeelt / och bleff tå uthaff Fem mächtige Konungar regeadt: Thet Första Rijket / Ryssland närmast beläget / war Finland / medh sina tilhörige Landskaper / Nembligen: Tawastland / Carelen / Lappland / Nyland / Österboth och Åland / tillijka medh flere andra mindre Parter och härader / hwilka äre belägne emellan then Ryske Gräntzen / och Wijken aff Öster Siön och sträckia sigh ifrån Söder in til Norr.' The exact year when Olai finished his work is debatable.
30. The discussion of why it was just Finland (but not, for example, Nyland (Uusimaa) or Tavastland (Häme)) that replaced the concept of Eastland is described in Eng 2001, 130–134 and does not require repetition here.
31. von Törne 1921, 15.
32. Olai 1678 (1470s), 13–14.
33. Petri 1860 (1530s), 14.
34. For Olaus and Johannes Magnus see Johannesson 2009a, 62–71; Johannesson 2009b, 73–81.
35. *Carta Marina* can be found in many books on the history of cartography, see e.g. Ehrensvärd 2006, 62–63; Strang 2020, 14–18.
36. Magnus, Johannes 1554, 22. 'Magogus igitur Noë ex filio Iapheto nepos… …Scythiae gentis pater, & conditor erat: primumqz; in ea Europæa Scythiæ parte, quæ nunc Finlandia

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Johannes Magnus describes Finland as consisting of two parts, northern and southern Finland. The first runs by the coast of the 'Suedic Sea' (*maris Suetici*) which is the Gulf of Bothnia, the latter by the coast of the 'Gulf of Vends' (*Venedici sinus*, i.e. the Gulf of Finland), which he explains receives its name from 'Vends', meaning 'Vandals' (*Vandalis*). According to Johannes Magnus Finland has within its landmass regions (*regiones*) like Tavastia and Satakunta (*Tauestiam, Satacundiam*) and Uusimaa (*Neolandiæ*). This description of Finland as a general concept consisting of several provinces is furnished with a map presenting Finland with its provinces in the context of Scandinavia as a whole and the present Baltic area.[37] Although ideas about Finland as a kingdom before Swedish rule are complete fiction from the modern historical perspective created by Swedish Gothicist historiography, the literature of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries shows they were truest for contemporary Swedish scholars. Historical knowledge was considered an important part of the training of princes at court. These views therefore certainly formed the basis of King John III's understanding of what Finland was, and the kind of constituent of the realm it was to be.

John was also familiar with Finland for personal reasons. As part of the consolidation of the new dynasty, John's father, King Gustaf (Gustaf I, better known by the later name of Gustaf Vasa), assigned all four of his sons duchies from all over the Swedish Empire in the mid-1550s. In 1556 John became Duke of Finland. The Duchy had at least partly separate financial accounts from the kingdom, and Duke John, who held court at Turku Castle, also pursued his own foreign policy, especially in Livonia and in the direction of Russia.[38] John III's contemporary, George North, therefore described Finland as follows in 1561:

vocatur, & Gothorum Regi Oriente, flue Tanaim versus hodie paret, imperabat: deinde, vt publica patriæ historiæ fides habet, transmissio Venedici maris sinu in Gothiam, Scandianæ peninsulæ partem, nauibus većtus, magnaque; populi multitudine sociatus, peruenit, & eas gentes ex suo nominee… …Magogas nominauit: quibus posteà Græci Scytharum nomen imposuerunt.'; the same, with minor differences Magnus, Johannes 1558, 28. The work of Johannes Magnus was translated to Swedish at the beginning of the seventeenth century by Erico Schrodero, Magnus, Johannes 1620, 4. 'War förthenskull Magog Noe Soneson vthaff Japhet… …the Skyters fader, aff hwilken the äre affkomne: Then ther aldraförst hafwer regerat vthi then deelen aff Skytien som ligger vthi Europa, hwilken nu blifwer kallat Finland, emot Solennes upgång, eller emot floden Tanam, och ty der i thenna dagh vnder Konungen i Swerige. Thernäst betyga wåra Swenske Crönikor, at han medh otalig mycket folck hafwer stiget til skeps, och seglat vtöfwer Räfweske botnen til Göthalandet, som är en deel aff Scandia, och… …nämdt samma Landskaps Inbyggiare effter sitt eghit nampn Magoger: The ther äre sedan wordne Skyter kallade vthaff the Greker.' Schrodero is not very exact in his translation, and he adds to the text words referring to the Swedish kingdom which do not exist in the original Latin text. See also Eng 2001, 135–136. Eng has used the translation to Swedish from 1620.

37. Magnus, Johannes 1554, 10–11, map 14; Magnus, Johannes 1558, 12–13, map 17. The maps of these two editions are not the same. The content, however, is similar.
38. Saarenheimo 1951, 234–237; Renvall 1949a, 315, 335–336; Renvall 1949b, 98–100; Eskola 2020; Katajala 2023, 277–278.

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> Finlande is called a fayre Countrye, because it is more plesaunter than Swecia. Plini seemeth to name it Finnonia, of the bowing arme or bosoms of the sea Finnonicus. It is so large a Countrye, that it once was called a kyngdome, but now it hath onely the title of a Dukedome.[39]

The short period of the Duchy of Finland ended when John, who had quarrelled with his brother King Eric XIV, was imprisoned in 1562. When John later ousted his brother from the Swedish throne, he still seems to have cherished the idea of Finland as dukedom.

The Grand Duchy of Finland is born in the tumult of war[40]

In 1570 war broke out between Sweden and Russia. In Finnish historiography the war has been called the 25-year war because of its long duration, for it did not end until 1595 with a peace treaty signed in the village of Teusina near the town of Narva in today's Estonia. The war's actual background was the struggle between Sweden, Russia, Denmark, and Poland to control the territories of Livonia, that is, approximately today's Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania. The struggle for these lands had its origins in the dissolution of the Teutonic State of the Livonian Order in the early 1560s. The acute reason for the war came from border conflicts in Swedish Savonia and Russian Karelia and from correspondence between John III and Tsar Ivan IV that has become famous for exceptionally gross personal insults.[41]

The war's main stage was Livonia, especially the territory of today's Estonia, but it also affected the Karelian Isthmus and Ingria severely.[42] The positions between the countries varied greatly during the war, but the general line was that Denmark sought to profit from cooperation with Russia at the expense of Sweden, while Poland, whose interests in Livonia were threatened by both Russia and Denmark, occasionally sought cooperation with Sweden. John III's contacts with the Polish court had long been close, as John's wife Catherine Jagiellon was the sister of King Sigismund II Augustus of Poland (1520–1572). Although Sigismund Augustus was the last Polish ruler of the Jagiellonian dynasty, contact with the Polish court was important to John III, especially when the interests of Sweden and Poland met in the struggle for Livonia.[43]

Russia was quite successful in its war effort against Sweden, but after Poland declared war on Russia in 1579 the Russian troops had to fight on a broad front. The Polish military action also allowed the Swedes to succeed in northern Estonia and Ingria and even enter the Audova region southeast of Ingria. In 1580 and 1581 the Swedes conquered the castles of Kexholm (F. *Käkisalmi*), Narva, and Ivangorod. The road seemed to be open for the Swedes to penetrate deeply into Russia's territory. On this occasion John III decided to renew the list of his titles. In addition to the titles of

39. North 1561, chapter 'The description of Finland, after the aucthoritie of Seba. Mounster', no page numbering.
40. This subchapter is largely based on my article, Katajala 2023.
41. Tawastjerna 1918–1920, 1–15.
42. See Mäkinen 2002.
43. See Tawastjerna 1929.

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King of Swedes, Goths and Vends, the titles of Grand Duke of Finland and Karelia and Duke of Harien, Wierland and Wijkett were added to the royal title. The title was soon changed again to the Grand Duke of Finland, Karelia, Ingria and the Solonski fifth and the Duke of Estonians in Livonia. The territory taxed by the Novgorodians had traditionally been administratively divided into 'fifths' (Russian *piatins*), five 'sectors' extending from Novgorod.[44] Some years later the Solonski fifth was replaced in the title by the Votskaia fifth.[45]

In the late sixteenth century there were four grand duchies in Europe. In 1569 the Pope granted Cosimo I de' Medici the title of Grand Duke of Tuscany (*Magnus Ducatus Tusciæ*). The Grand Duchy of Tuscany remained in the possession of the Medici family until 1737, after which, except for a brief interruption, it passed to the Habsburg-Lothringen family until 1859.[46] A grand duchy in the Italian peninsula was, however, hardly the model for John III when he decided to take the title of grand duke. More equivalent examples were closer, in Russia and Poland-Lithuania. The title of grand duke (Russian *velikii kniaz'*) was considered to have been inherited by the ruler of Muscovy from the grand duke of medieval Kyivan Rus'.[47] The Lithuanian rulers expanded their territories to the east towards today's Belarus and Ukraine in the late thirteenth century. Probably on this basis, the Duke of Lithuania began to use the title of Grand Duke of Lithuania for himself. Around the same time, the Grand Duke of Lithuania married a Polish princess and thus also ascended the throne of the Kingdom of Poland. Subsequently, the King of Poland and the Grand Duke of Lithuania were often, but not always, the same person. Formally, the kingdoms merged into the union of the Polish–Lithuanian Commonwealth in 1569.[48]

Like many early modern kingdoms, the territories of the grand dukes often constituted several princedoms and other areas variously associated with or attached to the realm. The grand duke's rule was also characterized as personal power over smaller princes like dukes ruling dukedoms or other principalities of the realm. The grand duke was thus the prince of princes.[49] After the Mongol destruction of Kyiv in the eleventh century the grand duke's title was assumed by the Prince of Vladimir, whence it was transferred to Muscovy. During the thirteenth and fourteenth centuries Muscovy expanded its territories and subjugated principalities competing for the status of grand duke. In the late fifteenth century the territories recognized as under

44. Kirkinen 1970, 43.
45. Juva 1951, 11–17; Katajala 2023, 273–274. Leif Tengström has suggested that John III introduced the title of Grand Duke of Finland as early as 1577. In his doctoral dissertation, he writes as follows: "In 1983, I found a copy of John III's letter to Archbishop Laurentius Petri dated 3 August 1577 in the National Archives in Stockholm, in which he calls himself the Grand Duke of Finland." Tengström 1997, 104; referring to Tengström also Talvio 1997, 12. Despite searching, I have not been able to find the letter in question. The observation is interesting and shows that John III already had the idea of a Grand Duke of Finland in mind in 1577. However, it is uncertain how much weight can be given to such a single mention. Based on the royal registry of sent letters (*riksregistratur*), John began to use the title of Grand Duke of Finland systematically from 1581 onwards.
46. Katajala 2023, 276.
47. Lehtovirta 1999, 159–184; Kivelson 1997, 638–639.
48. Stone 2001, 3–11; Kiaupiné 2020, 80–88; Ijäs 2016, 125; Friedrich 2007, 208.
49. Katajala 2023, 280–285.

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the Grand Duke of Moscow were bounded in the west by the territories of the King of Sweden and Grand Duke of Lithuania.[50]

In 1547 Grand Duke Ivan IV of Muscovy assumed the title of Tsar of Russia.[51] He retained, however, the titles of Grand Duke of Vladimirians, Muscovians, and Novgorodians.[52] Similarly, the Polish king declared himself to be the Grand Duke of Lithuanians, Samogites, Russians, and Kyivans.[53] The fact that the title of grand duke was determined by subjects, not territories, emphasizes the medieval idea of the personal character of the grand duke's power.[54] Poland-Lithuania was also a patchwork of regions. The Kingdom of Poland was formed by two parts: Lesser and Greater Poland. This state entity was joined by a relatively independent Masovian principality. Silesia belonged to the Kingdom of Bohemia from the thirteenth century, but it remained under a Polish diocese, and the Poles considered Silesia to be part of their kingdom. Meanwhile, along with Lithuania, the territories of the Grand Duchy of Lithuania included parts of Prussia and Ruthenia extending to the territories of today's Belarus and Ukraine, the duchies of Courland and Semigallia, and parts of Livonia.[55] It was in such a European environment that John III's idea of the Grand Duchy of Finland was born.

John was not, however, the first to call Finland a grand duchy. According to the Finnish historian Kauko Pirinen the first mention of Finland as a grand duchy can be found in a letter from the aforementioned Johannes Magnus to the Polish Matthias de Miechow from 1518. Miechow had prepared a book about European peoples (1517, second edition 1521), and Johannes Magnus, who wanted to correct the information in Miechow's book about the kingdom ruled by the King of Sweden, wrote, 'I can mention that the length of his empire extends to Götaland, the Grand Duchy of Finland, and Svealand.' Pirinen speculates that Johannes Magnus may have simply 'invented' the title of Grand Duchy of Finland to emphasize the power and honour of the King of Sweden to a Polish scholar.[56] In any case, according to Johannes Magnus, the Swedish realm consisted of three separate parts: the kingdoms of Götaland and Svealand, and Finland, elevated here to the rank of a grand duchy, equal to kingdoms.[57]

During his exile Olaus Magnus, Johannes Magnus's brother, wrote an extensive presentation of the history of the northern peoples (*Historia de gentibus septentrionalibvs*, 1555), in which he mentioned Finland once as a grand duchy.

50. Crummey 1987, 31–41; Kivelson 1997, 642; Nitsche 1972, 2–3.
51. Lehtovirta 1999, 302.
52. Lehtovirta 1999, 304; Katajala 2023, 280.
53. Ijäs-Idrobo 2018, 327–328; Kiaupiné 2020, 88, note 25; Watts 2009, 69.
54. Katajala 2023, 280–282, 286.
55. Watts 2009, 69; Stone 2001, 7; Niendorf 2010; Kiaupiené 2020, 79; Ijäs 2016, 128–136; Ijäs 2018, 7.
56. Pirinen 1953, 107–114.
57. In the hierarchy of values the grand duke is equated to the same level as the king. It is a higher-ranking title than, for example, duke, but only the emperor is considered to be of higher rank than the king and the grand duke. The emperor ruled the empire, which may have included several kingdoms, grand duchies, or dukedoms. The emperor or tsar himself may have held all these titles, but in the principalities that belonged to the empire there may also have been kings, dukes, or other princes subordinate to him. See Katajala 2023, 274.

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Describing the conditions in the border region to the east, Olaus Magnus writes, 'This applies mainly to those who cross the borders of Sweden and the Grand Duchy of Finland in search of disputes or spoils...' [58] Otherwise, he regularly refers to Finland as a duchy. It should be noted that the work of Olaus Magnus had appeared a year earlier, when King Gustaf appointed his son John as Duke of Finland and gave Finland to him as a duchy. Although there had not been a Duke of Finland for a long time, the idea of Finland as a dukedom separate from Sweden had therefore remained in the minds of scholars. Olaus Magnus routinely refers to Russia (Muscovy) and Poland-Lithuania as grand duchies and their rulers as grand dukes.

King Gustaf died in 1560. A monument for Uppsala Cathedral, where the king's body was to be interred, was commissioned from the Flemish sculptor Willem Boy. Carved in Antwerp, the monument was shipped in pieces to Sweden. The monument had already been commissioned by King Eric XIV, but it was not completed and erected in the cathedral until the time of John III in the early 1580s.[59] What is remarkable about the monument is that its sides are encircled by the coats of arms of the provinces of the Swedish realm. On the main side is the coat of arms of the kingdom in the centre. The coat of arms of Uppland, Sweden's most important province, is to the right (seen from the monument), and the arms of the Grand Duchy of Finland are to the left. In the descriptions written below the arms of the provinces they are elevated to duchies (*dvcatus*), but the inscription 'Coat of arms of the Grand Duchy of Finland' (*Arma Magni Dvcatus Finlandiæ*) appears on the shield under the coat of arms of Finland. The monument also bears the coats of arms of Southern Finland, Northern Finland, Tavastia, and Karelia. The Grand Duchy has clearly therefore been elevated for Finland as a whole.

The coat of arms of the Grand Duchy of Finland has heraldic peculiarities that shed light on the time of the birth of the idea of the grand duchy. The coat of arms has a crown-headed lion trampling on a curved sabre on a red background, with a straight sword in its right armoured hand. Nine rosettes decorate the background of the coat of arms. Above is an open crown. The open crown belongs to the heraldic imagery of the duchies: it is also depicted above the coats of arms of provinces thus designated. According to the heraldic code the crown of a grand duchy should be closed from above. The tomb was built in Upsala Cathedral over several years. Given that the nameplates of the coats of arms were almost the last feature to be attached to the tomb in 1591, it is likely that Finland was named a grand duchy after John begun to use the title of grand duke in 1581. The coat of arms itself, with its knight's crown, would therefore have been made in Antwerp before John assumed the self-made title of grand duke.[60] Very soon after 1581 the coat of arms of Finland was used in several

58. Magnus, Olaus 1555, 361. 'praecipue qui limites regni Suetiae, ac magni ducatus Finlandiae præliaturi.' For a translation in Swedish see Magnus, Olaus 1976, 226. 'Särskildt gäller detta om dem, som i och för strid eller plundring nalkas konungariket Sveriges och storfurstendömet Finlands gränser.' Quotation in English according to Magnus, Olaus 2010, 525
59. Eng 2008, 78–90; Tarkiainen 2017, 88–89; Juva 1951, 82; Klinge 1983, 74; the monument was sent from Antwerp in several separate shipments, and it was in its place in Uppsala in 1583. However, the decoration continued, and the last carvings were the legends below the coats of arms. The monument was finished in 1591. See Klinge 1981, 251.
60. Leif Tengström and Tuukka Talvio suggest that Willem Boy did not design the coat of arms of the Grand Duchy of Finland. It is a pity that Talvio's text, which is very informative in itself,

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drawings and descriptions. In these cases, the crown of the coat of arms is always presented as a grand duke's closed crown, and the layout and placing of the coat of arms in relation to the coats of arms of the provinces or duchies indicates its prestige in relation to them. The coat of arms of the grand duchy often 'leads' the coats of arms of the provinces of Finland; the scales of Swedish provinces are arranged under the coat of arms of the Duchy of Uppland.[61]

Whose voice is heard in sources about the Grand Duchy of Finland?

As the focus of this article is to identify the connections the name of the Grand Duchy of Finland and the meanings the label acquired during the period of Swedish Great Power, it is worth focusing for a moment on the material I have used. I have used almost no original archival material on paper. All the material used is published in collections of documents or printed original works. However, there is plenty of it. Most of the material is in electronic format and openly available on the internet in PDF or other file forms. When the publication is unavailable in electronic form, I have used printed volumes.

The material in electronic form is machine readable and therefore searchable. Using search terms such as '*storf**', 'stoorf*', and '*Finland**' results in a collection containing all references to the Swedish concepts of 'grand duke', 'grand duchy', and 'Finland' in its various inflections and different spellings (*storfurste, storförste, stoorfurste, stoorförste, storfurstinna, storförstinna, storfurstendöme, stoorfurstendöme, storfurstendömme, stoorförstendömme, Finland, Finlandia*, etc.). When necessary, other search terms have also been used. If the material is available only in printed form, concepts important for the research task and their contexts have been searched for in the traditional way by reading the works. When a digitized online version of a document publication is used, it is mentioned in the list of sources.

Most of the material consists of state administration documents. The minutes of the Diet (*Riksdag*) constitute one of the large datasets that enable the examination of forms of the use of political language. Unfortunately, the Peasant Estate protocols have not survived from the considered period, so we do not get a glimpse of whether and in what sense the concept of the Grand Duchy of Finland was used by the peasantry. The Burger Estate's minutes are available from 1654 in an almost unbroken series until the end of the period. However, these protocols of the Burger Estate were of no use because the search produced no results. The minutes of the Clergy are available from 1642 onwards. The most extensive collection of parliamentary protocols is the protocols of the Knightly or Noble Estate (*adelstånd*), which are available from

is without references, which is why the grounds of reasoning cannot be followed. According to Talvio, however, Willem Boy probably prepared the pictorial representation of the coat of arms. Tengström 1997, 111, Talvio 1997, 14–15. In my opinion, the fact that the lion's crown on the coat of arms is open and thus the crown of the dukedom and not the closed crown of the Grand Duchy points in the direction that the coat of arms was made before the idea of the Grand Duchy of Finland and that it was the work of Willem Boy.

61. Bomansson 1889, 331–337; Juva 1951, 86, and see pictures on pages 71, 79, 87, 100.

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1627 onwards. Documents of the Diet (*riksdagsakter*) are available as document publications from 1561 to 1617 and from 1719 to 1723.

Published in print from 1621 to 1650, the minutes of the Council of the Realm (*Svenska riksrådets protokoll*) represent more daily political debate. How the concept of the grand duchy was used in the decisions of the king and Diet is illustrated in Johan Schmedeman's collection of royal orders and decisions from 1528 to 1701 (printed in 1706) and in Anders Anton Stiernman's compilations of royal letters, decrees, and regulations from 1523 to 1688 (four volumes, printed from 1750 to 1760) and decisions of the Diet from 1521 to 1731 (three volumes, printed from 1728 to 1733).

Especially during the nineteenth century many different collections of documents were published, which in themselves were considered to shed light on Finnish history. As such, the collections do not usually form any systematic whole, but they contain documents which, from the perspective of contemporaries, have been considered important for illuminating Finland's earlier history. Together, however, they provide a large collection of material for an examination of the use of language in the studied era.

I have utilized the vast collection of Academy of Turku dissertations from 1640 onwards, in which writings describing Finland and the author's home region were occasionally published, only in its most important parts. Contemporaneous works form their own set of sources, partly in digital copies of the original works available; partly as edited printed publications. If possible when using edited works, I have used publications with the original text alongside the translation because this is evidential in studying language use and conceptual changes. The Grand Duchy of Finland's territorial conceptualization has been examined in the light of maps of the era published in digital and printed collections. As we can see, the sources studied are produced by the political, ecclesiastical, and scholarly elite. Some sources written in Finnish exist. They are mainly proclamations and religious texts mentioning the Grand Duchy of Finland. Although subjects had to listen to these proclamations at church, little can be said about how 'ordinary' Finns understood their message and the Grand Duchy of Finland they mentioned.

Early modern Grand Duchy of Finland in previous scholarship

The question of the early modern Grand Duchy of Finland has received scant from researchers. The Finnish research is quite old and has focused on the historical backgrounds of the idea of the grand duchy and the political context of John III's proclamation as grand duke.[62] Apparently, the issue has not recently been considered relevant, and only a few researchers have therefore really delved into the question.

Einar Juva's little book 'The Grand Duchy of Finland during Swedish rule' (*Suomen suuriruhtinaskunta Ruotsin vallan aikana*), in which he reflects on the concept of the Grand Duchy of Finland and its historical background, is most important here. Juva's work describes how John III himself 'invented' the title of Grand Duke of Finland, and how it became established as a Swedish royal title. Juva also reflects extensively on the background of the coat of arms of the Grand Duchy of Finland attached to King

62. Pirinen 1953; Saarenheimo 1951.

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Gustaf's tomb. In examining the consolidation of the concept of the Grand Duchy of Finland in seventeenth-century language use, Juva focuses on how the grand duchy's territory was defined and its relationship to Finland's territorial definition. In Juva's opinion, however, the Grand Duchy of Finland was not a 'real' principality because the grand duke never lived there, and no self-governing structures were formed for the grand duchy.[63] As the concept of the Grand Duchy of Finland had been used quite consistently since at least the 1630s, however, Juva suggests that Finland was more than the sum of its provinces, a special and whole part of the seventeenth century Swedish realm.

The Swedish historian Jonas Nordin also argues that Finland was conceived, especially in the eighteenth century, as a separate part of the kingdom of Sweden with a defined geographical area. He also suggests that for linguistic and historical reasons the Finns were seen as a separate people from the Swedes. According to Nordin, however, the division into Finland and Sweden took place purely at the emotional level without any legal or administrative basis. Nordin underlines that because Finland had never been a kingdom in its own right, it had to settle for the title of Grand Duchy and its almost complete incorporation into Sweden. He suggests that the Grand Duchy of Finland was therefore a nominal title adopted by John III in the late sixteenth century, and that Finland had been fully integrated into the Swedish realm in political doctrine and law long before this.[64]

Nordin is wrong to claim that although there were mentions of an ancient Finnish kingdom (and he gives an example[65]), it was an unusual perception. As we have seen and will see again, perceptions of Finland as an ancient kingdom were the rule in Swedish scholars' writings between the fifteenth and seventeenth centuries. Nordin himself correctly describes how the medieval realms were not territorial entities but designations of the king's power. Kingdoms could therefore not be incorporated but were included with other kingdoms, meaning that medieval kings collected almost endless lists of titles that created the formal conditions for their lordship.[66] The mere fact that Finland was generally presented as an old kingdom by scholars therefore made sense for John III in claiming and presenting his power over Finland in a medieval manner as a grand duke. In the medieval and early modern ranking the title of grand duke was not lower than (as Nordin suggests) but equal to king.[67]

Torbjörn Eng delves more deeply into the Grand Duchy of Finland's characteristics in his doctoral dissertation (2001) on the construction of the early modern Swedish realm. One of the key research tasks of Eng's dissertation is to examine how changes in royal titles reflected the shift from the personal power of princes to an abstract territorially defined power. According to Eng John III's main purpose in declaring himself Grand Duke of Finland was to make his realm and his own power appear greater in the eyes of the Russians, with whom he was then at war. Eng thus seems to have understood at least implicitly that the new titles taken by John III were based on the medieval idea of the personal nature of the prince's power. In something of a

63. Esp. Juva 1951, 97.
64. Nordin 2000, 47; Nordin 2008, 211–221.
65. Nordin 2002, 219.
66. Nordin 2008, 213.
67. See Katajala 2023, 274.

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contradiction, however, he argues that the Grand Duke of Finland was only a form of fictitious domination – an empty title – as no political or other organizations were established in Finland. Eng is strongly critical of Nordin's suggestion that Finland was perceived as a separate entity from Sweden in the sixteenth or even seventeenth century.[68]

The points Juva, Nordin, and Eng make are related to a broader debate on Finland's position in relation to Sweden at different times, of which space does not permit further discussion here. Finnish researchers have wanted to see and highlight the origins of Finland and Finnishness in the history of Finland's Swedish period. In Finnish national historiography the phrases 'Sweden and Finland', which are the rule in the sixteenth- and seventeenth-century documents, have become the term 'Sweden-Finland' (F. *Ruotsi-Suomi*), as if the Swedish realm were a dual state or a union of two realms like Poland-Lithuania. It is symptomatic that in their influential general presentation of Finnish history in 1966 Professors Kauko Pirinen and Eino Jutikkala start to use the expression 'Sweden-Finland', having just described how John III took the title of 'Grand Duke of Finland and Karelia' in 1581.[69] In their presentation the Grand Duchy of Finland implicitly made the Swedish realm a dual state.

Meanwhile, Swedish researchers have emphatically argued that Finland was an integral part of the realm, a group of mainly overseas provinces that lacked any privileges, their own administration, or perception of Finland or Finnishness as a factor in creating a Finnish identity. This is justified because Finland was fully integrated into the Swedish Empire politically, legally, administratively, militarily, ecclesiastically, and religiously. Since the 1980s most Finnish historians have supported the Swedish interpretation of Finland as fully incorporated in the early modern Swedish realm.[70]

In my opinion, however, this interpretation does not satisfactorily explain how Finland, and the Grand Duchy of Finland especially, was understood in connection with the kingdom of Sweden. In early modern Europe many regions like Germany lacked their own administrative structures but were still considered old countries. My postulation is that early modern Finland was understood in the medieval manner as a country that was separate from Sweden but part of the Swedish realm, and that the recognition of Finland as a grand duchy exactly reflects this idea. Although the grand duchy or Finland lacked its own administrative, legal, or military organs, being a country and grand duchy was not meaningless for the actions of the seventeenth-century Swedish authorities. In the following we therefore begin to examine the contexts in which the concept of the Grand Duchy of Finland was used, and whether anything can be deduced from how Finland and the Grand Duchy of Finland were understood in the seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries.

Grand Duke of Finland disappears and returns

John III and Catherine Jagiellon, sister of the Polish king, had a son Sigismund, born in 1566. From his childhood official documents refer to Sigismund as the

68. Eng 2001, 58–60, 148–150, 294–295.
69. Jutikkala & Pirinen 1966, 97 passim.
70. See, for example, Fagerlund, Jern & Villstrand 2000, 130–131.

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hereditary prince of Sweden and Duke of Finland (*Sveriges rikis arffurste och hertigh til Finlandh*).[71] Although the duke was himself a child, it is noteworthy that it was felt necessary to mention Finland as a duchy in its own right in Sigismund's title. The Duchy of Finland lived on in memories and royal titles, though the somewhat organized duchy of the 1550s and 1560s was withdrawn from John in 1563. After Sigismund's father John III had taken the title of Grand Duke of Finland in 1581, he was recognized as the nearest hereditary prince and heir of the Grand Duchy of Finland.[72] Because sixteenth-century Finland was itself undoubtedly understood as belonging to the old core lands of the realm and had no self-government or administration separate from Sweden proper, the Grand Duchy of Finland was a kind of intangible property or expression of power that could be inherited.

Because of his ties to Poland's royal family, Sigismund was a serious candidate to succeed his uncle, King Augustus, to the Polish throne. During negotiations concerning this Sigismund was called the supreme prince of the Swedes, the first hereditary prince of the Goths and the Vandals, and the future king of the Grand Duchy of Finland (*futurus rex magnique principatus Finlandiæ*).[73] In these expressions the Grand Duchy of Finland was clearly used as a counterpart to Sweden, and Sigismund was presented as a future ruler of two kingdoms in the Swedish Empire. The deliberately created association with the union of the Kingdom of Poland and the Grand Duchy of Lithuania and their common ruler is obvious. Sigismund came to the Polish throne in 1687. After Sigismund became King of Poland and Grand Duke of Lithuania, he no longer used his Swedish royal titles.

John III died in 1592, and Sigismund succeeded him as the King of Sweden. Among his other royal titles Sigismund immediately began to use the title of Grand Duke of Finland. Yet as he had still to be crowned as King of Sweden, he used the title of 'hereditary king'[74] (*arfkonung*) until his coronation at the Diet of 1594.[75] When Sigismund ascended the Swedish throne, the entire list of the Swedish king's titles, including that of Grand Duke of Finland, was added to those of King of Poland and Grand Duke of Lithuania.[76] Royal titles also passed to other members of the royal family. Sigismund's consort, Anna Habsburg, was thus Queen of Sweden, Goths and Vends, Grand Duchess of Finland, Karelia, Votskaia fifth, and Ingria in Russia, and Duchess of the Estonians of Livonia, as well as the Queen of Poland, Grand Duchess

71. See the nobility's assurance to King John and his family, renunciation of their allegiance to King Eric, 26 January 1569. Svenska riksdagsakter, andra delen 1561–1592, 300.
72. The constitution of the royal and princely rights, by negotiation between the King and Duke Charles, 13 February 1587. Svenska riksdagsakter, andra delen 1561–1592, 766.
73. Constitutions and conditions under which Duke Sigismund could be chosen King of Poland and which should be observed, as long as the two kingdoms would be united, 10 May 1687. Svenska riksdagsakter, andra delen 1561–1592, 785.
74. See, for example, King Sigismund's letter, 9 January 1593. Svenska riksdagsakter, tredje delen 1592–1597, 151.
75. Nuorteva 2006, 871–875.
76. See King Sigismund's answer to the joint petition of the estates, 1 February 1594. Svenska riksdagsakter, tredje delen 1592–1597, 308.

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of Lithuania, Lady of Russians, Prussians, Masurians, Samogites, Kyivans, Volhinians, and Livonia, born Archduchess of Austria and Styrmark.[77]

Through a dramatic set of twists and turns Sigismund's uncle, King Gustaf's youngest son Charles, Duke of Södermanland, led a coup in Sweden in 1597. The Diet of 1599 declared Sigismund to have lost the throne of Sweden, and Duke Charles was crowned King of Sweden in 1607 as Charles IX.[78] The list of titles King Charles IX used after 1607 differed substantially from those of his brother King John III and nephew King Sigismund. Charles announced that he was king of Sweden, Goths, Vends, Finns, Karelians, Lapps in Norrland, and Cajaners and Estonians in Livonia.[79] Charles IX therefore did not use the title of Grand Duke of Finland at all. Torbjörn Eng has pondered why Charles IX did not declare himself Grand Duke of Finland or Duke of the Estonians as his two predecessors had. The war against Russia had ended in 1595. For Finland the new border between Sweden and Russia was defined as running west of Lake Ladoga on a line separating Savonia, which belonged to Sweden, from Karelia on the Russian side. The Kexholm province and Ingria, conquered by Sweden during the war, were thus ceded back to Russia.[80] Charles himself was active in making peace, and he could not claim to be the Grand Duke of Karelia or Ingria, not to mention the Votskaia fifth, after peace was made. Yet Sigismund, King of Poland and Grand Duke of Lithuania, never approved or ratified the 1595 Treaty of Peace and continued to use all the titles he had inherited from his father, including those of the ceded Karelia, Ingria, and Votskaia fifth, even after the Diet had dethroned him in 1599.[81]

The title that expressed the dominance of the King of Sweden in the region of Livonia called Estonia was changed. Charles was the king of all the 'peoples' who lived in territories belonging to his entire realm. The relationship of domination was therefore not defined in Charles' royal list of titles by territories but by named groups constituted by subjects. Torbjörn Eng speculates that the reason for the change was that the title of Duke of Estonians did not assist Charles in his competition with King Sigismund, who ruled Livonia's Polish territories. In Livonia the King of Sweden could not take a title lower than Lord of Livonia, adopted by the King of Poland: it had to be higher in the feudal hierarchy. Eng presents the strong policy of harmonization pursued by Sweden in Estonia and Livonia under Charles IX as another factor in the change of title: the introduction of Swedish legislation was particularly important in these territories.[82] As Eng himself states, this is merely guesswork, as no source material has survived that would explain the changes to the title.

However, this does not explain why Charles IX did not want to use the title of Grand Duke of Finland adopted by the two previous Swedish kings. The territorial entity perceived as Finnish remained unequivocally on the Swedish side of the new

77. See the nobility's written declaration of allegiance to King Sigismund, 1 March 1594. Svenska riksdagsakter, tredje delen 1592–1597, 373–373.
78. Nuorteva 2004, 635–641.
79. See Waaranen 1864, Document No. 478, 343. 'Then Stormächtige Högborne Konungz och Herres, Herr Carlz den Nijondes Swerigis, Göthes, Wändis, Finnars, Carelers, Lappes i Norrlanden, de Cajaners och Esters i Lifland etc. Konungz swar…'
80. For the definition of the boundary of the 1595 peace see e.g. Julku 1987, 305–400; Katajala 2010, 190–193.
81. Eng 2001, 162, 177–178.
82. Eng 2001, 175–176.

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1595 border, so it could not have been why the title was left unused. Torbjörn Eng speculates that the reason was that Charles had gained power in Sweden through a coup d'état, and that he ruled the kingdom for the first ten years formally as regent, not king. Charles thus did not inherit the kingship or his royal titles, and this, according to Eng, possibly gave Charles the leeway to define his own title according to his own requirements. In this way Charles also did not inherit the Grand Duchy of Finland when the Diet appointed him King of Sweden.[83] After Sigismund had succeeded to the Polish throne in 1590 his father King John III had given the city and castle of Turku and the provinces of Northern and Southern Finland to his new-born son, Prince John (1589–1618).[84] When Prince John was three, he was given the title of Duke of Finland. After Duke Charles's coup, however, the title of Duke of Finland was needed for his heirs, and in 1604 Prince John was forced to renounce the title. As compensation, he was given East Götaland as a dukedom.[85]

When the order of succession under Charles IX was changed to favour his descendants, Charles's son, the future King Gustaf II Adolph, inherited the kingdom from his father, and with it the Grand Duchy of Finland. Gustaf Adolph then appears in official documents as both Grand Duke of Finland and Duke of Estonia, even before the death of his father Charles and his accession to the throne.[86] Thus, after a short break the Grand Duke of Finland returned to the ranks of Swedish royal titles.[87]

Johannes Messenius (c. 1580–1636) was a professor at the University of Uppsala and the Royal Archivist. In 1616, because of suspected contacts with the Polish and Catholic enemy, he was captured and jailed at Kajaani castle on the eastern border of the Swedish realm. During his prison years (1616–1635) he wrote his main works: the Description of Scandinavia (*Scondia illustrate*); and the Chronicle of Finland (*Finlands krönika*). The Description of Scandinavia is in Latin, and its tenth volume describes the history of Finland, Livonia, and Courland, ending in 1628. It is therefore obvious that it was written around the time of that part of the chronicle, but the work was not printed before the beginning of the eighteenth century. The Chronicle of Finland, written in Swedish, describes Finland's mythical past, from ancient times to the beginning of the seventeenth century.[88]

In his *Scondia Illustrata* Messenius first mentions the Grand Duke of Finland (*Magnus Finlandiæ dux*) when commenting on John III's religious ambitions

83. Eng 2001, 178–179.
84. King John's donation letter for his younger son John to Turku Castle, city, and provinces, Åland and Bråberg, 4 January 1590. Sveriges riksdagsakter, andra delen 1561–1592, 1028–1035.
85. Marjomaa 2001.
86. See Stiernman I 1728, Decision of the Diet, 20 December 1610, 636 'högborne Furste och Herre / Herr Gustaf Adolph / Sweriges / Giöthes och Wendes Affurst / Stoorfurste till Finlandh / Hertig till Estland och Wässmanland'.
87. Eng 2001, 178–179.
88. For Messenius, *Scondia illustrata*, and *Finlands krönika* see Lönnroth & Linna 2004, 10–19; Linna, Lagerstedt & Palmén 1988, 11–29. The document edition of *Finlands krönika* includes an introduction, a Finnish translation of the chronicle, the original text published in old Swedish commentaries, and Finnish translations of the source texts Messenius had used. For this publication I have used the original text in Latin.

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regarding the Roman Church in 1587.[89] The next mention is when Messenius comments on King John III's death: '1592. King John of Sweden, Duke of the Grand Duchy of Finland and Lord of Estonia, was carried by death from life at Stockholm on 17 November'.[90] It is immediately obvious that the titles of John used by Messenius differ from those used later (*Magnus Finlandiæ dux*, *magnus Finlandiæ princeps*).[91] The title used by Messenius is not really 'Grand Duke of Finland' but 'Duke of the Grand Duchy of Finland' or 'Grand Prince of the Grand Duchy of Finland'. Messenius's description reflects the views on the subject when he was writing, around the 1620s. Is this perhaps a symptom of a new approach to the Grand Duchy, which was no longer merely a hereditary title but a territorial concept of Finland? The third mention by Messenius is in his description of Gustaf II Adolph's election to the Swedish throne in 1611: '1611. Prince Gustaf Adolph, the eldest son of King Charles, was elected on 16 November as his father's successor to the throne of Sweden, and the Grand Duchy of Finland, and the dominion of Estonia'.[92] In the context of European dynastic politics the Grand Duchy of Finland is clearly a territorial concept here. In his Chronicle of Finland, however, Messenius does not recognize Finland as a grand duchy at all. In describing the coronation of King Charles IX in 1607, Messenius mentions that the king's son Gustaf (later King Gustaf II Adolph) was given the title of Duke of Finland.[93]

Perhaps even more important here is how Messenius uses the concepts of 'Finns' and 'Finland'. When Messenius explains the struggle for the Swedish crown between Duke Charles and King Sigismund in 1593–1599, Finland is without doubt a very clear territorially defined and understood concept. Messenius also writes about the Finns as an actor in the game (often paired with Estonians as '*Finnones & Esthones*'). This may not be understood as an ethnic concept but as an identification of people living and acting in Finland, and who in some respect identify themselves with a territory called Finland in the Swedish realm.[94]

Mentions of the Grand Duchy of Finland as a separate territorial concept are found in the source material just after the turn of the seventeenth century. According to Einar Juva the concept of the Grand Duchy of Finland appears for the first time in the Order of the Chancellery of 1626, which states that the Third Secretary of the Chancellery handles, presents, and receives all matters concerning the Grand Duchy of

89. Messenius 1702, 37.
90. Lönnroth & Linna 2004, 91; Messenius 1702, 37. 1592. 'Rex Sueciae Johannes, magnus Finlandiae princeps, & Esthoniae dominus, per mortem e vivis abriptur Stockhomiae, XVII. Novembris.'
91. Messenius 1703 (1628), 34. 'Johannes Sueciae rex, Magnus Finlandiæ Dux, Eastoniæque dominus…', 35 'Rex Sueciæ Johannes, magnus Finlandiæ Innstrains, & Esthoniæ dominus, per mortem è vivis abripitur Stockholmiæ, XVII, Novembris'.
92. Messenius 1702, 40. '*1611* Princeps Gustavus Adolphus, Caroli regis natu major filius, XVI, Novembris parenti successor in throno Sueciae, & magno ducatu Finlandiae, dominioque Esthoniae, fuit designates.'
93. Lönnroth & Linna (2004), 258, 'Sone her Gustaf, Hertigh blef J finlandh; kungh Carl thär näst dref'.
94. See Messenius 1702, esp. 35–37.

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Finland.[95] Already ten years earlier, in 1616, however, the participants of the Meeting of the Estates of Finland held in Helsinki referred to themselves by the collective name 'Councillors of the Swedish realm and estates in the Grand Duchy of Finland'.[96] Even as early as 1598 Colonel Arved Ericsson of Lindöö called himself a stadtholder in the Grand Duchy of Finland in a letter.[97] Indeed, it seems that while the Grand Duchy of Finland had lived a kind of 'virtual life' in kings' titles and heraldic representations since the 1580s, at the turn of the century it began to be understood and presented as a physical, territorial, and spatial entity that could also be understood separately from the royal titles.

The territorialization of the Grand Duchy of Finland on maps

With the exception of nautical charts the primary function of renaissance maps was not to help the traveller move from one place to another. Until the early seventeenth century surveying and mapmaking had not developed to the point that it generally made sense to use them as a guide when travelling. With the development of land measurement technology maps became more accurate in the second half of the sixteenth century.[98] As it was now possible to present the location and characteristics of places and natural formations on maps fairly reliably, their military importance increased.[99] Previously, maps were symbolic representations of regions, countries, and peoples and their relative positions to each other. Cartographical presentations made it possible to provide effective information about the characteristics of regions and peoples. The task of maps especially, however, was to show the powers and spheres of power of the princes.[100] By choosing what was and what was not shown on the map, one could influence the viewer's perception of how things were, should be, or would be.

When a map is a graphical representation of an existing or desired spatial reality, it reflects how the reality or its desired perception was understood in its time. Maps of the past are thus also good sources for studying contemporaries' perceptions of territories and the relationships between them.[101] The lack of accurate measurement methods meant map presentations of lands less well known to map creators resulted in peculiar distortions and shapes. This particularly applies to the representation of

95. Juva 1951, 29. 'handterar, ställer och optager alle the saker, som angå Storfurstendömet Finlandh…' Quotation according to Juva.
96. Stiernman I 1728, 701; Svenska riksdagsakter, första serien, avdelning II, tiden från 1611, 533. 'Wij effterskrefne Sweriges Rijkes Rådh och Landz-Ständer i Storfurstendömet Finlandh af Ridderskapet och Adelen / Biskop och Presterskapet / Krigzbefähl / Borgerskap och menige Allmoge / som nu i Helsingfors hafwe församblade warit […].' Translation in Finnish see Suomen historian dokumentteja 1 1968, 245.
97. Letter of Arvid Ericsson to the northern parishes (prosteriet), 16 February, 1598. Svenska riksdagsakter, avdelning 1, 1521–1611, fjärde delen 1597–1598, 560. '*tillförordnad uthi krijgzöfwerste och ståthållare stad uthi storfurstendömet Finland.*'
98. Lindgren, 477–508, esp. 483–484.
99. Cf. Ehrensvärd 2006, 191.
100. See Harley 2001, 52–60; Katajala 2011, 58–91.
101. Eng 2001, 354.

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the Finnish peninsula. In Olaus Magnus's *Carta Marina* (1539), the Finnish peninsula protrudes as a narrow 'nose' towards Sweden and Stockholm. The Gulf of Finland, on the other hand, stretches far to the east. Apparently, the proportions of the map illustrate how distances were perceived when travelling: the busy Stockholm–Turku route was felt to be short, while the journey from Stockholm to the town of Viipuri at the bottom of the Gulf of Finland lasted a long time, which is why the gulf and its coastline extended far to the east. The tradition of presenting the shape of Finland as a headland extending towards Stockholm continued in several variations in many map representations as late as the seventeenth century.[102]

In 1603 Duke Charles, the regent of Sweden who had deposed King Sigismund, commissioned the Royal Secretary Anders Bureus, who was familiar with mapping, to prepare a map of the northern kingdoms. Making the map was a slow process, and after the Peace Treaty of 1617 Bureus spent several years in Finland measuring and mapping the kingdom's new eastern border and borderland. The task given by Charles to Bureus was not completed until 1626, when the 'New and accurate drawing of the Arctic World' (*Orbis Arctoi Nova et Accurata Delineatio*) was printed.[103] In Bureus's map, the Finnish peninsula has been given a new, somehow correct, shape. The details presented on the map, such as rivers, lakes, and places, are also significantly more precisely defined than in previous map presentations. During the seventeenth century Bureus's map became the norm, according to which a large part of the subsequent map representations of the territory of Finland were drawn up.

Bureus has attached an extensive text, 'A description of the northern world and kingdom of Sweden' (*Orbis Arctoi Imprimisq. Regni Sveciæ descriptio*), describing the Nordic countries on his map. Bureus does not, however, mention anything about Finland as a grand duchy but reflects on the origin of the name of Finland, describes the Finns as a people, breaks down the peculiarities of the Finnish language, and recounts events related to Finland and the history of relations between Sweden and Russia over the last few decades in particular. On a couple of occasions Bureus refers to the contemporaries' notions that the Finns had their own kings before the Swedish conquest. The Grand Duchy of Finland appears on the map of Bureus only in the royal titles of Gustaf II Adolph and Queen Maria Eleonora[104] (*Magna Princeps Finlandia*) depicted in the large cartouche in its upper left corner. The coats of arms of Swedish provinces circulate the portraits of royalty. Above Gustaf II Adolph is Sweden's royal coat of arms and next to it the coat of arms of the Duchy of Uppland. Above the head of Maria Eleonora is her princely emblem and next to it, looking from the map, on the

102. See e.g. Vanhoja Suomen karttoja 1973, 38–39 (Adrian Veen, *Tabula exactissima Regnorum Sueciæ et Norvegiæ*, 1636); Ehrensvärd 2006, 62–63, 148–149 (*Adrian Veen, Nativus Sueciae adiacentiumque regnorum typus, 163*); Strang 2020, 20–21 (several examples from years 1570–1595). Referring to Matti Klinge, Torbjörn Eng has argued that presenting the north and south coasts of the Åland Sea and the Gulf of Finland as narrow straits was because of a desire to present the kingdom as one. This interpretation is open to doubt, especially because Matti Klinge (referring to Jacob Ziegler's map of 1532) writes only that sea distances between Finland, Åland, Roslagen, Saaremaa, and Estonia seem insignificant and easy to traverse. Klinge 1985, 9; Eng 2001, 359

103. Ehrensvärd 2006, 145–156.

104. A decorative shield with a place for the name and coat of arms. Cartouches have been used for inscriptions on maps and books.

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left-hand side, is the Grand Duchy of Finland's coat of arms.[105] In Bureus's proposal the Grand Duchy of Finland is therefore still even more of an abstraction attached to the title than it is a territorially defined area. In most later versions of Bureus's map the Grand Duchy is similarly represented in the dedication made to the ruler at the time of the map.[106]

In the well-known Dutch mapmaker Jan Blaeu's *Atlas Major* there are twelve maps based on Anders Bureus's *Orbis Arctoi* map, ten of which represent the Swedish realm or a part of it. One of the maps shows the Grand Duchy of Finland (*Magnus Ducatus Finlandiæ*). All the maps have a dedication to a member of the royal family, an overlord, or a warlord. The map of the Grand Duchy of Finland is dedicated to Field Marshal Count Gustaf Karlsson Horn, who had distinguished himself in the 30-year war and the war against Denmark in the 1640s. In 1651 Horn received the title of count, and his county included the town of Pori on the western coast of Finland and villages in its surrounding areas. In 1652 he became the Baron of Marienborg, and the following year the Marshal of the Kingdom.[107] Although Blaeu's map atlas did not appear as a whole until 1662, it is more than likely that its maps were drawn in the previous years and finally assembled in an atlas. Because Horn's titles, the Count of Pori, the Baron of Marienborg, and the Marshal of the Kingdom (*Comiti Biörneburgi, B. in Marienburgh* [...] *Sueciæ Senatori et Campi Marehchallo*), are listed in the cartouche decorated with a family coat of arms in the map's upper left corner, the most likely year of appearance of the first map of the Grand Duchy of Finland is 1653 or a year or two later.[108]

Jan Strang has uncovered the background of Blaeu's maps. Blaeu himself contacted Queen Christina of Sweden in 1649 and proposed the publication of maps of the Swedish realm and counties. The queen was positive, but when the matter was discussed in the Council of the Realm, Gustaf Horn opposed the drafting of maps because they might 'expose' (*yppa*) Sweden to its enemies. The queen did not waver, however, for she wanted to show off her kingdom as other kingdoms had. She ordered that Blaeu be provided with the necessary copies of maps and documents of Sweden and its counties.[109] As the Horn family was of Finnish origin, and Gustaf Horn had been the family's most significant aristocrat in the Swedish realm in his own time, and as his county fief was also in Finland, it was natural for him to be chosen as the object of the map's dedication. In the upper right corner of the map is a decorative cartouche with the inscription '*Magnus Ducatus Finlandiæ, Auct. Andrea Buræo Sueco*'. The map is therefore drawn according to Bureus's *Orbis arctoi* map. In the upper centre of the cartouche is the coat of arms of the Grand Duchy of Finland. Looking from the

105. See Ehrensvärd 2006, 154–155; Strand 2020, 25, 27.
106. Cf. version of Bureus's map in the works Vanhoja Suomen karttoja 1973, 42–43, sekä; Strang 2020, 38–39 (Claes Visscher/Nicolas Piscator, *Tabula exactissima Regnorum Sueciæ et Norvegiæ* […]). In Strang's work the coloured map dated to 1630; in Vanhoja Suomen karttoja 1973 the same printing plate, but with the map uncoloured, dated to 1633; also Strang 2020, 43–44 (Henrik Hondius*: Serenissmæ Potentitissimæq Principi ad Dominæ, Dominæ Christinæ Svecorum* […], 1635); Strang 2020, 49 (Joan Blaeu: *Svecia Regnum Avct Andrea Bureo Sveco,* 1645).
107. For Gustaf Karlsson Horn see Virrankoski 2004, 103–104.
108. Strang and many others suggest 1651 as the year the map was drawn. Cf. Strang 2020, 48.
109. Svenska riksrådets protocoll 1649 XIII 1912, 186; translation in Finnish: see Strang 2020, 48.

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map, the coats of arms of Southern Finland are on the right, and the coats of arms of Northern Finland are on the left. In the top row on the right is the coat of arms of Kainuu (*Caiania*), and the coat of arms of Savonia is on the left. In the lower row the coats of arms from left to right include the provinces of Tavastia, Uusimaa, and Karelia.

The Grand Duchy of Finland is bordered in red, which has been added later to the map. It is unknown when the hand colouring of the map was done.[110] Similarly, the Swedish coast and the border of the kingdom in the east are also bordered in red. The Kexholm province, annexed to Sweden in 1617, is separated from the Grand Duchy by green shading. The province of Kainuu stretches from the Vaasa region to the north, where it is bordered by the River Oulujoki, and to the southern shore of Lake Oulujärvi, where the map shows the Grand Duchy extending in the north. Kainuu is separated from Häme by a watershed called Suomenselkä, presented as a mountain range. Karelia is separated from Uusimaa and Savonia by a mountain range drawn from the Kymijoki river to Lake Saimaa.[111]

Around the same time as the publication of Blaeu's map of the Grand Duchy of Finland, maps were printed in a collection called *Novus Atlas* published by the heirs of the Dutch publisher Jan Janssonius (1588–1664). The map collection was compiled after Janssonius's death in 1664: his heirs are listed as the publisher, but the maps may have been printed earlier. The maps' detail is similar to Blaeu's map of the Grand Duchy of Finland, with small differences showing that it is engraved on its own copperplate. The map is dedicated to Jacob Schütz, knowledge of whom is lost to posterity. The cartouche in the upper right corner again bears the inscription 'Grand Duchy of Finland, a new and accurate drawing' (*Magnus Ducatus Finlandiæ. Nova et accurata delineation*). At the bottom of the cartouche is the coat of arms of the Grand Duchy of Finland in the centre and the arms of the provinces in the same order, although not in straight rows, as in Blaeu's map.[112]

A map of the Grand Duchy of Finland based on Bureus's *Orbis Arctoi* map was published in the last years of the 1690s. Jan Blaeu's printing plates had come into the possession of the Dutch cartographer Frederik de Wit (1630–1706). He made corrections and changes to them and published the maps in his own name. De Wit

110. For an uncoloured copy of the map see Vanhoja Suomen karttoja 1973, 48–49.
111. See Strang 2020, 50–51.
112. See Vanhoja Suomen karttoja 1973, 58–59. The map presented in this work is colourless. There are a few provincial boundaries outlined as dotted lines. The map is dated 1680. Instead in the map presented in Strang 2020, 52–53 boundaries of the provinces are marked with slight colouring and partly as dotted lines. In the map in van Ermen & van Mingroot 1987, 108–109, also dedicated to Jacob Schütz, it seems the same but reworked printing plate was used. The provinces are separated in the map by intense colours, and provincial boundaries are represented by dotted lines. As the year the latter was printed is estimated to be about 1707, it is clear that with the increase of data the same printing plate could be subsequently improved. A map's data must therefore be evaluated from the perspective of the year it was printed, not as an image of the time the original printing plate was made. Special care must be taken with the interpretation of the inscriptions, as the colouring of the maps printed on the same tile differs, and there is no information left about when the hand colouring was done on the maps. Eng 2001, 367–368 strongly emphasises interpreting one coloured version of the map of the Grand Duchy of Finland, and this leads him to erroneous conclusions.

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removed the left-hand cartouche of Blaeu's map but retained the right-hand one, changing it to a text box only, which now read 'A new table of the Grand Duchy of Finland, divided into provinces, enlarged and corrected by F. de Wit' (*Nova Tabula Magni Ducatus Finlandiæ in Provincias Divisia, Multis Locis aucta et Correcta per F. de Wit*).[113] The most significant change and addition to the previous maps of the Grand Duchy is that the Finnish provinces have now been separated with dotted lines as borders between them.[114] In this map the Kexholm province is no longer separated from the territory of the Grand Duchy (see Fig. 2). The fact that it is not shown on the provincial coats of arms in the cartouche suggests that the region does not belong to the Grand Duchy. Given the map was printed on Blaeu's original plates, it was impossible to change the coats of arms without changing the image of the entire cartouche. The absence of Kexholm province from the coats of arms is therefore understandable, even if the map itself indicates the area was already perceived as part of the Grand Duchy. The maps of the Grand Duchy of Finland well reflect the development that occurred in the second half of the seventeenth century from a regionally unstructured idea of a grand duchy with medieval counties without exact borders into a grand duchy with a hierarchical division into provinces defined by borders.

Just after the mid-seventeenth century, the Grand Duchy of Finland also appears on maps depicting the Swedish realm, the Nordic countries, or northern Europe.[115] After Bureus's *Orbis Arctoi* the next attempt to draw a general cartographic representation of the entire Swedish Empire (*välde*) was a hand-drawn map of 1688 by Carl Gripenberg in the Swedish Land Survey Office. It names Livonia, Estonia, Ingria, and Kexholm province, but not the Grand Duchy of Finland. Finland is presented as a single entity with Sweden. However, the handwritten legend states that it is a map of 'the whole kingdoms of Svea and Göta, the Grand Duchy of Finland, Livonia, Estonia and Ingria (...)'.[116] The Dutch mapmakers seem to have known the Grand Duchy well. For example, in Joannes van Keulen's nautical chart of the Gulf of Finland in the early 1700s there is a large inscription on the Finnish coast in capital letters: '*Het Groot Hertogdom van Finland*' (Grand Duchy of Finland).[117]

In Erik Dahlberg's map of the Nordic countries in 1696, Finland is named only '*Finlandia*'. The coats of arms of the counties adorn the regions. In the centre is the coat of arms of the Grand Duchy of Finland, which is presented in the same size as the coat of arms of the Kingdom of Sweden in Sweden, the coat of arms of the Kingdom

113. See Strang 2020, 54–55.
114. In Vanhoja Suomen karttoja 1973, 68–69, the map is dated 1680, and the copy there is uncoloured; in Strang 2020, 54–55, the map is dated to the end of the seventeenth or to the early eighteenth century, and the provinces' boundaries are reinforced with intense colours. Likewise, the colouring of the provinces' territories separate them.
115. See also Eng 2001, 369.
116. See Ehrensvärd 2006, 240; Strang 2020, 47. 'Denna Geographiske Carta öfwer heela Swea och Giöta Rijke, samt Stoorfurstendömet Finland.'
117. Joannes van Keulen, *Nieuwe Afteekening de Finlandse Golf of Bodem* […]. Nordenskiöld Collection, National Library of Finland. Digital collections. The map is dated 1700 in the collection, but because the construction of St Petersburg and the Kronstadt fortification (under the original name of Kronslot on the map) has already started and is marked on the map, which happened in 1703, the map must be from the beginning of the eighteenth century.

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of Norway, and the coat of arms of the Grand Duchy of Muscovy. The Grand Duchy is thus symbolically noted, though it is not marked on the map with borders, nor is it explicitly named.[118] Similarly, on Petter Gedda's map of the Baltic Sea region of 1694 the inscription 'Swerige' is indicated in Sweden, 'Finland' in Finland. Sweden's territory is adorned with its royal coat of arms, and the Grand Duchy of Finland's coat of arms is drawn on the site of Finland (this time, however, with the ducal crown, so the model is probably the tomb of King Gustaf).[119]

Yet it should be emphasized that throughout this period there were maps of the Swedish realm in which there was no information about the Grand Duchy of Finland. For example, in the atlas commissioned by Queen Christina in 1649 from Jan Blaeu the map of the kingdom dedicated to Prince Charles Gustaf, who ascended the throne in 1654, Finland is an integral part of Sweden, and the Grand Duchy is not mentioned in any title other than the prince's title as a grand duke.[120] Similarly, Blaeu's 1662 map of the Nordic countries does not distinguish Finland at all from the Swedish part of the realm.[121] In a French map of the Nordic countries from 1676 Finland is marked '*Finlande*'.[122] In the map of the Swedish realm printed in the early 1700s by Frederik de Wit, and in the map of the Swedish Empire by Gerhard Valk, printed around 1700 in Amsterdam, Finland is mentioned as a duchy (*Finlandia Dvcatus*).[123] In general maps of Northern Europe, the common expression for Finland was also '*Finlandia pars*' (*Finnish part*).

The study of seventeenth-century maps shows a clear development in which Finland was first left unmentioned or mentioned in the royal titles or dedications or presented as pictures of the coats of arms of the Grand Duchy. From the middle of the seventeenth century, it seems, Finland becomes a common toponym on maps, and the Grand Duchy of Finland begins to appear as a territorially defined concept that is presented even as equal with Sweden and other kingdoms and grand duchies. This development, however, is not straightforward. Yet it was possible to present the Finnish peninsula without reference to the Grand Duchy and even merely as a collection of Swedish provinces east of the Åland Sea and Gulf of Bothnia, but this was by no means the rule.

118. Vanhoja Suomen karttoja 1973, 24–25 (Erik Dahlberg, *Nova et Accurata Orbis Arctoi Tabvula Geographica*, 1696).
119. Petter Gedda, *Wäxande Grad-Charta öfwer Öster-Siön* […]. Nordenskiöld Collection. National Library of Finland. Digital collections.
120. See Ermen & van Mingroot 1987, 70–71.
121. Vanhoja Suomen karttoja 1973, 60–61 (Johannes Blaeu, *Svecia, Dania and Norvegia*, 1662). The map originates from the collection Queen Christina ordered from Blaeu in 1649. The collection was completed in 1662, but the map may be somewhat older. The map is a variation of Anders Bureus's *Orbis Arctoi* map.
122. Vanhoja Suomen karttoja 1973, 60–61 (Pierre du Val, *Le Royaume de Suede* […], 1676). Likewise, in Vanhoja Suomen karttoja 1973, 76–77 (Pierre Van der Aa, *La Suede suivant les nouv. observ*. […], 1714).
123. Cf. van Ermen & van Mingroot 1987, 102–103; Old maps of Finland 1973, 70–71 (Gerhard Valk, Leonhardt Valk, *Suecialways Amountæ* […], c. 1700).

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The place of the Grand Duchy of Finland in the order of precedence

The Swedish realm expanded rapidly in the first half of the seventeenth century. As a result of its active Russian policy, Sweden annexed the Kexholm province on the western shore and north of Lake Ladoga, and Ingria at the bottom of the Gulf of Finland, in the 1617 Peace Treaty. The long war against Poland ended with the peace concluded at Altmark in 1629, in which Livonia, east of the Daugava River, and the city of Riga were transferred to Sweden. Sweden fought several wars against Denmark in the 1630s and 1640s, and as a result annexed the Norwegian provinces of Jämtland and Härjedalen in 1645, and the Danish provinces of Scania, Halland, and Blekinge, and Bohuslän, which split from Norway, in 1658. Sweden also participated in the 30-year war, and in the peace concluded at Westphalia in 1648 it received the enclaves of Bremen-Verden and Pomerania on the north German coast.[124]

In his famous work 'A description of Sweden, Götaland, Finland and their subordinate provinces' (*Epitome Descriptionis Sueciæ, Gothiæ, Fenningiæ et subjectarum provinciarum*) (1650), Mikael Wexionius, professor of history at the Academy of Turku, presented the regions of the Swedish realm. He started by describing the three duchies of Svealand. He then introduced Götaland, in which he also included the southern territories captured from Denmark. He next described the northern provinces of Norrland and Lapland, followed by Finland (*Fenningia*) and its provinces, and then Ingria, Estonia, and Livonia.[125] The order of precedence of these Swedish territories was occasionally discussed during the seventeenth century. The Grand Duchy of Finland clearly appears as an entity in its own right in these discussions and listings of regions. It is placed in order of precedence immediately after the ancient Swedish kingdoms of Svealand and Götaland, the mysterious Vendi people added by King Gustaf to the royal title, and after the first of the Swedish provinces of Svealand, Uppland.

In the Diet of 1634 the nobility discussed the funeral ceremonies of Gustaf II Adolph and the order of the funeral procession's flags. The minutes accurately recorded horsemen and flagbearers in the reverse order of the territories' precedence. First, the counties considered less significant would pass, followed by the most valuable principalities (Swedish *furstendömme*). Of these, in reverse order of precedence, the flags of Estonia, Eastern Götaland, Southern Finland, Småland, Northern Finland, Western Götaland, the Grand Duchy of Finland, Uppland, Vends (*Wändes*), Goths (*Giöthes*), and Sweden (*Sweriges*) would be the last to pass.[126] Uppland's position in the hierarchy of values was ahead of the Grand Duchy of Finland in the same way as in the coat of arms on King Gustaf's tomb in Upsala Cathedral, where it was placed on the right of the national coat of arms, with the coat of arms of the Grand Duchy of Finland on the left.

The same order of precedence was regularly followed in the symbolic representations of the territories that belonged to Sweden, achieved with the aid of coats of arms.[127] For example, the portrait of Queen Christina (who was 15 years

124. Katajala 2005, 14–20.
125. Wexionius 1650.
126. Ridderskaps och adelns riksdagsprotokoll, 1633–1636 II 1856, 105–107.
127. See Juva 1951, 86.

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old at the time) on the preface to the Bible published in Finnish in 1642 is flanked by the coats of arms of the Swedish provinces. In the upper centre, to the right of the Swedish royal coats of arms, seen from the picture, is the coat of arms of the province of Uppland, and on the left is the coat of arms of the Grand Duchy of Finland. Above the other coats of arms is the open crown of a Duchy; above the coat of arms of the Grand Duchy of Finland is the closed crown of the Grand Duke (or Grand Duchess). Christina's titles are written under the picture in Finnish as 'Christina, by the grace of God, the chosen Queen and Hereditary Princess of Sweden, Goths and Wends, Grand Duchess in Finland, Duchess in Estonia and Karelia, the Maiden of Ingria'.[128]

In the latter Diet of 1660 the nobility defined the marching order of the flagbearers in Charles X Gustaf's funeral procession, which differed somewhat from the procession of 26 years before. The position of the Grand Duchy of Finland, however, was unchanged: Sweden; Götaland; Vends; Uppland; the Grand Duchy of Finland; Western Götaland; Northern Finland; Southern Finland; Eastern Götaland; Scania; Estonia; and Livonia. After these would come the provincial flags.[129] The flags of Sweden and Götaland thus symbolized the old kingdoms, and Eastern and Western Götaland formed their own 'principalities' within that kingdom in the same way that Southern and Northern Finland were included under the Grand Duchy of Finland. In the Diet of 1664 the clergy had to justify the regions' hierarchies of values when the new Diocese of Scania enquired about its place in the order of precedence. The discussion took place by diocese, and it was first explained that in the king's titles the place of the Duchy of Scania immediately followed the Grand Duchy of Finland, but in the order of precedence of the dioceses Scania belonged next to the Diocese of Viipuri. Yet the order was also justified because Scania had been annexed to Sweden by war, and because the king had then placed Scania in his list of titles immediately after the Grand Duchy of Finland, the diocese could take its place immediately after the Diocese of Turku. The order of precedence of the seven dioceses mentioned in Swedish law would thus not be confused.[130]

Grand Duchy of Finland as an administrative entity

A new Court of Appeal began its activities in Turku in 1623. The order establishing the new Court of Appeal makes no mention of the Grand Duchy of Finland. The new court's establishment was ordered because the king's subjects who lived in Finland had a long and expensive journey to seek justice at the Svea Court of Appeal in Stockholm.[131] When the court received its seal, however, it was the seal of the Court of Appeal of the Grand Duchy of Finland (*sigillum svpremi ivdicii magni ducatus Finlandiæ*).[132] Despite the seal, the name 'Turku Court of Appeal' (Swedish *hovrätten*

128. Bible 1642, preface. 'Christina Jumalan armost Ruodzin, Gothein ia Wendein walittu Drotningi ia Peri Furstinna, Suuri Furstinna Suomenmaalla, Hertuinna wiroin ja Carelein maalla, Fröking Ingerin maalla.'
129. Ridderskaps och adelns riksdagsprotokoll VIII, 1660 senare riksdag 1886, 253.
130. Prästeståndets riksdagsprotokoll 1660–1664 II 1954, 305–306.
131. Schmedeman 1706, 218–219.
132. See the images of the seal in the appendix between pages x and xi in Westerlund 1923 and in Juva 1951, 106. In these sources the seals of the Court of Appeal of the Grand Duchy of

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i Åbo) was soon established in the documents. Yet the designation of the Court of Appeal of the Grand Duchy of Finland occasionally appears during the seventeenth century. For example, in the 1634 Constitution the Grand Duchy of Finland is presented as its own jurisdiction. The constitution stipulates that there are four courts of appeal in the Swedish realm. The first was Stockholm, an area of the old kingdom of Svea (*Svea rike*). The second was in the city of Jönköping, and its territory was the Kingdom of Götaland (*Giötha rike*). The third was the Finnish Court of Appeal in the city of Turku, and it worked in the Grand Duchy of Finland and 'both Karelias'. The fourth was the Livonian Court of Appeal in Tartu, to which Ingria also belonged.[133]

The form of government thus equated the old Swedish kingdoms of Svea and Göta and Finland to legal territories, with Finland separately specified as the Grand Duchy of Finland. Here one can again sense echoes of Finland's perception as one of the old kingdoms from which the Swedish realm was formed. Mentioning Finland alongside the old kingdoms of Svealand and Götaland was not to underline its separate character: the aim was to underline in a 'feudal' way the unity of the realm (*Rike*), which consisted of three previous kingdoms. The notion of the Grand Duchy can be interpreted as the frame of personal ties between the ruler and the inhabitants, with the Court of Appeal representing the old tradition of appealing to the king and the law as the cornerstone of the legitimacy of the king's rule.

The bishops and professors of Sweden submitted a report to the Diet of 1637 recommending that two or three more universities, or academies, should be established in the Swedish realm. In 1630 the University of Upsala had already received a '*placenta*' in Tartu in Swedish Livonia. New academies should also be established in Linköping and Turku.[134] The Finnish historian Matti Klinge sees in this plan the intention, previously demonstrated in the establishment of the courts of appeal, that every basic part of the kingdom, that is, the kingdoms of Svea and Göta, the Grand Duchy of Finland, and Livonia, which with Ingria were called the Baltic provinces (*Östersjöprovinser*), should have a university.[135] Of these, the Academy of Turku was established in 1640. Instead of the old Kingdom of Göta and Linköping, a new university was given to the city of Lund in the newly ceded province of Scania. The previous Danish provinces of Scania, Halland, and Bohuslän, however, were

Finland are different. Neither author indicates the timing of the seal of their choice. Both seals show the goddess of justice seated and holding in her left hand the symbol of justice, a scale. She is presumably the Greek goddess of law, Dike, because in both seals the goddess holds a sword in her left hand. The position of the goddess is different in the seals. The seal presented by Juva lacks the coat of arms of the Grand Duchy of Finland, to which he draws attention separately, but has the coats of arms of eight Finnish provinces. Two putti are bearing the royal crown above the goddess's head. In the seal presented by Westerholm a hand stretching out from the cloud holds a royal crown over the head of the goddess, and the hand of the goddess holding the sword leans on a shield with the coat of arms of the Grand Duchy of Finland. At the bottom of the seal at the feet of the goddess is a slithering snake. The text circling the seal is the same in both.

133. Stiernman II 1729, 894.
134. Schybergson 1915, 7–8.
135. Klinge 1987, 62, 73.

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included under the concept of Götaland,[136] and the allocation of universities to the main parts of the realm was thus realized.

In general, when the Council of the Realm discussed the whole realm, it was divided into four main parts: the old kingdoms of Svea and Göta, the Grand Duchy of Finland (usually only mentioned as Finland), and the provinces beyond the Baltic Sea, which were called Livonia. The first three, Svea, Göta, and Finland, formed the kingdom proper (*rike*); the regions south of the Baltic Sea under Swedish rule, Ingria and part of the Kexholm province, were discussed as provinces at the Council.[137] The provinces' administration and political rights were organized differently from the core regions. The most significant differences were that the provinces lacked the right to send representatives to the Diet, and there was no organized military conscription. Although Swedish law was also introduced to the provinces, they were subject to the Tartu Court of Appeal, where the jurisdiction was based on the principles of Roman law, unlike in other Swedish courts of appeal.[138] Torbjörn Eng distinguishes between the territories of the kingdom proper (*rike*) and the provinces under Swedish rule (*välde*).[139] The kingdom proper included the Kingdom of Svea, the Kingdom of Göta, and the Grand Duchy of Finland. However, the provinces of today's southern Sweden, won from Denmark in the wars of 1630s and 1640s, were quickly integrated into the empire, and their nobility soon acquired political rights: that is, they were able to participate in the Diet's work. In his work on the territories of the Swedish realm Mikael Wexonius thus presents Scania, Halland, and Bohuslän as belonging to Götaland as early as 1650.[140]

The source material clearly shows that in the late 1630s and 1640s the Swedish Council of the Realm and Christina's regency paid more attention than before to Finland. It was seen as an overseas but quite uncivilized part of the realm that needed to be brought together more firmly with Sweden's core regions. When the postal service was organized in Finland in 1638, the instrument of appointment to this task was given to Steen von Steenhusen for the Grand Duchy of Finland.[141] An important part of this 'process of civilization' was the assignment of governors-general to those areas of the empire that were to be developed and drawn more closely into the realm. The 1634 Constitution especially enabled the appointment of governors to the conquered Baltic provinces, that is, Livonia, Ingria, and Kexholm province, but also to the old core areas of the kingdom like Western Götaland, Småland, and Finland.[142] Finland was given a governor-general in 1623, after which governors-general occasionally served in Finland until the middle of the eighteenth century.

When Per Brahe (the younger) served as governor-general in Finland in 1637, he was the Governor-General of the Grand Duchy of Finland, not the Governor-General

136. See Wexionius 1650.
137. See e.g. Svenska riksrådets protokoll 1636 VI 1889, 163.
138. For more details on this, see below. Katajala 2005, 21–35, 224–244. In 1684 the Kexholm province was transferred from the Tartu Court of Appeal to the Turku Court of Appeal.
139. Eng 2001, 61–63.
140. Wexionius 1650.
141. Tigerstedt 1849–1850, 91. Fulmacht för Steen Von Steenhusen att anrätta Påstväsendet j Finland. Dat. Stockholm den 2 Junii 1638.
142. Odhner 1865, 170; Katajala 2005, 23–26.

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of Finland.[143] Brahe was again assigned to this position in 1648. King Charles X Gustaf wrote a decree to Erik Gyllenstierna in 1657 in which he stated that he considered it necessary to appoint the Governor-General 'to our Grand Duchy of Finland with its bordering provinces' (*wår storfurstendöme Finland med angrentzande provincer*). This time, however, the order was not sent, and because of the ongoing war with Russia, the civil affairs of the Grand Duchy of Finland were entrusted to the Marshall of the army in Finland, Gustaf Evertsson Horn. Similarly, Herman Fleming's order as governor-general was given for 'the previously mentioned Finland'. Finland was earlier mentioned in the document specifically as a grand duchy. When the reappointment of a governor-general in Finland was discussed in 1674, the Grand Duchy of Finland was constantly mentioned. The matter lapsed, however.[144]

Matti Klinge sees Per Brahe's term as governor-general specifically as a period of Finland's 'civilization process'. Brahe made long tours of Finland, including its eastern border, where he had been given extensive lands. Although in his travelogues Brahe wrote that the Finns were rather uncivilized and simple people, in his report to the Council of Realm he called the Grand Duchy of Finland a vast and the most eminent land of the Swedish crown, which should be developed for precisely this reason.[145] According to Klinge the establishment of the Academy in Turku should therefore be seen as an integral part of Brahe's significant reforms, including the establishment of new schools and towns, the relocation of Helsinki, the division of administrative districts into smaller ones, and the establishment of new pedagogies. He also suggests that the 'project of civilization' is evident because when the Council of the Realm drew up the charter of the Academy of Turku in 1639, it provisioned paper at the same session for the Finnish translation of the Bible (published in 1642).[146] The Academy's founding document, which was written by the regency government in the name of Queen Christina, mentions that the university will be founded 'in honour and for the beautification of our Grand Duchy of Finland'. However, it refers to the Academy a couple of times as the University of Turku (*Universitet i Åbo*), not as the Academy of the Grand Duchy of Finland.[147]

In November 1636 the Council of the Realm discussed how to promote sailing and trade in towns. The sailing of foreign merchants from ports other than the 'staple towns' (towns with foreign trade privileges) abroad and the activities of the peasants' 'village ports' were considered to hinder trade in the capitals, Stockholm in Sweden and Turku in Finland, in particular.[148] What the Council of the Realm meant by calling Stockholm the capital of Sweden and Turku the capital of Finland remains unspecified in the source. It is the only time Turku is mentioned in the published minutes of the Council (from 1621 to 1653) as the capital of Finland. The idea is

143. See Svenska riksrådets protokoll 1640, 1641 VIII förra häftet 1896, 226; also Tigerstedt 1849–1850, 42. *Fullmacht för Greffue Per Brahe att vara General Gouverneur i Finland, Åland och Begge Carelerne, Gifven Stockholm den 27 Oct. 1637.*
144. The governors-general's appointments have been described by Juva 1951, 107–108. Quotes according to Juva.
145. Svenska riksrådets protokoll 1637–1639 VIII förra häftet 1892, 324.
146. Svenska riksråds protokoll 1637–1639 VIII förra häftet 1892, 478; Klinge 1987, 61–62, 71.
147. Klinge 1987, 82–84; photo of the founding document of the Academy on page 86.
148. Svenska riksrådets protokoll 1636 VI 1889, 767. '…som skada städerne, eenkannerligen huffvudstäderne, Stockholm i Sverige och Åboo i Finlandh…'

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repeated in a royal trade decree of 1637. The decree permits subjects to organize free fairs in 'the royal residence city of Stockholm on 29 September and the second fairs in the capital of the Grand Duchy of Finland, Turku, on 8 September…'[149] In 1659 Johannes Elai Terserus, the Bishop of Turku, visited his new diocese. In the protocol the newly nominated bishop mentions that he wishes to start his visitation from Turku because it is the capital of Finland.[150]

How should we understand these mentions of Turku as the capital of Finland and even as the Grand Duchy of Finland? The Italian microhistorian Carlo Ginzburg emphasizes the importance of paying particular attention to abnormalities and small details in data. Such small clues may lead the researcher to capture the studied era's hidden thought patterns.[151] Against this frame of interpretation one might think the councillors' single mention of Turku as the capital of Finland reflects an implicit idea or a convention of thought more than serving as an explicit definition of Turku as the administrative capital of Finland. The clue to understanding the meaning of the 'capital' of those times is the definition given by the Swedish councillors of the realm in 1636, when they explained, in discussing the rights of cities, 'But the city of Stockholm draws [trade] and profits the Crown more than all towns in the kingdom and can *de jure merito* be a foundation for a capital city of Sweden'.[152]

There was no official capital in the medieval Swedish realm, but the king travelled from castle to castle and thus kept his realm together. The main city of the realm was Uppsala, which had both a castle and a cathedral. In the sixteenth century Stockholm and its 'Three Crowns' castle became the main residence of the king. The idea of Stockholm as a capital city, however, was still to be fully developed in seventeenth-century Sweden, and the previously mentioned councillors were given grounds for thinking the trade of smaller towns near Stockholm should not be developed to compete with it. The idea of Turku as the capital of Finland must be understood in the same way. It was the most important trading town; the oldest episcopal seat in the Finnish region was there; the Court of Appeal and the seat of the Governor-General had been established there in the 1620s. Just a few years after the discussion about the capital at the Council of the Realm, Sweden's third university was established in Turku. The importance given to trade and administration was the context in which Stockholm and Turku were mentioned as capitals.

149. Ordinance for the conduct of trade at two free markets in Stockholm and Turku, 25 August 1637. Stiernman II 1750, 106–107. '…anordnat twänne frij-Marknader, en i wår Kongelige Residentz Stadh Stockholm på then 29. Septemb. och then andra is Storfurstendömet Finlandz Hufwudstadh Åboo then 8. Septemb. at wara och påstånda i tre weckur eftter hwar annan.'
150. Protocol of bishop's visitation 17 August 1659. *Consitorii ecclesiatici Aboënsis protokoller 8/11 1658–16/9 1661, III*, 1902, 332. 'Förmälte och så Högw. Bisk., nembl. effter som Åboo ähr hwfutstaden här i Finland, alt så will han begynna här en general visitation först.' I owe much here to Jani Marjanen, who has allowed me to read his thought-provoking unfinished article manuscript about Turku as the capital of Finland.
151. For more on the subject see Peltonen 2007, 17.
152. Svenska riksrådets protokoll 1636 VI 1889, 213. 'Men Stockholm stadh drager och proufiterer Chronan mehr än alle städer i rijket och kan de jure merito vara itt fundament till een huffvudstadh i Swerige.'

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So, do the contemporary sources define the Grand Duchy of Finland as a territory? When Niels Bielke and Gabriel Oxenstierna were appointed Governor of Finland in 1623 and 1631 respectively, the instrument of appointment excluded Åland and Ostrobothnia (*Österbotten*) from their territory. When Per Brahe was appointed Governor-General of Finland in 1637, however, his region was defined as the Grand Duchy of Finland, Åland, and 'both Karelias' (*Storfurstendömet Finland medh Åland och bägge Carelerne*). Ostrobothnia was thus outside the territory of the Grand Duchy. It was seen as belonging to the province of Västerbotten west of the Gulf of Bothnia, together forming an entity called 'Bottom' (*Botten*). Throughout the seventeenth century there was a debate about the extent to which Ostrobothnia fell under the concept of Finland. In some contexts it was considered to belong to Finland; in others it was not.

The phrase 'both Karelias', on the other hand, is a tricky one. It consisted of two parts, the Karelian Isthmus around the town of Viipuri, which had belonged to the realm since the fourteenth century, and Kexholm province, which the Swedish realm annexed in 1617. The first was without doubt considered part of Finland, but the latter was not. In 1641 Kexholm province and Ingria formed their own governorship.[153] With Livonia (Estonian, Lithuanian, and Latvian territories belonging to Sweden) it was included in the Baltic Sea provinces. At a conceptual level, however, the Karelian Isthmus and Kexholm province both belonged to the concept of 'Karelia', which was symbolically presented with its own coat of arms on King Gustaf I's tomb in Uppsala Cathedral. So if it was necessary to define a territory including both Finland and Kexholm province, it was necessary to mention that it included 'both Karelias'.[154] If nothing special was mentioned about Karelia, it was self-evident that the Karelian Isthmus was included in the concepts of Finland and the Grand Duchy of Finland, but that Kexholm province was not.

When Brahe was appointed Governor-General of Finland for the second time in 1648, his administrative region was defined as the 'said Finland with Åland and Ostrobothnia' (öfwer bem:te Finlandh medsampt Åland och Österbotten). Finland here referred to an earlier reference to the Grand Duchy of Finland. The region now also included Ostrobothnia, but because it was mentioned separately it can be inferred that it was still not considered to belong to the Grand Duchy of Finland. Kexholm province was not mentioned in Brahe's ordinance. Because it belonged to the region governed by the Governor-General of Ingria, it was not included in Brahe's governorship.[155] However, large territories in the northern part of Kexholm province belonged to the landed donation he had been given, the County of Kajaani.[156] So, when Brahe made inspection visits to that area, founded towns, and attempted to promote trade there, he must have done so as a count, not as a governor-general.

The Governor-General's records give some indication of how the territory of the Grand Duchy of Finland, now clearly understood as a territory, was understood in the seventeenth century. The concept included the most central areas of the Finnish peninsula, but Ostrobothnia, Åland, and Kexholm province were excluded. The idea

153. Juva 1951, 110; Katajala 1994, 73.
154. Cf. Juva 1951, 110.
155. Odhner 1865, 170.
156. Kokkonen 2002, 30–32, 41–42.

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of Turku as the 'capital' of the Grand Duchy of Finland, the most important city for trade and administration, also implied that even in the first half of the seventeenth century in the 1630s and 1640s at the latest, the Grand Duchy was taking a territorially defined shape, which is visible in the instruments of appointment of Governors-General of Finland.

Grand Duchy of Finland as the fatherland of Finns

Perhaps the greatest work of Swedish Göthicism is Olof Rudbeck's 'Atlantica' (1675). Rudbeck seeks to prove that Sweden is the mythical lost Atlantis with a marvellous history. Because his main arguments are linguistic, based on the relationship of Swedish with the other European main languages, he pays little attention to Finland. However, whenever Finland is mentioned in Rudbeck's 'Atlantica', it is always presented with Sweden as a pair: Sweden and Finland. For example, according to Rudbeck, referring to Plato, the 'Bottom' (Gulf of Bothnia) lies between Sweden and Finland.[157] He also explains that Finland is the mythical isle of 'Vinland' near the Arctic Ocean mentioned by Adam of Bremen (before 1050–1081/85) and in the Viking sagas of Snorri (Sturluson) (1179–1241).[158]

Rudbeck's 'Atlantica' is markedly patriotic. One of its central concepts is 'fatherland' (Latin *patria*, Swedish *fädernesland*). While medieval Swedish legal codifications use the concept of '*fosterland*'[159] to mean the realm or country where one was born and where one is subject to the king, according to the Dictionary of the Swedish Academy (*Svenska Akademiens Ordbok, SAOB*) the concept of 'fatherland' has been used in Sweden from at least the early sixteenth century.[160] We have no proper sources that allow us to judge if 'ordinary' Swedes or Finns identified themselves with this 'fatherland'. Nor do we know, if they did identify with Finland as their 'fatherland', what the content of the concept was for them: was it a more local concept meaning the home county or even a smaller regional unit, or was it the rather abstract concept of the Swedish kingdom? In any event, for the medieval law of the land in the fourteenth century and for Rudbeck in the seventeenth century, the meaning of 'fatherland' was above all the attribute of 'Sweden'. The second connotation was therefore the realm of the King of Sweden.

Rudbeck's fanciful linguistic theories were questioned even in his own time. Despite this, how he distinguishes between peoples is interesting when we ponder the relationship between the concepts of Sweden and Finland and being a Swede or a Finn in the seventeenth century. According to Rudbeck the division into different peoples is based first on the origin from one 'forefather' (usually one of Noah's sons or grandsons), second on language, third on the country they inhabit – although

157. Rudbeck 1675, 154. '…som ligger emillan Swerige och Finland.'
158. Rudbeck 1675, 292.
159. Magnus Erikssons landsag 1350, Höghmåla, VIII. 'Nu än man lede an fostirland sitt här vtlänzkan. Bar avoghdan skiöld amott sinom rättom härra. Oc häriar sitt eghtt fostiland…'
160. SAOB 1925, Spalt F 1228, band 8, 'fosterland', https://www.saob.se/artikel/?unik=F_1101-0174.6AqK&pz=3 (accessed 30.8.2023); SAOB 1926, Spalt F 2036 band 9, 'fädernesland', https://www.saob.se/artikel/?unik=F_2023-0010.ZCdY&pz=3 (accessed 30.8.2023).

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people speaking the same language can live in different countries, and fourth on the laws, stipulations, and manners of a people living under a single authority. These factors, according to Rudbeck, are based on the Bible. Other factors dividing people are physical signs like hair and skin colour.[161] In the seventeenth-century Swedish realm it was therefore unsurprising that the Finns, who had their own language and customs, as well as a mythical origin separate from the Swedes, were considered their own people. At the same time, since the Finns and Finland were subject to the same authority and king and to the same laws and regulations, they were also part of Sweden, and Finns were in some way also 'Swedes'.

An interesting near-contemporary text to Rudbeck's work is the Chronicle of Finland, written by an unknown author. Its most likely author is Elias Brenner (1647–1717), the son of a Finnish clergyman and a respected scholar of history in his time. If the chronicle is indeed Brenner's, the text can be dated to 1672–1674.[162] The author of the chronicle writes that the information has been collected especially from Icelandic and Norwegian histories (sagas) and the works of other historians who have written about ancient times in Finland. The chronicle presents a description of kings of Finland from ancient times to the eve of Swedish rule in Finland (i.e. c. 1150). The work's introduction reveals the author's patriotic feelings for Finland. Its main task is to show that claims about the primitivity of the Finns of the past are baseless, and that they have had their own kings. The author also mentions that Finland is called a grand duchy, which is clearly important for him, and he maintains Finland has long been one of the best counties in the Swedish realm.[163]

About the same time, from the 1650s, Finland's presentation as 'fatherland' (*patria*) begins to appear in some dissertations presented at the Academy of Turku. For example, Eskell Pettersson (*Æschillo Petræo*) writes in his 1652 dissertation about Sunday sermons, 'With these honours and increased glory, meritoriously, the fatherland of Finland, as a son to mother, I am congratulating...'[164] The Grand Duchy of Finland often appears in the dedications of dissertations in the titles of the patrons, but also as a territorial concept. In his dissertation about good rule Johannes Curnovio (Biörneburgo-Fenlando) writes that many great men have worked on the etymology of 'this Grand Duchy'.[165] The Academy of Turku's students adopted a name in Latin and often added an attribute mentioning their home county or town but also their 'nationality', as the aforementioned Johannes Curnovio 'A Finn from Pori' (*Björneborg*) did. The students of the Academy of Turku attached a kind of patriotism to their hometown, home county, and Finland. The territory of Finland and the Grand Duchy had become an object of patriotic identification for at least some learned Finns.

161. Rudbeck 1675, 15–21.
162. Lönnroth, Lagerstedt & Palmén 1988, 127–128.
163. Lönnroth, Lagerstedt & Palmén 1988, 135–136. Note! Here I have used translations from Latin to Finnish and Swedish. The translator in Finnish has used the word 'county' (maakunta) instead of the word 'country' (maa). The translation in Swedish, probably from the beginning of the eighteenth century, says '…ibland Chronones förnehmste landscaper, emedan dhet hafwer nampn af Stor Förstendöme.' See Maliniemi 1939, 287. The original text in Latin was unavailable to me.
164. Petraeo, Aeschillo 1652, no page numbers. 'Quibus honoribus & gloria augmento, merito, patria FINLANDIA, ut mater, filio tanto.'
165. Curnovio, Iohanne Hen 1648, no page numbers.

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Perhaps the expression *caritas patriæ*, certainly familiar to the late seventeenth-century students of the Academy of Turku from the writings of Cicero, describes this patriotism. *Caritas* and *amor patriæ*, in the sense of loyalty to one's country, were well-known concepts in the discourse of Europe's early modern learned people.[166]

We do not know how 'ordinary' Finns understood the Grand Duchy of Finland in the seventeenth century. They must have had some idea about it, for every year, from the 1650s at the latest, they heard in Finnish from their church's pulpit the announcement of the days of fasting and prayer prescribed by the king in Sweden and the Grand Duchy of Finland.[167] The Grand Duchy of Finland also appeared in many other announcements translated to Finnish. However, nothing in the sources suggests the Finns called the King of Sweden their Grand Duke. For them the king was a king: the sources only reveal that Finland was Finland, not the Grand Duchy of Finland. However, the latter half of the seventeenth century introduces several scholarly Finnish works to the source material that display patriotic feelings for Finland, and the Grand Duchy of Finland has a certain place in these writings. This cannot be interpreted as any kind of separatist movement but as symptomatic of the developing identities of being a Finn within the Swedish realm.

We should not confuse the concepts of 'nationalism' and 'patriotism'. I believe the British novelist George Orwell provides a simple definition of patriotism that is suitable for the early modern context. Orwell writes, 'By "patriotism" I mean devotion to a particular place and a particular way of life, which one believes to be the best in the world but has no wish to force on other people'.[168] Nationalism, according to Orwell, is always connected with the aim of securing power for the nation with which one identifies.[169] If Finland was understood as a country as the sources suggest, identifying oneself as a Finn and patriotic feelings towards one's hometown, homeland, Finland, and even in some sense the Grand Duchy were understandable. There were no problems for Finns being simultaneously loyal subjects of the King of Sweden and the Swedish realm. As Rudbeck's definition showed how he divided peoples from each other, the 'dual identity' of being a Finn according to one's country of birth and a Swede according to a relationship of loyalty to the king was by no means exceptional.[170]

A contemporary of Rudbeck's Atlantica and the Chronicle of Finland is the speech by a Finnish student of Greek at the University of Uppsala, Johan Paulinus (after his ennoblement in 1690, Lillienstedt), published in 1678. According to a salutation for the readers, written by Professor Johannes Columbus, the speech praises the

166. See Schmidt 2010, esp. 243–251.

167. Pipping 1856–1857, 28, passim. The phrasing of the declaration varies during the time: 'Ruodzis, Suures Forstindömis Suomes, ja caikis sen alla makawaisis Maacunnis' (1658), 'coco Ruodzis, ja sen alla olewaisisa maacunnisa, samalmuoto myös Suures Ruchtinan maasa Suomes, nijn myös Wirois ja Ingerinmaalla' (1662), 'coco Ruotzisa ja sen alla olevaisisa Maacunnisa ja Suures-Ruhtinacunasa Suomesa, nijn myös Estin, Wiroin ja Ingerinmaalla' (1688).

168. Orwell 2022 (1945), 228.

169. Ibid.

170. Benny Jacobssen discusses seventeenth-century multilevel identities and the use of the concept of fatherland (*patria*) in relation to patriotic feelings for Western Götaland; see Jacobssen 2008, 95–99, 454–455.

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author's 'fatherland', Finland (*Plenius haec … FINNONIÆ laudes patriæ PAULINUS IANNES*).[171] The work itself is in Greek, but it was printed and furnished with a title page in Latin. The speech's title is 'The Grand Duchy of Finland, described in the epic poem, presented in the famous academy of Uppsala by Johannes Paulino, a Finn'.[172] The speech itself praises Finland's nature, animals, and people, Finns' military achievements, and the Academy and Court of Appeal in Turku. In the main text, however, the Grand Duchy of Finland is not mentioned, but the author uses expressions like '*Finlandia*', '*Finnonia*', and '*Finnia*', depending on the poetic metre in Greek.[173] Only on the title page of the 1678 edition in Latin is the Grand Duchy of Finland mentioned. When Paulinus republished his speech in 1694, however, 'Grand Duchy' was omitted from the title page.[174]

The most famous publications praising Finland and the Grand Duchy as the 'fatherland' published in the late seventeenth and early eighteenth centuries are the works of Daniel Juslenius.[175] As a student at the Academy of Turku, Juslenius published his practicum 'Turku Old and New' (*Aboa vetus et nova*) in 1700. The work begins: 'Turku is the capital of the Grand Duchy of Finland' (*Aboa Magni Ducatus Finlandiæ Caput est*).[176] Citing ancient authorities, Juslenius repeats the stories of the ancient Finnish kings and of Magog, the grandson of Noah, as the forefather of Finns.[177] In his *pro gradu* thesis for his master's degree, 'The defence of the Finns' (*Vindiciae Fennorum,* 1703), Juslenius mentions the Grand Duchy of Finland once, when he attacks against those who do not sufficiently value Finland: 'opponents […] find some rationale in the freezing cold, the shortness of the summers, the distorted rays of the sun, and other trivialities. In studying these issues, they refer to the closeness of the cold zone: part of our Grand Duchy is even inside it.'[178] For Juslenius Finland was his 'fatherland' (*patria*), and Sweden his 'motherland' (*communis Mater Patria*), which encompassed the concept of 'fatherland'. For Juslenius the criteria of a Finn were their place of birth, and where they were educated. It is evident that the Grand Duchy of Finland was a clear territorial concept for him and equal to the concept of Finland.[179]

171. Korhonen, Oksala & Sironen 2000, 38–39.
172. Korhonen, Oksala & Sironen 2000, 158. 'Magnus Principatus Finlandia, Epico Carmine depicta, Et in Illustri Academia Upsalensi publicè decantata, â Iohanne Paulino, Finlando.' The edition consists of an introduction, a Finnish translation of the text, comments, and a facsimile print of the publication.
173. Korhonen, Oksala & Sironen 2000, 74.
174. Korhonen, Teivainen & Oksala 2000, 161.
175. For the life and other works of Juslenius see Pietilä 1907.
176. Pekkanen & Seppälä-Pekkanen 2005, 8–9. The edition consists of the introduction, the original text in Latin and translations to Finnish, Swedish, and English.
177. Pekkanen & Seppälä-Pekkanen 2005, 46, 52, 74.
178. Sarsila 1994, 38. The quotation marks inside the quotation are Juslenius's. Translated to English by the author from the Finnish translation. The edition does not include the original text but only the Finnish translation. We therefore cannot know Julenius's exact wording.
179. Manninen 2000, 76–95; Manninen 2008, 240–242.

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Conclusions

When King John III of Sweden decided to use the title of Grand Duke of Finland in 1581, he had no idea that the Grand Duchy would be an administrative entity. That kind of Grand Duchy of Finland did not begin to form until after 1809. The title of Grand Duke for John was, in medieval fashion, primarily an instrument to demonstrate his power. An apt illustration of this is that while John declared himself Grand Duke of Finland, he also made himself Grand Duke of Karelia, Ingria, and the Votskaia fifth. Only Finland, however, which was one of the old core lands of the Swedish Empire, was given the symbols of a grand duchy, especially its own coat of arms. The Grand Duchy's coat of arms appears in pictures and monuments depicting royal power alongside the coat of arms of Uppland, the first among the Swedish provinces, as if prejudicing the coats of arms of the provinces 'below' it, which were called duchies.

At the end of the Middle Ages at the latest Finland was understood as a separate region from Sweden, and it was thus presented in fourteenth- and fifteenth-century scholars' writings. When Finland was presented as an ancient kingdom annexed by Sweden, it was thought of as a country in its own right. We must emphasize here that the concept of a 'country' is not equivalent to the concept of a 'state'. When the titles of Grand Duke of Karelia, Ingria, and the Votskaia fifth disappeared from the King of Sweden's titles after the 1595 peace treaty, it therefore seems natural that the title of Grand Duke of Finland remained. By the 1620s at the latest the source material begins to show signs that the Grand Duchy of Finland was no longer merely a title indicating the power of a prince and a frame of personal bonds between the ruler and his subjects, but that it was also beginning to be used as a territorial term. This is also indicated by discussions of how Stockholm came to be considered the capital of Sweden, and Turku the capital of Finland, in the Swedish Council of the Realm in the 1630s and 1640s. In both cases, however, the term capital did not mean these cities had any official legal status, but simply that they were the most important commercial and administrative cities in those parts of the kingdom, Sweden and Finland. Sweden and Finland appear in the source material as parallel concepts in the sixteenth century and at the end of the seventeenth century and beyond.

Olaus Magnus's 1539 map of the Nordic countries is more an illustration of the regions than a map as the modern world understands it. Swedish land surveying and cartography developed strongly in the early seventeenth century, and representations of the Finnish area became more precise at the same time. In the first half of the seventeenth century the Grand Duchy of Finland was still presented as a group of regionally undefined ancient provinces, and the Grand Duchy appears on these maps among pictorial representations, that is, coats of arms, of controlled territories. The Grand Duchy does not begin to appear as a separate territory marked on maps until the second half of the seventeenth century. At the end of the century, the Grand Duchy is already presented as a separate entity, divided into administrative counties delineated by boundaries. The Grand Duchy's territorial description is already quite complete by this time. Yet the map representations still show the Grand Duchy only by means of the coat of arms, whereas the area is otherwise referred to as Finland, and so that the territory of Finland is not separated in any way from that of Sweden. Although this latter presentation of Finland included in the concept of Sweden was

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not prevalent in the late seventeenth century, it reflects the complexity of development and that maps were marked only with the information the authorities wanted to give to their users. This omission of the Grand Duchy may also have been part of Sweden's unification policy in the seventeenth century.

Almost nothing can be said about ordinary Finns' perceptions and views of Finland as a grand duchy. Of course, they heard that they lived in the Grand Duchy when listening to various declarations of authority in churches, but nothing in the source material shows that the King of Sweden was called the Grand Duke. In the second half of the sixteenth century, however, Finnish students' dissertations and other literary works by scholars began to appear in which Finland was specifically mentioned as a grand duchy and which evinced patriotic feelings for Finland and its territory. This patriotism, which is especially evident in writings about Finland in the use of the concept of fatherland, was neither separatist nor contradicted the patriotism associated with the Swedish realm. Instead, it can be interpreted as the author's own love for the homeland that was directed at Finland no differently from the identity and patriotism of the students from Western Gothia studied by Benny Jacobssen. As Olaus Rudbeck's definition of peoples demonstrates, both overlapping notions of belonging to a 'people' and overlapping loyalties were characteristic of the seventeenth-century way of thinking. At the end of the seventeenth century these patriotic writings and feelings for Finland had resulted in the concept of the Grand Duchy of Finland as a separate entity that was so strong that when the Swedish rulers had to renounce the title of Grand Duke of Finland, the idea of Finland as a grand duchy remained throughout the eighteenth century, even though Finland did not have a grand duke.

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A Grand Duchy without a Grand Duke

Conceptualizing Finland in Eighteenth-Century Sweden

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Finland was first named a grand duchy in the 1580s,[1] and it never really ceased to be called one until Finnish independence in 1917. In 1720, however, Queen Ulrika Eleonora omitted 'Grand Duchess of Finland' from her royal title, and it was only restored in 1802, when King Gustav IV Adolf declared his new-born son Carl Gustav the Grand Duke of Finland. This chapter investigates the use of the concepts of 'grand duchy' and 'grand duke/duchess'. What meanings beyond a geographical region did the concept of 'Grand Duchy of Finland' possess in the absence of the grand duke/duchess? Was Finland a grand duchy without a grand duke, or was the 'grand duchy' merely an empty remnant to describe a common region that had once elevated the ruler's authority? These questions are not only essential for understanding the multiple dimensions of 'Finland' as a political space within the Swedish realm but also in the European context. The chapter reveals that the two main concepts, 'grand duke' and 'grand duchy', did not develop in unison during the period. The study discusses the developments that led to the 'grand-dukeless' era, what happened during it, and what finally caused the 'grand duke' to become again topical in the early nineteenth century.

Focusing on 'the grand duchy', the chapter investigates the concept in its time and context based on Reinhart Koselleck's idea of semantic fields. The aim is to recognize the intentional or unintentional content the concept was given and the conditions in which it was expressed. The development is traced from a temporal and spatial perspective, identifying the criteria enabling the concept's use.[2] The answer to the question of why the 'grand duchy' endured can be sought by contextualizing the temporal and political development of the 'grand duchy' more closely in its contemporary context.

The source material consists of peace treaties, manifestos, and the minutes of the Diet of the Estates (*Riksdag protokoll*). The peace treaties between Sweden and Russia provide a view of the evolution of the use of 'grand duchy' and the royal titles. In the early half of the eighteenth century the Grand Duchy of Finland was central in the Russo-Swedish peace treaties, but in the latter half of the century it was marginalized.[3] I use peace treaties between Sweden and other states and rulers for comparison to highlight the features the grand duchy is given. Another group of sources presenting the Russian understanding of the Grand Duchy of Finland is the two wartime manifestos – in 1742 and 1788 – for 'Finland' to join Russia.

1. Katajala 2023.
2. Koselleck 2004, 155–161; Marjanen & Ihalainen 2022, 66–67; Kärrylä 2022, 118–123.
3. Liikanen 2014, 27–28.

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Despite being war propaganda and never materializing, they provide evidence of the conceptual content of the 'grand duchy'.

The largest group of sources in this research is the minutes of the Diet of the Four Estates in Sweden, in which the nobility was the largest and most influential estate. All noble families were entitled to representation, but the number of attendees varied greatly. Peasant representatives were in theory invited from all court districts (*härad*), but in practice the regions sometimes joined forces to elect a common representative or sent extra representatives. The burghers sent representatives based on the size of the town, which for Finland meant two from Turku and one from other towns. All bishops had a right to represent the clergy, and they were accompanied by priests elected from the regions.[4] During the 'Age of Liberty' (1719–1772) the estates were to assemble every three years for no less than three months. In practice the Diet was much more active. After Gustav III's coup the power structure shifted and therefore the potential of the estates to follow through changes declined. The king reserved the right to summon the Diet only when necessary and for no longer than three months. Another means of crippling the Diet's work was disbanding most of the deputations and committees.[5]

The minutes only provide us with a narrow view of the discussions that occurred during the Diet. Not all discussions happened in the Diet assemblies, nor were they written down. Stockholm, where the Diet most often assembled, offered a variety of public and private places for the representatives and interested parties to discuss and exchange information.[6] The minutes of the Diet, however, provide us with a fairly consistent source of political discussions at the state level. The spatial 'grand duchy' was related to the values of common good, wellbeing, and progress, which were essential topics in the political speech of the Age of Liberty, as well as after it. Despite criticizing the monarchy and idealizing liberty (*frihet*) as one of the main values, royalism was intertwined across all social groups in Swedish society and political thinking.[7] The connection between the crown and the regions remained strong. The Gustavian Era marked a conceptual shift. Liberty especially continued to be a central concept in policy, but with new conceptual dimensions.[8] During the Gustavian era the conceptual relationship between the ruler and territory was refocused.

Focal 'Finland', ambiguous 'grand duchy'

In the historiography of Finland as a political space the focal questions about its position in Sweden concern its separateness, territorial composition, and national identity. It has been difficult to grasp the question of what the Grand Duchy of Finland meant in the eighteenth century because it is not connected with the modern dictionary definition of a 'grand duchy': a territory ruled by a monarch whose noble status was below that of the king or queen, that implied distance from the core of

4. Paloposki 1961, 41, 54–57, 329; Metcalf 1987, 116–119; Almbjär 2016, 67–68.
5. Metcalf 1987, 122, 147–149.
6. Sennefelt 2019, 52–69.
7. Claréus 2002, 41–43, 46–47; Nurmiainen 2009, 54–69; Tandefelt 2007, 139.
8. Wolff 2016, 98–103.

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the state and from a dynastic composite. The discussion about Finland has therefore included scant problematizing of 'the grand duchy'. The century has often been viewed as a long and somewhat vague transition between the early modern and the modern, when 'the grand duchy' was not topical. The Swedish, Russian, and German maps presented Finland as a grand duchy in a rather clear visual manner, but they were rooted in a century-old cartographic tradition. Several Swedish and European mapmakers based their creations of Finland on Anders Bure's map *Orbis Arctoi Nova* (1626) until the end of the eighteenth century. In 1799 Carl Petter Hällström completed his atlas of Finland, which is said to reaffirm the idea of Finland as a grand duchy.[9] The maps alone cannot therefore provide us with sufficient evidence of the conceptual continuities and changes.

The historian Wilhelm Gabriel Lagus (1834) saw that the distinctiveness of Finland in the judicial, administrative, and societal sense had already grown evident since the establishment of central institutions such as the Turku Court of Appeal.[10] Yet Yrjö Koskinen (Georg Zacharias Forsman) thought ideas about Finland as a nascent state emerged only in the late eighteenth century. The feeling of separateness, writes Koskinen, intensified in Swedish politics because Finland's political agency was much weaker than Sweden's.[11] Einar Juva (1951) maintained that Finland was not an actual grand duchy, at least not after 1650. As according to his definition the title was 'empty' even before it was omitted, the 'grand duchy' could represent nothing more than a force of habit; a geographical name that endured from the seventeenth century without gaining novel content in the eighteenth century. From a geographical perspective the meanings of 'Finland' and 'the Grand Duchy of Finland' were fairly synonymous.[12]

Eino Jutikkala and Kauko Pirinen support Juva's analysis on the grounds that there were few signs of administrative separateness from Sweden.[13] Matti Klinge argues that although Finland was geographically recognizable before 1809, it became a clear territorial and political entity only as a Russian grand duchy. In the Peace Treaty of Hamina (Fredrikshamn) in 1809 it was still defined as a group of counties. Finland was not a unified region of Sweden but consisted of central areas that had a close connection with the capital, and the periphery. Karelia, Savonia, and Ostrobothnia were no less peripheral than Norrland and Dalarna, which, to Klinge, meant Sweden and Finland were equal parts of the realm.[14]

In the early twenty-first century the focus has been on the discussion of the conscious distinctiveness of Finns. Juha Manninen dates the birth of Finnish ethnic self-determination across society to Daniel Juslenius's work in the early eighteenth century, which Henrik Gabriel Porthan especially continued, but only then in the context of Swedish patriotism.[15] Jonas Nordin foregrounds Finland's cultural distinctiveness within Sweden yet concludes that the distance was probably more

9. Strang 2020, 65–68, 130.
10. Lagus 1834, I–II.
11. Yrjö-Koskinen 1870, 15–17.
12. Juva 1951, 97–121.
13. Jutikkala & Pirinen 1989, 180.
14. Klinge 1975, 10–11; Klinge 1982, 35–39; Klinge 2012, 20–21.
15. Manninen 2000.

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geographical than political. Finland was not a defined political entity by tradition, but nor did it belong in the history of Svea.[16] Jouko Nurmiainen opposes the idea of separateness and that Sweden imposed an integration process on Finland during the eighteenth century.[17] Torbjörn Eng points out that despite its distinctiveness and never being fully merged heraldically into the core regions of Sweden, Finland was already integrated into the Swedish realm, and no drastic integration measures were therefore necessary. The administration did not separate Finland from Sweden as a separate imperial substructure but on the contrary drew it closer to the central power.[18] Nils Erik Villstrand supports this conclusion. Although it was conventional to describe Sweden and Finland as separate regions, the motive was not to suggest Finland was outside the Swedish realm.[19] Petri Karonen avers that the representation in the Diet included Finland in the realm, but the 'grand duchy' segregated it. The representatives of burghers from Finland foregrounded their home regions more than others in the Diet of the Estates, especially in the 1740s, but the reasons were more practical than ideological. 'Finland' had an established content that required little explanation.[20] Jani Marjanen approaches Finland beyond the dualism of being separated or integrated. 'The grand duchy' was not particularly articulated in the eighteenth century, but the geographical and political meanings of 'Finland' were intensified especially towards the end of the century. What should be studied more closely, states Marjanen, is the internal asymmetry between Finland and other regions within the realm.[21]

Focusing on the 'grand duchy' in this chapter affords me an opportunity to approach the regional comparison. First, I discuss the process of changing the title, then the use of 'grand duchy' and the changing understanding of a realm's structures. Finally, I discuss the title becoming topical again in the early 1800s as the political agency of the 'grand duchy' had grown clearer.

Giving up a grand dukedom?

A royal title was a claim to the possession of power over land or subjects that connected regions and lines of succession. An individual held the authority of a grand duke as part of a greater imperial or conglomerate power system, and it was often inherited, giving it a dynastic dimension. The claim and its symbols in time began to represent the territory. The titles were meaningful in diplomatic encounters and in building the hierarchy among the European dynasties. Although royal titles lengthened with every conquest, monarchs were reluctant to remove titles once added to their name. It was not out of the ordinary for royal figures to persist in claiming a title and other symbols after losing a region in a war, provoking a wish to eventually win back their lost territorial status and benefits. In peace negotiations representatives

16. Nordin 1998, 202; Nordin 2000, 90, 325–327; Nordin 2008, 214–220, Nordin 2009b.
17. Nurmiainen 2003, 260–264.
18. Eng 2001, 291–292, 294; Eng 2008, 92, 94.
19. Villstrand 2012, 38–54.
20. Karonen 2008, 271–272, 281–283.
21. Marjanen 2013, 90, 179–182; Marjanen 2017, 533–536.

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paid meticulous attention to titles in the various translations of peace treaties.[22] In Sweden in the early eighteenth century the state power grew further apart from the ruler's persona, but dynasticism cannot be overlooked. The ruler's personal dynastic power and the royal networks continued to be essential political assets. The wars of succession in Spain, Poland, and Austria testify to the significance of the royal persona and monarchs' promotion of dynastic aims alongside state policy.[23]

After King Charles XII's sister Ulrika Eleonora succeeded him, she possessed more than twenty different titles from within Sweden's sphere of dominance – including the Grand Duchess of Finland, the Duchess of Scania, and the Lady of Ingria.[24] For these regions a symbolic disconnection between the claimant and the territory was intertwined with the propulsion of Sweden to the end of autocracy. First, the humiliating defeat in the Great Northern War (1700–1721[25]) fundamentally changed Sweden's political position in Europe by ending the 'Age of Greatness'. The Queen of Sweden lost the provinces in Bremen-Verden and parts of Pomerania, the customs freedom in the Sound, and her influence in Schleswig-Holstein to Denmark. In the war against Russia, Sweden lost Ingria, Estonia, Livonia, and parts of Finland and Karelia. In the Russo-Swedish wars of 1741–1743 and 1788–1790 Sweden attempted to reconquer the lost parts of Finland but gradually lost the whole region to Russia in the 1808–1809 war.[26] Second, the dynastic crisis opened opportunities for the redistribution of power, on which the four estates successfully capitalized. The death of King Charles XII and the unresolved question of the succession paved the way for the restriction of the king's power,[27] resulting in the beginning of the 'Age of Liberty' for the four estates.[28] The domestic power struggle was concentrated on the redistribution of political and executive power, which reduced the ruler's personal power, balancing central power between the king, the council, and the estates. The monarch retained his personal majesty, but the executive authority of the 'Royal Majesty' consisted of the king and the Council of the Realm (*riksrådet*) together.[29] Charlotta Wolff points out that though strengthening the authority of the Council of the Realm and the Diet, the estates still wished to secure 'the highness' (*höghet*) of the king. Although 'the highness' of the ruler was more limited in relation to 'sovereignty'

22. Caers & Stein 2022, 278–279; Damen & Meer 2022, 247–250; Rozn 2003; Birgegård 2014, 35–37.
23. Black 2002 8–13; Jones & Knights 2018, 340–341.
24. 'Ulrica Eleonora, Sweriges, Götes och Vendes drottning, storförstinna till Finland, Hertiginna uti Skåne, Estland, Lifland, Carelen, Bremen, Verden, Stettin-Pommern, Cassuben och Venden, furstinna til Rügen, fru öfver Ingermanland och Wismar, så ock pfaltzcrefvinna vid Rein i Beijern, till Jülich, Cleve och Bergen hertiginna, landgrefvinna och arfprincessa till Hessen, furstinna till Hirschfeldt, grefvinna till Catzen-Ellenbogen, Dietz, Ziegenheim, Nidda och Schaumburg etc.' Instrument of Government 21 Feb. 1719.
25. The Great Northern War coincided with the War of the Spanish Succession (1701–1714) and the War of the Quadruple Alliance (1718–1720).
26. Gustafsson 2017, 108–109.
27. To avoid any setbacks in the transition of power, Ulrika Eleonora was crowned 'the King of Svea and Gothia Lands and their including provinces, she and no one else'. The 'queen' did not possess the same authority by default in Sweden as the 'king'. Nordin 2009, 68–69.
28. Scherp & Forss 2019, 9–14.
29. Gustafsson 1994, 50; Nordin 2009, 56–57.

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in the Age of Liberty, the ruler was essential to the authority of the state.[30] The ruler's title mirrored the state's symbolic integrity.

Nordin maintains that shortening the royal title was a political manoeuvre by the Swedish central power to secure the remains of its foreign diplomatic credibility and stability on paper.[31] Losing the ongoing war placed Ulrika Eleonora in an unsettling position. Achieving peace would require ceding territories and making concessions.[32] Interestingly, the decision to shorten the royal title happened because of pressure from George I of Great Britain, the Elector (*Kurfürste*) of Hanover (or Brunswick and Lüneburg).

In the Swedish-Hanoverian Peace Treaty of Stockholm on 20 November 1719[33] Queen Ulrika Eleonora ceded the Duchies of Bremen and Verden to George I with all the rights she held over the provinces. This peace treaty did not spell out the devolving of titles, but it stated that the queen and the kingdom of Sweden had relinquished 'all the rights she hath, or ever had, or ought either one way or another to claim, to the duchies of Bremen and Verden in general and particular'.[34] The treaty's general formulation led the parties to different interpretations of its outcome. The British interpreted the treaty as meaning that along with the duchies the queen yielded all prerogatives to the King of Great Britain, including the personal and dynastic rights of these duchies and their symbols.[35] Ulrika Eleonora, however, continued calling herself the Duchess of Bremen and Verden in diplomatic communications, including the Swedish-British Treaty of Defensive Alliance and the Swedish-Prussian peace treaty of Stockholm in January 1720.[36] George I's motive for the Treaty of Defensive Alliance was to weaken Sweden's affairs in Germany. Sweden, on the other hand, wanted Great Britain's support for the coming peace negotiations with other powers.[37]

In March 1720 the Secret Committee (*sekreta utskottet*) discussed a note from the British envoy Adolf Friedrich von Bassewitz about the queen's continuing use of titles she – in Great Britain's view – no longer possessed. The Secret Committee consented to the lack of justification for keeping the titles of the Duchess of Bremen and Verden, which, however, led it to worry about the integrity of the ruler's dynastic authority in the near future, with the war against Russia ongoing and Finland under seizure. Finland was under threat of being partly or completely lost, which could soon conclude in further cessions of the title. To avoid the inconvenience of a gradual forfeiture, the title was reduced to 'the King of Sweden, Goths and Wends etc.'.[38]

30. Wolff 2016, 31–32; Wolff 2007, 361; See also Nordin 2009, 22–23, 29–36, 41–42.
31. Nordin 2009, 56.
32. Larsson 2009, 317.
33. Per the Julian calendar used in Sweden and Great Britain. In the *Verbesserte Kalender* (the Gregorian) the date was 9 Nov.
34. Peace Treaty of Stockholm 9/20 Nov. 1719, in English. '... alla de rättigheter som Hennes Maj:t hafwer, eller har haft, eller på et eller annat sätt skulle hafva haft på Hertigdömerne Bremen och Verden, ...' Peace treaty of Stockholm 9/20 Nov. 1719, in Swedish.
35. Jenkinson 1790, 243.
36. Treaty of Defensive Alliance between the crowns of Sweden and Great Britain 21 Jan. 1720, in Swedish. Jenkinson also introduces the same treaty but does not specify its origins. In this transliteration the queen's title is shortened. I rely on Modeé's translation.
37. Luukko 1967, 778–779; Larsson 2009, 317.
38. Decisions in the Diet of the Estates 12 Mar. 1720.

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Hence, the queen also omitted the Grand Duchess of Finland and the Duchess of Scania from her title. Only a few days later Ulrika Eleonora abdicated in favour of her husband Frederick I, and the king adopted the new shortened title.[39] The sources do not state whether the titles were omitted or relinquished.

It was common to use abbreviated titles in diplomatic treaties.[40] In the Russo-Swedish Peace Treaty and its ratification in 1721, for example, Peter I (the Great) also used the short title, 'Emperor of Russia and all Russians' Sovereign Ruler &ca: &ca: &ca:'.[41] Yet in the ratification of the Russo-Swedish state border in 1723, Frederick's title fits on two rows, while Peter I's title is three quarters of a page, including all the regions of which he is the emperor and sovereign ruler, tsar, grand duke, duke, lord, and commander.[42] Using the full title highlighted the asymmetry of authority and the losses Sweden had suffered.

Dividing the 'grand duchy'

As anticipated, the war against Russia ended disastrously with great losses. Although the royal title was already shortened, the 'Grand Duchy of Finland' was central in the Treaty of Uusikaupunki (Nystad) on 30 August 1721, in distinction from the Baltic Provinces. The 'grand duchy' meant the place in which the war had happened but also a territory over which both states had claims. The fifth article stated that the emperor's troops were to leave the 'grand duchy' within four weeks and to restore it to the king and crown of Sweden. The south-eastern part of the 'grand duchy' was left to the emperor, over the rest of which neither he nor his heirs or successors should make claims in the future.[43] The 'grand duchy' was thus divided between the realms.

Despite being a grand duchy, Finland was considered part of Sweden, unlike the German and Baltic Provinces. Bremen and Verden were called 'property' (ägendom) of George I, and the Duke of Schleswig-Holstein-Gottorp spoke of 'my Schleswig'.[44] Finland was not presented like this. In the Treaties of Stockholm there were references to the Treaty of Westphalia (1648) in the terms for the duchies that Sweden had ceded.[45] They concerned the dynastic power over the Swedish ruler's sphere of dominance, not the core regions and subjects within the realm as Finland did in the Russo-Swedish treaty.

39. Affirmation by the ruler 2 May 1720; peace treaty between Sweden and Denmark in Stockholm 3 June 1720.
40. Birgegård 2014, 38.
41. 'Peter der Erste K[eiser] A[lles] R[ussland] und aller Reußen Selbst-Halter &c[eter]a &c[eter] a &c[eter]a'. Peter I's ratification of the Treaty of Uusikaupunki 30 Aug. 1721.
42. Treaty between Sweden and Russia in Uusikaupunki 30 Aug. 1721; ratification of the border between Sweden and Russia in Vyborg 30 Mar. 1723.
43. Treaty of Uusikaupunki 30 Aug. 1721.
44. Royal Majesty to the Estates, Diet protocols of the nobility 22 Jan. 1720; Duke Carl Fredrik to the Estates 12/23 Mar. 1720, Diet protocols of the nobility 21 Apr. 1720.
45. Peace treaty of Stockholm 9/20 Nov. 1719, in Swedish; Treaty of Stockholm 3 July 1720, in Swedish.

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A separate article of the peace treaty explicitly confirmed the short Swedish royal title, including the titles in the territorial losses. The article stated that the Swedish king:

> ...wishes not to present himself with, or ever obtain another Title, than the King of Sweden, Goths and Wends etc. etc. etc. [...] Assuring Him and His Successors on the Royal Swedish Throne, to give His Tsarist Majesty and his Successors in the Russian Realm, without any clause, the Title, that they, considering the abovementioned ceded lands and Provinces reside with, if they should please, farther along to serve Them in their full Title.[46]

The Swedish king surrendered to the emperor the right to add the titles of the ceded regions under his name. The additional article does not spell out which titles exactly, nor does the peace treaty suggest that the 'grand duchy' was one of them. After all, most of Finland was restored to Sweden apart from the Vyborg region.

Including 'et cetera' in the title suggested there was more than was presented, although Frederick I abandoned all additional titles besides the king 'from here on and always remaining as such'.[47] Indeed, he readopted a longer title later in his reign. In the next Russo-Swedish peace treaty in 1743 and the Treaty of Defensive Alliance that soon followed in 1745, the king added to his title the landgrave of Hessen, the duke of Hirschfeld, the count of the four German regions he possessed, and the *et cetera*.[48] After Frederick I the royal title expanded yet again with the rulers of the Holstein-Gottorp family. Adolf Frederick and his successor Gustav III were the Heirs to Norway and the dukes of Schleswig-Holstein. The same title appeared in the domestic context, as well as in some foreign treaties.[49]

The development of the royal title displays a determination to reclaim lost dynastic power. The 'Grand Duke of Finland' was not among the reclaimed titles, despite the passionate aim of a revanchist war against Russia. Eng concludes this was a deliberate process of centralization. The titles that once highlighted the greatness of the Swedish sphere of domination in the seventeenth century represented a weak link between the realm's regions at the end of the Great Northern War. Removing the titles justified these regions' belonging to the realm and presented Sweden territorially as more unified.[50]

46. '... ej will fora, eller någonsin tilägna Sig annan Titul, än Sweriges, Giötes och Wändes Konung etc. etc. etc. [...] Försäkrandes för Sig och Sine Efterträdare på den Kongl. Swenska Thronen, at gifwa Hans Tzariske Maj:t och des Efterträdare uti Ryska Riket, utan något förbehåll, den Titul, som dem, i anseende til åfwanbemälte afsträdde länder och Provincer tilkommer, i fall dem skulle behaga, at framdeles betiena Sig af hela deras Titul.' Separate article 30 Aug. 1721, Uusikaupunki.
47. 'hädaneffter ock altid beständigt blefvo sådan'. Decisions in the Diet of the Estates 12 Mar. 1720.
48. 'Herr FRIEDRICH then Förste, Sveriges, Göthes och Wendes Konung etc. etc. etc. Landt-Grefve til Hessen, Förste til Hirschfeldt, Grefve til Catzen-Ellenbogen, Dietz, Ziegenhayn, Nidda och Schaumburg etc. etc.' Treaty of Turku 7 Aug. 1743.
49. Decisions in the Diet of the Estates 30 Jan. 1770; Instrument of Government 1772; Royal Majesty's letter of authorization for Fredrick Nolcken 1 May 1780; Decisions in the Diet of the Estates 15 June 1800.
50. Eng 2001, 291; Eng 2006, 128–129. Eng 2008, 92, 94–96.

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Given how the title's abbreviation occurred, one cannot overlook the matter's sensitivity. The 'grand duchy' was a cross-border region divided between the Swedish and the Russian realms and was no longer fully under Swedish control. Most of Finland still consisted of 'Swedish Finland' (*svenska Finland*), and the mention of Finland usually meant the Swedish side. The Vyborg Governorate, which was also known as 'Russian Finland' (*ryska Finland*), however, was also regarded as part of geographical Finland.[51] Reclaiming the title might have caused tension between the realms. The conclusion raises the question, however, about other regions like the Duchy of Scania that were also omitted from the royal title but were not partly seized. It suggests that the regions were interpreted as part of the king's realm rather than subunits of it. For the Finnish and Scanian inhabitants the king was above all the king. Although Adolf Frederick travelled to the 'Grand Duchy of Finland' after his coronation in 1752, he was not there as the grand duke but as the king.[52]

Main region yet a periphery

'Grand duchy' appears occasionally in the minutes of the Swedish Diet of the Estates until the late 1770s, but the use of 'Finland' alone is much more common. In the Diet of 1742–1743, for example, 'Finland' appears more than 1,500 times, while the 'grand duchy' is mentioned only 21 times. The peak in the absolute and relative frequency of 'grand duchy' dates to the 1740s and early 1750s. All the estates recognized the concept, but the nobility used it most. Scania is also occasionally referred to as a 'duchy' (*hertigdöme*) in a similar manner as Finland was called a 'grand duchy', although Scania was also removed from the royal title in the process described above.[53]

In the minutes of the Diet 'grand duchy' is most often used in the contemporary context, but some mentions date to the seventeenth century. For example, 'the Court of Appeal in the Grand Duchy of Finland'[54] was used in the discussions alongside the better-known 'Turku (Åbo) Court of Appeal'.[55] Both names appear in the minutes – even in the same case. In 1723 the Diet discussed the use of penalty funds in Finland, and the secretary comfortably switched between both names in the minutes. The former name was in the seal, but the Turku Court of Appeal was already in general use in the seventeenth century.[56]

After the Great Northern War the main regions of Sweden were Svea, Gothia, Finland, and sometimes Scania and Norrland. 'Sweden' meant both the realm and the central region, which were often defined in detail, while the periphery was spoken

51. Diet protocols of the nobility 5 Nov. 1746; Engelhardt 1973 (1767), 13; Wraxall 1807, 212.
52. Diet protocols of the nobility 12 Dec. 1751; Decisions in the Diet of the Estates 4 June 1752.
53. Alenäs, Bergman, Gustafsson & Lerbom 2006, 134–135.
54. The seal reads *Supremi Iudicii Magni Ducatus Finlandiæ*.
55. Or *in*.
56. Decisions in the Diet of the Estates 18 July 1723; Diet minutes of the clergy estate 26 Aug. 1738; Diet minutes of the burgher estate 16 May 1738, 8 July 1738, 30 Aug. 1738; Diet minutes of the peasants 3 Aug. 1761; see also Instrument of Government 1772. For the Court of Appeal in Vaasa, see Tandefelt 2007, 135–137.

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of in more general terms.[57] In the Diet assembly, the representatives expressed the geographical distance between these main regions by talking of Sweden as 'here' and 'the grand duchy' as elsewhere.[58] Christer Kuvaja, Arja Rantanen, and Nils Erik Villstrand (2007) remind us that the east-west dichotomy or even the main-region thinking that divided the realm into Sweden and Finland was not an exclusive perception of the Swedish realm. Sometimes the regional hierarchy followed another logic, based on economic, military, or ecclesiastical grounds. The main regions also had peripheries that were less important than the central areas along the waterways or on other important routes.[59]

In some of the cases in the minutes of the Diet the counties or provinces stand out; in others the 'main' regions. Sweden, Finland, Scania, and sometimes Norrland are often mentioned separately.[60] The separateness from the rest of the main regions that together formed the realm was temporal. According to Eng Finland was thought to have been merged to the realm rather than Sweden conquering Finland.[61] Nordin argues that Finland was a 'grand duchy' in the sense that it was understood as a historically separate region from Svea and Gothia. Scania was a border region with a similar cultural distance from Svea and a history as part of Denmark-Norway.[62] Swedish Karelia, which was the easternmost conquest still under Swedish rule, was integrated more closely into the realm and as part of Finland, yet its historical and social connections with Russian Karelia were not forgotten. Special applications of Swedish regulations were justified by the region's unique character.[63] These aspects highlighted the regions' cultural and spatial distance, despite the administrative closeness.

The parts of Finland beyond the southwestern coast especially were a geographically distanced periphery, sometimes disconnected, and vulnerable to external threats. The peripheries were important barriers for the safety of Svea, the 'heart of the realm'.[64] Scania and Finland were sometimes referred to as provinces (*province, provintz*), meaning they were peripheral regions; sometimes they were described as a *län* or *landskap*, denoting them as subunits in the realm with an institutional character. During the Great Northern war Scania was described as a *province* whose commoners should not be trusted in military matters.[65] Swedish Karelia provoked

57. Katajala & Juvonen 2006, 14–18; Eng 2001, 397; Kuvaja, Rantanen, & Villstrand 2007, 1; Strang 2020, 68.
58. 'ifrån storfurstendömet Finland hit öfwer til Swerige'. Diet minutes of the nobility 27 Jan. 1739; '... såwäl i Swerige som ock i Storfurstendömet Finland'. Diet minutes of the peasants 26 July 1771; Also e.g. Diet minutes of the clergy 3 May 1739; Diet minutes of the peasants 16 Oct. 1760.
59. Kuvaja, Rantanen, & Villstrand 2007, 35–36; Klinge 1982, 33.
60. E.g. Diet minutes of nobility 20 Jan. 1714; Diet minutes of the peasants 16 Oct. 1760.
61. Eng 2001, 136–139, 291.
62. Nordin 2008, 214–218.
63. The northern part of the Kexholm Province was merged with the Savonia and Kymmenegård County in 1721. Paloposki 1961, 55–56; Saloheimo 1980, 477–479; See also Kuusisto & Merovuo 2021, 31.
64. sielfva hiärtat af riken
65. The Diet minutes of the nobility 17 Dec. 1713, 12 Mar. 1714; Diet minutes of the clergy 1 Aug. 1723; Diet minutes of the burghers 1 Aug. 1723; Diet minutes of the peasants 16 Oct. 1760, 22 Oct. 1761.

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similar suspicions.[66] Although the Baltic Sea was a gateway between coastal regions, the Nordic climate did not provide a year-round water route between Finland and Sweden. To ensure the representation of the 'grand duchy' in important votes, the representatives of the nobility requested that the Diet not be summoned early in the winter because of the unpredictable weather conditions.[67] Finnish representatives had difficulties arriving in Stockholm in time for the Diet opening and elections scheduled in January.

The region's remoteness is explicit in the Secret Committee proposal in 1723, when the Diet discussed the shortage of small öre coins 'in the remote provinces, especially the Grand Duchy of Finland'.[68] The Secret Committee proposed the minting of arbitrage coins to revive the post-war monetary situation in the periphery. The 'grand duchy' appeared in the minutes of the clergy and the burgher estates, but the peasants and the nobility discussed the issue in general, without a particular regional emphasis. The peasants supported the proposal in order to remove the secondary currency from use. The nobility acknowledged there was a regional aspect but focused on the currency's value.[69] Although the estates realized how pressing the economic situation was for the 'grand duchy', it was not necessarily seen as reviving the battlefield of the Great Northern War but as a matter of the common good.

In 1739 'the noblemen of the Grand Duchy of Finland' raised the issue of the potential shortage of hirelings. Carl Henrik Sprengtport (1687–1776), an officer in the army in Finland, complained that because the right to move from county (*län*) to county for service was included in the new law, hirelings might consider moving from Finland to Sweden. This would devastate productivity in the countryside. The nobility thought it reasonable to oppose such a freedom. The clergy agreed: the right to move from county to county should not extend to moving from the 'grand duchy' to Sweden.[70] Finland is presented here as a subunit with counties within it. The idea of the separateness of these main regions was used to sustain a boundary that had no administrative grounds to control the workforce for the landowners' benefit.

In other cases the representatives sought to break down the boundaries between the main regions. Appeals involving concessions in taxes, other payments, or duties were sometimes presented in the name of the 'grand duchy' and in cooperation with other remote regions. In 1734 the burghers of Western Norrland, the 'Grand Duchy of Finland', and Ostrobothnia complained that their commercial ships were suffering unnecessary delays on the way to Stockholm because of the control on the island of Vaxholm. They appealed to the Diet to be granted permission to pass Vaxholm and sail all the way to the Blockhus customs house for their check to provide equal access to the capital.[71] In 1739 Carl Lilljestierna acted as the spokesman for Finland when

66. Kuusisto & Merovuo 2021, 33–35.
67. Diet minutes of the nobility estate 13 Dec. 1734; Diet minutes of the nobility 12 July 1738.
68. '... uti the aflägne provincier, hälst storfurstendömet Finland...'; Also '..., som så här i landet och de aflägnare provincier, som storfurstendömet Finland...'.
69. Diet minutes of the peasants 1 Aug. 1723; The general appeal, peasant estate 1723; Diet minutes of the nobility 1 Aug. 1723.
70. Diet minutes of the nobility 27 Jan. 1739; Diet minutes of the clergy 3 Feb. 1739. For Sprengtport see Marjomaa 2001b.
71. General appeals of the burghers 1734.

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the Diet discussed a foundation to support unmarried noblewomen.[72] Competition for posts and positions had intensified in the eighteenth century because of a decrease in career opportunities in the army.[73] Lilljestierna insisted that one of the directors of the foundation should be from 'the grand duchy' because it was such a large region with many noble families. Pleading the status of the 'grand duchy' was a way to highlight its significance within the realm. Finland was not great in population, but as a main region it was worthy of a trustee of its own. Three of the directors were chosen from Stockholm, and the other three from Finland, East Gothia, and Scania.[74]

Buffer zone between neighbouring states

During the Russo-Swedish war in March 1742 the Russians spread a manifesto in which the Empress Elizabeth offered freedom to all four estates and inhabitants of the 'Duchy of Finland' – not grand duchy[75] – in return for not helping the Swedish army. The manifesto was distributed shortly after Elizabeth called off the armistice. It suggested the separation[76] of Finland from Sweden and joining the 'duchy' under the protection of the Russian Empire. The document is often mentioned as the first source to depict Finland as an independent state.[77] Yet it did not speak of independence but of non-dependence on Sweden. The proposed Finland would be a:

> ...free and by none of its parts dependent land under their own and self-established Form of Government on such grounds, and to come to such rights, privileges, and immunities,[78] that serve their own benefit and everlasting assurance for the common good and serving their own will, and [what] they themselves could wish for...[79]

72. *Vadstena adliga jungfrustift*.
73. Karonen 2008, 269.
74. Diet minutes of the nobility 26 Apr. 1739.
75. The version in Swedish mentions 'Stor-Furstendömet Finland' once but after that 'Furstendömme', in Finnish 'Suomen Ruhtinacunnas' and in German 'des Herzogthums Finnland'. Elizabeth's manifesto 18 Mar. 1742.
76. poies eroittaman / befrija och löös giöra / losszumachen geneigt ist.
77. Cederberg 1942, 360; Nordin 2000, 309; Nurmiainen 2003, 271; Keskisarja 2022, 126–130.
78. Immunities in this sense refers to rights to implement official duties in certain area. SAOB; OED.
79. 'yxi wapa ja eij cennengän vallan alla olewainen ma häidän omainne tykönä itze cäskenänne ylös asetta hallituxen Sädyn, säncaldaisen perustuxen pälä ja sen caldaisen oickias Wapauxes pysy, nijn cuin se häidän omaxi hyödytyxexi ja alati pysywäisexi wahwistuxexi, ja sen saman häidän oman tachtons päran asetetan, ja itze toivåtta taitawat', / 'et frijt och af ingen dera dehlen dependerande Land under deras egen, emellan sig etablerande Regerings-Form på en sådan foot, och med alla sådane rätter, Privilegier, och Immuniteter förblifva vilja, som till deras egen nytta och evigvarande befästning på det aldrabästa och effter deras egen åstundan tiena, och de sielfva zig så dant önska kunna', / 'ein freyes und von keinem Theile dependirendes Land bey ihrer eigenen unter sich zu etablirenden Regierungs-Form auf einen solchen Fuss und mit allen solchen Rechten, Privilegien und Immunitäten verbleiben, wie es zu ihrem eigenen Nutzen und zur immerwährenden Befestigung desselben am allerbesten und nach ihren einigen Verlangen gereichen'.

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In return for showing neighbourly friendship to Russia, the manifesto promised to take the 'Duchy of Finland' under Russian protection and to defend her integrity. The manifesto ended with a warning: if the estates and inhabitants did not wish to assist the Russians, the imperial army was to devastate the region 'through fire and sword'.[80] The message was clear. The Russians had made the same threat some thirty years earlier when occupying regions during the Great Northern War, and the devastation wrought by the enemy was known and remembered to be brutal.[81]

According to Nordin the idea that Finland could declare independence as a state was illogical in the Swedish thinking of the 1740s. A grand duchy could only exist under a king or an emperor, and it could therefore only be seized by one ruler from another.[82] Finland was presented as a territorial yet separate part of Sweden with its own borders. The manifesto dissociated the subjects of Sweden who were inhabitants of Finland from the Swedish government responsible for the war. Sweden was Russia's neighbour; Finland had only a potential political position. The manifesto promised that should it 'free and release itself from Sweden's sphere of dominance and jurisdiction'[83], Finland would become a barrier[84] between the two realms, a separate political entity. The manifesto reflects the general idea behind other Russian wartime manifestos for borderland regions in the eighteenth century. In the manifestos for the Cossack Hetmanate in 1708 and 1709 the setting was rather different, yet there were similarities. Serhii Plokhy suggests that Peter the Great presented himself as the protector of the land and the nation of Little Russia, which he promised would lead to the greatest freedom, liberties, and privileges for the Hetmanate. He requested passivity towards the Polish and Swedish troops and warned Little Russia against believing their promises.[85]

The Council of the Realm decided that the king needed to address his subjects in general, but especially the inhabitants in 'the grand duchy', by replying to the manifesto and pleading to their loyalty. The king's proclamation warned his subjects that the empress was attempting to lure them into Russian serfdom by provoking an uprising and then bringing his once loyal subjects into the same hardship the Novgorodians and Ukrainians had suffered. In the king's opinion his subjects already possessed freedom and the Form of Government they desired. After all, the Four Estates had wanted the war that was now upon them.[86] It would be unfair to their ruler if they backed down now and supported the Russian cause.

In reality there was little political will or even a clear agency to actually lead the supposed liberation from Sweden. The purpose of the manifesto as propaganda was clear to its contemporaries. The Swedes did not try to prevent people seeing the manifesto – the Royal Press even made copies of its own. As the government newspaper *Posttidningar* reported the king's reply, the interest in the original manifesto

80. 'Tulen ja Mieckantäran cautta' / 'igienom Eld och Svärd' / 'durch Feuer und Schwerd'.
81. Vilkuna 2005, 31, 37.
82. Nordin 1998, 210.
83. 'Ruotzin wallan allda poies eroittaman ajwoitettu on' / 'sig utur Sveriges välde och Jurisdiction att befrija och löös giöra' / 'sich von der Schwedischen Bothmätzigkeit losszumachen geneigt ist'.
84. 'raja' / 'Barriere och skiljesmåhl' / 'Barriere und Mittel-Scheidung'.
85. Plokhy 2006, 277–280, 337.
86. King Frederick I's proclamation 27 Apr. 1742.

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only increased. In May 1742 copies of the manifesto in Swedish and the king's reply were delivered with the paper.[87]

The Russian troops moved on to occupy Finland during the summer. The occupiers convened two small assemblies in western Finland, after which a few clergymen asked for further steps to be taken to put the manifesto into practice. It failed to prompt any significant movement, but the locals tried to cooperate to avoid the horrors of the previous occupation era and improve their conditions.[88] Despite the faint interest, the possibility of seizing Finland for the Russian Empire was not far-fetched. The Danish were even willing to support Russia in doing so.[89]

The king summoned the estates, but by the time they assembled in August the matter of the manifesto was no longer topical, and the discussion of the Swedish crown's succession took centre stage.[90] The representatives of the Finnish nobility, however, referred indirectly to the idea of possible division in their argument against the Danish successor and a Danish–Swedish Union. On behalf of those 'living in Finland' the Hat politician Fabian Wrede stated that if 'the Swedish subjects were to become Danish', Russia would seize Finland for good. Trying to win it back would only bring more sorrow to Finland, and its inhabitants would therefore prefer to surrender and become Russians.[91] Rather than being pro-independence, Wrede was anti-Danish.

Ultimately, Russia settled for a smaller territorial gain in exchange for the succession of the empress's Swedish candidate. The state border was shifted west as Russia seized the towns and fortresses of Hamina, Lappeenranta (Vilmanstrand), and Savonlinna (Nyslott). The peace treaty of 1743 was in many ways a continuation of the treaty of 1721. The 'Grand Duchy of Finland' was central in both. Finland was again portrayed as somewhat distant from Sweden (Proper). The ceded regions were in the 'grand duchy' – not explicitly in Sweden. In this peace treaty, however, it was only Swedish Finland and the newly ceded parts that comprised the 'grand duchy'. The parts of Finland that Russia seized in 1721 were no longer described as parts of the 'grand duchy' but of Karelia and the Vyborg County (*län*). Trade relations were re-established between the Swedish and Russian realms and subjects, not the 'grand duchy'.[92] The treaty presents no agency of the 'grand duchy' beyond the experience of the damage caused by the war. Elizabeth's manifesto was not actualized. The Swedish and Russian realms were the neighbouring powers, and Finland was divided between them.

87. Posttidningar 10–17 May 1742.
88. Complaint of the Liperi parishioners 8 Nov. 1742; Cederberg 1942, 353–354, 358–370; Favorin 1975, 229–233.
89. Cederberg 1942, 361.
90. E.g. Diet minutes of the clergy estate 26 Oct. 1742.
91. Diet minutes of the nobility 16 Mar. 1743. For Wrede see Marjomaa 2001a.
92. Peace Treaty of Turku 7 Aug. 1743, in Swedish.

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Highlighting the 'grand duchy'

'The reasons for the unfortunate development in the war in the Grand Duchy of Finland'[93] were central issues in the Diet during the war and after it. As Nordin and Karonen have shown, 'Finland' was used as a rhetorical tool in the Diet discussions. Rebuilding the warzone was in the state's interest. Pleas became stronger and more demanding because of the general awareness of Finland's poor conditions.[94] After the war the 'grand duchy' was provided with a Governor General, Gustav Fredrik von Rosen, and a deputation for the issues of the Grand Duchy of Finland (also known as the Finnish deputation). The goal was to rebuild this main region by temporarily increasing the government's presence.[95] The post of Governor General was temporary, and Rosen lacked authority beyond suggesting improvements for the central government – many of which were declined. His duties included improving military and economic circumstances in Finland, but he focused on the former. The position was cancelled as unnecessary in 1752.[96]

The 'grand duchy' was an 'ill-treated'[97] territory and was left in the hands of the enemy, resulting in death and suffering, as the mayor of Öregrund Carl Gustaf Boberg put it.[98] The Finns belonged to the political community and were therefore called 'fellow brothers' (*medbröder*) or 'citizens' (*medborgare*), which conveyed togetherness, membership of the state, and political agency.[99] The Diet discussed a memo from the 'Grand Duchy of Finland' in which the war refugees pleaded for the right to participate in the capital's politics. They wished to officially assemble, form a statement on behalf of the whole 'community' of the 'grand duchy', and place the report on the gate at the House of Nobility. One nobleman, Adam Brunow, who had forged his military career in Finland and Scania, described the inhabitants' challenges as so severe and concerning to all the subjects in Finland that their claims for representation were justified. Several representatives thought it would be better if the refugees sought representation from the assembled estates. Permission was eventually granted to give the representatives of the 'grand duchy' a better opportunity to prepare their pleas.[100] Their political agency and status as members of the realm was clear as inhabitants of the 'grand duchy', as well as members of the Four Estates.

Progress and the common good were essential ways of describing the happiness of the state in the Age of Liberty. The opposite of happiness was darkness and difficulties.[101] During and after the wars the peripheries' representatives justified their

93. '... orsakerne till krigets olyckeliga förlopp i storfurstendömet Finland'.
94. Nordin 2000, 308; Karonen 2008, 275, 280–281.
95. E.g. Diet minutes of the peasants 26 May 1747; Diet minutes of the nobility 27 May 1747; see also Eng 2001, 292.
96. Teerijoki 2001.
97. illa handterat.
98. Diet minutes of the burghers 6 Nov. 1742. The 'fellow brothers' were also mentioned in the Diet minutes of the peasants 21 May 1734; Diet minutes of the nobility 13 Dec. 1734.
99. Saastamoinen 2003, 46–47; Wolff 2016, 71–75. The 'grand duchy' was also linked to the 'nation'. For the nation see Jani Marjanen's chapter in this volume.
100. Diet minutes of the nobility 16 Sep. 1742, 27 Sep. 1742; Diet minutes of the burghers 27 Sep. 1742.
101. Nurmiainen 2009, 76–78.

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demands by solving and avoiding difficulties. The peripheries needed resources to develop and prevent trouble spreading.[102] The 'grand duchy' was mentioned to give their appeals relevance, even if the appeal only benefited part of it. In 1761 a peasant representative from Westrobothnia, Jonas Gabrielsson, demanded stabler towns to boost the regional economy, justifying the request as an attempt to contribute to the progress of the state. They awaited an upturn in the regions of the 'Grand Duchy of Finland, Westrobothnia and the northern part of Western Norrland'.[103]

Representatives might also be disadvantaged if they foregrounded the 'grand duchy'. When the Council of the Realm was reinforced in 1769, Carl Fredrik Aminoff insisted that a candidate from Finland be added to the list of nominees. He based his argument on the status of the 'grand duchy', stating that Finland covered a great part of the realm and was a significant resource for Stockholm, the surrounding areas, and part of Bergslagen, and further that Finland was 'included in the royal title as a Grand Duchy'.[104] No one contradicted the claim, although it was not the case. Another Finnish representative, Berndt Otto Rehbinder, only pointed out that Finland was certainly not forgotten, as three of the candidates – Fredrik Carl Sinclair, Fabian Wrede, and Johan Vilhelm Sprengtporten – had a personal connection there. Rehbinder continued by reminding Aminoff that candidates were chosen by merit, not by 'province' (*landskap*). Sinclair was elected.[105] The examples show the idea of the grand duchy was still connected with Finland even decades after the title was omitted. Although the 'grand duke' had been marginalized, the 'grand duchy' seemed still to connect the territory to the king's dynastic authority. While it was worthy of mention in discussions after the war, the strategy lost its power as rebuilding the peace proceeded. Highlighting the 'grand duchy' could by then also frame the cause as too regional.

The peripheries' representatives did not always mention the 'grand duchy', or even Finland, in their proposals. When the borderland peasants criticized high border customs fees at the Finnish, Norwegian, and sea borders and demanded relief for inhabitants who depended on border trade, they represented their thirteen respective jurisdictional districts – not the main regions.[106] They wanted an exception, an indication that 'grand duchy' may have seemed too general. In another appeal the commoners of Finland, Bohus County, and Lövsta and Dannemora court districts (*tingslag*), which had suffered from the war, joined forces to reform inheritance practices. The resolution presented their localities more generally: the 'Grand Duchy of Finland', Uppland county, and Roslagen.[107] Using 'grand duchy' was sometimes an administrative convenience, unprompted by the representatives.

In contrast with the 'grand duchy', which belonged to the realm, the Diet discussed the Grand Duchy (*storhertigdömet*) of Tuscany as a state. Defending the freedom

102. Diet minutes of the nobility 6 May 1710; The Secret Committee to the Royal Majesty 15 July 1723; Diet minutes of the peasants 29 Jan. 1743.
103. Diet minutes of the peasants 22 Oct. 1761.
104. 'Denne provincen förtienar en sådan acktning; den utgiör en stor del af riket, är införd uti konungatitulen som et Storfurstendöme och är et betydande visthus för Stockholm, de omkringliglande orter och en del af Bergslagen.'
105. Diet minutes of the nobility 4 July 1769.
106. Diet minutes of the peasants 24 Mar. 1772.
107. The general appeal and resolution, peasants 1765.

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of religion and its benefits to the realm, the Finnish priest Anders Chydenius and Swedish nobleman Johan Liljencrantz both spoke of Tuscany as a Catholic state (*stat*) among other European states such as Denmark, Prussia, Russia, and Sweden. In another discussion the notary of the court of appeal, Carl Estenberg, called the Grand Duchy of Tuscany a 'merchant state'[108] – a destiny the Swedish realm ought to avoid at all costs.[109]

Spatial shift in the concept of 'grand duchy'

During the Gustavian era the 'grand duchy' is not mentioned in the Diet protocols after 1779, even though 'Finland' was under discussion in the Diet in 1786, 1789, 1792, and 1800. Much like the 'grand duchy', it was presented as a main region, province, and part of the realm. The military, economics, and general parcelling out of land issues were topical. The Duchy of Scania also disappears from the Diet protocols – though even earlier than the Grand Duchy of Finland. Scania is not referred to as a duchy after the Diet of 1760–1762, and the concept reappeared only in 1823 in the Diet protocols. The title of Duke of Scania was restored in 1826.[110] A possible explanation of the absence of 'grand duchy' in the protocols is that the Diet's role as a political forum diminished in the Gustavian era, and it was no longer as much a place for expressing regional interests.

Although the concept is missing from the Diet protocols, it was not forgotten by the king or his subjects. In proclamations in various newspapers the king continued to address his subjects in an imperial manner: '… loyal subjects, who build and live in Our kingdom Sweden, the Grand Duchy of Finland, and other provinces and domains that belong to Sweden….'[111] Indeed, it seems the political agency of 'the grand duchy' became only more focused during the Gustavian era.

Throughout the eighteenth century the fear of losing Finland was frequently raised in Sweden. Russia had grown more powerful, but Gustav III still planned to expand his realm. In 1783, after he met Catherine II (the Great), rumours suggested the king was willing to sacrifice Finland to Russia to conquer Norway. A few years later his policy changed and Sweden attacked Russia instead. When the Russo-Swedish war broke out in 1788, the Russians soon gained the upper hand, and Denmark forced Sweden into two-front battles by attacking Scania – though this was soon restrained by a British ultimatum. In Finland the war raised doubts about the king's judgement. A group of more than a hundred officers known as the Anjala League united to pursue peace.[112] In the summer of 1788 the nuclear group of officers in Liikkala bypassed the king

108. köpmannaväldet
109. Diet minutes of the nobility 20 July 1760; Liljencrantz to the Estates 11 Oct. 1760, Diet minutes of the clergy 16–19 Jan. 1779.
110. Diet minutes of the peasants 17 Mar. 1823; Södermanlandsposten 10 May 1826.
111. '…trogne undersåtare, som bygga och bo uti Wårt konunga-Riket Swerige, Storfurstendömet Finland, samt andra Sweriges krona tilhörige och underliggande Land- och herrskaper…'. Götheborgs Allehanda 4.1.1793; Inrikes tidningar 4.11.1794; Weckoblad För Gefleborgs 12.11.1796, 14.1.1797; *Landskap* can refer to a territorial unit or a more unfocused geographical region. *Herrskap* was a territorial unit ruled by someone. SAOB.
112. Blomstedt 1986, 240–244; Paaskoski 2005, 175–176, 187, 196–198.

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and approached the empress with a peace overture. They wanted peace and the form of government of 1772 to be overruled, offering to send Jan Anders Jägerhorn as the negotiator of the '[Finnish] Nation'.[113] Yet they presented themselves as representatives of the Swedish fatherland.[114] The note did not mention the grand duchy.

The empress's response painted a Finland that was detached from Sweden under Russia's protection. It was influenced by Georg Magnus Sprengtporten, who had supported Gustav III's coup but had fallen out with the king in the 1770s and defected to Russia in 1786. He projected the idea of a Finnish state inspired by the American Revolutionary War, the Declaration of Independence, and the Irish Patriot Party. Sprengtporten saw potential for an independent 'grand duchy' as an act against Gustav III and the Instrument of Government of 1772.[115] At this point, the Anjala League went from criticising the king towards committing treason, according to Wolff. The agenda for separatism led to the unravelling of the League's unity.[116]

Whereas Elizabeth's manifesto of 1742 was directed to the 'Finnish nation' as Swedish subjects in Finland and described Sweden as Russia's neighbour, Catherine's response to the Finnish officers 46 years later introduced a clearer political agency to 'the grand duchy' (*Stor-Hertigdömet*). In Catherine's response the addressee was clear – a group of Finnish officers and noblemen already acting against their king. Whereas the manifesto in 1742 implied that the 'duchy' could become a 'free and by no means dependent Land'[117] under Russia's protection, in Catherine's reply Finland was already 'the land', and the Finnish officers were promised 'political and civic self-rule'[118] with the help of the Russians. In exchange the Russians demanded the officers withdraw from the border and allow the Russian troops to stay in Finland. Although the war was between two realms, Finland was Russia's closest neighbour, not Sweden. The plan was:

> ...quickly to negotiate and form realm-representing corps, that, according to the laws, could negotiate on the true benefits of the fatherland, and eventually decide upon them agreeable ways to promote its current and forthcoming wellbeing. General Count Mussin-Pushkin, who commands the Empress's troops in Finland, shall sustain full authority, not only to protect this preparatory step, but also, after it has been implemented, to hear the Finnish deputation, which by the abovementioned corps may be sent to him, and to assist them with any help necessary, to lead this patriotic undertaking to a good ending.[119]

113. 'Nation'. Earlier in the document it is defined as the 'whole Nation's and especially the Finns' common sincere wish' ('*hela Nations och isynnerhet den Finskas gemensamma uppricktiga önskan*').
114. The Liikkala note 9 Aug. 1788.
115. Blomstedt 1986, 224–247, 353–254, 259; Vainio-Korhonen 2008, 121–125; Hallberg 2016, 7–8.
116. Wolff 2022, 105–108.
117. Translations in note 83.
118. et Politiskt och Borgerligt sjelfbestånd
119. '..., med det skyndesammaste med hwarannan öfwerlägga och utgöra en Riks-föreställande Corps, som, Lag-likmäktigt, må kunna afhandla om Fäderneslandets sanna fördelar, och sluteligen afgöra dem på et med dess nu warande och framtida wälfärd mäst öfwerensstämmande sätt. Generalen Grefwe Moussin Pauschin, som commenderar Kejsarinnans i Finlandstående Armee, skall erhålla full myndighet at icke allenast skydda

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Sweden was the fatherland, but the reply presents the agents of the 'grand duchy' as political actors who could take possession of the authority to decide on Finland's fate. As an encouragement to shift loyalties, Catherine II's position was significantly less hostile than the manifesto of 1742, reflecting a shift in Russian policy. Oksana Mykhed describes how people escaped poor conditions in Russia across the Russo-Polish border in the 1760s, but especially since Catherine's administrative reformation in the 1780s, the promises of freedom and tax relief began to attract expatriates. People now moved to the Russian side, and by the second partition of Poland there was little opposition to Russia within the borderland's local elites.[120]

After the officers of Anjala were captured Gustav III turned to the 'Finnish folk' for a reassurance of their loyalty. The Liikkala incident called into question all the king's subjects in the 'grand duchy'. He warned them against any disorder and demanded that they resist Russia. The king reminded the inhabitants of the destiny of Poland, Courland, Crimea, and the Vyborg Viceroyalty[121] who had once been promised the same benefits the empress had offered the Finnish officers.[122] Gustav III also tried to convince the inhabitants of Russian Finland to support his military endeavours to recover the region for the Swedish realm, but they showed little enthusiasm for embarking on such a campaign.[123]

In February 1789 Gustav III summoned the Diet. He scolded the nobility and invited the other three estates to cooperate with him.[124] The Diet began with the nobility discussing rumours about Finland and Scania wishing still to 'break away'[125] from the Swedish realm.[126] According to the rumours Finland would join Russia, and Scania with other formerly Danish provinces would reunite with Denmark. Chancellor of Justice Joachim Wilhelm Liljestråle supported the Finns, stating his disbelief that his 'honest fellow citizens' in Finland could have devised or supported such plans.[127] In the same speech he called the inhabitants of Finland 'our honest countrymen',[128] an attempt to underline the proximity of Sweden and Finland.

The 'Diet representatives of the peasant estate in the Grand Duchy of Finland' handed the king a declaration of their loyalty, including on behalf of their 'fellow brothers at home', in response to his freeing Finland from the enemy. The declaration was published in the newspapers, followed by the king's response, in which he praised the bond between the 'grand duchy' and Sweden. The renewal of fealty and

detta förberedande steg, utan ock, sedan detsamma hunnit til werkställighet, at höra de Finska Deputerade, som ifrån åfwannämnde Corps kunna blifwa honom tilsände, samt gå dem til handa med alt nödigt bistånd, för at leda detta Patriotiska företagande til et godt slut.' Göteborgs Allehanda 5 May 1789.

120. Mykhed 2014, 129, 137–139.
121. The Vyborg Governorate became the Vyborg Viceroyalty (Ger. der Wiburgschen Stathalterschaft) in the administrative reform of Catherine II of Russia in 1784. The reform was cancelled after her death in 1796, and the name was restored.
122. King Gustav III's proclamation to the inhabitants of the Grand Duchy of Finland 6 Dec. 1788.
123. Paaskoski 2005, 217.
124. Blomstedt 1986, 283–286.
125. afsöndra
126. Diet minutes of the nobility 6 Feb. 1789.
127. '...wåra redliga Medbröder'. Diet minutes of the nobility 6 Feb. 1789, 9 Feb. 1789.
128. 'wåra redlige Landsmän'. Diet minutes of the nobility 9 Feb. 1789.

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the king's response both mentioned domestic and foreign enemies, referring to the critical domestic nobility and Russia. The peasants promised that '... no peasant is found in all of Finland who thinks treacherously about their King and Fatherland'.[129] The king responded that he believed in 'their' loyalty, and that the age-old bond had made the 'security of both the realm and the Grand Duchy'[130] strong and enjoyable. The king reminded his audience that this bond had given Finland its religion, laws, cultivation, trade, and prosperity.[131] The burgher representatives of Finland made a similar declaration on behalf of the 'Finnish community' to the king.[132] The examples illustrate the rhetoric of Finland belonging to the Swedish realm, but they also suggest a distance, and that the 'grand duchy' formed a political entity that was also detachable from the realm – and not merely by seizure.

Reclaiming the title

After Gustav VI Adolf succeeded Gustav III to the Swedish throne, the northern rivalry linked to European alliance political and power struggles was again accentuated. In 1800 Russia, Prussia, Sweden, and Denmark-Norway formed a defensive alliance Second League of Armed Neutrality that aimed to secure their sea trade while France and Great Britain were fighting over their maritime claims. The alliance dissolved as the parties agreed one by one to an armistice. The assassination of Paul I of Russia in 1801 resulted in a shift in Russian foreign policy, which complicated relations with Sweden.[133] Gudmund Jöran Adlerbeth[134] (1751–1818), a Diet representative and historian, who followed the endeavours of the unpopular king in person, wrote that Gustav VI Adolf despised the new European order more than was good for Sweden. The new king disapproved of the politics of Prussia and France and dreaded the reforms of Alexander I of Russia. The conclusion of a trade agreement by Denmark and Russia with Great Britain complicated Gustav IV Adolf's foreign policy, marking the end of yet another period of favourable relations between Sweden and her old rivals.[135]

The tension in foreign policy was reflected in a series of strange events involving the 'grand duchy', starting with a dispute over the ownership of a bridge on the Swedish-Russian border crossing in Ahvenkoski (Abborfors). Jyrki Paaskoski describes the dispute as reheating rivalry over Finland.[136] In the summer of 1802 the Swedish king and queen – then expecting their third child – visited Finland. During the visit the king ordered the repainting of the bridge from the Swedish end in the Swedish colours

129. '...ingen Bonde i hela Finland gifwes, som tänker förrädiskt emot sin Konung och Fosterland'.
130. 'både Rikets och Stor-Furstendömets säkerhet'
131. *Göteborgs allehanda* 17 Mar. 1789.
132. Diet minutes of the burghers 1 Apr. 1789. The declaration did not, however, mention the grand duchy.
133. Paaskoski 2007, 249–250.
134. Gustaf Andersson published a series about the political history of Sweden based on Adlerbeth's notes and archived manuscripts. Andersson 1857. For Adlerbeth's biography see Beijer.
135. Andersson 1857, 149–152; Carlsson 1946, 105–115; Paaskoski 2005, 251.
136. Carlsson 1946, 107–113, 115–119; Paaskoski 2005, 253.

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to claim its ownership. The soldiers followed the orders, but the Russian border troops kept repainting the bridge, almost resulting in armed conflict.[137] The anecdote about the bridge incident spread widely in Sweden as an example of the king's lack of political sense. It was later referred to as the prelude to the Russo-Swedish war, which began in 1808.[138]

In December 1802 the queen of Sweden gave birth to a son, Carl Gustav, who was granted the title of Grand Duke of Finland. Only some weeks later the Russian emperor released an ukase that renamed the Governorate of Vyborg the Governorate of Finland.[139] It was rumoured that the attempts to rebuild diplomatic relations with Russia were overshadowed by these actions, writes Gustaf Andersson (1857), because reclaiming the title was against the peace treaty of 1721.[140] By renaming the governorate, the emperor gave expression to his authority over part of Finland. Carl Gustav died before his third birthday, but it was evident and concerning to many contemporaries that Finland was becoming topical.[141]

After the Tilsit pact in 1807 Russia, France, and Denmark-Norway joined forces against Sweden, which made her position all the more precarious.[142] In attempting to challenge France, Sweden lost the German provinces, and war between Sweden and Russia erupted in 1808. Gustav IV Adolf was overthrown in March 1809, after which the Diet assembled to choose his uncle Charles XIII as king. In May, with the war continuing, the 'Grand Duchy of Finland' – a valuable third of the realm – was considered lost to a much stronger enemy because of the recklessness of the now deposed king.[143] The estates insisted that the new Instrument of Government should include an article concerning the titles of the royal family. Its members could still inherit titles of duchies (*Hertigdömen och Furstendömen*) but without any claims over the provinces (*landskap*) whose names the title bore.[144] The territory named in the title was primarily included in the realm, and the royal person inherited only the status.

There was no mention of the grand duchy in the Swedish-Russian Peace Treaty of Värälä in 1790. In the Peace Treaty of Hamina in 1809 Sweden ceded a group of provinces (*landskaper*) to Russia. The seventeenth article stated that the ceded 'lands' (*länder*) – now the Russian Grand Duchy of Finland – had a long tradition of economic relations with Sweden that was to continue.[145] Although the old Swedish 'grand duchy' was not mentioned, the treaty was a continuation of its development. As the conclusion of the dispute of a few years earlier, Alexander I took possession of

137. Carlsson 1946, 116; Paaskoski 2005, 251–253.
138. Porthan to C. C. Gjärnwell 11 Aug. 1802, 1 Sep. 1802, 6 Sep. 1802.
139. The Lutheran consistories were to spread the proclamation about the name change to the parishes. Consistory of Hamina minutes 3 Jan. 1803.
140. Andersson 1857, 148, 151. Per Andersson, Adlerbeth makes no connection between the bridge dispute and the title's re-establishment.
141. E.g. H. G. Porthan to N. G. Schultén 24 Feb. 1803; N. G. Schultén to H. G. Porthan 27 Mar. 1803.
142. Wolff 2022, 220–223.
143. Diet minutes of the nobility 30 May 1809; Conclusion of the Diet 10 May 1809.
144. E.g. Diet minutes of the nobility 8 June 1809.
145. Peace Treaty of Hamina 17 Sep. 1809.

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the title of Grand Duke of Finland.[146] It was now activated in a new political setting as part of imperial Russia. As Sweden adjusted to the new practice after the war, the 'grand duchy' reappeared in the Diet's discussions. The funding for the children's home system required reorganization after the 'grand duchy' was no longer part of the realm.[147] Finland was still not discussed as the Russian, but as the lost Swedish grand duchy.

Conclusions

In this chapter I have investigated the development of the concepts of 'grand duchy' and 'grand duke' in eighteenth-century Sweden, focusing mainly on Diet protocols and treaties. The 'grand duchy' was a secondary concept to 'Finland', but it cannot be said to have been an empty one. Both the removal of the title and the highlighting of the 'grand duchy' had a political purpose.

Dynasticism remained central in European politics, though the eighteenth century was a highly territorial era. The relationship between the ruler and land was redefined as part of the peace process of the Great Northern War. In the first Peace Treaty of Stockholm the Swedes separated the territorial claims from the ruler's dynastic authority, but by the time Sweden and Russia signed the Peace Treaty of Uusikaupunki titles were strictly subjected to territory. The anticipation of future losses, foreign pressure, and the adjustment to the new order resulted in Finland being intentionally omitted from and kept from the royal title. The 'grand duchy' was adjusted to extend only to 'Swedish Finland', but the domestic and foreign understanding suggested that Finland continued on the Russian side. Re-established in 1802, the title mirrored the rivalry concerning the authority and claims over the territory, which ultimately led to the war in which Sweden lost Finland.

Although no one declared they were its grand duke, there was a practical reason for using the 'Grand Duchy of Finland'. Finland's position between the Swedish and Russian realms was also due to its being connected with both, without being fully considered to have historically originated from either. In domestic use it afforded an elevated status that was used especially by its inhabitants to underline the region's significance within the realm. Being distanced from Sweden Proper, it was necessary to be presented as part of larger campaigns for the common good. As a periphery vulnerable to foreign threats, Finland and Scania came to be articulated as a 'grand duchy' and a 'duchy' in the Diet protocols, whereas more secure peripheries were not. This was particularly effective during the recovery from the Russo-Swedish war, which strengthened its inhabitants' political agency. Later, highlighting the 'grand duchy' may have sounded too regional or provincial, which lessened its effectiveness in the Diet from the 1760s onwards.

The 'grand duchy' is completely missing from the Diet protocols between 1779 and 1809. Other sources, however, verify that the concept was not abandoned. With Sprengtporten's departure from the Swedish court the 'grand duchy' probably lost its rhetorical power in official Diet discussions after the 1786 Diet. Nevertheless, the

146. StorFurste til Smolensko, Lithauen, Wolhynien, Podolien och Finland.
147. E.g. Diet minutes of the nobility 4 Apr. 1815; Diet minutes of the peasants 5 May 1815.

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idea of a degree of independence in Finland was imaginable, and it was expressed outside the Diet, though not particularly supported. Finland and Scania were also still understood as part of the realm and not similar to the Grand Duchy of Tuscany, for example. However, the manifestos show that the Russians had a different understanding of the 'grand duchy' that suggested a territorial detachability.[148]

There was an understanding of Sweden without Finland in a geographical, economic, military, and cultural sense, but the idea of a non-dependent Finland remained improbable for the Swedes in the 1740s. The political agency of the 'grand duchy' was unfocused, but towards the end of the century it developed, not only because of wars and foreign issues but also because of the development of domestic political practices. Although the wording of the Peace Treaty of Hamina in 1809 suggests Klinge's interpretation that the 'grand duchy' formed only in 1809, this chapter has shown that the roots of the Swedish 'grand duchy' persisted throughout the grand-dukeless century. Even after the war the Diet discussed the old Swedish Grand Duchy of Finland that had been lost. As part of Russia, Finland's grand-duchyness was newly defined, and its position in relation to the centre of the Empire differed from its status during the Swedish era, but the concept persisted.

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148. For the Russian view see Natalia Potapova's chapter in this volume.

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Fatherland, the Grand Duchy, and Finland Equated

The Concept of Finland before and after the Napoleonic Wars

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Collectives wishing to describe their history need to focus on certain institutional, territorial, linguistic, or other features that can afford legitimacy to a historical narrative. German history before unification can lend building blocks from the substructures of the German Confederation and the Holy Roman Empire. The history of India can highlight continuities and discontinuities from independence to the colonial period and further to the Mughal Empire and its successor states. Sometimes, as in the case of North American history before and after European colonization, the historical ruptures are so violent that it is difficult to use history to create a past for a collective 'we'. In the Finnish case the continuity and discontinuity of 'Finland' having been part of the Swedish kingdom and then being incorporated into the Russian Empire in 1809 has been debated since the nineteenth century.[1] The question of what Finland was before 1809 has been approached by assessing different institutional settings and debating the levels of past actors' ideological commitments to Finnishness. This chapter takes a somewhat different approach to assessing the rupture of 1809 by deploying a strictly conceptual approach. It asks how 'Finland' gained currency as a rhetorically mobilizing term for a collective at the end of the eighteenth century and again after 1809. While it is in a sense self-evident that the notion of Finland changed due to the cession of 1809, this chapter seeks to describe this change more precisely and to understand the intentions and predicaments of those speech acts that were relevant to this change.

The study of the rhetorical use of 'Finland' should be seen in the context of debates about the different parts of the Swedish kingdom and the Russian Empire in particular and the study of empires and nations in general. The study of imperial provinces in the early modern period has often suffered either from seeing the empire as a unitary state or from treating the parts of an empire as a kind of predestined nation-state.[2] In the case of early modern Sweden the later history of the provinces has greatly affected the historical interpretations of their role in the period before the Napoleonic Wars. For example, Scania, Swedish Pomerania and Finland were all parts of the Swedish realm in the eighteenth century but had different relations with the crown.[3] Finland's relative autonomy within the Russian Empire after 1809 and subsequent independence has also made Finnish historiography prone to exaggerating

1. A landmark in this debate is Topelius 1843, 189–217.
2. Miller & Berger 2014.
3. Gustafsson 1998.

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Finland's role in the Swedish realm, without fully appreciating the Swedish crown's imperial outlook. Pomerania has in contrast become hugely overlooked due to its later Germanification. Scania, again, has become central to notions of Swedishness and has therefore been made more Swedish than the problematic and even potentially rebellious province was in the early modern period.[4]

This has ultimately meant that early modern Sweden has not been seen as an empire with many different components with varying relations to the crown.[5] In its most simplistic form this has led to the treatment of the Swedish realm as a unitary state and the portrayal of especially Sweden and Finland as predestined to become small European nation-states. This theme is most visible in the hyphenated history of 'Sweden-Finland' in describing Sweden before 1809. The introduction of this term was not part of early Finnish historiography, but by the 1890s it had become established in historiographical accounts such as Heikki Renvall's dissertation about the reception of physiocracy in 'Sweden-Finland' from 1899,[6] but was also used in newspaper accounts.[7] It is still in popular use Finland, although it has been debunked as an analytical category in historiography, as it postulates a nationalized category to the political setting in the eighteenth century and even earlier.[8] However, although Finnish historiography has turned against the category, in Sweden it is sometimes used for a similar reason. In the Swedish context the category of Sweden-Finland has been a way of undermining the anachronistically national perspective and highlighting early modern Sweden as an imperial conglomerate with regional differences.[9]

Nationally oriented interpretations of Finland's ontology in the eighteenth century have thus been criticized in recent scholarship. This valuable strand of scholarship has greatly nuanced our perception of what Finland was during its Swedish era, although obviously there is no complete agreement about the degree to which Finland should be seen as separate from or integrated into the rest of Sweden. Most importantly, the scholarship has led to a renewal of analytical concepts on both the Swedish and Finnish sides of the Gulf of Bothnia.[10] Thus far, however, there has been only limited interest in the rhetorical use of the term Finland in the past – that is, the question of how past actors themselves participated in this disagreement by reconceptualizing Finland and the grand duchy.[11] This aspect has been present in the scholarship on Finland since 1809 in the ample attention that has been paid to different visions of making Finland,[12] but a description of the semantic shifts in talking about Finland remains lacking.

4. Eng 2001; Nordin 2000; Önnerfors 2003; Engman & Villstrand 2008.
5. Gustafsson 1998, prefers the term conglomerate state. Marjanen 2022, 180–81.
6. Renvall 1899.
7. See e.g. *Uusi Suometar* 18 August.1895, 2.
8. Jussila 2007; Wassholm 2008, 4.
9. Össbo 2020, 420–43.
10. For recent scholarship see Klinge 1982; Pulma 1997; Manninen 2000; Nordin 1998, 195–223; Nordin 2000, 267–327; Eng 2001, 118–50; Nurmiainen 2003, 257–75; Ihalainen 2003, 37–58; Bladh & Kuvaja 2005; Kuvaja, Rantanen & Villstrand 2007; Manninen 2008; Wolff 2008; Katajisto 2009; Persson 2009.
11. For exceptions, see Karonen 2008; Marjanen 2017, 533–44; Stenius 1987, 103–7, 136–41.
12. For an account see Marja Jalava's chapter in this book.

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In approaching the matter's rhetorical aspect, this chapter aims to contribute to the debate about the political formation of Sweden and Finland in the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries at three different levels. First, it argues for historicizing the concepts that have been building blocks of imperial configurations such as the Grand Duchy of Finland and thus for undermining the use of ahistorical analytical categories such as Sweden-Finland. While the deployment of such a term may be justified as a move to criticize a national gaze in Swedish historiography, it still fails to capture the dynamic in past imperial configurations. Second, in suggesting not only an inquiry into what people meant by speaking of Finland as a geographical area, but also arguing for an analysis of what they did when speaking of Finland, this chapter aims to uncover how geographical concepts have been deployed in political and intellectual struggles.[13] Third, and most importantly, it describes the semantic shift that took place regarding the term Finland after 1809, showing how the new circumstances created new possibilities for its historical use and made some old uses obsolete. A supplementary patriotism in which Finland was highlighted as a native land within the larger fatherland, Sweden, ceased to be opportune in the post-1809 setting. Instead, discussion of Finland became couched both domestically and abroad in the discourse of the grand duchy as an imperial substructure, which made Finland newly comparable to other similar political units in post-French Revolution Europe.[14]

In this period many names of regions or states were in flux, especially in Europe and Latin America. This chapter holds that this dynamic stemmed from two interlinked and slightly contradictory processes. First, the names became tied to processes of imperial consolidation in which the big European empires strengthened their positions vis-à-vis smaller aspiring empires and started to dominate world politics.[15] Second, the rise of the idea that statehood and nationhood belonged together gave an impetus to a reassessment of many regional names, providing a telos that was in some cases realized.[16]

Geographical concepts and conceptual history

The point of studying the uses of the term Finland draws on the idea that linguistic change reflects but also affects historical change.[17] In other words, in this paper the historical uses of the word Finland are seen as indicative of how perceptions of Finland changed before and after 1809 but also as ways of negotiating this change. Furthermore, this change is not seen as a straightforward process but a conflicted one, with several attached uncertainties. Indeed, I argue that for many of the key actors studied here, Finland was not the object of a conceptual struggle.

Geographical concepts have not been the primary interest of conceptual history (*Begriffsgeschichte*), but some ventures have been made in this direction.[18] The

13. Skinner 2002.
14. For the politics of comparison in this period, see Kurunmäki and Marjanen 2021.
15. Bayly 2004, 1–4.
16. Miller 2014, 309–68.
17. Koselleck 1972, XIII–XXV.
18. Feres 2010; Mishkova & Trencsényi 2017.

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struggle concerning the meaning of geographical concepts has naturally revolved much around the question of territory and borders, but there is a clear advantage in also seeing the use of geographical concepts as rhetorical devices in given debates. They always carry significant culturally embedded political meaning that may be decisive in understanding a given utterance. In some cases, like that of talking about Burma instead of Myanmar or vice versa, the names of regions or nations are the object of genuine political controversy, but the connotative meanings and changing valuations related to geographical names are rarely immediately contested. Rather, they tend to latch on to other controversies and shift gradually.

The study of borders and region building has addressed geographical concepts from various perspectives, but it is clear that human geography generally regards them as constructed by a diverse group of actors. These processes need to be studied historically and contextually.[19] The conceptual history perspective deployed in this text does not contradict this paradigm of region and border studies, but instead of focusing on the region (and later nation-state) as an outcome of a long struggle, the aim here is to address the rhetorical use of Finland as a concept. The focus here is both on the locutionary meaning in the use of 'Finland', that is, what was meant by the word Finnish, and on the illocutionary aspects of this use, that is, what people were trying to do by using the term.[20]

As the analysis is based primarily on reading passages in which the term Finland was used, the potential quantity of material is enormous. Writing about Finland had already become relatively common in the thirteenth century, and most of the uses since have been mentions in passing. For this study I have therefore used mostly digitized sources from the late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries. Apart from the passages that I have identified with keyword searches in newspapers, academic dissertations and occasional books, I have turned to the canonical works that previous research has raised.

A Finnish moment

Previous research has pointed out that political discourse in Sweden started including clearer articulations of Finnish interests in the eighteenth century. This happened against the backdrop of the two occupations of Finnish territory during the so-called Great Wrath (Swedish *stora ofreden*, Finnish *isoviha*, 1713–1721) and Small Wrath (Swedish *lilla ofreden*, Finnish *pikkuviha*, 1742–1743), which makes it possible to see the articulation of Finnish interests as an attempt to rebuild Finnish territory after the experience of war[21] or as a reaction in which the Finnish nation became the object of an early national imagination.[22] Both elements are certainly present, but it is noteworthy that the notion of nation was seldom associated with any state structures at the time. In the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries including the Grand

19. For an insightful introduction under the heading 'Regions are social constructs, but who or what "constructs" them? Agency in question' to these debates, see Paasi 2010, 2296–2301.
20. Austin 1975; Skinner 2002, 98–101, 103–27.
21. Nurmiainen 2009; Karonen 2008.
22. Nordin 2000; Manninen 2000.

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Duchy of Finland in the monarch's title was surely intended as an articulation of Sweden's might.[23] This element was also possibly present in the eighteenth century, but attempts to articulate particularly Finnish interests brought a new dimension to discussing Finland and Sweden side by side.

As Jonas Nordin points out, the peculiar asymmetry between Finland and the crown had to do with the fact that the Finnish nation (here mostly related to language) was self-evidently distinct from that of the Swedish nation, yet there were very few if any reasons to see Finland as distinct from the rest of the Swedish realm in terms of state structures. This meant that the Grand Duchy of Finland was mentioned among many other dominions of the Swedish monarch, but when texts did not intend to highlight the role of princely power, differences within the Swedish realm in the eighteenth century were often articulated by saying 'Sweden and Finland' as if they were the only components of the realm.[24] This formulaic notion was replicated in newspaper texts, and it seems that when newspapers in Sweden in the seventeenth century wrote about Finland, it was to denote a geographical distinction, as in the phrase 'the archipelago in Sweden and Finland'[25] or in reference to the 'people [*allmogen*] in Sweden and Finland', and then denoting linguistic difference.[26] The geographical notion is also present in Voltaire's remark that 'Sweden and Finland make up a kingdom about two hundred *lienes* wide and three hundred *lienes* long'.[27] Voltaire's *Histoire de Charles XII* is otherwise saturated with political content, but when Finland is mentioned, there is no political element to the text. The geographical notion also distinguishes the eighteenth century discourse on 'Sweden and Finland' from the category of 'Sweden-Finland' introduced in the late nineteenth century. Overall, in the Swedish newspapers of this time 'Finland' is very often mentioned in a comparison with other regions or cities in the realm, but this predominantly occurs as a geographical marker. Rather than seeing the frequency of the term Finland in Swedish newspapers as a sign of a separate ontology in a political sense, these mentions should be indicative of newspapers in Sweden writing a lot about people, goods and other items from Finland, and could thus be seen as a sign of integration.

It is difficult to point quantitatively to the increase in talking about Finland in the eighteenth century, but digitized newspapers suggest that such an increase occurred, and that it was accompanied by the notion of the 'Grand Duchy of Finland' (Swedish *Storfurstendömet Finland*) becoming more common. As Jonas Nordin has suggested, the use of the political units tied to the crown was often linked to crises in international relations,[28] and it makes sense that the occupations and negotiations regarding the border between Sweden and Russia brought about a need to talk about the Grand Duchy of Finland, not only Finland. This also entailed a discourse in the eighteenth century in which the Grand Duchy of Finland was present, but the Grand Duke was not mentioned, highlighting the territorial aspect of Finland as part of the Swedish

23. Katajala 2023, 273–98. For a word history of Finland, see Katajala's chapter in this volume.
24. Nordin 2008, 215–19. See also the chapters by Kimmo Katajala and Jenni Merovuo.
25. *Posttidningar* 25 January 1697, 8.
26. *Posttidningar* 24 January 1698, 8.
27. Voltaire 1802, 23.
28. Nordin 2008.

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realm.[29] Judging from occurrences in digitized Swedish newspapers from the period, it seems the term grand duchy appeared slightly more often in the last three decades of the eighteenth century than earlier in the century, but the overall frequency is so low that it is difficult to make any claim about a significant rising trend. It also seems that the 'Grand Duchy of Finland' is usually present as nothing more than a geographical marker.[30] There are some exceptions. For example, in 1802, when Prince Carl Gustaf, the son of Gustav IV Adolf, was christened, the young prince was given the title Grand Duke of Finland.[31] This move was designed to signify Gustav's interest in Finland, but it also raised questions about Finland's territoriality, as this title had not been readily used after the cession of the most eastern parts of Finland (later called Old Finland) to Russia. To be sure, the use of the title gave rise to a reaction in the Russian press of the time.[32]

If exact changes in frequency are difficult to detect, it is easy to confirm a completely new mode of writing about Finland, and that is the notion of 'the Finnish nation' (Swedish *Finska nationen*), which started appearing in newspaper texts from the 1760s onwards in Sweden but also in Russia.[33] This new concept was tied to the general temporalization of the concept of nation in the wake of the Seven Years' War (1756–1763), which meant an entanglement of ideas of linguistically defined nations, economic improvement and emulation between nations.[34] Yet the term 'Finnish nation' does not come across as particularly laden and the most common reference to it concerned the Finnish congregation in Stockholm or Turku and appeared in announcements of the services held in Finnish. Gradually, however, statements about the Finnish nation having a history and agency also became more common. In 1795 *Stockholms Posten* wrote about the lack of historical expertise concerning the past of the Finnish people due to the nation's lack of literacy before Christianity.[35] Although the account of the Finns was unflattering, the Finnish nation was still seen as having a past. Nevertheless, an analysis of which things could be called Finnish in the eighteenth century makes it clear that they were primarily related to language, geography, or the people (Swedish *nation* or *allmoge*). This was in contrast with things Swedish that could also include state institutions and notions of territoriality (like borders).[36]

Eighteenth-century discourse also included some vagueness regarding the geographical area the term Finland denoted. In Swedish texts it could denote at least three different but overlapping things: 1) the area around Turku (Åbo), today called Finland Proper (*Varsinais-Suomi*, *Egentliga Finland*); 2) the territory of the grand duchy without the region of Ostrobothnia; or 3) the Grand Duchy of Finland, which resembles present-day perceptions of the Finnish state domain, albeit it with some shifts in the Swedish–Russian border during the century.[37] Although quantitative

29. See Jenni Merovuo's chapter in this volume.
30. The newspapers have been studied at https://tidningar.kb.se/.
31. *Nytt och gammalt* 12 August 1802, 1.
32. See Natalia Potapova's chapter.
33. See Natalia Potapova's chapter.
34. Hont 2005; Ihalainen 2003; Marjanen 2022.
35. *Stockholms Posten* 22 September 1795, 1.
36. Marjanen, Kanner & Mäkelä 2022, 109–19.
37. Kuvaja, Rantanen & Villstrand 2007; Villstrand 2002, 106–14.

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assessments are difficult, it seems the third meaning became more prominent in the latter half of the century in conjunction with the discourse of 'the Grand Duchy of Finland' and 'Sweden and Finland' becoming more common.

Further to the Swedish conceptualizations, another perspective was present on the Russian side of the border, where the term Finland could denote both a larger geographical area of Finland and the Governorate of Vyborg, the area that had been ceded to Russia in 1721 and further expanded in 1743. These border changes highlighted the need to define Finland from the perspective of St Petersburg, and to a certain extent the Russian interest in Finland also put Finland on the map internationally.[38] It is clear that after 1812, with the institutional consolidation of Russian Finland (later often called Old Finland) and the newly acquired Swedish Finland into a grand duchy, the term's semantic flexibility became less useful. The idea of Old Finland did live on and was an ingredient for the negotiation of identity in the new Grand Duchy of Finland (see Fig. 7).[39]

Representing Finland and supplementary patriotism

The use of Finland as a term was perhaps most visible in the push for concrete organizations that sought to deal with the whole of Finland. These organizations were also important in cementing the geographical definitions of 'Finland' as denoting Swedish territory on the eastern side of the Gulf of Bothnia, including Ostrobothnia. Here the motivation for defining the space for action as 'Finland' was not primarily related to a growing national consciousness but to a need to profile Turku intellectuals in a competition between the Swedish realm's other intellectual centres. This is particularly visible in the establishment of the Aurora society in 1770 and the Finnish Economic Society in 1797.

The second half of the eighteenth century witnessed several dissertations from the Academy in Turku that specifically defined Finland as its unit of interest. The titles *Om landt-hushållningens förbettrande i Finland* (1751), *Om jordens svedande och kyttande i Finland* (1753), *Betesmarckers förbättring i Finland* (1759), *Om schäfferiernes uphjelpande i Finland* (1762), *Äpple-träns ans och skötsel i Finland* (1769), *Om rå-pottaske tilwärkningens uphjelpande i Finland* (1774), *Potatoes wäxtens utwidgande i Finland* (1782), *Om orsakerne til flod-vatnets öfversvämningar i Finland* (1786), and *Om medel at underhålla och öka skogsväxten i Finland* (1795) all stood out for three reasons. They all opted for Swedish rather than Latin as the publication language, focused on economic improvement, and in the title defined Finland as a space in which economic improvement was desired. Although it is possible to claim that Finland required special attention as it was a region that deviated from the rest of Sweden economically and perhaps also by its nature, it seems that the focus on Finland was something advocated among Turku academics. Of all the Swedish-language dissertations published prior to 1809 and included in the catalogue of Uppsala University Library, each title containing the word Finland was published in

38. See also Natalia Potapova's chapter in this volume.
39. Paaskoski 2010, 355–63.

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Turku.[40] The production of knowledge in Swedish on economic affairs in Finland had the specific aim of representing Finland. Although Latin dissertations also sometimes wrote about Finland, this was not a way of defining a geographical area for which the information was relevant. Rather, Latin dissertations were generally geared towards universal knowledge production.

The societies followed the same pattern, but they were more explicit in expressing a kind of supplementary patriotism in which reforms in Finland aimed to benefit the whole Swedish realm. The Aurora Society, with Henrik Gabriel Porthan as its prime mover, directly modelled itself on similar semi-secret scholarly societies in Uppsala and Stockholm. The society's constitution (Swedish *allmänna lag*) stated that its 'noble objective' was to 'participate in efforts that bring honour to the Swedish Nation' with the societies in Stockholm and Uppsala, but 'although it primarily strives to benefit Swedish scholarship [*vitterhet*], the society extends its interest to several sciences, especially pertaining to the Finnish language and the customs and history of this country, as well as the free arts, especially music'.[41] The idea that improving Finland as part of the Swedish kingdom was obviously related to the fact that the Aurora Society needed locally anchored objectives that were not only copies of the objectives of the societies in Uppsala and Stockholm, but it is clear that thinking in such concentric circles of patriotic improvement was present among the society's leading figures. In a statement about the society's motivation the founders write of their 'love for our Fatherland and tenderness towards Finland's honour'.[42] It is not entirely clear if the word 'fatherland' refers to Finland or Sweden, but it is more likely that it refers to the latter, as the word was not usually used to denote Finland,[43] and this fits the idea of a supplementary patriotism. If the fatherland were Finland, it would have made more sense to replace the word 'Finland' with 'its'.

That the Aurora Society wished to represent Finland is also visible in how the society's newspaper dealt with the parts of Eric Tuneld's *Geographie öfver konungariket Swerige* that dealt with Finland. It published long addenda correcting and revising Tuneld's information, clearly seeing itself as a forum for collecting and disseminating knowledge about Finland. The corrections are related to Finnish etymology and geography, providing a rather detailed catalogue spanning four issues of the newspaper.[44] Although Tuneld had corresponded with informants from Finland,[45] it is clear that few in the Swedish realm could be an authority on matters related to Finland. The Aurora Society and their newspaper took on that role.

A similar, albeit much less detailed project, was materialized in the short-lived Finnish-language publication *Suomenkieliset Tieto-Sanomat*, which in 1776 included two parallel series of texts, one outlining the economic betterment of Finland and one on the different regions (*maan-piiri*) in the empires and realms (*waltakunta*) of the

40. The searches were conducted at https://uub.primo.exlibrisgroup.com/discovery/ and checked against the catalogue of the National Library of Finland.
41. Hjelt 1886, 147; For another interpretation see Manninen 2000.
42. 'Kärleken för vårt Fädernesland och ömheten om vårt Finlands heder', Hjelt 1886, 146.
43. The most well-known exception is Daniel Juslenius, who wrote in Latin in the first decade of the century. Juslenius also operated with supplementary language by distinguishing between *patria* and *communis Mater Patria*. See Kimmo Katajala's chapter in this volume.
44. See *Tidningar Utgifne af et Sällskap i Åbo* 30 September 1784, 1, and three consecutive issues.
45. Legnér 2004.

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world. The Swedish realm is dealt with in four consecutive issues. They divide Sweden into four different parts: Sweden Proper; the Götha realm (*waltakunta*); the Northern regions (*maakunnat*); and Finland (*Suomen-Maa*).[46] The status of the different parts differs in the sense that the order in which they are described is not random but follows a centre–periphery pattern. Moreover, the names of the region, with Svealand as the core, Götaland as a realm, Norrland as a set of regions and Finland as a land or country, tell of their status. The order clearly draws on how the different parts were presented historically in the king's title.[47] The naming of the different regions is also related to the ad-hoc character of Finnish-language political vocabulary. In Swedish it is quite likely that Finland would have been called a grand duchy, but in Finnish this term was less established simply because of the lack of Finnish-language texts that described the political order. Finland, or *Suomen-Maa*, was divided into seven regions (*maakunta*): 'Österbotn'; Finland Proper; Åland; Tawastland; Sawolax; Nyland; and 'Kymmenegårdin Maakunta'.[48] The names of these regions were given only in Swedish and the fluctuating vocabulary concerning what was a region and what was not gives a general impression of the terminology that was in the making. The text also provides an example of how Finland could in one text refer both to the whole land and its parts and that Ostrobothnia held a special position in it.

The supplementary patriotism the Aurora Society articulated was perhaps even more pronounced in one of its successors, the Finnish Economic Society, founded in 1797. The Economic Society saw at its mission the improvement of Finland's economy, which had been neglected in the years prior to its foundation, with Finland seen as a buffer zone against aggression from the East. Now, the Economic Society reasoned, it was time for the government to 'think about Finland's value to the Swedish Crown as well and the development of this land'.[49] In its statement the Economic Society, probably unknowingly, echoed a statement of Anders Chydenius from 1765, in which he wrote of the risk that Ostrobothnia would increasingly resemble a barren land and buffer zone for Sweden but then called for the need to see Ostrobothnia's economic development as benefiting the whole Swedish realm.[50] The sentiment was no coincidence: it was articulated repeatedly in the documents of the Economic Society, most forcefully in a poem written in honour of the society by Frans Michael Franzén in 1800: 'O land of my ancestor, O Finland! You also shall arise among the countries of the world'. It concludes 'Finland, be raised at Sweden's side'.[51]

Supplementary patriotism was not only advocated from Turku: it also gained support from the highest levels, as the whole foundation of the Economic Society was connected with the wedding of Gustav IV Adolf, who, like his father, wanted to show he was an active monarch who established organizations that developed culture and the economy. Gustav granted a royal charter to the Economic Society, a move that was undoubtedly connected with his signal of Swedish strength to Russia, as was his later

46. *Suomenkieliset Tieto-Sanomat* 1 October 1776, 3.
47. For a discussion of the order see Katajala's chapter.
48. *Suomenkieliset Tieto-Sanomat* 1 October 1776, 5.
49. Cited from Cygnæus 1897, 94; Marjanen 2022, 179.
50. Chydenius 2012, 202–3.
51. 'Medborgerliga Dygd! du lefwer ännpå jorden? … O mina fäders bygd, o Finland! Skal omsider du äfwen lyfta dig bland jordens länder opp. … och Finland, lyft wid Swerges sida, beundras af en werld, som glömde at det fans'. *Åbo Tidning* 8 January 1800.

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decision to grant his son the title of Grand Duke of Finland.[52] The Economic Society's royal charter infringed on the domain of the Patriotic Society, which had already been established in Stockholm in 1766. The Patriotic Society's mission was to promote economic development throughout the realm, but once the Finnish Economic Society was established, the two societies divided the labour.[53] The Economic Society should therefore be seen as both an expression of regional discontent and of a supplementary patriotism, in which the term Finland was a way of activating local elites in Turku.

The supplementary patriotism in Turku was not only about making a local impact, but genuine attempts to spur improvement throughout Sweden were rare. One was the publication of a learned journal, *Allmän Litteratur-Tidning*, in 1803. At the time Sweden's publishing climate had become increasingly restrictive, with several journals withdrawn.[54] Although the withdrawals were discouraging, they also opened up the literary field to outsiders from Turku. In an announcement of the coming journal the editors argued that 'we are now among the few nations in Europe … that seem to only a limited degree to bother with things that take place in the learned world elsewhere'. The statement echoes some of the earlier calls for the need to improve Finland's backward economy, but in this case the text was explicitly directed to 'the Swedish Public'.[55]

As *Allmän Litteratur-Tidning* was to a high degree aimed at a broader Swedish readership instead of only relying on local readers in the Turku area, it perhaps downplayed its Finnishness. This differs from the Aurora Society and the Finnish Economic Society, as these two organizations seemed to emphasize themselves as representatives of Finland. The illocutionary aspect of the rhetoric of Finland is enlightening here. Representing Finland provided the organizations with more importance vis-à-vis the other academic centres in the Swedish realm. As Turku in a sense competed with Uppsala and Lund for prestige, usually with little success, the late eighteenth-century move towards representing Finland and focusing on scientific utility gave Turku an edge. Through a type of rhetorical synecdoche Turku represented the whole of Finland. The idea of synecdoche is that something small represents something larger, as in today's political parlance in which Brussels represents the EU, or something big represents something smaller, as in how talking about 'the West' actually just means Britain and the United States of America.[56] In the case of the Turku improvers, the latter type of synecdoche was present in how representing Finland was a way to bolster the role of the intellectual groups in the realm's second largest city.

52. Cygnæus 1897, 89–94. See also Natalia Potapova's chapter in this book.
53. Marjanen 2022, 183–87.
54. Marjanen 2019, 111–40.
55. 'wi nu äro att räknas bland de få nationer i Europa, som med anspråk på hyfsning, smak och kännedom af både konster och wettenskaper, likwäl föga synas bekymra oss om hwad som i den öfvriga lärda werlden förehafwes', Åbo Tidning 11 August 1802.
56. Perelman & Olbrechts-Tyteca 2006.

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Native land and fatherland

The increased momentum the term Finland gained in the latter half of the eighteenth century had the effect of forming an imaginary of Finland as a space for intellectual activity. Coupled with the supplementary patriotism outlined above, this increased momentum also led to a diversification in discourses on the fatherland. If not common, it became at least possible to distinguish between the native land (*fosterland*) and fatherland (*fädernesland*), with the former related to Finland (or something local) and the latter to the Swedish realm as a whole. Although the terms *fosterland* and *fädernesland* are quite commonly seen as synonyms in present-day Swedish, they have a complicated and entangled history. *Fädernesland* draws on an older tradition of political vocabulary that is connotated with civic duties and activities in the state, whereas *fosterland* is younger and obviously has more nativist connotations.[57] The terms *fosterländsk* and *fosterlandskärlek* were relatively new words in the political language of the eighteenth century and have since become more common than the words related to fatherland.[58]

In general the term fatherland was reserved for Sweden, but Finland could reasonably be presented as part of it. For example, an academic dissertation of 1754 laments how little interest has been directed at gardening 'in our Fatherland, especially here in Finland'.[59] Similarly, in the early 1800s *Åbo Tidning* spoke of Sweden as a fatherland and the Swedish part being much better known to foreigners than the Finnish,[60] published articles in which the author described how Finland appeared more foreign than the rest of the fatherland,[61] or simply lamented how people living on the Western side of the Gulf of Bothnia lacked a good grasp of their fatherland because of their lack of knowledge of the Grand Duchy of Finland's geography.[62] That Finland was regarded as part of the Swedish realm that differed from the rest is not especially surprising, but it underlines that Finland was in general not the fatherland, but part of it.

In a series of articles on the cultivation of Finland the leading figure of enlightenment thought in Turku, H. G. Porthan, wrote about Finland's importance to the Swedish crown, using this premise to present a selection of improvements that could be implemented in the former's economic life. In doing so, he distinguished between *fosterland* and *fädernesland.* He presented 'ideas for the cultivation of our shared Native land', and that such ideas could be further developed and spread to citizens who desired the common good 'for the real benefit and advantage of the Fatherland'.[63]

57. Lindberg 2006.
58. Marjanen 2022, 123.
59. '[m]en så älskadt detta närings medlet [krydd- och trädgårdar] är hos fremmande folkslag, och så högt som de hafwa bragt det genom sin stora idoghet: så ringa aktadt är det beklageligen på många orter i wårt Fädernesland, i synnerhet här i Finland.' Kalm & Lindstén 1754, 2.
60. *Åbo Tidning* 30 August 1800, 2.
61. *Åbo Tidning* 13 January 1800, 3.
62. *Åbo Tidning* 18 January 1800, 2; Åbo Tidning 17 February 1802, 2.
63. 'Föranledd af dessa betraktelser, wågar jag hemställa wår allmänhets ompröfwan och behjertande följande tankar om detta wårt gemensamma Fosterlands widare upodling. Kunnige Landsmän torde af dem få anledning til ämnets närmare och fullständigare

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A reading of the occurrences of the words *fosterland* and *fädernesland* in newspapers published in Turku prior to 1809 supports the idea that vocabulary connected with the fatherland often referred to the Swedish realm, whereas vocabulary connected with the native land could also refer to Finland as part of the realm. For example, *Åbo Tidningar* explicitly wrote of 'our Finnish native lands' in 1798.[64]

The precise meaning of the terms fatherland and native land in historical texts is far from evident. Lea Laitinen argues that of the ten examples of the Finnish word 'fatherland' (*isänmaa*) prior to 1810 in the collection of the Institute for the Languages of Finland, none refers to Finland.[65] An academic dissertation by Julius Krohn from 1862 which outlines early Finnish-language literature also notes that fatherland referred to the Swedish realm, whereas Finland was usually spoken of as 'our land' or the 'native land'. These findings are perfectly in line with the above claims, but the aim of Krohn's book was to identify a nascent Finnish sentiment rather than any supplementary patriotism. Krohn also suggests one case from 1783 of 'our fatherland' being used to denote Finland.[66] Krohn's example is probably this passage from H. G. Porthan on the need to study whether or not 'Tacitus's Fenni, Ptolemy's Finni, and Pliny's Fenningi ought to be sought in our Fatherland'.[67] It is not impossible that fatherland denotes the Swedish kingdom, but I am inclined to follow Krohn's interpretation. Compared with the other instances of 'our fatherland' in the Turku newspapers published in the late eighteenth century, however, this example stands out, as all other examples are clearly about Sweden or originate abroad. This does not mean that other examples of fatherland denoting Finland did not occur anywhere, but if they did, they were few. Regardless of the complexity of identifying exact meaning in utterances, taken together these findings indicate that there was in general a difference in how the terms fatherland and native land were used in Finland in the late eighteenth century. It seems this distinction was less present elsewhere in the realm.[68]

There is, however, a prehistory to the late eighteenth-century way of distinguishing native land and fatherland among Turku intellectuals. In Swedish late seventeenth- and early eighteenth-century learned Latin discourse the word *patria* (fatherland) had three interrelated political meanings: the local patria, linked to a town or an area; the political system, linked to the realm and the head of state; and a combination of the two, a localized understanding of the realm consisting of Sweden and Finland. According to Bo Lindberg this plurality in meaning drew on Cicero's distinction between *patria naturae* and *patria juris*, which corresponds to the two first meanings

utredande, och uplyste samt för det allmänna ömmande Medborgare tilfälle, at sedan göra bruk af dem til Fäderneslandets wärckeliga hielp och båtnad.' *Åbo Tidningar* 13 March 1797.

64. 'At känna det Land, hwars hushållning och näringar man vill uphjelpa, är så aldeles nödwändigt, at man utan denna kunskap aldrig en gång bör hoppas framgång i sit företag. Genom forskande och patriotiske Medborgares åtgärd, har wäl de senare åren i synnerhet den Geographiska kännedomen af wår Finska Fosterbyggd blifwit märkeligen utwidgad och förbättrad.' *Åbo Tidningar* 1 October 1798.
65. Laitinen 2008, 104.
66. Krohn 1862, 138.
67. *Tidningar Utgifne af et Sällskap i Åbo* 6. November 1783, 7.
68. For example, Lindberg 2006, 142–50, does not distinguish between *fosterland* and *fädernesland*.

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outlined above.[69] One expression of *patria naturae* was Daniel Juslenius's work on Turku and Finland,[70] in which he uses the word patria to refer to Finland.[71] Juslenius's work is hyperbolic and best understood in the context of seventeenth-century Swedish Gothicism, which emphasized Sweden's might, argued for by its Gothic ancestry. At the height of Sweden's might, with the realm consisting of several different parts of the conglomerate state, it made sense that locally anchored hyperbolic interpretations like Juslenius's also emerged. Indeed, similar works were written about Dalsland, Värend, Umeå, Westrobothnia, Gotland, Norrköping and many other towns and regions.[72] The appeal of such accounts lessened once Sweden's territorial might decreased during the eighteenth century, and Sweden overall became a more unified state. Towards the late eighteenth century, however, with a heightened sense of supplementary patriotism the three meanings of *patria* were articulated anew in Swedish using the distinction in Swedish between *fosterland* and *fädernesland*.

Equation of fatherland, the grand duchy and Finland

The Napoleonic Wars and particularly the rupture of 1809 are generally presented as major turning points in Finnish history. There are therefore several shorthand descriptions of the events of 1809. They all tend to highlight slightly different things and obviously all have their strengths. One critical point in using these shorthand descriptions is that they allow us to think about how the concept of Finland was understood at the time and how an obvious political rupture forced historical actors to rethink what Finland was.

The most common shorthand in historical accounts is more or less that Finland was ceded to Russia in 1809. This tends to emphasize a continuity in what Finland was, in a sense equating Finland before 1809 with Finland after 1809. Although it is in a sense self-evident to argue that Finland was ceded, it does suggest there was some sort of administrative structure to be ceded, and ever since Zacharias Topelius's famous essay, 'Do the Finnish people have a history?', there have been serious discussions about whether Finland in the Swedish period was sufficiently established to be seen as some sort of historical agent. Topelius answered the question in the negative but seems to have changed his mind later in life, and it is clear that most historiography up to the 1960s took an affirmative position.[73] Further, and perhaps more importantly, the idea of Finland being ceded disregards the Governorate of Vyborg, that is, the parts of Finland that had already been part of the Russian Empire since either 1721 or 1734. How could Finland have been ceded, as parts of it had already been Russian since almost a century before?

Another formulation is found in the Hamina (Fredrikshamn) peace treaty of September 1809, which does refer to Finland as a grand duchy but in the crucial passage mentions the specific six Swedish counties (*län*) which were ceded to Russia.

69. Lindberg 2006, 149–50.
70. Juslenius 2005; Juslenius 1994.
71. Manninen 2000, 81–83, 235–48, see also Kimmo Katajala's chapter in this volume.
72. Lindberg 2006, 145.
73. Topelius 1843.

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Such a description is less prevalent in scholarly accounts, but it does draw on a crucial historical source in describing the key events. The phrase emphasizes the Swedish kingdom's administrative structures, highlighting that the Grand Duchy of Finland was not an administrative unit in the Swedish kingdom in the same way as the counties. Hence, it was the counties that were ceded, not Finland or the grand duchy. Nevertheless, writing about the cession of the six counties draws on language from only one text, the peace treaty. It was then much more common to conceptualize the cession as Finland being ceded.

A third way of talking about cession is to present it as a question of the implosion of the Swedish kingdom and frame it as a question of 'half of Sweden' – or more accurately, a third – being ceded. The problem with this characterization is that it presents early nineteenth-century Sweden as more unified than it was. Like the version about the counties, it downplays Finland as part of the imaginary of historical actors in the period before 1809. With a national perspective dominating Finnish historiography, there have been good reasons to use expressions that force readers to rethink Finnish history.[74]

For all these ways of telling the story of 1809, but especially the first, a crucial question concerns how the concept of Finland changed as a consequence of the political rupture of 1809. Although it is in a sense self-evident that the concept changed, there are few attempts to describe this change. I suggest that talking about Finland underwent three interlinked changes: 1) the distinction between fatherland and native land that was characteristic of eighteenth-century supplementary patriotism no longer made sense; 2) the synecdoche of talking about Finland as Turku was no longer appealing; and 3) the grand duke had again become an important part of the conceptualization of the Grand Duchy of Finland.

It is difficult to prove such a shift in the language about fatherland, native land and Finland. The continuities are strong, and there are few cases which distinguish between fatherland and native land. An examination of these words' use in newspapers published in the 1810s and 1820s shows that fatherland (*fädernesland*) was about three times more common than native land (*fosterland*). The two words are nearly synonymous, but fatherland is more likely to refer to the general patriotic virtues of 'king and fatherland',[75] and native land is tied more to the actual land.[76] The pronoun 'our' occurs with both terms but is slightly more likely to be expressed as 'our native land'.[77] A large share of the occurrences stem from foreign news, which means there is a limited pool of articles in which one can assess if the author uses them differently in a Finnish context. The one text that stands out in its political focus is an article in *Åbo Morgonblad*, titled 'A look at our native land' ('*En blick på vårt fosterland*'), which is very clear about Finland being the native country and Russia being something else. The text includes a passage about how 'our native land was united some ten years ago with the powerful Russian Empire (*riket*)', using the

74. For the dominance of the national perspective see Kettunen 2008; Haapala, Jalava & Larsson 2017.
75. See e.g. *Finlands Allmänna Tidning* 15 October 1822, 4.
76. For examples in which this can be discerned see *Finlands Allmänna Tidning* 25 August 1821, 4; *Finlands Allmänna Tidning* 15 October 1822, 2.
77. *Finlands Allmänna Tidning* 10 February 1821, 3.

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terms *fosterland* and *fädernesland* interchangeably.[78] This is the case for most texts in which both terms are used, regardless of whether they concern Finland or deal with foreign fatherlands.[79] The synonymy of the terms is found particularly in translations, including a printed speech by President James Monroe in 1825 in which the original English word used is probably fatherland, but the translation uses both *fädernesland* and *fosterland* for variation.[80]

In this material there are no examples of *fädernesland* being used for Russia and *fosterland* for Finland as in the abovementioned Finnish and Swedish examples of eighteenth-century supplementary patriotism. The only times Russia is called a fatherland in these newspapers is when the story is a translation of a Russian news item,[81] or when the newspapers directly report a speech that Alexander I or Nicholas I has delivered. These latter texts were first delivered for a Russian audience and reprinted as translations in Finland.[82] Interestingly, the translations of imperial speeches never use the term *fosterland* in the same way as in the translation of Monroe's speech. This may be coincidental, but it is also possible that the notion of native land did not fit well with the emperor's image.

If the distinction between fatherland and native land had become less effective, the rhetorical synecdoche of talking about Finland as an extension of the domain of Turku intellectuals had completely lost its point. Politics, culture and intellectual life in Finland were in many ways a complete continuation from Sweden, but making these connections visible became less opportune. Although many civil servants from Sweden had careers in Finland and vice versa, crossing the border became less desirable and even politically unwise.[83] Part of this turning of backs on Sweden was that academics in Turku and later Helsinki oriented themselves less towards Uppsala and Lund and certainly did not see themselves as representatives of Finland in the rest of Sweden. Yet even less did they see themselves as representatives to the rest of Russia. This meant the end of the synecdochic rhetoric of Finland. In conceptualizing Finland's position towards the rest of the Russian Empire, a comparison with other parts became less important. Rather, Finland's position was conceptualized as a relationship with the emperor, which meant that the grand duke's role became important when talking about the grand duchy.

Unlike the shift in talking about fatherland and native land, the shift in moving from the grand-dukeless grand duchy, as documented in Jenni Merovuo's chapter, to a Finland dominated by the grand duke is easy to quantify in language use. Nevertheless, the best illustration of the return of the grand duke is found in how Alexander I is present in Finnish public discussion. Although he is obviously above all an emperor, in Finnish texts he is almost always also a grand duke. This was the case in the title of Alexander as the 'autocrat of all Russians &c. &t. &c. Grand Duke of Finland'[84] and especially in the frequently occurring phrase 'withholding their [the

78. *Åbo Morgonblad* 13 January 1821, 1.
79. For examples, see *Finlands Allmänna Tidning* 16 June 1827, 8; *Helsingfors Tidningar* 17 October 1829, 2; *Åbo Tidningar* 4 November 1829, 2.
80. *Finlands Allmänna Tidning* 29 March 1825, 2.
81. *Åbo Allmänna Tidning* 21 January 1813, 2.
82. *Åbo Allmänna Tidning* 2 July 1814, 2; *Finlands Allmänna Tidning* 26 September 1826, 1.
83. Marjanen 2019.
84. E.g. *Åbo Tidning* 6 December 1809, 1.

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Finnish subjects'] special Constitution [Författning] under OUR and OUR successors' sceptre'.[85] The emperor's sceptre bound many different political units in the empire, and in both Alexander's and his Finnish subjects' rhetoric the link with the Grand Duke of Finland was emphasized more than the incorporation into an empire. On this point the person of the Emperor and Grand Duke (usually in this order) became a crucial point of identification, as Kati Katajisto's book *Isänmaamme keisari* points out.[86]

The grand duke's role was also visible in more popular public manifestations like the 'The Finns' song for their Grand Duke', which was published in both Finnish and Swedish,[87] and the steamship 'The Grand Duke', a vessel of eighty horsepower that started voyaging between the main cities on the Baltic Sea at the end of the 1830s.[88] It is difficult to assess how important the medium of a steamship was for communicating the emperor's many roles, but the naming is in itself an indication of how the figure of the grand duke gained multiple new expressions in Finnish public life after 1809. Other ships in the fleet of the Turku steamship company from this period were called 'Furst Menschikoff' after the General Governor from 1831 to 1855, Alexander Menshikov and 'Finland'. The company's naming policy clearly sought a certain political relevance. That the company had to sell 'Finland' to Germany in 1847 should not be seen as diminishing this.[89]

Apart from the outlined general changes in the use of the term Finland, there is naturally a range of uses that stem from individual actors' feelings, loyalties and ambitions. Local elites in Finland had to rethink their loyalties, which made them particularly prone to linking Finland with imperial power and the stability that was believed to come with trusting it.[90] Some members of the elite like Eric Gustaf Ehrström were able to create new careers for themselves by learning Russian and juggling their Swedish, Finnish and Russian loyalties, showing remarkable flexibility in thinking about ethnic and state belonging.[91] For others the situation was open to political confrontation, as in the case of A. I. Arwidsson, who could imbue the word Finland in his *Åbo Morgonblad* (cited above) with a new type of meaning. Improving Finland and the Finnish language represented for him a new future that was not only national; it was also politically more open-minded. On this point the Finnish language itself also acquired new social meaning, a process that is more than well documented in the historiography of the Finnish national awakening. It is noteworthy for this chapter that this entailed the more frequent use of the word 'Suomi', the Finnish word for Finland. This also happened in Swedish-language texts, particularly in poems, to create added effect.[92] There seems to be a slight difference in the Finnish and Swedish uses of 'Suomi' and 'Finland' respectively, however, as the former was more culturally and linguistically oriented, whereas the latter gained more connections with the state

85. *Åbo Allmänna Tidning* 7 March 1816, 1.
86. Katajisto 2008.
87. *Åbo Allmänna Tidning* 19 January 1813, 1.
88. *Helsingfors Tidningar* 1 April 1837, 2.
89. For examples, see *Åbo Tidningar* 17 March 1848, 2–4.
90. Katajisto 2008.
91. Wassholm 2014.
92. For an example, see *Åbo Underrättelser* 3 January 1824, 4.

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administration. This was to change during the century as Finnish-language political language was synchronized with Swedish.[93]

The political innovations which sprang up from the new post-1809 situation were partly stifled by an innovation on the part of Alexander I and his regime. By making Helsinki Finland's capital and moving the university to it, the elites were consolidated farther from Swedish influence and directed towards a more loyalist view of the empire.[94] A loyalist perspective did not, however, mean a lesser focus on Finland. Rather, Finland as the object of improvement encouraged thinking about culture and language, whereas issues of political economy were pushed to the margins.[95]

External comparability

A self-evident change in how Finland and Finnishness were talked about was connected with the administrative structures established in the country after 1809 that were part of Alexander's campaign to consolidate Finland as a political unit within the Russian Empire. This change is measurable, and a comparison of which nouns the adjective 'Finnish' modifies in newspaper texts before and after 1809 clearly shows a shift. In newspaper texts from the 1770s the adjective Finnish was most commonly used to denote nouns connected with geography (e.g. archipelago) or language (e.g. language or book), whereas references to the administrative state (e.g. cavalry) constituted around ten per cent of cases. In the 1830s the share of modified nouns connected with the administrative state more than doubled, but more importantly perhaps, also diversified, with the introduction of terms such as 'Finnish citizens'.[96]

A shift in the grand duchy-ness of Finland to more state-like features was also manifested outside Finland. Although Finland had also been talked of as a grand duchy before 1809, the rupture of the Napoleonic Wars meant added interest in Finland abroad. This was because Finland had become an administrative unit in a way it had not been before, which made it more comparable with other subunits of empire in Europe, but it was also because such subunits mushroomed all over Europe and in European colonies, and there was simply a need to discuss what they were. Different types of duchies and protectorates with varying names were in their way part of the changes in the reconceptualization of the state and how administrative power was related to different degrees of statehood.[97] From the Kingdom of Hungary within the Austrian Empire to the Grand Duchy of Luxemburg within the German Confederation but with the Dutch king as grand duke, all political units seemed to produce very specific rules for their existence as political units. This was also the case for Finland, which was clearly elevated in status – though to what exactly was unclear to many.

Matti Klinge has noted that immediately after 1809 three books with the word Finland in their title were published internationally. The last time such a book had

93. Marjanen, Kanner & Mäkelä 2022.
94. Klinge 1988.
95. See Max Engman 2016; Marjanen 2022.
96. Marjanen, Kanner & Mäkelä 2022.
97. For an extensive discussion on the concept of the state, see Boldt et al. 1990.

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been issued was in the seventeenth century. Although words used in book titles are perhaps not the best proof of increased interest in Finland, these books still reflect some kind of interest.[98] The most prominent was by the historian Friedrich Rühs, who was commissioned to write *Finland und seine Bewohner* (1809), a book about Finland and its inhabitants. Rühs was a native of Greifswald and a specialist in Swedish history, so he was well versed in the composite nature of the old Swedish Empire and was in a position to write about Finland as well. The book is presented as particularly interesting for the situation in Saxony, which had also gained an elevated status in the complicated reshuffling of the lands in the Holy Roman Empire during the Napoleonic Wars. Saxony's historical trajectory differed from Finland's in the nineteenth century, but there were clear links between the two places in 1809.

Rühs's book was very quickly translated to Swedish and made available to readers in Sweden and Finland in 1811. The Finnish historian, A. I. Arwidsson, who emigrated to Sweden in the 1820s, published a new and extended translation in 1827. All three versions stem from a particular context, the first two of which are connected with 1809, whereas the third was linked to another history of Finland written by Peter von Gerschau published in 1821. Arwidsson wished to intervene because many felt Gerschau's *Versuch über die Geschichte des Grossfürstenthums Finnland* presented Finnish history as only a struggle between Sweden and Russia.[99]

Finland und seine Bewohner starts by noting the different peoples that inhabited Northern Europe, claiming that only the Hungarians (*Madyaren*) had succeeded in forming 'a state, an independent realm'.[100] It portrays Finns as an underdeveloped people who had barely taken the step from a state of nature and were then attacked by a more cultured people. The Swedish conquest of Finland was a blessing in this sense and had allowed the Finns to develop further. Nevertheless, it is the new situation that invites a reflection on Finland's history. Rühs writes that 'It may be that there is a lack of political interest in the history of Finland, but it becomes interesting through a portrayal of its origins and progress … as the bonds that have united Sweden and Finland for nearly six hundred years, unexpectedly have been torn, and a new period begins for Finland.'[101] For Rühs it is the current development towards statehood that makes the history of Finland interesting, regardless of how underdeveloped the Finnish people have been, which contrasts with the previously mentioned study by Zacharias Topelius, which was sceptical about such a history due to the lack of state-like institutions.

What is interesting in Rühs's account of the grand duchy is that the label is strongly present in how he presents Finland in his own time, but less so in the past. The whole book is a history of the *Großfürstenthum*, but the outcome and the words grand duchy and grand duke do not really appear in the descriptions of past events. John III, for example, is not present as a grand duke, although he very well could have been. It seems the current grand duchy-ness for Rühs was something different from its older versions.

98. Klinge 1996, 34–35.
99. For a comparison of the versions, see Päivärinta 2008.
100. Rühs 1809, 3; Rühs 1811, 1.
101. Rühs 1809, 5; Rühs 1811, 3.

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Although Rühs's book should be seen as part of the new international interest in Finland, it must be noted that not everyone was interested. Finland was not mentioned in the Vienna settlement because it was not in Russia's or Sweden's interest to put it on the table.[102] Yet although it is clear that in all the turmoil in Europe after the French Revolution, Finland's cession to Russia was not regarded internationally as the most important, but its place was still part of court politics in a way it had not been before. Madame de Staël, who was highly influential in international politics and in negotiating between Alexander I and the future Swedish king Bernadotte, travelled from St Petersburg to Stockholm via Finland in 1812 and produced a famous description of Finland in her book *Dix années d'exil*, published in 1821. The account pays attention mostly to the character of Finns and Finnish nature and very little to its political position, but it still provoked a reaction from General Governor Arseny Zakrevsky, who thought the description was pejorative.[103]

A quantitative assessment based on the Google Books Ngram Viewer in English and German shows that in these data Finland does not become much more topical after 1809, but the discourse on the Grand Duchy of Finland becomes more frequent.[104] This quantitative finding suggests that one of the main changes in talking about Finland is connected with how the label of grand duchy became more prominent. It also made Finland comparable with other state-like political units in Europe.

Increased talk of the grand duchy was also part of the bringing together of those parts of Finland that had already been ceded to Russia in the eighteenth century with those that had remained Swedish until 1809. The practice of talking about Russian Finland and Swedish Finland ended and was gradually replaced by a discourse on Old Finland and New Finland.[105] Yet the merger of the two Finlands also made it more reasonable to talk more about the Grand Duchy of Finland as a whole. Obviously, Swedish political parlance had included notions of the Grand Duchy of Finland in the eighteenth century, but there was always a tension in talking about it as one unit. In 1803 this tension came to the fore as the Russian state bureaucracy changed the Governorate of Vyborg to the Governorate of Finland in 1804 in response to Gustav IV Adolf's naming of his son as the Grand Duke of Finland.[106] Although the tensions may have been modest, it is noteworthy that they came to an observable end after the merger of the two Finlands in 1812.

Conclusions

Studying the meanings associated with names such as Finland can further nuance our take on the historical understandings of European empires and their parts. By focusing on how often and why intellectuals wrote about Finland, it is possible to see that not only was there increased political interest in articulating things as Finnish

102. Paasivirta 1981, 34.
103. Kurunmäki 2017; Klinge 2009, 374–82.
104. For the Ngram Viewer and criticisms, see Michel et al. 2011, 176–82; Pechenick, Danforth & Dodds 2015.
105. Paaskoski 2010.
106. See Natalia Potapova's and Jenni Merovuo's chapters.

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in late eighteenth-century Sweden, this discourse also had at least three different modes. First, Finland was more often presented as a grand duchy. Second, Finland was used as a type of synecdoche in Turku academics' attempts to strengthen their own position in the cultural competition with other academic centres in Sweden. Third, the discourse on Finland highlighted a supplementary patriotism that was, among other things, present in the distinction between fatherland and native land, with the former referring to the realm, and the latter to Finland.

After the Napoleonic Wars all these modes of writing about Finland changed. The grand duchy certainly remained important in writing about Finland, but if it had been a crucial part of the imperial struggle between Sweden and Russia in the period before 1809, after the establishment of the grand duchy within the Russian Empire this state-like structure made it comparable in Europe. After the French Revolution there was a mushrooming of grand duchies in Europe and this institutional framework made Finland something that could be attached to political imaginaries in Europe. The notion of a Grand Duchy of Finland thus bears a long continuity from the early modern period, but at the same time the notion itself gained further importance.

As for the tropes of Finland as synecdoche and the distinction between fatherland and native land when talking about Finland, both uses became more or less obsolete. Although one can make the claim that the new grand duchy soon created a public life that became increasingly unipolar with Helsinki as the new centre representing the whole of Finland, it is scarcely thinkable that Helsinki academics attempted to use this position to bolster their position; nor is it plausible to think that Helsinki in the same sense represented the whole country. The distinction between fatherland and native land became obsolete for the simple reason that Finland's position within the Russian Empire differed significantly from that of its position in the Swedish Empire. The fatherland and native land were in a sense equated with one another, and they were intrinsically linked with the grand duchy as an institutional framework.

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From Dynastic Status to Land-Centred Nation

The Grand Duchy of Finland in Russian Political Discourse

NATALIA POTAPOVA

This chapter deals with the progress of the idea of Finland as a political space up to Alexander I's proclamation of the Grand Duchy. What did it meant to be a 'Grand Duchy' in Russian political discourse from the sixteenth to the early nineteenth century? How was Finland's status as a Grand Duchy understood, and what were the pragmatics of the new discursive inventions? I will focus on the influence of new political concepts such as the territorial state and the sovereignty of the people,[1] the nation as a political unit,[2] and political independence, which have become crucial for the political discourse of modernity. How did the use of the concept of the 'Grand Duchy of Finland' change, and in what context were its new meanings 'invented'?

The Grand Duchy of Finland's political status has never been properly problematized in Russian historiography. 'Finland' has commonly been considered a primordial entity that existed from ancient times on the same territory and a national unit that gradually developed towards statehood. In the period after 1990 the history of Karelian and Finnish toponyms gave new optics to Russian studies of the Finnish-Karelian borderlands that allowed them to be seen as imagined communities, moving entities with changing locations and without strong boundaries.[3] Although Russian linguists did not use a systematic conceptual approach, a careful analysis of word use offers important findings. Especially valuable is the work of the Russian historian Alexander Tolstikov, who examined the problem of how, when, and in what context the *toponym* 'Finland' was assigned and transformed in the early modern period.[4] Tolstikov studied the concept of 'Finland' as part of Russian diplomatic discourse and the geographical imagination of Russian political elites in pre-Petrine Russia. He analysed sources of various genres – diplomatic charters and letters, international treaties, and scientific cosmographies – paying attention not only to vocabulary but to grammar and the pragmatics of translation. Tolstikov found that in Russian diplomatic discourse the toponym '*Finlant*' was first used in 1514 in an embassy book copy of a speech delivered by the ambassadors of Grand Duke Vasilii III of Moscow to King Christian II of Denmark. The speech was preceded by negotiations in Moscow with the Danish ambassador. Tolstikov notes that the main language of negotiation between the Danish and Russian diplomats at that time was Latin, and in old Latin the word '*finlont*' had been known in runic inscriptions, for example.[5] Thus, the introduction of the form '*Finlant*' (*Финлант, финланские*) used in the

1. Kalmo and Skinner 2011. Bourke and Skinner 2016.
2. Миллер 2016; Berger and Miller 2015.
3. Муллонен 2018.
4. Толстиков 2014, 148–175.
5. See FMU I 1910, 8.

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Russian text could be connected with these negotiations with the Danes.[6] In the 1514 Russian embassy book '*Finlant*' was considered part of the Swedish realm governed by crown administrators (aldermen, or *namestniki* in Russian, using the model of the Novgorodian lands). In the Russian '*Books of the Swedish Embassies*'[7] the Swedish word *Finland* ('*landzende Findlandh*', '*Findlandh*') was first used in 1556 and interpreted in Russian translation as 'Finnish land' ('*Finskaia zemlia*'). Until the 1570s this word was never used in original Russian discourse, only in translations of Swedish charters.[8] In 1556 it was used in the translation of the charters of Gustav I Vasa and his son John for the Novgorodian alderman Store Nogårdh ('*namestnik*'in Russian) and the Russian tsar Ivan IV (named '*högborne furste*' in the Swedish original). '*Findlandh*' was described as a borderland ('*porubezhie*' in Russian) and a location of border conflicts on Sweden's fringes, so remote from the capital that it was difficult for the king to get there quickly and to keep order. The absence of the king, who had not come 'from Swedish land to Finnish land' ('из Свейские земли в Финскую землю')[9] was understood as a source of anarchy. In Russian discursive practice this notion was referred to in such cases as *Novgorodian* or *Siberian land* as justification for intervention, and through this comparison implicit legitimation could also be sought for establishing jurisdiction over Finland as a *conquered* part of the Swedish realm.

The charter given by John, the son of Gustav Vasa, to the Novgorodian alderman (*namestnik*) explained the Finnish land's status as part of the Swedish Kingdom, explicitly mentioning that his father, Gustav Vasa, had visited the borderland, which 'was in his kingdom in Finnish land'). These charters of 1556 also proclaimed John's new status as the Duke of Finland: Johan was titled '*Sverigis*, *Götis* and *Vendis*, etc. hereditary archduke … the supreme regent in the land of *Findlandh*'. In Russian this new status of the Swedish royal inheritor was translated as '*Sverigis*, *Götis*, *Vendis* patrimonial duke (*votchinnii kniaz*)' and sovereign, ruler, and owner of Finnish land ('*господарем… вышним властелем, обладати Финскую землю… властвовати и действовати ему вправду*'). Tolstikov concludes by arguing that 'this new status of Finland was ignored by Ivan IV, as in his return charter Ivan considered John not a ruler but a governor, ('управу делати'), but the name "Finnish land" has since been part of Russian diplomatic language'.

Finland was first translated not only as 'land' or as part of the title of *Duke* but in a charter of John III in 1569 as a *Duchy* of Finnish lands ('княжество Финские земли'). After 1581 it was regularly used in charters in the title of King John III as 'the Duke of Finnish and Karelian land' (князь Финскии земли и Корелский). At the turn of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries two notions of Finland began to be commonly used in Russian diplomatic discourse: the 'Grand Duke of Finland' part of the king's title referred dynastically to the bondage between the inhabitants and

6. Толстиков 2014, 154. The text of the Embassy books was published in Shcherbachev 1897, 9.
7. Books compiled by clerks of the Russian Office of Embassies, *Posol'skii Prikaz*, with copies and translations of Swedish charters and diplomatic correspondence
8. Толстиков 2014, 155–156.
9. Polekhov and Erusalimsky 2023.

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the Swedish king, whereas 'Finnish land' was understood in spatial terms as the areas ruled by the Swedish realm.[10]

In the article's afterword Tolstikov noted that a compiled cosmography had been published in Moscow in 1670 which represented Finland as *an old realm*, following the 'Cosmography' of Sebastian Muenster (1544) and the 'Chronicle' of Marcin Bielski (1551). By the eighteenth century Finland had thus become known as an integral element of Europe's geographical imaginary. Tolstikov did not further analyse the history of the concept of 'Finland' during the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, but he concluded that in the age of Peter I there had been a crucial shift in Finland's optics from territorial to political in the modern sense. Denis J. B. Shaw has argued that 'Peter in fact inherited certain geographical practices and spatial understandings, practices which arose as a result of political and social developments that were affecting many parts of Europe at the time'.[11] He mentions in particular that 'this ambition was no doubt encouraged by the tsar's meeting with the celebrated cartographer Guillaume Delisle in Paris in 1717, with whom he discussed the problems of such an undertaking, and by his correspondence with the philosopher G. W. von Leibnitz'.[12]

In this chapter I continue this research and elaborate on some of its results. I proceed from the hypothesis that the process of 'conceptual modernization' was more complicated and controversial, occurred gradually in several stages, and had not been completed by Peter I's time. As knowledge of Finland and its political status then belonged mainly to the competence of diplomats, my analysis focuses on international treaties and diplomatic correspondence. The study is based on the results of a comprehensive review of documents collected in the archives of the Russian state. I also use official Russian newspapers edited by scholars and translators who worked at the Russian court and the court academy of sciences. The Russian 'press' was closely related to diplomatic discourse in the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries as it was often based on diplomatic correspondence, published treaties, and international news translated from the European press. My analysis is based partly on a comparative analysis of the texts published in European languages and their Russian translations. I complement the textual analysis with a study of visual representations, using cartography as a crucial source to show how discursive shifts in the understanding of the political status of 'the Grand Duchy of Finland' were articulated in visual form earlier than in published texts. In my approach to cartography I proceed from J. B. Harley's proposed analytical perspective 'to explore the discourse of maps in the context of political power'.[13]

This chapter's structure is correlated with the consistent development of new meanings of the concept of the Grand Duchy of Finland, borrowed from European discourses and interpreted in the Russian tradition. I examine how the idea of the grand duchy was formed as a territorial entity, separate from the dynastic title, and how it was rethought as the idea of the nation as a community united by language, customs, political will, and an aptitude for independent political existence spread. My

10. Толстиков 2014, 163–164.
11. Shaw 2005, 410, 423–424.
12. Shaw 2005, 165.
13. Harley 1988, 278.

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analysis focuses on changes in political discourse, but it also seeks to understand how rhetoric was connected with political practices.

The shift from dynastic to territorial political imagination

John Brian Harley has argued that since the Renaissance cartography had been deeply involved in the representation and expression of sovereign power depicted by titles, dedications, coats of arms, and so on.[14] In displaying the royal arms, however, maps not only speak of the source of their authority – the power that through the system of patronage brought them into existence – but also of the relationship of that power with the land they depicted. Through cartographic analysis historians can discern the traces of a transfer of authority from the sovereign and the royal system of jurisdiction to the land as a political community. The emergence of cartography coincides with another important transformation of the idea of power: service to one's lord, regardless of country, faded into the past, yielding to the emergence of the 'land' as a single, if variously significant, term for the focus of allegiance. As Richard Helgerson has said, cartography 'pictured an entity that, as a basis of authority, hardly existed, an entity that had remained subordinate to the dynastic regime whose power defined its limits'.[15]

The map of the Swedish realm engraved in 1626 by Swedish cartographer Anders Bure and dedicated to King Gustav II Adolf and Queen Maria Eleonora proclaimed royal sovereignty over the kingdom as a whole, as well as the king's dominance in Northern Europe (the Nordic countries).[16] Following the paradigm of geography as a court science, Bure represented Sweden as part of Northern Europe, called Scandinavia in Latin, and divided by nature itself, according to the king's title, into Sweden, Gothia, Finland, Ingria, and Estonia, which were considered natural resources. The elements of the Swedish king's title and the provincial coats of arms were correlated with the territory and its inhabitants and were inspired by royalist ideas. At the same time, as Richard Helgerson argues, such maps allowed readers to 'see in a way never before possible the country – both county and nation – to which they belonged and at the same time showed royal authority – or at least its insignia – to be a merely ornamental adjunct to that country. Maps thus opened a conceptual gap between the land and its ruler, a gap that would eventually span battlefields.'[17] Finland was considered a region that lay within natural borders, with its own history, natural resources, and inhabitants. The distant borderland, which had traditionally been thought of as land's end, could now be seen as one of the two centres of the Swedish kingdom.

Bure's map greatly influenced the political imagination of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries.[18] In the second half of the seventeenth century it was used by

14. Harley 1988.
15. Helgerson 1986, 75.
16. Orbis Arctoi nova et accurata delineatio, karta över Norden av Anders Bure, https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Orbis_Arctoi_nova_et_accurata_delineatio_Anders_Bure_1626.jpg#Licensing (March 2025).
17. Helgerson 1986, 56.
18. See Kimmo Katajala's chapter.

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the Dutch mapmakers and publishers Jan Blaeu, Johannes Janssonius, and Frederik de Wit, who published the maps of '*Magnus Ducatus Finlandiae*' separately, representing it not simply by mirroring dynastic reality but as a territorial political unit, with its own natural borders and provinces. Based on Bure's cartographic tradition, the Dutch cartographer Jan Blaeu, the official cartographer of the Dutch East India Company, edited the map of the Grand Duchy of Finland in the second half of the seventeenth century.[19] He depicted it as a state unit with its own linear borders and symbols of power like provincial coats of arms, but without Swedish symbols except for the coat of arms of Gustav Horn, the count of Björneborg (Pori) and president of the Swedish war department. The symbol of the Swedish local nobility's power in Finland and within the Swedish state replaced the royal symbols in the map's upper left-hand corner. Frederik de Wit, who started his work in the Blaeu firm (see Fig. 5), also copied this in his reprint of the 1680s, and in this form the map was frequently reprinted until 1740 and sold throughout Europe.[20] Johannes Janssonius, who owned bookshops in Frankfurt, Danzig, Stockholm, Copenhagen, Berlin, Königsberg, Geneva, and Lyon, edited numerous volumes of the atlas in Dutch, Latin, and French, and several editions in German. Dutch cartographers introduced Finland to the European public, contributing significantly to the progress of the idea of the Grand Duchy of Finland as a political space.

The Dutch and German cartographic tradition of the latter half of the seventeenth century presented Finland as a territorial entity without the symbols of the ruler. For the first time Finland could be 'seen' as a 'state' with its own borders, coats of arms, and other symbols related to *power.* The description reflects a choice between one system of authority or source of legitimacy over another. Richard Helgerson argues that in creating this entity, cartography also brought into being a new form of political subjectivity in the Foucauldian sense that Helgerson calls 'the *novus homo chorographicus*',[21] new cartographic subjectivity, and that Denis J. B. Shaw labels 'geographical consciousness'.[22] Similarly, the story of the Finnish land and people was separated from the story of dynastic power – and the reader was offered a new imaginary of Finland as a separate political community.

There is no doubt that in the eighteenth and at the beginning of the nineteenth centuries the model of the printed maps influenced the mental map of the Grand Duchy of Finland. The maps transferred images of Finland as a separate political entity from Europe to Russia. Jan Strang has noted that the creation of maps of Finland in the eighteenth century was closely associated with military actions on its territory.[23] European dynastic geopolitics, alliances, and wars also played a role when

19. Blaeu, Joan & Bureus, Andreas, *Magnus ducatus Finlandiae* (1662), https://www.doria.fi/handle/10024/90416 (March 2025).
20. *Nova tabula magni ducatus Finlandiae in provincias divisa, multis locis aucta et correcta pre F. de Witt,* https://www.doria.fi/handle/10024/79231 (March 2025).
21. Helgerson 1986, 81.
22. All the maps edited by the Dutch cartographer are in the catalogue: see Khmelevskikh and Karnachev 2016, 1670–77. List 95. Blaeu J. Magnus Ducatus Finlandiae auct. Andrea Buraeo; *N 15-1598* Janssonius J. Atlas Novus. Amsterdam, 1646–1647. Shaw 2005, 168, 170, writes: 'Peter left a personal library of 1,621 books and 1,351 maps, charts, and illustrations. Of the former, 143 (8.8 per cent) are described as geographies, cosmographies or atlases'.
23. Strang 2014, 17.

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early Russian newspapers paid attention to Finland, particularly in the context of the Russian-Swedish wars.

During the Great Northern War Finland was first mentioned as *a land* ('*finliandskaia zemlia*') in reports on the movement of troops in the first official Russian newspaper, *Vedomosti*, published by a decree of Peter I. In June 1703 the newspaper recognized 'the Finnish Land, Ingermanlandia, and Karelia [as] *belonging* to the Swedish Crown'. The old dynastic entity, the Duchy of Finland ('*finskoie kniazhestvo*'), as a well-known part of the title of Swedish kings, however, was reinterpreted not only as a sign of the Swedish sovereign's power but as a separate territory with its own administrative division, *capital*, Åbo (Turku), and *army* ('*finliandskie voiski*'). *Vedomosti* made no comment on the status of the Duchy of Finland ('*finskoie kniazhestvo*') that would associate it with 'the Grand Duchy of Lithuania' or 'the Grand Duchy of Tuscany' ('*velikoie kniazhestvo*'), for example, or any other such entity in the European dynastic hierarchy. We therefore have little information about how the newspaper's publishers pictured the Duchy of Finland in relation to the political structures of Europe's old dynastic systems. We can argue, however, that Finland was in any case imagined in a new sense as a territorial unit between Sweden on the one hand and Karelia with Ingermanland on the other.[24]

This became especially clear during the occupation of Finnish territory in the Great Northern War: 'And so on the 28th day of the last month, without any resistance, they entered Åbo (Turku), the *capital of the Finnish duchy*, and with the help of God they took possession of this *duchy*'.[25]

We can also argue for the dynastic to territorial shift in political imagination by comparing two peace treaties, the Treaty of Stolbovo of 1617 (signed before Anders Bure's 1626 map) and the Treaty of Nystad (Uusikaupunki) of 1721. In the Treaty of Stolbovo the concept of Finnish land ('*finskaia zemlia*') can be interpreted in the traditional sense of spatial imagination in accordance with people's settlement and movement from one land to another (e.g. Swedish, Finnish, Chukhonish, and Russian lands). *Finnish land* was considered territory under the Swedish king's jurisdiction, but with often unclear physically tangible natural marks like roads along mountains and rivers ('*mezha*') dividing Swedish and Russian lands. This was vital for merchants who had to pay taxes and duties on arrival in the Swedish king's jurisdiction. The anticipated movement of troops and tax collectors, however, still embodied the medieval idea of jurisdiction and power as the movement of the sovereign's body.

> ...As long as the city is on His Royal Majesty's side, all city and county people shall pay to His Royal Majesty their usual taxes and perform their service for the maintenance of the military people who continue to be in that city. ...[26]

24. *Ведомости*, June 1703.
25. *Ведомости*, September 1713. 'И тако в 28 день прошедшего месяца, без всякого сопротивления в столичной Финского княжества город Абов вошли, и с помощию Божиею оное княжество овладели.'
26. The Treaty of Stolbovo, 1617. '… Також доколе город на Его Королевского Величества стороне побудет, всем городским и уездным людям Его Королевскому Величеству обыклые свои подати давати и службу свою чинити на воздержание ратным людям, которые в том городе будут по-прежнему…'. - Полное собрание законов Российской империи. Complete collection of laws of the Russian Empire. Vol. 1, 1649–1675, 180–181.

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As the Swedish court cartographer, Anders Bure was a member of the commission for border demarcation at Stolbovo. Jan Strang suggests that Bure drew his famous map of 1626 not only based on measurement using a quadrant, astrolabe, and compass but on discussions with the Russian officials in the commission.[27] In the early eighteenth century the tradition Bure established set the standard for Finland's cartographic representation.[28] Jan Strang has even argued that Finland began to be considered an equal part of the Swedish kingdom through this map's visualization.

In the Treaty of Nystad (Uusikaupunki) of 1721 the concept of the Grand Duchy of Finland was explicitly used to refer to the territorial entity that in accordance with the principles of the dynastic geopolitics of the time was considered a conquered land. With other 'conquered provinces' (Livonia, Estland, Ingermanland) 'the districts of the Vyborg county' (*län*) were annexed to the Russian Empire. The treaty considered these crown lands not only royal jurisdictions but the basis of the state's wealth in the logic of the new *Polizeiwissenschaft*. The state's ability to accumulate resources and transform them into power was expressed in territorial terms through a rational administrative division of the state that could be shown on a map.

> ...[I]t then goes in a *straight line* into the ground even to the road, which is from Vyborg to Lapenstrand, a distance of three miles from Vyborg and so on, at the same distance of three miles to the North by a *straight line*, before the Kexholm fief fell to Sweden. And this old border will follow northwards up to eight miles, and from there, it goes in a *straight line* through the Kexholm fief, even to the place where Lake Poroervi, whose source is near the village of Kudu Maguba, meets the last former border between Russia and Sweden…[29]

The annexation of the Swedish Vyborg county (*län*) was symbolically manifested by converting it into the Russian province of Vyborg. In 1722 a demarcation map was published with the image of Hercules setting Theseus free from the underworld in the upper left-hand corner. This decorative cartouche symbolized the liberation of the 'Russian lands' from Sweden. The image was complemented by the coat of arms of the Russian Empire, with the motto 'From God to the world'.[30] This map represented a simple strategy to appropriate and 'domesticate' the Swedish administrative division. On the Russian side of the border the Latin '*districtus*' was changed to '*uezd*', and '*territorium*' to '*pogost*". The boundary was not natural but drawn in a geometrical

27. Strang 2020, 24–25.
28. Strang 2020, 64–67.
29. The Nystad (Uusikaupunki) Treaty, 1721. '… идет тогда прямою линиею в землю даже до дороги, которая от Выборга в Лапенстранд есть, расстоянием в трех милях от Выборга и тако далее, в таком же расстоянии трех миль Северною стороною за Выборгом прямою линиею, даже до старинной между Россиею и Швециею границы, прежде нежели Кексгольмский лен Швеции достался. И последует сия старинная граница к Северу в верх восемь миль, а оттуда идет оная прямою линиею через Кексгольмский лен, даже до того места, где озеро Пороэрви, которое под деревнею Куду Магуба свое начало имеет, с последнею между Россиею и Швециею бывшею границею сходится…'. Complete collection of laws of the Russian Empire 1830, vol. 6, 425.
30. Map of Russian-Swedish Borders by the Perpetual Peace Terms of 1722 AD. Engraved by Pieter Pickaerdt. [Saint Petersburg: Saint Petersburg printing house, 1724]. https://expositions.nlr.ru/eng/ex_map/Russia/north_war.php (March 2025).

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straight line formally dividing individual settlements. It seems the treaty's drafters were not thinking of physical reality but of an abstract 'common good', which was identified with the territory's geometrical area.[31] Denis J. B. Shaw notes that 'Peter I was basically a practical man with a limited grasp of abstract ideas', but the demarcation of international treaties with maps indicates that 'Peter's policies were influenced by what might be termed a cartographic consciousness'.[32]

In 1725 the geodesist of the Russian Academy of Sciences, Akim Kleshnin, drew up a map of the Russian Empire's newly conquered provinces.[33] The conservatism of the cartographic tradition meant he associated the Latin concept of '*Magnus Ducatus*' from old maps edited in the seventeenth century with historical antiquity, giving his map two titles: '*Nova et Accurata Ducatus Korelensis nunc vero Kexholmensis Districtus Tabula*' in Latin; and 'New and accurate map of the *Duchy of Karel*, now Kexholm county' [*Kniazhestvo Karelsoie, Keksgol'mskii uezd]* in Russian. Following the explanatory note on the bottom right, the map was dedicated to Emperor Peter II. The map can be considered a continuation of the first demarcation map, which told the story of the end of the Great Northern War and the establishment of a new border. In turn the second map speaks of the peaceful life established in the new territories. The only military symbol is the plan of the Kexholm fortress, though it can also be seen as a symbol of maintaining order and protecting borders. In 1727 this map was engraved by Alexei Rostovtsev and included in the atlas published by the Chief Secretary of the Russian Academy of Sciences, Ivan Kiryllov. Denis J. B. Shaw argues that by 'easing the problems of administration, such cartographic endeavours also served to further Russian claims in these peripheral regions … and enhance its control over space'.[34]

The administrative order that existed on paper posed a challenge to reality. The new province's administrative integration actually began much later. Even in the 1740s after the new war political elites' cartographic imagination contributed mainly to the legitimization of power at the diplomatic level, while everyday routine governance relied on custom and habitual negotiations in the borderland. According to these everyday ideas these lands were perceived for decades as Swedish or 'foreign'. Russian newspapers between 1720 and 1750 treated Finland as a remote borderland and a joint economic space on both sides of the border (Russian and Swedish) and an 'old Swedish possession' *('vladenie')*, with Swedish currency ('*copper money*') and Swedish customs and practices ('*obyknovenie*').

31. 'The border was drawn "strictly along the ruler", so that even individual estates were divided in two' Юссила, Хентиля, Невакиви 2010, 18. In the English edition just: 'The border was drawn on the map with a ruler in such a way that even single farms were split in two'. Jussila, Hentilä and Nevakivi 1999, 5.
32. Shaw 1996, 161, 168.
33. A new and accurate map of the Duchy of Karelia. Engraved by Anton Kleshnin, from the Atlas of the All-Russian Empire. Collection of maps of Ivan Kiryllov. St Petersburg, 1722–37. Wikimedia Commons (March 2025).
34. Shaw 1996, 164–165, 169.

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1730–1740: the Grand Duchy of Finland in the European hierarchy of royalty

In the 1730s and 1740s the new notion of the Grand Duchy of Finland (as part of Sweden) was transferred to official Russian discourse from Swedish newspapers. In the Swedish political context the Grand Duchy of Finland was considered not merely a territorial unit but a political space governed by general laws issued by the Swedish king and approved by representatives of the estates at the '*Sejm*', as the Riksdag was traditionally translated in Russian. However, it was claimed that the Grand Duchy of Finland was administered by special taxation, trade, and marriage rules. *Vedomosti* reported that the Grand Duchy had the right to send deputies to the Swedish Diet as subjects of the Swedish king belonging to the Swedish nation. In 1735 *Vedomosti* called the Grand Duchy of Finland a 'duchy' ('*gertsogstvo*'), not a 'principality' ('*kniazhestvo*').[35] Overall, Finland acquired a certain political status and structure that was clearly correlated with the European dynastic system and hierarchy of royalty.

It was also possible to reinterpret the political notion of the Grand Duchy of Finland as an administrative unit of the Swedish kingdom through analogies with the Grand Duchy of Tuscany. The official Russian newspaper, *SPb. Vedomosti,* sometimes reprinted European news on this duchy.[36] Since 1737 both the European press and *SPb. Vedomosti* had discussed rumours that the Florentines 'hoped that the Tuscan lands, upon the death of the present Grand Duke, would regain their former *freedom* and form a *free republic*'[37] and that 'the Sienese were working to stop Florentine possession and to create their own free region (*oblast*) that would depend directly on the Grand Duke alone'.[38] There were also frequent references to the Tuscan region having its own '*natural borders*'. The theory of natural boundaries often served to legitimize sovereignty in the eighteenth century.

After the death of Gian Gastone de' Medici, Franz I Stefan became the Grand Duke of Tuscany, although as the husband of Maria Theresa, he was the co-ruler of the Austro-Hungarian Empire. Franz Stefan was the commander-in-chief of the Austrian army, and Austrian troops entered the territory of the Grand Duchy of Tuscany, formally securing his 'rights to the throne'. Tuscany was governed according to the 'general regulation' ('*reglament*' in Russian) by the Grand Duke, an elected council ('*consigliere*'), and a senate. The senate appointed governors and ambassadors, and was responsible for war and peace (by appointing a military collegium), taxes and fees (by appointing a chamber), and the functions of the supreme court of appeal for civil and criminal affairs. The Grand Duke's power was limited by estate representatives, and *SPb. Vedomosti* presented all these features of the system to the public.[39]

In the context of European dynastic geopolitics Tuscany received close attention especially in 1740 and 1741 during the War of the Austrian Succession, which

35. *Санкт-Петербургские ведомости* [St Petersburg News], 17 April 1735.
36. The Polish-Lithuanian union or the Grand Duchy of Lithuania was mentioned extremely rarely in Russian statements, much less than Tuscany, and these references to the general court of tribunal, for example, provided no opportunity for political analogies.
37. *Санкт-Петербургские ведомости* [St Petersburg News], 3 April 1735.
38. *Санкт-Петербургские ведомости* [St Petersburg News], 22 September 1737.
39. *Санкт-Петербургские ведомости* [St Petersburg News], 22 December 1737.

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also concerned the throne of the Grand Duchy of Tuscany. The discourse has an intertextual relationship with the Russian Empire's actions during the War of the Hats, 1741–1742, when Russian troops occupied Finland. Two women announced their accession to the 'paternal' imperial throne – Maria Theresa in Austria and Elizabeth in Russia. The right of inheritance through the female line was dubious in both cases. Elizabeth's older sister was married to the Prince of Sweden and Duke of Schleswig-Holstein-Gottorp, Charles Frederick (1700–1739). Rumours that their son, and Elizabeth's nephew, Charles Peter, Duke of Holstein-Gottorp, could be elevated to the Swedish throne and 'take Finland under his protection' were discussed in diplomatic and military reports in 1741–1742. Having acceded to the throne of the Russian Empire, Elizabeth declared the Duke of Holstein-Gottorp Grand Duke and heir to the Russian throne. The official Russian press thus presented two Empresses and two Grand Dukes. This produced the illusion of similar rights and competence, serving as a model for the legitimation of power. Like Maria Theresa, Elizabeth appealed in her accession manifesto to the *estates*, 'our spiritual and secular loyal *subjects* […] to accept the paternal throne for the suppression of the feared external and internal unrest against the state'.[40]

On 18 March 1742 Elizabeth issued another manifesto 'for the Grand Duchy of Finland' based on a similar discourse. It was published in Moscow, but Elizabeth sent copies to the Commander-in-Chief of the Russian Army in Finland for distribution in 'Swedish Finland'. According to the cover letter the text was written in German and translated to Swedish and Finnish. The translation was by Secretary of the Senate Kron and Secretary of the Chief of Police Geht, and it was printed by the Academy of Sciences. The manifesto was also distributed at the Russian court: Cyril Wyche, the British minister plenipotentiary to Russia, sent a German copy of the manifesto to John Carteret, the British Secretary of State. Wyche did not consider the project realistic, seeing it as a Russian diplomatic response to the August 1741 Swedish manifesto published in Finland in Russian by the commander of the Swedish army, Count Charles Lewenhaupt. It had called for 'the liberation of Russia from the foreign yoke', and it was rumoured among European diplomats that Lewenhaupt 'wanted to seize Finland and create a *separate duchy of Finland*' with its capital in St Petersburg and then ascend to the Swedish throne.[41]

Secret diplomatic correspondence in Russia in 1742 discussed Finland in terms of 'taking/returning' *the land* as property or a domain. In her manifesto, however, Elizabeth[42] denied the allegations, calling for non-resistance and not to strength but to 'common sense' and 'Christian compassion'. Elizabeth's manifesto was addressed to 'the estates and inhabitants of the Grand Duchy of Finland'.[43] The Swedish term '*Stor-Furstendömet Finland*' was used only once as an inscription. The main text used the term '*Furstendömet Finland/Herzogthums Finland/Suomen Ruchtinacunnas (Suomen Ruchtinacunda)*', which Cyril Wyche translated as 'the duchy of Finland'. The manifesto treated the 'inhabitants' as 'Swedish subjects' (*svänska undersåtare*/*Schwedischen*

40. *Санкт-Петербургские ведомости* [St Petersburg News], 27 November 1741.
41. Collection of the Imperial Russian Historical Society 1894, 458.
42. For a detailed analysis of the manifesto and the political context around it, see Jenni Merovuo's chapter.
43. http://vvks.it.helsinki.fi/tekstit/1700_3_laki_ja_sanomalehtikieli/40/ (read 29 May 2025)

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Unterthanen/Ruotzin Waldacunnan alimmaiset) and Finland as a 'neighbouring *foreign land*', or a 'country annexed to Sweden' in Cyril Wyche's translation.[44] The land had its own borders, 'the borders of Finland' (*Finnländska gräntzerne/Finnlaendische Graenzen*) and possessed a civic sense of patriotism (*Fädernes Lands/Vaterlandes/ isänmaansa*). The Russian Empress granted her 'protection' to the attempt to 'free yourselves from the jurisdiction and subordination' of Sweden. She called Finns to create 'a *non-dependent state* under its own *government* elected by the Finns themselves', enjoying all the related rights, privileges, and facilities which they deemed necessary and useful.

Cyril Wyche interpreted this as an engagement to 'set up a new form of government amongst themselves, by which means the duchy of Finland [would be] under her own duke or chief'.[45] According to the manifesto the Grand Duchy should become a barrier between Russia and Sweden.[46] In the treatise '*Considérations sur le gouvernement de Pologne*', written 30 years later, Rousseau elaborated the same idea that rights, laws, and the form of government ('*règle… tous les liens de fraternité entre les membres de la république*') would work as a barrier between nations. The will of the legislator was assumed to be enough to make a nation independent of its neighbours.

The manifesto was also discussed in European newspapers in 1742,[47] and its influence was enhanced by a map. In 1742 the Russian Academy of Sciences published a map of Finland titled '*Magnus Ducatus Finlandiae*'.[48] Johann Grimmel's map took the classic seventeenth-century map of Anders Bure and Petter Gedda as its basis. This map appeared earlier than the first map of Finland published in Sweden and was republished in Germany by Seutter and Lotter in the 1770s ('*Charta nova Expensens Regnum Sueciae et Gothiae una cum Nordlandia et Magno ducatu Finnlandiae*').

On 27 April 1742 King Fredrik I of Sweden tried to subvert the idea of any representation of the Grand Duchy of Finland as a 'free and independent government' by referring to the Russian annexation of such neighbouring provinces as Great Novgorod and Ukraine, 'which still groan under chains … submitted to Muscovite servitude slavery'.[49] Possibly influenced by this, Vasily Tatishchev (1686–1750), in describing Finnish antiquity, wrote: 'Finland had its *own kings* before Rurik. The Russian sovereigns did not own the Finns, but *for some time the Finns did possess Russia*, but after Rurik the Russians *owned* the Finns'[50]. The discourse of Finland as an object of partition between dynastic powers in 1742 was confronted here by a historical image of Finland as a separate state free of any dependence.

44. Collection of the Imperial Russian Historical Society 1894, 458.
45. Collection of the Imperial Russian Historical Society 1894, 458.
46. Borodkin 1910, 282–284 (in Swedish).
47. *The Scots Magazine* 7 May 1742.
48. Strang 2020, 66–67.
49. *Gazette* 16 June 1742; *Mercure de France*, June 1742.
50. Татищев В.Н. 1768, 45; 1769, 263.

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Catherine II: the justification of partition through the idea of the nation

After the 1741–1743 war *Vedomosti* presented Finland traditionally, as the borderland between Russia and Sweden, a landscape, or the northern regions of the Swedish kingdom, and sometimes as a possible place for a future war. The territories ceded to Russia in the Treaty of Turku in 1743 kept their Swedish administrative division and practices. Within Russia it became more common to mention the 'Finnish nation' when referring to the inhabitants who 'originated in the Finnish land'.

Under Catherine II in the late 1760s Finns also began to acquire the features of a separate national existence that differed from Sweden in the eyes of Russian state officials. In 1767 a church in St Petersburg was given to the Finnish congregation as '*die Finnische Kirche*'. Official announcements were sometimes published in Finnish, as well as in Russian, German, and French. With this recognition, however, Catherine II insisted on the integration and Russification of the Finnish 'province'. She wrote to the head of the senate, Prince Vyazemsky: 'Finland is a *province*. It is wrong to treat them as foreigners: they need to be Russified.' However, it is noteworthy that her reasoning was based on the Finns being 'a people of one law and one language', a *nation* in the sense of Catherine's great inspiration, Rousseau.

On 29 September (10 October) 1768 the Russian Minister of Foreign Affairs, Nikita Panin, sent the new British ambassador at St Petersburg, Charles Cathcart, '*Some ideas*' on a Russian alliance with Great Britain, which sought to maintain the balance in northern Europe against French domination (*le système du Nord*). He mentioned that relations with Sweden were determined by the war of 1741–1743, and that Russia had conquered its 'best provinces', as he defined the annexed parts of Finland.[51] Lord Cathcart informed William Rochford, British Secretary of State of the Northern Department, about the 'the idea of *forming a barrier* against Sweden by *erecting all Finland* into *an independent Grand Duchy*', and that Russia would act 'from the principle of moderation not to increase her dominion'. On 30 June 1769 Rochford replied, objecting that the plan would help 'secure a permanent peace as it is easy to see that such an independent *state* could be meant to be no other in reality than entirely *dependent* on Russia'.[52]

Thirty years after the war Finland was still thought of as a divided entity with a political existence of its own, and the annexed areas as a foreign entity within the Russian Empire. The former vision of Finland as a Swedish territory and setting for military action was slowly replaced by speculation about the Finnish people's independent political existence.

The treaty of alliance concluded between Russia and Prussia in 1769 contained a secret article on collective self-defence ('*casus foederis*') if the state order changed in Sweden. This order was presented in terms of turbulence and an unstable balance of power. The new significance of the concept of *nation* as a political entity was associated with political debates in the public sphere, which presented the Swedish citizen ('*les*

51. *Collection of the Imperial Russian Historical Society* 1873, 374.
52. *Collection of the Imperial Russian Historical Society* 1873, 460–461.

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concitoyens') in constant unrest and created disorder that divided the nation ('*factions dans la nation*').[53]

The Swedish king Gustav III had presented himself anew in a public speech in the Riksdag by promising that he belonged to the nation. As 'the first Citizen of a free people' he promised to contribute to 'the happiness, glory, and independence of the Nation'.[54] If this thinking represented the anticipated threat to dynastic power, neither Prussia nor Russia interfered when Gustav III carried out a coup d'état in August 1772 and established a constitutional monarchy in Sweden with strong royal power. For them the Polish question was more important.[55]

In a treatise on 'Considerations on the Government of Poland', written on the first partition of Poland in 1772, Rousseau drew on models of Newtonian mechanics that fed the eighteenth-century political imagination. The relations of states were considered through the concept of 'balance', the collision of states as collisions of bodies and the action of forces exerting pressure and willingness to crush others. For Rousseau there were two alternatives, equilibrium or conquest. A weak state awaited fragmentation, absorption, and dissolution by strong neighbours and aggressors. Government anarchy, oppression, and despotism could weaken the state from the inside and outside, leading to conquest and partition. Conquest was not the only option, however. Rousseau referred to the biblical example of the people of Israel and the laws of Moses, which made it possible to avoid merging the conquered with their conquerors. The example of Moses showed that a divided people could continue to exist as a nation. Rousseau spoke of the republic of Moses. What made a nation strong was obedience, respect, and affection for rulers, economic structure, and military strength, all of which were *interdependent* on population and wealth accumulation.

Rousseau did not address the north of Europe and relations between Russia, Sweden, and Finland, but his treatise provided a general paradigm to justify Catherine II's policy.

In parallel with this discourse on partitions new maps of Finland were edited in Russia by Jacob F. Schmidt, adjunct of the Academy of Sciences, and Alexander Wilbrecht, court geographer of Catherine II's cabinet. They represented Finland's partition and its incorporation as a political entity into the Russian Empire. In these maps 'Vyborg province' as an assimilated unit was contrasted with '*parts* of Swedish Finland'.[56] The European press commonly considered Finland a territory partitioned like Poland between dynastic sovereigns: Swedish Finland, owned by the King of Sweden; and Russian Finland, under the Russian Empress.[57]

53. *Traité d'alliance de St. Petersburg, conclu avec la Priusse, 1764, 31 mars/ 11 avril*, Collection of treaties and conventions concluded by Russia with international states 1883, 20–21.
54. *Gazette de France*. 19 July 1771.
55. *Traité d'alliance avec la Prusse conclu a St. Peterbourg, 1769, 12/23 octobre* Collection of treaties and conventions concluded by Russia with international states 1883, 48, 60, 61.
56. *Карта Выборгского наместничества, разделённая на 6 уездов / датировано 1792,* https://geoportal.rgo.ru/record/6029 (March 2025).
57. For example, the author of a brochure devoted to the role of women in politics and published just before the French Revolution, outlined the principles of the peace treaty of Turku (Åbo), in his usual terms spoke about 'the cession of possession of the conquered provinces and districts of the Grand Duchy of Finland' (as it was in the French original of the treaty, 'en possession éternelle la province… qui a été conquise par les armes de Sa Majesté Impériale

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In 1788–1789, just before the revolutionary wars in Europe, J. M. Probst and J. B. Homann edited new maps that presented '*Das Grosfurstenthum Finland*' and '*Magni Principatus Finlandiae*' as a political body with natural and quasi-state boundaries. As in Bure's old maps, Finland was depicted as being under the Swedish monarchy, but the old symbols received new significance in the context of a revolutionary age.

In June 1788 a new war between Sweden and Russia broke out. Both parties sought legitimacy for the war in public discourse through an appeal to the concept of 'nation' and the people's sovereignty. After troops were mobilized to Finland's borders, diplomats started to exchange notes. Between 7 and 18 June 1788 the Envoy Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of the Minister of the Imperial Court of Russia, Count Razumovsky, presented the Swedish envoy, Senator Count Axel Gustavson Oxenstierna, with a note which stated on behalf of Empress Catherine II that it was not Russia's intention to fight Sweden. Instead, it was recruiting troops against the Ottoman Empire. The empress appealed to the king and the Swedish nation ('to all those in the nation who are involved in the administration'). The Swedish king regarded this as an incitement to revolution, 'to sow discord among the subjects, anarchy undermining the fundamental laws of the state' ('*les loix fondamentales de l'État*') and the spirit of the Swedish nation. As these notes were published and discussed in the European press,[58] Catherine published a manifesto on 30 July 1788 on the causes of the war in which she accused Gustav III of a coup d'état in 1772 against the power of the senate and the people's freedom to achieve an autocracy.

In the Swedish declaration of war Gustav III accused Russia of secret diplomatic negotiations that sought Finland's separation from Sweden. Under the pretext of its independence the goal was actually to turn it into an imperial domain. Gustav referred to the division of Poland, the conquest of Crimea and Courland, concluding with an appeal: '... [I]t is regrettable to think that the sacred words freedom and independence, like the worshipped name of the God of mercy and peace, are almost always a sign of disagreement and disaster.' The king demanded that Russia cede 'Finland and Karelia, with the province and city of Kexholm' to Sweden as compensation for the war.

In 1788 Finland was thus again mentioned in European public debate as a Swedish province, a Grand Duchy with the capacity for political independence, and at the same time as a borderland, a territory that was the object of plans of conquest and military operations.

dans le grand-duché de Finlande, avec les villes… et Forteresses…, ensemble un Districts etc.', Traité d'Abo, 27 août 1743) and not about the new duties of the inhabitants (as in the original, 'relevant les Habitants d'iceux des sermens, qu'ils ont faits à Sa Majesté et au Royaume de Suède, dont ils sont entièrement relevés par la présente, et incorporés à jamais à l'Empire de Russie, avec les Habitants, qui s'y trouvent, devenant Vassaux et Habitants de l'Empire de Russie, y étant incorporés à jamais'), but about the cession of government over territories in the Grand Duchy of Finland ('Le Roi et le Royaume de Suède cèdent encore à la Russie le Gouvernement de.Keymengard, dans le Grand-Duché de Finlande; les Forteresses et Villes de Frédériksam, de Wilmanstrand; la partie de la Paroisse de Pyttis, qui est a l'ouest du Kimen ou Kiltis la Ville de Nyslot avec son territoires'). Ternisien d'Haudricourt 1788, 35–36.

58. *Gazette de France* 22 July 1788; *Courrier de l'Europe*. Vol. 24. 18 July 1788.

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In 1788 Catherine published her comments in three languages (Russian, German, and French) on the Declaration of Gustav III,[59] in which she ascribed the Swedish king's policy not as the result of 'the intrigues of Russia' but as an attack on 'the spirit of liberty, characteristic of the Swedish nation since ancient times'. Catherine offered Russia's support to 'the defenders of the constitution and laws'. She appealed to the people's right to resist the tyranny about which Rousseau had written, emphasizing that Russia was ready to negotiate only with the representatives of the nation and its free diet (*Sejm*), not with the king. Catherine thus touched on Finland's political existence, stressing that 'the state constitution, laws, and treaties' had been violated not only in Sweden but in Finland, exempting not only Swedes but also Finns from their oath to the king. 'Swedish Finland could be independent of Sweden and Russia; it need not be the domain of either Sweden or Russia. It is unsurprising if in the present circumstances the Finns want to be independent. The Finns themselves must decide what is more profitable for them: to be oppressed by Sweden or conquered by Russia, to starve under Swedish rule, to receive bread from Russia, or to be independent.'[60] Catherine emphasized that Finland, not Sweden, was the Finnish nation's fatherland.

The European press took up this discourse of national sovereignty. In this context Finland was associated with the idea of the nation's sovereignty rather than that of the king – especially his right to determine issues of war and peace. A letter from Finland was published in Gothenburg and other Swedish newspapers discussed the troops' unrest in Finland, protesting that the king had started the war without the Riksdag's consent and had thus violated state laws. In St Petersburg and Moscow *Vedomosti* also reprinted this news: 'The people in Finland recognize the current war against Russia as unfair. ... [I]n Finland the people are sure that the king has violated the constitution through the current war.'[61] Throughout 1789 Russian newspapers reprinted and commented on reports from Swedish newspapers about opponents of autocracy and defenders of freedom, saying that the king had convened government officials 'to assist in the affairs of the Fatherland', and that he had appealed 'to the subjects of the Grand Duchy of Finland'. In 1788–1789 the official newspaper *St Petersburg Vedomosti* selected the news from Sweden so that the traditional monarchist discourse was associated with the Swedish king's actions, and the discourse of the *nation's* liberty and sovereignty was associated with the actions of the Russian empress Catherine II. The newspaper wrote that the Swedish king was demanding 'that all of Finland and Karelia be ceded to him ... as war *reparations*'.[62] The Swedish king addressed 'an admonition to the *subjects* of the Grand Duchy of Finland',[63] and the Russian empress

59. Примечания и исторические объяснения на объявление его величества короля шведского, изданные в Гелзингфорсе в 21 день июля 1788 года : С прил. - [СПб. : Имп. тип., 1788] [Notes and historical explanations on the announcement of the King of Sweden, published in Helsingfors on 21 July 1788]; *Anmerkungen und historische Erläuterungen über die Königl. Schwed. Erklärung d. d. Helsingfors den 21. Julii 1788: nebst Beylagen*. [S.l.], [c. 1788] (translated by Arendt); *Observations et éclaircissemens historiques sur la déclaration de Sa Majesté le roi de Suede en date de Helsingfors du 21 juillet 1788. Avec des annexes* [Catherine II, impératrice de Russie]. [ca. 1788] (translated by Koch).
60. Ibid., 33.
61. *Санкт-Петербургские ведомости* 22 December 1788.
62. *Санкт-Петербургские ведомости* 7 July 1788.
63. *Санкт-Петербургские ведомости* 31 January 1789.

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turned to the 'Finnish nation', addressing it as a subject of political will: 'the *nation* of Finland recognizes the current war against Russia as unjust. ... [T]he king started the war without the consent of state officials in complete violation of the law'.[64]

During the war of 1788–1789 the official Russian newspapers also included ideas of Finnish separatism. Finland was presented as a sovereign state with its own political elites and political interests that differed from Sweden, preparing the ground for political protest and national revolution. The Finnish political tradition was also equated with Polish politics, which in turn enabled the projection of the discourse on the partition of Poland into the Finnish context, offering new discursive strategies to legitimate the incorporation of a 'sovereign country' into the Russian Empire. On 3 August 1790, however, Catherine put an end to the war and the discourse on Finland's sovereignty, and Russian Finland was again defined as 'our frontier lands', inhabited by loyal subjects of Russia.

Only in 1796, after the third partition of Poland, was the Grand Duchy of Finland again mentioned in the press as a territory belonging to the Swedish kingdom bordering Russia and in need of protection from possible attacks: 'The Empress is assembling an army upon the *frontiers of Finland*. … His Swedish Majesty, while not having certain information of her object in so doing, thinks it necessary to put *his territories* in the best state for defence and has given orders for the movement of all the regiments *in Sweden, as well as the Grand Duchy of Finland*.' [65] Ancient dynastic notions could easily be re-elevated in revolutionary Europe, while subversive interpretations were also possible. Together, these notions amounted to uncertainty about the potential meanings of the concept of the 'Grand Duchy of Finland' at the turn of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries.

Napoleon and projects for a new European order

In the summer of 1804 Europe was discussing the proclamation of the first consul Napoleon Bonaparte as emperor of the French and its possible consequences for the European political system.[66] In this context the British press drew attention to the Grand Duchy of Finland, linking it to Bonaparte's plan regarding Sweden:

64. *Санкт-Петербургские ведомости* 22 December 1788.
65. *Kentish Weekly Post or Canterbury Journal* – Tuesday 26 April 1796; *Hereford Journal* – Wednesday 27 April 1796, *Caledonian Mercury* – Thursday 28 April 1796.
66. 'Bonaparte was proclaimed Emperor of France. …[T]he coronation is to take place next August upon Bonaparte's birthday', London Courier and Evening Gazette – Wednesday 16 May 1804; '[T]he new Emperor of France is at this moment mediating plans of almost boundless dominion. … [H]e had chosen Charlemagne for his model'; '[T]he King of Sweden peremptorily refuses to recognize the new acquired title of Bonaparte. … It is impossible to believe that this step can have been taken by his Swedish Majesty without the concurrence of the Emperor of Russia at least', *Saunders's News-Letter* – Monday 23 July 1804; 'The Russian Emperor, no doubt, … hopes to engage his Prussian Majesty to enter into his views with respect to the French. … [T]he closest alliance between the Emperors of Russia and Germany is now talked of, and the Emperor Francis has sent two noblemen … to Petersburgh to assist in the negotiations of the embassy', *Kentish Gazette* – Tuesday 19 June 1804.

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> French intriguers are endeavouring to persuade certain continental Powers to reduce Sweden to the state Poland. They have circulated a partition plan, according to which the *Swedish part of the Grand Duchy of Finland*, and five of the surrounding provinces, *are to be given to Russia*, and the provinces of Scania, Bohur, Halland, Bleking, and the remaining part of Sweden, are to be called Denmark; his Swedish Majesty is to receive, as indemnity, a new kingdom taken from the provinces of the Batavian Republic, and the Prussian Provinces along the German Sea, with the Duchy of Oldenburgh, as far as Bremen. The King of Prussia is to be *indemnized* Hanover and Swedish Pomerania, while the Duke Oldenburgh will obtain his Patrimonial Duchy Holstein, with Jutland.[67]

British publishers referred to 'a private letter' from Sweden 'received by the Gottenburgh Mail' on 13 August 1804, which stated 'that Bonaparte's emissaries in Sweden have circulated a plan … printed in the German, French, Swedish, and Danish languages and universally circulated through the North, where it has made a great sensation … and sown discontent'. The newspapers wrote that in Germany, for example,

> a new partition plan is circulated, according to which, Bavaria, as far as the river Iser, will be given to Austria, and the states on the left bank of the Rhine divided between Bavaria and the Province Borghese, Belgium and Holland will be given to *the King of Sweden, whose kingdom will be given to Russia*; Hanover and the three Imperial cities will in the future belong to Prussia; and Switzerland partitioned between France and the elector of Baden.[68]

These designs for Europe's reconstruction were associated with revolutionary principles based on the rise of the masses and deemed to be opposed to dynastic principles based on sovereigns' virtue and selfless policy that guaranteed nations' liberty and independence:

> The Emperor of Russia, and the King of Sweden are brothers-in-law, and second cousins, both of the same age, and have the same noble and generous principles. … Judging by the well-known character of the Swedes, it is impossible that they would give up their freedom and independence without a stubborn struggle … and should they rise mass and become a revolutionary nation, the evil might be incalculable.[69]

The British press presented this as Bonaparte's intrigue, saying that he wanted to confront and destroy both his opponents, the King of Sweden and the Emperor of Russia, under the guise of acquiring new allies. In 1804 the implementation of such a revolutionary reorganization of the states of Europe was called 'so absurd as to awaken to disbelief',[70] but it certainly captured the political imagination. 'It is well known that Swedish Finland would be a desirable *acquisition* to Russia'. The model of 'partition'

67. *London Chronicle* – Tuesday 14 August 1804; Star (London) – Tuesday 14 August 1804.
68. *Bell's Weekly Messenger* – Sunday 12 August 1804.
69. *Star* (London) – Tuesday 14 August 1804.
70. *Morning Herald* (London) – Wednesday 15 August 1804; *Morning Chronicle* – Wednesday 15 August 1804.

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was reconsidered through the revolutionary age's vocabulary by placing the sovereign's will in opposition to that of the nation.

In 1803, only a year before Bonaparte became emperor of the French, and the Swedish king began to form a new confederation against revolutionary France, the British press discussed the Grand Duchy of Finland in purely dynastic terms as part of the title of the Swedish kings. The British press observed the news that the king of Sweden Gustav IV Adolf had granted to his new-born son the title of the Grand Duke of Finland, and that

> Finland is a *province* which, at present, *partly belongs* Russia. It was, therefore, rather impolitic to revive a title, insignificant in itself, but which might be construed to contain pretensions to the whole of Finland. It is true, that in the year 1680, the Father of the Great Gustavus Adolphus, was Grand Duke of Finland before he ascended the Swedish Throne, under the name of Charles IX, but at that time the Grand Duchy of *Finland belonged entirely to Sweden*.

At its root the conflict was thus interpreted as 'a disagreement between two Princes', of whom 'one is ready to hazard his kingdom for a mere title'. The revived title was said to have irritated Russia and been followed by 'some acts of insult and violence on the frontiers of Finland'. In the context of this dynastic dispute concerning the Grand Duchy of Finland the opposing view of the virtues of dynastic sovereigns was also present:

> The Emperor of Russia and the King of Sweden are brothers-in-law, both young, of great natural abilities, improved superior education, philanthropic, generous, and virtuous, and destined by equal age, talent, rank, and consanguinity, to be friends, Monarchs were ever destined to enjoy the blessings of equal friendship.[71]

This exchange of argument rhymes with two discourses, but it also allows us to observe the gap and the emergence of a new political language in the discussion of European politics and the Grand Duchy of Finland's status.

The period's diplomatic correspondence shows that Russian diplomats were negotiating with Sweden regarding an alliance in the event of war with France 'because of Bonaparte's offensive policy and his unbridled character'. Appealing to the old model of divine right, on August 1805 the Russian ambassador to Stockholm David Alopeus sent a note to King Gustav IV Adolf with a request to guarantee the Russian fleet's passage along the coast of '*Swedish Finland (la Finlande Suèdoise)*' in the event of war.[72] The Russian Minister of Foreign Affairs Adam Chartoryskiy wrote to Alexander I about a possible 'alliance between Sweden and France' and rumours that Napoleon was playing a double game, offering Sweden the opportunity to *acquire* Russian lands.[73] In this correspondence Finland was treated as a *borderland*, a *land with natural borders*, regardless of its political status. The historian Adolph Thiers considered that negotiations between Napoleon and Alexander on the division of

71. *London Chronicle* – Tuesday 3 May 1803.
72. *Foreign policy documents* 1965.
73. *Foreign policy documents* 1965.

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Europe began in Tilsit, when Napoleon offered Russia an alliance against England. Sweden was considered a potential enemy, as it depended on England due to its 'seaside position' (an argument with an implicit reference to Montesquieu's *The Spirit of Law*). Thiers also referred to French diplomatic correspondence,[74] in which the negotiations' logic was described in the same way as in the British press in 1804. The theory of natural boundaries was contrasted with the dynastic theory of political alliances: 'The Swedish king is your brother-in-law and ally, but is an enemy due to his geographical position. Petersburg is too close to *the border with Finland*'.[75] In 1808 the French argued openly, with reference to natural boundaries, that Finland should 'reunite with Russia'. If Finland went to the Russians, the harvest in Finland would resemble Poland, and the climate in Finland was similar to St Petersburg.[76] Ultimately, Thiers saw the negotiations as a trade deal: according to Thiers in Tilsit Napoleon offered Alexander '*Finland as recompense* for the war with Sweden'. In the spirit of the theory of mercantilism Finland was treated as merchandise, a region that provided income, and thus a good acquisition in terms of *Polizeiwissenschaft*.

In the Treaty of Tilsit Napoleon's creation of the Grand Duchy of Warsaw also produced many protests among the Russian nobility. The treaties and the European press mentioned that 'the provinces that have become part of the duchy are part of the former Kingdom of Poland', which some members of the Russian political elite interpreted as a call for the restoration of the kingdom and thus directed against Russia as a participant in the partitions.[77] When the duchy's constitution was published in

74. In September 1807 French Foreign Minister J.-B. de Champagny wrote in instructions to the French envoy in St Petersburg A.-J.-M. Savary: 'Swedish Finland must be captured by Russia' (political correspondence of General Savary during his stay in St. Petersburg in 1807. Collection of the Imperial Russian Historical Society 1893a. Diplomatic relations between Russia and France in the era of Napoleon I. Correspondence of Napoleon, Champagny, and Savary. St Petersburg, 1893. 181–182). Savary reported to Napoleon that he could not get the Russian army sent to Finland: 'Il m'est impossible de faire marcher un seul regiment en Finlande' (*Collection diplomatic correspondence 1892: Сборник Императорского Русского исторического общества*. Vol. 83: *Политическая переписка генерала Савари во время пребывания его в С.-Петербурге в 1807 г. [Collection of the Imperial Russian Historical Society. Vol. 83. Diplomatic relations between Russia and France in the era of Napoleon I. Correspondence of Napoleon, 83:* Political correspondence of General Savary during his stay in St. Petersburg in 1807. *St Petersburg, 1892.* 88–89]. In September 1809 Alexander I wrote to Napoleon: '*Il ne me faut que le temps necessaire a mes troupes pour revenir, des bords Niemen dans la Finlande, qui s'en trouve entierement dégarnie*' (ibid. vol. 88. 291). In October 1807 Napoleon wrote to the ambassador to Russia A. de Caulaincourt, '*la Russie envahirait la Finlande*' (ibid. 300), and in February 1808 Napoleon wrote to Alexander I treating Finland as a conquered province: '*Je me réjouis fort de savoir qu'elle a conquis la Finlande et qu'elle a ajouté cette province à ses vastes états*' (ibid. 489). In February 1808 Champagny wrote to Caulaincourt: '*La Valachie et la Moldavie et peut-être la Finlande, incorporées à son territoire, y seront a jamais unies, et le bienfait de cette acquisition augmentera avec le temps par 1'effet d'une meilleure administration*' (ibid. 528).
75. Thiers 1847, 648.
76. *Journal de l'Empire* 1 March 1808.
77. Tolstoy wrote in 1807–1808 to the ambassador in Paris: 'One must not lose sight of the clear goal towards which French policy is directed: by restoring Poland in the north and capturing Greece in the south, to finally consolidate its dominance in Europe'. Tolstoy P.A. Note on the position of European states in 1807 (*Сборник Императорского Русского Исторического*

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the French newspapers, Russian noblemen were scandalized that the 'new Warsaw Constitution states that no one has the right to own serfs'. The new political status of the Grand Duchy of Warsaw was defined in Napoleon's treaties and public speeches. It was proclaimed in the press as 'belonging entirely to the *sovereignty* of His Majesty the King of Saxony, under the name of the Duchy of Warsaw, and governed by the *constitutions*, while ensuring the *freedoms and privileges of the peoples* of this duchy'. The newspapers reported that the King of Saxony, as sovereign, had established a council with deliberative powers, whose members took an oath of allegiance. A proclamation was then issued in the king's name to all the estates of the Duchy of Warsaw to enlist them to help him in every possible way to restore this part of Poland to its former splendour.[78]

Finland was not mentioned in the context of Tilsit in the Russian press or in the correspondence, diaries, or even memoirs of the Russian political actors of the time. Yet it can be assumed that all the political ritual and rhetoric in March 1809 that surrounded the creation of the Grand Duchy of Warsaw in 1807 would also have been projected onto the Finnish case.[79] As one event was represented through the prism of another, the proclamation of the Grand Duchy of Finland in 1809 was associated with the proclamation of the Grand Duchy of Warsaw in 1807, and its status should be interpreted through the prism of the events in Tilsit. The ritual of the Russian Emperor's ceremonial welcome in the Finnish city of Porvoo in March 1809 was constructed in exactly the same way and was thus also represented in the official Russian newspapers. The newspapers reported that this ceremony, held in the 'newly acquired Finland', should definitely 'confirm and record this country's accession to the Russian Empire for eternity'.[80]

No documents exist in the Russian archives that suggest Napoleon and Alexander had reached an agreement in Tilsit on Russia's annexation of Finland. Russian diplomatic documents, however, suggest it can be deduced that Finland had become the subject of discussions between the governments of Russia and France in the ambiguous situation after Tilsit in the autumn of 1807.[81] In the diplomatic correspondence between Russia and France the beginning of the war against Sweden was described as 'a commitment made in Tilsit'. Alexander agreed with Napoleon

Общества. Vol. 89: *Посольство графа П. А. Толстого в Париже: от Тильзита до Эрфурта (годы с 1807 по 1808). / ред. Н. К. Шильдер.* [Collection of the Imperial Russian Historical Society. Vol. 89. Embassy of Count P. A. Tolstoy in Paris: from Tilsit to Erfurt (1807–1808). St Petersburg, 1893.)

78. *Journal de l'Empire* 25 October 1807, 'possédées en toute propriété et souveraineté par S. M. le Roi de Saxe, sous le titre de duche de Varsovie, et régies par des constitutions qui, en assurant les libertés et les privilèges des peuples de ce duché'. 'S. M. le roi de Saxe, chargé par son souverain, a installé le Conseil-d'Etat dont les membres ont prêté serment de fidélité. M. Scliœnfeld a ensuite publié une proclamation addressee par S. M. le roi de Saxe, à toutes les classes de son Duché de Varsovie, pour les engager à l'aider de tous leurs moyens pour rendre à cette partie de la Pologne son ancienne splendeur.'
79. *Mercure de France: journal politique, littéraire et dramatique / par une société de gens de lettres* 4 October 1807.
80. *Санкт-Петербургские ведомости*; Московские ведомости 1809, 536, 564, 573, 576, 600, 660.
81. Päiviö Tommila considered that Alexander had tried to delay the war, and that Finland was not part of his own plans. Tommila 1962.

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on the declaration's text, which was published after the entry into Finland. Among other things the declaration proclaimed that the country's laws had been preserved. Alexander discussed the need to reorganize Finland with French diplomats: 'The prompt organization of Finland so that the landowners and the land are bound to Russia and its cause before the sea is opened, so that the civil organization responds to their loyalty'.[82]

The war was presented to the Russian public as the result of pressure from Napoleon.[83] Even more so, in the British press all the war's events were interpreted as Bonaparte's interference. Russia had acted simply in subservience to his projects. 'A new proof of the subjection of the European Continent to its revolutionary master' was be found in the Treaty of Fredericksham. In this public act although 'Alexander ostensibly appears as a principal, he is in reality, only an agent moved by Corsican springs', and the Grand Duchy of Finland was to become 'a Russian or rather a French province'.[84] With the conquest of Finland 'Alexander has manifested so complete a subserviency' to Napoleon.[85] The British press attributed the war between Russia and Sweden and the proclamation of the Grand Duchy of Finland so strongly to Napoleon that it was referred to as the present war '*with France and her allies*'.[86]

The British newspapers presented Finland as a *province* of Sweden, and 'Swedish Finland' as a victim of war. It was portrayed as part of a unitary Swedish state, 'our faithful ally', and a people who had been made 'unwilling slaves of the Tyrant [Napoleon]'.[87] The events were described in traditional dynastic terms: *by right of conquest* the *dominion* of the Swedish sovereign had become the *dominion* of the Russian sovereign. The 'newly *conquered* country' had been *annexed* and given to traitors. 'General Sprengtporten, who has long been banished from Sweden, is appointed Governor-General of Finland with very extensive powers.' The Swedish sovereign's loyal subjects took the oath to the new sovereign against whom they had just fought.[88] '*The Grand Duchy of Finland* has been declared [by Alexander] *as an integral and inseparable part of* the Russian *Dominions*'.[89] Finland was *appertained* or '*incorporated*' into Russia, and the Grand Duchy of Finland had become part of *the title* of the Russian Emperor, who now referred to the Finns as 'his faithful vassals and subjects of the Grand Duchy of Finland'. As a province, Finland was '*ceded*' to Russia[90]

82. Caulaincourt to Champagny, April 1808. Collection of diplomatic correspondence 1893. 664. '*La prompte organization de la Finlande afin que les propriétaires et le pays se trouvent liés à la Russie et à sa cause avant que la mer soit ouverte, de manière à ce que l'organization civile réponde de leur fidélité.*'
83. P.A. Stroganov wrote to S.R. Vorontsov in London: 'You can't even imagine, Herr Count, what influence France has gained here. We are more like one of the prefectures of this empire than a free state ... [E]veryone, down to the unfortunate Prussian court, behaves with greater dignity than we.'
84. *Globe, Saunders's News-Letter* Thursday 23 November 1809.
85. *Dublin Evening Post* Saturday 16 December 1809.
86. *Sun* (London) Monday 13 February 1809.
87. *Hull Packet* Tuesday 28 February 1809.
88. *Public Ledger and Daily Advertiser* Thursday 2 February 1809.
89. *The Day* Saturday 18 March 1809; *Johnson's Sunday Monitor* Sunday 19 March 1809; *Westminster Journal and Old British Spy* Saturday 25 March 1809.
90. *Morning Post* Saturday 10 June 1809; *Globe* Friday 9 June 1809; *Dublin Evening Post* Tuesday 13 June 1809; *Morning Post* Saturday 2 December 1809.

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as a possession. On 7 September 1809 Alexander proclaimed that 'Finland has been for ever *incorporated and united with our empire*'.[91] The British newspapers noted that Alexander had referred to the '*peculiar (former) constitution of that country*' as '*statutes of the empire*' and concluded that 'the Administration of Finland is to *remain as it has been under the Swedish Government*'.[92] The uncertainty of these concepts was observed, but they were commonly interpreted in a strongly monarchical sense.[93] One of the reasons for the uncertainty was the awkwardness associated with the Russian sovereign's dependent position under the influence of Napoleon. The fact that Gustav IV Adolf had lost the throne was interpreted as a revolution with Napoleon's support, and it was expected that the 'lost Finland' could be 'restored to Sweden'. The British *Globe* compared modern events with Erik XIV's overthrow by his brother, John, the Duke of Finland, in 1568.[94]

At the same time in internal Russian and French diplomatic correspondence Finland was dealt with only in terms of conquest, with phrases like '*La conquéte de la Finlande*'.[95] In the spring of 1808 the act of surrender treated Finland as a conquered land: '*les provinces de la Finlande, conquies de s.m. l'empereur / Finske officerarne ... uti de i Finland af dess kejserliga majestat nu conquetterade', 'sous la domination de la Russie / under Ryska Regering*'. The same concept, 'conquetterade Finland' was mentioned in the proclamation of the commander of the Russian corps in Finland, F. F. Buxhoeveden, to the inhabitants of Finland in the spring of 1808. Alexander I wrote: 'I ordered the corps to move to the borders of Finland ('*côte de la Finlande*') and gave the order to occupy Swedish Finland ('*occupier la Finlande Suèdoise*').' In the declaration of 16 March 1808 on the break of peace with Sweden Alexander proclaimed: '[F]rom now on, the part of Finland, which hitherto was called Swedish ... is recognized as a region conquered by Russian weapons and for ever annexed to Russia'.[96] Since May 1808, after the publication of Alexander I's manifesto, the term 'newly acquired Finland' had become commonly used in official discourse.

G. M. Sprengtporten used the concept the 'Grand Duchy of Finland' in his diplomatic letter to the Russian Minister of Foreign Affairs, Nikolay Rumyantsev (17/29.01.1808).[97] Sprengtporten referred to his conversation with Alexander I 'about the affairs of Finland, still Swedish (*la Finlande encore suèdoise*)'. According to Sprengtporten Alexander I considered Finland a *land* that should be taken under the Russian monarch's *protection* and a *conquered province* annexed to the Russian Empire. From this monarchical perspective the summoning of the Diet could be considered a traditional form of petitioning for local needs. Following the logic of *Polizeiwissenschaft*, it was necessary for the Empire to balance the amount of taxes imposed with the needs of the state.

91. *Globe* Friday 17 March 1809; *Public Ledger and Daily Advertiser* Saturday 18 March 1809.
92. *Globe* Friday 17 March 1809; *Public Ledger and Daily Advertiser* Saturday 18 March 1809.
93. *Saint James's Chronicle* Saturday 4 March 1809; *Globe* Friday 3 March 1809; *Oracle and the Daily Advertiser* Saturday 4 March 1809.
94. *Globe* Saturday 1 April 1809.
95. *Collection of diplomatic correspondence* 1893a, 572, 682, 693, 574, 600, 532.
96. Complete collection of laws 30, 129.
97. Внешняя политика России XIX и начала XX века: Документы Российского министерства иностранных дел. *Серия 1: 1801 – 1815 гг., том 4: Июль 1807 г. – март 1809 г.* Foreign policy documents 1965.

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To this monarchical discourse Sprengtporten added some references to the new political language of national sovereignty, dignity, and legality that he associated with the Diet. 'The convocation of the deputies of the Finnish nation ... is important for its dignity, as well as for the tranquillity of the population, so that this august ceremony be performed by legally chosen and legitimate deputies of the nation' ('*la convocation des deputés de la* nation *finnoise … il importe a* sa dignité, *comme la tranquillite des inhabitants que cette auguste* ceremonie *se fasse par des deputés légalement choisis et* legitimés *de la nation*'). He presented the new political relationship between Finland and Russia as a bilateral act of establishing a union, thus attaching it features that referred not only to conquest and the monarch's decisions but to national convention ('*consolider l'union* de la Finlande avec la Russie').

Sprengtporten succeeded in accommodating these two logics in the same sentence: 'it subsists according to its constitution and the new order of things where the Grand Duchy of Finland is united with the Empire of Russia and protected by it' ('*il subsiste suivant sa* constitution et un nouvel ordre des chose *ou le grand duché de la Finlande* uni *avec l'Empire de la Russie et* protégé par elle'). Sprengtporten interpreted the same act (the convocation of the Diet) as a solemn monarchical ceremony ('*tout la solemnité*') and a legal act ('*acte* authentique'). 'The Diet' could at the same time be interpreted as the National Assembly ('*les contestation d'une assemble populaire, parlamentaire*') and Assembly of the Estates ('*la convocation des états*'). Sprengtporten referred to the constitution as 'les loix *fondamentale du pays*' and to Finnish administrative structures as '*gouvernement locale*', '*l'administration civile en géneral ainsi que la force militaire du pays*'. Sprengtporten thus interpreted – or better presented, the Grand Duchy of Finland in two different ways – as a nation, *united* with the Russian Empire ('*de conserver leur liberté civile, nonobstant le changement qui les soumet a une dépendance despotique*') and as loyal subjects, '*un peuple*', under sovereign patronage ('*il subsiste suivant sa constitution et un nouvel ordre des chose où le grand duche de la Finlande uni avec l'Empire de la Russie et protégé par elle*'). Here he seems to have used the Bonapartist strategy of argumentation based on two simultaneous discourses – revolutionary and monarchical. He even directly quoted Napoleon's recommendations that had been transmitted through his ambassador Caulaincourt: 'the speedy *organization* of Finland, so that the proprietors and the country will be bound to Russia … the *civil organization* will answer for their *fidelity*'.[98]

Sprengtporten also bracketed his message with economic and military arguments, claiming that after the convocation of the Diet Russia would not need the same number of troops, and their maintenance in Finland would therefore be less expensive. He thus presented the forthcoming peace terms through two different lenses: the Swedish king could be compensated for his lost domain ('*pour se dédommager de la Finlande*'), and the Finnish national spirit would be raised ('*disposé les esprits*').

In November 1809 Sprengtporten used the same Bonapartist strategy in a letter to Alexander: in one statement he presented the people of Finland as a self-governing nation, '*compatriotes*' ('*une nation elle-même législatrice*') and as *loyal subjects* of a

98. *Caulaincourt à Champagny, St. Pétersbourg*, 14/26 Avril 1808. *Collection diplomatic correspondence 1893*a, 664. 'La prompte organization de la Finlande a fin que les propriétaires et le pays se trouvent liés à la Russie et à sa cause avant que la mer soit ouverte, de manière à ce que 1'organisation civile réponde de leur fidélité.'

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conquered land. He called on the Emperor to delegate Finland to a '*Régence provisoire*'. In Speransky's archive there is a copy of the plan drafted by Sprengtporten for 'the provisional government of Finland as a country'. It suggests that the members of the government should be elected 'by the nation according to estates' and in accordance with the model of the Bonapartist reorganization of the European grand duchies, that the new government would combine traditional monarchist practices and French constitutionalism.

In 1809 there was still no certainty or agreement among Russian officials about how Finland should be treated. In his announcement to the inhabitants the commander-in-chief of the Russian troops in Finland, General Knorring, called Finland 'a province, so remote on earth'. He reminded the inhabitants that 'Finland was conquered three times by the power of the Russian guns in one century and was twice returned to Sweden in the hope that such exceptional nobleness would induce the Swedish government to more peaceful relations'. Knorring referred to the conception of natural borders that should protect Russia and Finland from future war and mentioned that the war had begun against Russia's will. At the same time official negotiations were started with the task that Sweden 'ceded Finland' to Russia for eternity.[99]

The Emperor approved the ceremonial act for the opening of the Diet in Porvoo in February 1809. It was drawn up by the Secretary of State, Michael Speransky. At the same time Michael Speransky wrote to Alexander I that 'Finland is a state, not a province'.[100] In March 1809 Alexander I sent his solemn affirmation to the Finnish Diet in Porvoo. It was also drawn up with the assistance of Speransky: 'By the will of the Almighty, having taken possession of the Grand Duchy of Finland, we recognized it as a blessing to confirm and certify the religion, fundamental laws ('*lois fondamentales*'), rights and privileges that each estate of this duchy, in particular, and all subjects, inhabitants, from small to large, in accordance with their constitution, have enjoyed.'[101] Notably, Alexander used the notion of constitution twice – in the

99. *Кнорринг Б.Ф. Всеобщее оповещение местных жителей от имени главнокомандующего русской армией в Финляндии, Або, март 1809* [Knorring von G. J., General notification of inhabitants on behalf of the Commander-in-Chief of the Russian army in Finland, Åbo, March 1809]. Foreign policy documents 1965, 525.
100. Jussila, Hentilä and Nevakivi 1999, 21.
101. Мехелин 1888, 11–12. General M. M. Borodkin emphasized that 'the original of this charter burned in Åbo'. Бородкин 1900, 17. Legal scholar Pyotr Shilovsky also noted the absence of the original: it 'has not been found, it is assumed that it burned during the fire in Åbo in 1827'. Шиловский 1903, 9–10. Shilovsky emphasized that the only official certified copy of it was preserved in the archives of the State Council, the copy was written on paper with watermarks from 1815. An uncertified paper copy from 1809 is also kept there, along with a Swedish translation printed at Frenkel's printing house, and a Russian translation. Shilovsky argued that in this 1809 copy, the ending of the word 'konstitutsi...' is folded and illegible, and in Swedish – in singular, while in the certified paper copy from 1815, used in the plural form. This folder was indeed preserved among the papers of M. M. Speransky (with Speransky's amendments, one of them with a note that it was delivered on May 16, 1809). We could suggest that the strategy of legitimizing the seizure through the preservation of old Swedish laws either as a liberal 'constitution' or as a privilege granted by the monarch to preserve special 'laws, morals and customs' was the common strategy of Alexander and his nobles. Russian State Historical Archive. F. 1251 (Papers of M.M. Speransky). Op. 1. Part 1. D. 5. Three drafts of the Imperial speech in French, which was to be delivered at the opening and

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singular and plural. Official translations had been prepared in St Petersburg of several Swedish documents to which reference might have been made: 'the form of government approved by His Royal Majesty and the ranks of the State of Sweden on 21 August 1772'; 'the act of unification and security approved by His Royal Majesty and state officials, dated 21 February and 3 April 1789'; 'His Royal Majesty's assurance given to his innocent subjects and all estates of the state on 21 April 1772'; and the Swedish texts of the oath of the king, land marshal, archbishop, marshal of the nobility, and so on.

In some instances the theme of returning Finland to Sweden arose. Alopeus, the Russian Ambassador to Sweden, informed the Russian Foreign Minister that the Duke of Södermanland had assured him at a meeting that he was ready to 'practise trickery to return Finland'. The ambassador concluded that Sweden 'also expects the *Finnish province* to be returned thanks to the protection of France'.[102] Finland's 'natural borders' also remained controversial: different rivers were mentioned, and 'it is impossible accurately to determine the demarcation line by language, as Finnish settlements can be found in almost all the provinces of Sweden'.[103] In Speransky's note on Swedish affairs in April 1809 he discussed circulating in diplomatic circles and elite salons the assumption that 'France will wish to restore its former influence in Sweden and can ... return Finland to Sweden', suggesting negotiations about this be started with the regent. The official Russian newspapers, however, stated that Russia now 'possesses Finland as a country by conquest of weapons, and in political and civil terms it is irrevocably annexed to the Empire'.

The Treaty of Hamina (Fredrikshamn) did not mention the Grand Duchy of Finland in the listing of ceded areas. According to dynastic logic the '*provinces of Finland*' and the subjects of one sovereign had been released from their oath and become the subjects of another. In October 1809 a manifesto was published on the conclusion of the Treaty of Hamina, in which Alexander referred to the conception of natural boundaries, declaring that 'the conquest of all Finland's provinces by force of arms' had led to the joining of the Finnish people to the number of his loyal subjects and among 'the peoples under the sceptre of the Russian throne'. These 'six provinces ... are acquiring a new existence' through conquest by force of arms and had been annexed to a rich and vast region.

The official Russian newspapers published a speech by Archbishop Ambrose, Metropolitan of Novgorod, St Petersburg, Estland, and Finland on 7 September 1809: Ambrose interpreted the Treaty of Hamina (Fredrikshamn) as the return to Russia of the lost lands that in ancient times had belonged to the ancestors of Russian sovereigns, and that had been conquered by the Swedes. Now by force of Russian arms the Russian sovereign had returned 'the right to possess all the Variago-Russian property that belonged to his ancient ancestor Rurik'. A single line of official Russian discourse on Finland's political status was historicized here for the internal Russian public.

closing of the Finnish Diet, 1809; Russian State Historical Archive. F. 1151 (Department of Civil and Spiritual Affairs of the State Council). Op. 1. D. 43. On the submission to the State Council of papers on affairs in Finland and in the lands annexed from Austria.

102. Foreign policy documents 1967, 30–31.

103. Foreign policy documents 1967, 31.

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The British press also used historical examples for the interpretation of Finland's current uncertain status. The point that conquered lands could first be annexed to the Empire and then returned to Sweden was demonstrated with a story that compared Alexander I to Peter I[104]. In 1809 it was stated that by 'taking' Finland, Peter's heir had placed his dignity, the glory of Russian arms, and his personal independence at the feet of the conqueror [Bonaparte]. The situation's uncertainty was perceived in dynastic terms as the correction of an injustice and the expectation of the return to the Swedish king of what has been taken from him. This perspective ended on 10 May 1809, when the Swedish Riksdag declared that Gustav and his family had forfeited the throne, after which the dynastic perspective on the resolution of the conflict between 'two princes' ceased to appear logical. Furthermore, the Grand Duchy of Finland's political status remained uncertain.

At Erfurt in 1808 Napoleon had officially recognized Finland's annexation by Russia.[105] By order of Alexander I a meeting of the foreign ministers of Russia and France took place, during which Rumyantsev conveyed to Champagne that Alexander considered Finland a territory that should be annexed and incorporated into the Russian Empire ('monarque regardait la Finlande […] *comme une juste acquisition et devant positivement être* incorporée *a l'Empire de Russie*').[106] Between 30 September and 12 October 1808 at the Congress of Erfurt, Russia and France signed a treaty in which the parties declared it a condition for peace with England that Finland be recognized as part of the Russian Empire. In diplomatic correspondence Alexander insisted that Napoleon recognize not only the annexation of Finland, '*l'acquisition de la Finlande*' but also 'agree that the Russian Emperor has *all sovereign rights* over Swedish Finland … as *a province annexed to* the Russian Empire'. Finally, in a speech addressed to the legislature, Napoleon made a statement that was taken by the European press as proof of his decisive role in the creation of the new Russian duchies: 'My ally and friend, the Emperor of Russia, has united Finland with his vast Empire. ... I am not jealous of anything that can produce good for that Empire. … Its illustrious Sovereign is in union with my policy'.[107] The international recognition of Finland's new status was thus confirmed according to the old dynastic logic of the success of arms and consent of dominant rulers, and it was not taken up later at the Congress of Vienna.

Conclusions

An analysis of the Russian documents and press prompts us to consider the concept of the Grand Duchy of Finland as a flexible political tool that allowed various political interpretations to legitimize political manoeuvring. It contained the potential for a monarchical interpretation of the regime, referring to Swedish antiquity in connoting the notion of the Grand Duchy of Finland with the dynastic succession to a royal title. It named the territory conquered by the realm on the edges of the kingdom.

104. *Globe*, Saunders's News-Letter 23 April 1809.
105. Käiväräinen 1965.
106. Foreign policy documents 1965, 346.
107. *Journal du département de la Haute-Vienne, Journal du département du Mont-Blanc* 16 December 1809.

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Consecutively, this concept defined Finland as a separate political entity, and at the time of Finland's annexation to Russia connoted Bonapartist ideas of legality and constitutionalism, even allowing references to national sovereignty and other ideas from the French Revolution. The official Russian political discourse's later uncertainty concerning the concept of the Grand Duchy of Finland can also be interpreted as a traumatic consequence of the Napoleonic wars. Uncertainty about the meaning of the Grand Duchy of Finland made it possible to reinterpret its political status and mobilize public discussion at times of change in political regimes and the dominant discourse. This tension peaked in Russia in the second half of the nineteenth century when the Grand Duchy of Finland was the topic of sharp public controversy. Finland's status was associated with questions of parliamentarism, legality, federalism, and the possibility of political freedom within the Russian Empire – and even the political future of the monarchy. In Russian political discourse the concept of the Grand Duchy of Finland, which in former times had referred to the possessions of dynastic rulers on the territorial borderland of two realms, became in modern times the sign of a separate political borderland.

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The Grand Duchy of Finland in the Rank of Nations

Rhetorical Moves in the Politicization of a Phrase

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In depicting the key moments of the history of Finland's parliament, the website of parliament quotes Alexander I's speech from the closing ceremony of the Porvoo Diet in 1809, saying it was here that Tsar Alexander announced that 'Finland had been raised to the status of a nation among nations'.[1]

The words are instantly recognizable to most Finnish readers, though the English translation does not use the phrase's most common wording.[2] For generations of Finns Alexander I's speech have become familiar from school textbooks and the historical literature, as well as academic research. Today the statement belongs to the most well-known and cited political phrases in Finnish historiography. Despite changing political conjunctures, the phrase has kept its rhetorical value as a slogan in political speeches and ceremonies of historical remembrance. For more than two hundred years the words of Alexander I have been cited and interpreted by Finnish scholars and political actors as a symbol of a key moment in Finnish political history.

At first glance it may appear improbable that a sentence from a speech made originally in French by a Russian autocrat during a war with Sweden would attain such prominence in Finnish public awareness. Yet it is easy to comprehend that in the later discussion of Finland's political status, the words of the Russian monarch were understood to strongly articulate the Grand Duchy of Finland's special position within the Russian Empire. Furthermore, the need to translate the original French text for the Finnish public has given scope for the formulation of a slogan-like political catchphrase. This has also contributed to a certain flexibility of interpretation, which

1. See 'The history of the development of statehood in Finland'. Parliament of Finland, in: https://www.eduskunta.fi/EN/naineduskuntatoimii/kirjasto/aineistot/yhteiskunta/suomi-valtiona/Pages/Suomen-valtiokehityksen-historiaa.aspx
2. The most common variation in the wordings of the phrase is between whether it was Finland or the Finnish people that had been elevated to a new status. Moreover, referring to the new position as the 'status of a nation among nations' has a much-used alternative in English translations in 'raised to the rank of nations'. These variations have their source in compressing the complicated sentence structures of Alexander and the little shifts in emphasis between the original speech in French and its Swedish and Finnish translations. As we shall see, these variations can also be linked to the writers' political intentions, whether the stress is on Finland's international position as a state or on the Finnish people's recognized political position as a nation. Furthermore, the use of Tsar is exceptional, as Alexander is regularly referred to as emperor both in original documents and later historiography, probably to stress his role as a ruler bound to European political traditions.

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has doubtless added to the phrase's political usefulness for various actors in changing political conditions.

When comparing the catchphrase's later use in the historical literature with the original printed text, the most striking feature is the straightforward condensation of expression. In the historical literature it has become common to combine two sentences of Alexander into one. In the first of the sentences he praises the 'brave and loyal people', which is replaced in later quotations by 'Finnish people' or simply 'Finland'. The main message of the phrase comes from the second sentence, which starts with a non-finite clause referring to Finland's elevation among the rank of nations as an established fact. In the condensed slogan this is converted into an active deed by omitting the main clause that refers to relations with Sweden. Together, this condensation of the quotations produces a statement that lifts in the core Finland's political status and the recognition given to it by the emperor.[3]

These modifications had already become a common practice in the tradition of citing the speech during the nineteenth century. They gave the phrase a slogan-like punch that accentuated the birth of a new political entity and a separate national community in terms of the emerging modern political vocabulary. At the time of Alexander's speech, during the turmoil of the Napoleonic wars, European political language was however in a state of flux. The modern conceptions of state and nation were introduced but still taking shape as tools for depicting the changing political conditions. The old imperial dynastic conceptions of the state and nation were contested by – and used side by side with – the new republican and revolutionary notions propagated by American and French revolutionaries. In Napoleonic Europe they were amalgamated into a variety of ideas of princely state structures that experimented with constitutional and representative forms of government. This European context is vital when attempting to understand the diverse reading of the core sentences of Alexander's speech. Evidently, the speech, given in French, offered contemporaries a considerable challenge from the outset to find the right tone to convey his message publicly.

> Ce peuple brave et loyal bénira la Providence qui a amené l'ordre de choses actuel. Placé désormais au rang des nations, sous l'empire de ses lois, il ne se ressouviendra de la domination passée, que pour cultivar des rapports d'amitié lorsqu'ils seront rétablis par la paix.[4]

In French the key constituents of the later phrase can be translated as 'the brave and loyal people' that is hereby placed 'in the rank of nations' or 'among the rank of nations' ('*Ce peuple brave et loyal … Placé désormais au rang des nations*'). As is always the case with translations, small variations of emphasis can be found even between the original French sentences and the Swedish and Finnish translations published in the meeting's protocols. In Swedish these words are translated as the 'noble and decent people' that has been raised 'among the number of nations' ('*Detta ädla och redliga folk … Upphöjd för framtiden bland nationernas antal*'), and in Finnish 'the upright and honest people' that has been raised 'among nations' ('*Tämä jalo ja rehellinen kansa …*

3. For the adaptation of a standard pattern of quoting the phrase see Jussila 2007, 136–138.
4. Concerning the original French text and its translation, see Tandefelt 2009, 137–140.

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Korotettuna tästä lähtien kansakuntien joukkoon'). A little variation has thus always been inherently typical in quotations of the speech. It would be bold, however, to assume that such small shifts of emphasis as the translation of 'loyalty' of the people to 'honesty' represent a conscious or intentional rhetorical move.[5]

The question of whether the translations of the expression 'au rang des nations' might have been carefully considered and consciously directed is more plausible. At the time it was well known that among those who participated in the planning and preparation of the Russian documents were men like Councillor Michael Speransky and Governor G. M. Sprengtporten, known for favouring the vocabulary of radical French political thinking. One can only speculate as to whether the translators were alert to this influence, but it is clear that certain French layer of meaning is absent in the translations of 'au rang des nations' to Swedish and Finnish – and it has also remained unnoticed by later political actors and historians.

Intriguingly the expression 'rank of nations' chosen by Alexander had its own identifiable revolutionary history. It had appeared in the texts of Montesquieu and Benjamin Franklin, for example, and it was often used in the public discourse of the newly independent United States and revolutionary France.[6] Later, during and after the Napoleonic period, it was adopted in many European languages and countries.[7] The use of the expression often seems to have included a specific republican value judgement recognizing the rank of nation as the highest level of political existence as an independent self-governing political agent.[8] Although we do not know how intentionally Alexander borrowed the expression, he was certainly well acquainted with the French tradition of political theory.[9] Even if aimed primarily at the representatives of the Finnish estates, his choice of words indicates that the message of his speeches was also targeted at the international audience – his ally Napoleon and other European rulers. This accentuates the notion that also more generally his contentious conceptual choices in Porvoo should be read in the context of changing

5. Protokoll hållit … 1899.
6. The English, or rather the American, custom of preferring the form of 'in the rank of nations' to 'among the rank of nations' offers a hint about the array of emphases between the internally earned grade and the externally valued position among nations. Although it would be tempting to recall the forgotten layer of interpretation by using the first alternative as the translation, in this chapter I will use the more common 'among the rank of nations', which is closer to the Swedish and Finnish translations and thus the original building blocks of the phrase in the historical and political literature.
7. I am grateful to Antti Härkönen and Natalia Potapova for their help in verifying this observation with an instant pilot inquiry into French, English, and German digitized newspapers. This tradition surely merits a more comprehensive future study of its own.
8. An extreme example of this radical use is from news dating to the year 1808, when the expression was used in the speeches of the celebration of Haiti's fifth anniversary of independence to describe the status of the country after the revolution.
9. For the French influences on the political views of Alexander and Speransky see e.g. Raeff 1957. For the influence of Sprengtporten on the preparations of the estate meeting see Kalleinen 2017, 46–52. Sprengtporten had personally been in contact with e.g. Benjamin Franklin and was acquainted with American and French revolutionary rhetoric when he was preparing his draft of the constitution of the Finnish republic in 1786. Vainio-Korhonen 2008, 120–125.

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European political language and not only as a balancing between the Russian and Swedish traditions of political culture.[10]

At the level of international politics the fundamental changes in political language that followed the American and French Revolutions concerned also Russia and the international treaties and constitutional reform plans in which Alexander I was involved during the Napoleonic period. As part of this process the use of the concept of nation received multiple meanings in the vocabulary of the Russian political elite. It was essentially anchored in the traditional dynastic understanding of nation as a category mediating the relationship between the ruler and his subjects, but it was gradually influenced by the new political vocabulary of the period, with the concept of nation referring to an ethnolinguistic community or separate political entity.[11] Indeed, we can also find examples of a similarly oblique use of political key concepts in the Russian manifests and statements concerning Finland's status during the 1808–1809 war and its immediate aftermath.[12]

The building blocks of the politicization of a phrase

As such this duality of political language has been well noted in Finnish research on the Russian political documents and the speeches of Alexander I at the Diet of Porvoo. The key concepts of the three short speeches that Alexander I gave in Porvoo in 1809 have always been at the centre of historical interpretations of the status Finland gained within the Russian Empire.[13] This pattern was established gradually during the nineteenth century and became common practice during the so-called 'legal battle' towards the end of the century. As Marja Jalava shows in this volume, the frontlines of the legal battle have ever since formed the dominant context for interpreting the significance of the Diet of Porvoo for the political status of the Grand Duchy of Finland.[14]

Since the 1960s, however, the traditional reading of the significance of the Diet of Porvoo has become an object of critical scholarly reconsideration, and this has kept the interpretations of the speeches made there continuously at the core of the historical re-evaluation of Finnish state making.[15] In contrast with the continuously disputed

10. This is also evident when considering the scholarly discussion on the Russian and Swedish traditions of understanding the concept of the constitution as the core question concerning the status of the Grand Duchy of Finland. See Marja Jalava's chapter in this volume.
11. Miller 2008, 379–390. Many studies have emphasized the significance of Alexander's plans for constitutional reform in Russia for his attitude towards Finland and his speeches in Porvoo. The joint templates for a future Europe that Alexander had been elaborating in Tilsit in 1807 with his ally Napoleon – and in particular the constitutional status of the Grand Duchy of Warsaw – are especially interesting in this context. See e.g. Stites 2014; Klinge 2009, 70–74, 88–93.
12. See e.g. Tommila 1984, 24–38 and Natalia Potapova's chapter in this volume.
13. Tandefelt 2009; Tommila 1984, 39–53.
14. See Jalava's chapter in this volume.
15. Osmo Jussila in particular has taken up the task of debunking the 'myth of the Porvoo Diet' and uncovering the political contexts of its construction. He has analysed the gradual adoption of modern concepts of state and constitution in Finland and criticized earlier 'anachronistic' and 'teleological' interpretations of how contemporary actors understood Finland's status within

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interpretations of the meanings given to the concepts of state and constitution, the concept of nation has not been the object of such a comprehensive examination. Its importance among the key concepts of Finnish political language has been recognized, but conceptual shifts in its political use have not been analysed in detail.[16]

Recent comparative research on imperial history has questioned the clearcut either/or juxtaposition of traditional and modern conceptions in the analysis of imperial political rhetoric. According to the comparative analysis of Berger and Miller it was quite common for diverse principles of political rule to coexist in the multilayered power structures of empires, and that even opposing political discourses and concepts were often simultaneously in use. In the latter case imperial rule could even benefit from the flexibility that equivocal conceptions of the political system granted an authoritarian ruler.[17] Similar conclusions have also been drawn in recent Finnish studies of the Diet of Porvoo's significance. The nature of the event has been seen in the first place as ceremonial and the commitments that Alexander I gave in the middle of the ongoing war as ambiguous, and perhaps deliberately left open for future specification.[18]

In existing canon of research Osmo Jussila has paid attention to the question of how the phrase 'raised among the rank of nations' has been used politically in Finnish public discussion. According to Jussila it was the historian and Fennoman political leader Yrjö Koskinen (originally Georg Zacharias Forsman; after his ennoblement Yrjö-Sakari Yrjö-Koskinen) who first emphasized the historical significance of Alexander's words and gave the phrase the form that has later become standard in the historical literature. Koskinen had first quoted the phrase in a semi-public speech in 1854, and he made it more widely known in his historical works at the turn of the 1860s and 1870s.[19] Jussila notes that even though there was more intensive discussion of the significance of the Porvoo Diet in the 1880s, regarding the slogan-like use of the phrase 'the picture created in the 1860s and 1870s did not change significantly thereafter'.[20]

Taking Jussila's claim about the birth of an established canonical use of the phrase as its starting point, this study strives to analyse the introduction and politicization

the Russian Empire. In distancing himself from the pattern of projecting later standpoints and concepts back onto history, Jussila has, however, continued argumentation along the frontlines of the so-called legal battle by taking an explicit stand on which of the contemporary actors was more 'right' or 'wrong' in their interpretations concerning what had been said in Porvoo. Jussila 1969, 1987, 2004, and particularly 2007.

16. The concept of nation is e.g. not included in the volume '*Käsitteet liikkeessä*' that analyses the political key concepts of Finnish political language, Hyvärinen et al. 2003. An exception is made by Aira Kemiläinen's article from the 1960s, which I will discuss in detail later in this chapter. Notably, however, Kemiläinen's aim was not to uncover the contested use of the concept but to give it a true meaning in the sense of what Alexander really intended, Kemiläinen 1964b, 290–304, cf. Tommila 1984, 52–53. In her dissertation Kemiläinen presents a broader comparative analysis of nationalism that also discusses the concept of nation, Kemiläinen 1964a. The importance of a detailed examination of the conceptual history of nation has been motivated by Kurunmäki 2000, 82–84, 179–183.
17. Berger and Miller 2015, 18–25.
18. See e.g. Kalleinen 2023, Katajisto 2008, Klinge 2009, and Tandefelt 2009, cf. Rasilainen 2024.
19. Jussila 2007, 136–138.
20. Jussila 2007, 138.

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of quotations of Alexander's speech in detail and to understand the process in its historical context. The aim is to offer an analysis of the turning points in the political use of the phrase before it became an established part of the canon of national historiography.[21] Based on newly digitized newspaper data, it has become possible to show that even before Koskinen there were several attempts to make political use of the citing of Alexander's speech, and although these were not immediately continued, they can be seen as major steps in the politicization of Alexander's words.[22]

Initially this tradition was launched by the scholars E. G. Ehrström and A. I. Arwidsson in 1821, who gave the phrase its first slogan-like form. After more than two decades of silence the phrase was used in political discussion by the most prominent Fennoman intellectual, the philosopher and journalist J. V. Snellman, in the 1840s. The theologian and university vice rector F. L. Schauman was the next openly to politicize the phrase in 1856. Before Koskinen the notion of the rank of nations had also become part of the political discussion between Snellman and the liberal-minded journalist August Schauman in the 1860s. The following analysis centres on these rhetorical moves in politicizing the phrase before the 1870s. By focusing on the interpretations that contemporary actors gave to Alexander's words, the chapter seeks to shed light on the broader question of the changing contemporary conceptualizations of the Grand Duchy of Finland as a political entity.[23]

As the phrase was adopted already in the nineteenth century by both liberal and Fennoman politicians and historians, it would be tempting simply to underline the evident link that the phrase has with Finnish state making and nation building - to which most actors were committed, though with diverse strategies. Still, the phrase's continuing rhetorical power and political usefulness can hardly be explained based solely on the powerful image it creates of the formal recognition of Finland's political status but perhaps even more due to the flexibility Alexander's use of the concept of nation provided later actors in conceptualizing Finland as an ethnic, civic, and political community. A study of the phrase's introduction and politicization may thus serve as a unique window not only into how contemporary actors understood the Grand Duchy's position – but also how they wished to influence its future as a political entity.

21. The analysis draws its inspiration from established methods in conceptual history, especially Quentin Skinner's contextualization, Skinner 2002, and Reinhart Koselleck's analysis of the temporalization and politicization of concepts, Koselleck 2002.
22. The analysed corpus is based on searches in the digitized newspaper collections of the National Library, with different variations of the search terms '*nationernas antal*' and '*kansakuntien joukkoon*'.
23. The changing meanings given to the phrase have recently been noted in novel Finnish historiography. The recent observations concerning the phrase echo the wide gap between interpretations of what Alexander originally meant, the status of Finland as an 'equal state' in terms of international politics or its internal constitution as a political community based on 'the inherited principle of the representation of the people'. Haapala 2021, 33; Ihalainen & Haaparinne 2020, 84–97.

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Politicized history of what Alexander I really meant

In the press and public discussion Alexander's reference to Finland's position among 'the rank of nations' was first noted widely towards the end of the nineteenth century in the context of the so-called legal battle. The phrase sits well in the constitutionalist tradition of the late-nineteenth-century legal battle and the interpretation of the Diet of Porvoo as a solemn confirmation of Finnish statehood.[24] Yet interpreting Alexander's reference to the elevation of the Finnish people to 'the rank of nations' as a recognition of the existence of a separate political community also suited the Fennoman project and related strategies for building Finnish statehood based on the nation's internal consolidation. This may partly explain why Alexander's phrase later came to be cited by historians of both schools in an almost unbroken harmony as a confirmation of Finnish 'autonomy'. Even in post-Second World War historiography it largely preserved this undisputed status, though with a major exception in the early 1960s.

In 1963 the phrase suddenly became the object of a fierce historical debate that has been seen as one of the first signs of the emerging revisionist interpretations of the history of Finnish 'autonomy'.[25] The discussion of the phrase was fuelled by the young scholar Päiviö Tommila, whose dissertation analysed the status of Finland in the context of European geopolitics and discussed the significance of the Diet of Porvoo as part of Russian imperial policies of the time.[26] Interestingly his analysis of Alexander's use of the concept of nation became the core issue of the debate on the dissertation.

The debate remains still today the most thorough examination of Alexander's speech at the Diet of Porvoo's closing ceremony. The dissertation was published in French, and perhaps because of this the discussion after the public defence focused more on the popularized Finnish summary Tommila published separately.[27] In the printed version of the dissertation Tommila discussed the issue in one page and one footnote, but a year later Dr Aira Kemiläinen devoted an entire article to Tommila's interpretation of Alexander's use of the concept of nation mainly commenting on his Finnish language article.[28]

In his popular article Tommila straightforwardly suggested that Alexander's statement 'simply revealed that Finland had been joined to the many peoples of Russia under his sceptre'. Tommila concluded: 'The emperor's phrase "that Finland had been raised to the rank of nations" thus included no thought that could be used as

24. See Klami 1977, 107–108 and Marja Jalava's chapter in this volume.
25. In the debate of the 1960s the new scholarly approaches were rejected as an adoption of a 'late-tsarist standpoint'. Soikkanen 2009, 22–23, 26–27; Jutikkala 1965, 129; cf. Jussila 2007, 134–138. See also Jalava's chapter in this volume. Jalava analyses the significance of the debate as part of the breakthrough of the new revisionist cannon in Finnish historiography. I concentrate in this chapter in specifying the distinct lines of argumentation employed in the debate.
26. Tommila 1962. As Marja Jalava describes in her chapter the rise of the revisionist school was further manifested by the dissertations of other young scholars Korhonen 1963, Klinge 1967, and Jussila 1969.
27. Tommila 1963.
28. Tommila 1962, 25–35, particularly n. 50 on p. 34; Kemiläinen 1964b.

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testimony that Finland had gained a position better than its previous position which might motivate the birth of the autonomy of Finland.'[29]

Both Tommila and Kemiläinen compared the use of the concept in the original French text with the Swedish and Finnish translations. According to Kemiläinen Tommila's interpretation of the phrase 'raised for the future among the rank of nations'[30] went against the established academic tradition, which had generally accepted the phrase as an expression of the new special status granted to the Finnish people. Tommila had missed that the word 'nation' had in the use of the time acquired the meaning of political independence (*valtiollinen riippumattomuus*) and thus counted as a recognition of a special political status.[31] Based on an exploration of Alexander's use of the concept in other contexts, Kemiläinen concluded that Alexander used the concept of nation as a people associated with a state (*valtiokansa*) and 'in the same meaning as in the context of international law'. According to Kemiläinen Alexander's phrase 'raised among the rank of nations' thus refers in the first place to a state, 'in this case to an internally independent state – a position that Finland certainly acquired in practice'.[32]

The fact that Kemiläinen intuitively recognizes the connection of the expression 'rank of nations' with the radical French tradition gives her interpretation more nuance than the standard linking to the confirmation of the Swedish time constitution. At the same time this argument seems to lead her to an exceptionally sharp conceptual juxtaposition between right and wrong interpretations of what Alexander really meant. Even with the reservations she expresses regarding Alexander echoing the French Revolution's concept of the nation, she ultimately links the phrase to a quest for a single clear meaning of the word that evidently goes right back to the frontlines of the nineteenth-century legal battle. In this respect both Kemiläinen and Tommila missed the more complex multilayered meanings that contemporary actors gave to the political key concepts. By examining how the phrase 'among the rank of nations' was first introduced as an object of Finnish public political discussion and utilized as part of contemporary political projects, I attempt to go beyond the question of what 'Alexander really meant' and offer a more nuanced picture of the multiple layers of meaning that were mobilized when the phrase was made a tool in Finnish political discussion.

29. Tommila 1963, 161–162.
30. In Finnish Kemiläinen used the translation of Yrjö Koskinen '*kansakuntain joukkoon tästä-lähin koroitettuna*' (Koskinen 1869, 567), and also referred to Koskinen's earlier 1854 formulation '*korotettiin vastaisuudeksi kansakuntien joukkoon*'. (Koskinen 1904–05, 43) As the Swedish translation, Kemiläinen used a neutral authentic text printed in 1821. Samling af Placater 1821, 23.
31. Kemiläinen concluded that as Alexander I spoke in French and had a French education with an emphasis on the French language and enlightenment, it was reasonable to assume that he used the word nation 'in a French manner'. Kemiläinen 1964b, 290, 296–297; for a broader analysis of the concept of nation see also Kemiläinen 1964a.
32. Kemiläinen 1964b, 298–300. In 1999 Kemiläinen returned to the genuine meaning of Alexanders words. She repeated and complemented her earlier line of argument against views presented by Osmo Jussila and Matti Klinge. Kemiläinen 1999, 102–113.

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The introduction of the phrase as a political tool under Alexander I

During the first ten years after the Diet of Porvoo there were no references in Finnish press to Alexander's statement about the Finnish people being raised among the rank of nations. The first appeared in 1819, when Daniel Myréen published an article in *Finlands Almänna Tidning* which included long citations of Alexander's speech at the estate meeting's closing ceremony. Without slogan-like concentration of expression Myréen praised the great significance that Alexander's statements and speeches had had for the Finns. As a rhetorical move, his assessments hardly presented a challenge to dominant imperial views in the sense of daring to give an alternative interpretation on what the emperor had meant. Myréen did not try to specify what the position among the rank of nations indicated in terms of a political-institutional status. Instead he concentrated on praising the benefits that Finland had won through its annexation to the Russian Empire and the felicity Alexander's benevolence had brought to the Finnish people.[33]

In general terms Myréen saw the annexation of Finland to the Russian Empire as a guarantee of peace and undisturbed internal national development. He also cited the Assurance of the ruler given at the beginning of the estate meeting. Here he included also the part that mentioned the confirmation of the constitution. Myréen summarized this part by saying that Finland's constitution and civic liberty were now verified, and the nation's political existence had been secured. When citing Alexander's words on the position 'among the rank of nations' (*nationernas antal*), Myréen refrained from further comment and the liberty of daring to interpret what the ruler had meant, settling for asking his fellows to bless the noble monarch 'who was the protection, brace, and fortress of our felicity'.[34]

Myréen's article contains elements that hint at modern conceptions of state and nation. He mentions the confirmation of the constitution and civic liberties and discusses the nation's political existence and favourable internal development but does not present further claims or new horizons of expectation on these bases. His narrative's characteristic feature is the quest for loyalty and gratitude to the ruler. In this sense the dominant layer in his interpretation of the position 'among the rank of nations' is firmly anchored in the traditional discourse of princely power.

Myréen himself did not summarize the message of Alexander's speech in a slogan-like phrase, but his publication of the text and perhaps even his utterly loyalist interpretation may have inspired the first writings that ventured to make sharper political use of Alexander's words. The first attempt to use the phrase to support a

33. Kort öfwersigt af de fördelar Finland wunnit genom sin lyckliga förening med Ryska Riket under Kejsar ALEXANDERS spira. *Åbo Allmänna Tidning* 26 October 1819.

34. Hans Maj:t Kejsaren har ännu widare nådigast behagat yttra. "Detta ädla och redliga Folk skall då wälsigna den Försyn, som stadgat sakernas närwarande ordning. Upphöjdt för framtiden ibland Nationernas antal, under sina Lagars skygd, skall det i hågkomma sin fordna Styrelse, blott för att så mycket fastare underhålla de wänskaps förbindelser, som freden skall återföra. Och Jag! Jag skall hafwa skördat den yppersta frugt af mine omsorger, då Jag får se detta Folk lyckligt, ostördt af främmande anfall, fritt innom sig, öfwerlämnande sig, under Lagarnas och sedernas hägn till Åkerbruket och andra lofliga närings yrken, och, genom uppnådd werkelig sällhet, rättfärdiga mina afsigter och wälsigna sin Lott." Landsmän! och wi tilläggom: Wälsigna DEN Ädle Monark som är Upphofwet, Stödet och Borgen för wår sällhet.

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political argument in the Finnish press took place in a sequence of polemical articles published in the journal *Mnemosyne* and the newspaper *Åbo Morgonblad* in 1821. The later famous way of summarizing the message of the quotation in a slogan-like phrase, however, was not introduced as evidence in a discussion of the status of the Grand Duchy of Finland but used as an argument in a discussion of the status of the Russian language in Finnish education institutions.

The first to mobilize Alexander's words in the form of a catchphrase was the theologian and teacher of the Russian language, E. G. Ehrström,[35] who, to encourage the need for Russian in the Finnish education system, coupled 'two wishes of our great Monarch':

> I should therefore like merely to recall ... that the same noble Monarch, who solemnly declared before the assembled estates of Finland his heartfelt wish to be 'that the inhabitants of Finland, for the future raised among the rank of nations and under the protection of their laws, will constitute a People, free in their inner life', the same Monarch was also the one who wished that his and his nation's languages would be known in Finland.[36]

How Ehrström cited the phrase departs in several ways from its later mainstream variants. First, by using the expression 'the inhabitants of Finland' instead of the Finnish people, he deviates from Alexander's exact wording in a way that makes it a timely goal for the future to constitute the Finnish people as a collective historical and political actor. Second, in the same manner as the later canon, he picks up the subordinate clause 'raised to the rank of nations' as the speech's core statement, omitting the main clause concerning relations with Sweden. With an innovative rhetorical move the notion of the rank of nations is connected to both 'the protection of its laws' and to the expression used in the following sentence, 'people, free in its internal life', which could be read as references to modern conceptions of a nation as a self-determining agent.

Having presented this compressed quotation of the first 'wish of the monarch', the main part of his text was devoted to what Ehrström described as the emperor's second wish: to bring Finland closer to its ruler by promoting 'his and his nation's language'. This emphasis on the 'second wish' indicates that the language issue was as important for Ehrström as presenting the position 'among nations' as a recognition of the Grand Duchy of Finland's political status in terms of modern political vocabulary.[37]

Notably, Ehrström is untouched by similar need as Kemiläinen later to ignore the fact that Alexander used the concept of nation in several conflicting ways. He referred to Finland's political status but also to an imperial subject and a linguistic community when speaking of Russian as the language of 'his nation'. Even Ehrström's 'first wish' of the monarch on the status of Finland seems to set the main accent not on Finland's recognized external status as a political entity but on the guarantees that Alexander I had given for the nation's future internal development by confirming the laws and rights of the inhabitants of Finland. It is also notable that Ehrström's argumentation

35. For more on Ehrström, see Wassholm 2014.
36. *Mnemosyne* 1 April 1821 no. 4.
37. This was a natural orientation for Ehrström who worked as the Russian language teacher at the university.

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on Finland's status as a nation is in no way counterposed to Alexander's position as a sovereign ruler and the autocrat of Russia. On the contrary, Ehrström refers to his words and wishes as the highest authority to be followed when organizing the Finnish internal administration and the status of Russian in higher education.

The editor of *Åbo Morgonblad*, A. I. Arwidsson, was quick to comment on Ehrström's views. He started with first politely discussing Ehrström's political suggestions concerning the teaching of Russian language but soon gave the discussion a much bolder political direction. Arwidsson used the exact wording of Ehrström's citation of Alexander's speech but turned it into a statement of support for his own programme to advance the status of Finnish language. In emphasizing this point, he claimed that Ehrström's suggestions were in fact harmful for the political position as a nation that Alexander had envisaged for the Finnish people.

> Mr E. himself mentions that our 'noble Monarch before the assembled estates of Finland solemnly declared his heartfelt wish to be that the inhabitants of Finland would, for the future raised among the rank of nations and under the protection of their laws, constitute a People, free within themselves'. Has not this high assurance placed us with our native language, our statutes, and fundamental laws on our own ground, even if in a closer and unceasing communion with the ruler?[38]

By following Ehrström's wording exactly, Arwidsson, too, modifies the sentences' original structure. Unlike Ehrström, however, who focused on the means of building future relations with Russia and the emperor, Arwidsson moves the central point to the special political connection between the ruler and the nation, presenting the Finnish nation now constituted as an independent historical agent with an inner life and laws of its own. By so doing Arwidsson creates basis for the pattern typical to the phrase's later use among Fennoman scholars and politicians.

More pronounced than Ehrström, Arwidsson turns the phrase into a rhetorical justification of the special status granted to the Grand Duchy of Finland by noting how the nation is set on its 'own ground' with its language and laws. Notably, Arwidsson limits his argumentation to the political conception of nation by omitting the last part of Ehström's quotation, which included Alexander's reference to the dynastic notion of 'his nation', the Russians as a language group.

During a debate that continued for several weeks the two participants seemed (possibly deliberately) to misunderstand each other, which provided more publicity and weight to the very point on which they were unanimous: the emperor's wish that the Finnish inhabitants were to be raised 'to the rank of nations', and that this wish was to be followed as the foundation of future policies. Furthermore, when politicizing and temporalizing this maxim, both debaters presented their version of phrase as generally known, although without any explanation of the citation's origin.[39]

38. *Åbo Allmänna Tidning* 26 October 1819.
39. Ehrström's pattern of cutting and combining sentences raises the question of the origin of the citation both scholars used. It was not taken directly from the minutes of the estate meeting that spoke not of Finland's inhabitants but of the brave and loyal Finnish people. Nor was the source the best-known description of the meeting, the report of Archbishop Tengström, which only briefly mentions the closing speech, cf. Berättelse om landtdagen i Borgå, printed

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Moreover, it is notable that both writers included in their quotations that the inhabitants of Finland had been raised to the rank of nations 'under the protection of their laws'. Neither of them, however, elaborated further on this theme, which later became the central point of the constitutionally tuned interpretations of Alexander's speech. Instead, they both linked Finland's new position to Alexander's wish that the Finns would form 'a people, free in its inner life' (*utgöra ett folk, fritt inom sig*). This idea of the people as a historical agent with its own internal life guiding its destinies would, in principle, have fitted well with later political aspirations that prioritized the nation's internal development in terms of national, civic, or political community. Despite its central place in Ehrström's and Arwidsson's argumentation, this part of the phrase they built did not become part of the later canon for quoting Alexander's speech. One can speculate if this was an outcome of the poor rhetorical credibility that introducing elements from three different sentences would have created, or of the politically less than flattering fact that in its original context this notion of free inner life was connected with the prosaic wish that the Finnish people would dedicate themselves to 'farming and other valuable livelihoods'.

A. I. Arwidsson and the politicization of the status of the Finnish people in the rank of the emperor's nations

The polemic between Ehström and Arwidsson culminated in their conflicting visions of how the Finnish people's free inner life was to be advanced by promoting the status of the Russian or Finnish language. They seemed to share as their premise a common idea of its basis in a community united by its laws and traditions. Their exchange of arguments, however, suggested that although Ehrström also saw the status of Finnish as important for promoting the 'inner life of the nation', the crucial question for him was to foster it to advance the relationship between the nation and its ruler. Arwidsson did not challenge this, but he seemed to approach this relationship through a more political interpretation of the status among nations. He stressed the role of laws, but rather in terms of the protection of the nation's capacity for an inner life than the constitutional recognition of the position of state institutions. In hindsight it is evident that the design of the quotation Ehrström and Arwidsson used went well with the ideas of the academic network of the Turku Romantics to which both belonged. As recent research indicates, their views of the importance of language, laws, and shared traditions, the nation's "free inner life", was to a large degree based on the political ideas of an ethnolinguistic based statehood that the intellectual circle nursed.[40]

Especially in Arwidsson's argumentation, a horizon of expectation of the future development of the nation was linked to the promotion of the language of the majority of the population. Despite their disagreements, Arwidsson and Ehrström were united

in Hwasser 1839. A more likely source for combining the variant the two scholars used was Myréen's article in *Åbo Allmänna Tidning* in 1819 in commemoration of the tenth anniversary of the Porvoo estate meeting (which was reprinted in the new edition of documents of the Diet of Porvoo, published in the same year as the debate took place). *Åbo Allmänna Tidning* 26 October 1819.

40. Sarjala 2020.

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in their claim that the nation's future was to be advanced by promoting Finnish as the national language. Yet Arwidsson especially seemed to play rhetorically with a double hand when stressing that the explicit wish of the monarch was to implement this programme.

> When we have been ordered by our High Monarch to constitute our own people in his great realm, should we then despise this enviable lot? ... We should [instead] fulfil what the Monarch has decided for us and not despise the honour he has granted us; the lot of forming a specific tribe in the universe of his rule.[41]

The tasks Arwidsson had set himself were based on radical novel conceptions of the state, nation, and constitution, but when promoting them by politicizing and temporalizing the 'wishes' of Alexander, he generally relied on traditional dynastic political concepts. The imperatives of becoming a particular 'branch of people in the great realm' of the emperor and the demand to follow the emperor's wish to form a 'specific tribe in the universe of his rule' were clearly associated with princely rule and traditional notions of the personal bonds of loyalty between the ruler and the ethnolinguistically defined peoples over whom he ruled. It is more important, however, that despite the discrepancy, Arwidsson's concept of nation was not understood in static terms but boldly employed as a mobilizing concept to open new horizons of expectation for the development of the nation as a historical agent. The fact that this was combined with an ultimate claim of loyalty to the ruler's wishes can be seen as either a sign of the conservative monarchism that was characteristic of Arwidsson's later political thinking or simply as a rhetorical move to avoid the strict censorship of the time.[42]

This discrepancy is also present in the more indirect reference to Alexander's speech that Arwidsson made earlier the same year in his oft-cited article '*Om Nationalitet och National Anda*'. In this text, too, Arwidsson started his argument by emphasizing his obligation to the wishes of the monarch, who had ordained 'our civic constitution'. According to Arwidsson this should correspond to 'the just command he possesses over his Finnish subjects' demonstrated in how Alexander had 'with full confidence in the national maturation among us allowed our country to form a small distinct state in his immeasurable realm'.[43]

Doubtless, Arwidsson's far-reaching conclusions about the aims of Alexander's statements can be seen as an indication of his exemplary rhetorical skills: the enactment of the Finnish constitution, Finland's consolidation as a nation, and ultimately the forming of a distinct state. All this is counted as part of the 'place among

41. *Åbo Morgonblad* 26 May 1821. Då vi blifvit bestämde af vår höge Regent till att utgöra en egen folkstam i hans stora rike, skola vi då förakta denna afundsvärda lott ... Vi skola uppfylja hvad Monarken föresatt oss, och ej förakta den äran han förunnat oss; den att vara ett skildt slägte inom rymden af hans välde.
42. For Arwidsson, see Wassholm 2016, 269–299.
43. Vi anse det arven för en skyldighet emot den Nådige Monark, som stadfästad vår borgerliga författning, att, så mycket vi del förmå, svara emot det rättvisa kraf han äger hos sina Finska undersåtar. Han har med fullt förtroende till en nationel mognad hos oss, tillåtit vårt land att bilda en liten särskildt stat i sitt omätliga rike; han har öfverlemnat oss åt vår egen klokhet, våra egna insigt och den stadga och bestämdhet som erfordras af alla fullmyndiga.

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nations' which Arwidsson calls the 'higher life and existence' organized in accordance with the ruler's wishes. Clearly, we can discern here a significantly more ambitious political programme than Ehrström had in mind when presenting his summarizing quotation of Alexander's words. Arwidsson recognized its rhetorical power and did not hesitate to politicize Ehrström's compact formulation for his own purposes.

In the context of the political life of the time all this certainly deserves to be seen as an extremely bold rhetorical move. Nevertheless, Arwidsson's aims seem to correspond poorly with some later interpretations of how contemporaries understood the phrase's significance. Arwidsson's use of the concept of nation certainly distanced itself from the old tradition of princely power – and that of the leading Finnish noble bureaucrats.[44] Although accusations were soon made against his 'revolutionary' intentions, it would be confusing to assume that Arwidsson had adopted his notions of nation and state directly from the vocabulary of the French Revolution and was at the same time motivated by the promotion of Finnish statehood in accordance with the wishes of the Russian autocrat. Furthermore, this conclusion would fit quite poorly with the often rather conservative positions Arwidsson expressed after having moved to Sweden in 1823. A more logical starting point would be to take his references to the monarch's authority seriously and try to understand his interpretations of the Grand Duchy of Finland's position in the context of the theories of German romantic nationalism and discussions of the Napoleonic period on national states and their constitutional foundations, which were well known in the academic circles of Turku.[45]

The phrase's politicization underlined the Grand Duchy of Finland's special status as a separate political entity, but this was not presented by contrasting the confirmation of the constitution with the limiting of the ruler's powers. The Grand Duchy of Finland was staged as a princely state with constitutional rights, but the relationship of these rights to the ruler's powers were not commented on – or were understood as subordinate. Arwidsson and Ehrström were among the first to adopt the concept of *självständighet* (independence) in describing the position of Finland and the Finnish people. In the same way as the position among the rank of nations this concept could be given a double significance: it could be understood to refer both to the nation's status as a separate political unit and to the capacity of the national community for its own internal life and independent actorness. At the core of Arwidsson's rhetoric lay a strategy to promote both these goals by strengthening the internal potency of the nation through advocacy for the Finnish language.

In hindsight it seems a little strange that these first public politicizations of the emperor's words earned no immediate public comment from the reading audience or the authorities. Censorship may have played a role, but this merely emphasizes the boldness with which both debaters linked the phrase to their own projects. In the longer perspective it remains a valid question whether the mere exercise of publicly interpreting the emperor's wishes was too much for the ruling elite. Whether the first public discussion of the phrase 'raised among the rank of nations' actually played

44. Katajisto 2009; Kalleinen 2023, 117–121. The leading bureaucrats may have held partly same ambitions as manifested in the behind-scenes discussions on Finnish constitution, but they were wise enough to refrain themselves from - and strictly condemn those who made themselves guilty of - publicly pronouncing these aspirations.
45. Sarjala 2020; Wassholm 2016, 269–299.

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a role in the development that led to problems in Ehrström's career and ultimately to Arwidsson having to leave the university and Finland is a matter for speculation. Be that as it may, it took several decades before other political actors dared to cite Alexander's words in support of their political projects. Towards the end of the rule of Nicholas I, however, unspecified references to Alexander's words appeared that indicated that new windows of opportunity were opening for the phrase's politicization as the emerging new party groupings began more openly to challenge the old notions of Finland's status as a nation.

J. V. Snellman and the encrypted politicization of the rank among nations under Nicholas I

The next public reference in the Finnish press to the phrase 'the rank of nations' (*nationernas antal*) can be found in an anonymous contribution published in 1844 in the journal *Saima* and copied later in the newspaper *Helsingfors Morgonblad*.[46] Although unsigned, the style and argumentation were easily recognized and identified as the school headmaster and docent J. V. Snellman's. At the time he had been forced to leave Helsinki University for Kuopio, where he continued his political activities as the editor of *Saima*. There was no explicit reference in the text to the phrase as a citation of Alexander words, and it was not used to support any political claims. On the contrary, Snellman referred to it to criticize ideas that he suggested served to 'erase the Finns from the rank of nations'. Notwithstanding whether Snellman was referring here to Alexander's words or borrowing a phrase employed in the radical European press, he gave the phrase a meaning as a generally understood indication of Finland's special political position as a nation.

In Snellman's text the reference to the phrase is employed as part of a polemical response to an article published in the newspaper *Borgå Tidning*. As in Arwidsson's case, the phrase is employed to support demands to promote the status of Finnish language and culture. This time, however, the plea is not formulated as an open appeal in the name of the emperor. Snellman presents the language question even more sharply than Arwidsson as the decisive constituent of the existence of the nation. His approach is, however, defensive in the sense that it lacks the temporalization and opening of the future horizon of expectation that Arwidsson applied when supporting his claims with the 'wish of the emperor'. Under the reactionary rule of Nicholas I the primary goal for Snellman was to safeguard the existing status. Referring to the destiny of the Irish as an example, Snellman warned of the consequences of a people losing its language: the Finns would be erased from the 'rank of nations'.[47]

It is quite surprising but perhaps telling that this indirect and unsigned reference to the status of the Finns among the rank of nations is the only public statement of its kind during the authoritarian rule of Nicholas I. In conditions of strict censorship it is logical that newspapers avoided publishing statements that could be connected with political radicalism and Arwidsson's cautioning example. The Finns were given

46. *Saima* 14 November 1844.
47. *Saima* 14 November 1844.

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a new warning when Snellman's Saima, the only paper that under the rule of Nicholas I dared to test the limits of public speech, was closed down two years later, in 1846.[48]

Set in a broader context this episode indicates how tender a question the reconceptualization of Finland's position as a nation was in the early public political discussion – and how keen the authorities were in their pursuit of the suppression of open debate. In its main points Snellman's arguments concerning the basis of Finland's existence as a nation followed the ideas he had elaborated in his early scientific work on state and nationality and were gradually formulated as a political programme based on the promotion of Finnish language, traditions, and institutions. Snellman's programme presented the nation as a pre-existing political community whose maturing towards statehood depended on the development of the national spirit, and it culminated in practice in the demand that Finnish should also be adopted by the elite. It is important, however, to note that Snellman's theoretical thinking was not built solely on the idea of the nation and national language as the self-evident centrepiece of history but on a universal view of the role of nationality in world history. World history was the history of the birth and action, clash and dissolution of nations. For Snellman a deeper knowledge of the currents of world history was the foundation for national task setting and securing a place among the nations.[49]

In this sense it is understandable that after Arwidsson it was Snellman who actualized the question of the future of Finland among the rank of nations. For him this did not depend on mere expressions of national spirit but on the deeper understanding of the world-historical preconditions for national consolidation. This could occasionally entail the prioritization of the nation's ethnolinguistic consolidation and under other world historical conjunctures the strengthening of state institutions and even the representative system. As a rhetorical move, the goal of securing the position among nations served both these sides of his programme as a claim for safeguarding the internal consolidation of the nation, as well as the Grand Duchy of Finland's external status within the Russian Empire and the international system.

The liberal moment and the constitutional interpretation of the rank of the nation under Alexander II

It took another decade before the next interventions that connected the position of Finland with the phrase 'rank among nations' appeared during the first years of Alexander II's rule. Censorship was eased, and political visioning was encouraged by the expectation of liberal reforms. This forward-looking spirit is also visible in the indirect reference to the phrase 'rank of nations' that was published in the newspaper *Wiborg* in 1856. The article straightforwardly expressed expectations of reforms that it hoped would strengthen the Finnish nation's status. It was published under the pseudonym Q, which belonged to Carl Immanuel Qvist, known as one of the first writers who publicly subscribed to liberal ideas.[50] He started by referring to the ethnolinguistic bases of the quest to prepare the Finnish people a future place in the

48. Tommila 1988, 135–140.
49. Kettunen 2006, 148–149; Liikanen 2003, 275–276.
50. Railo 2013.

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'rank of nations', writing: 'The only thing of its own that our people still has left is what nations in general are to lose only in the last moment, and which, long after the loss of all other forms of independence, characterizes them as a peculiar people, the language.' For Qvist, however, this argument, familiar from the writings of Arwidsson and Snellman, was only the first step that must be taken, as no other steady grounds existed.

> It is only natural that the newly awakened desire to prepare a future room for our people among the rank of nations should first seek its realization on this last remaining independent basis, the only unique field, which still exists.[51]

In continuing, Qvist linked this argument to a critique of the misguided policies of the government that had endangered the fundamental grounds of the national existence. It remains an open question whether Qvist was referring directly to the speech of Alexander I, commenting on the ideas of Arwidsson and Snellman, or simply borrowing a phrase often employed by the European liberal press of the time. Be that as it may, Qvist's temporalization of the phrase by presenting it as a matter for the future is noteworthy here. When Qvist further elaborated his ideas later the same year, he specified his vision of liberal reforms in more tangible terms that distanced themselves from the earlier Finnish examples of the phrase's politicization and declared instead the promotion of domestic industry as the only certain and natural means of preparing a dignified place in the rank of nations.

> And we merely add that only in this way can a higher national aspiration securely mature, and the Finnish people in time acquire a worthy place among the rank of nations.[52]

Despite the exceptionally open criticism of Finnish conditions and his bold reform programme, it is notable that even Qvist referred to achieving a place among the rank of nations as something that was expected to be prepared from above. In this context a hidden reference to the words of Alexander I could be engaged in support of a programme of liberal reforms by appealing in a loyalist spirit to the highest recognized authority, the new ruler, Alexander II.

As an example of the expectation of reform prevailing in 1856, however, Qvist's intervention appears to be merely a prelude to the far-reaching programmes that Finnish political actors were nursing at the time of the coronation of Alexander II. These great expectations were manifested later the same year in the speech that the theologian and vice rector Frans Ludvig Schauman held in connection with the celebration organized in honour of the coronation of Alexander II at the Imperial Alexander University in Helsinki. The speech was also circulated in the form of a printed booklet addressed quite daringly to Finnish citizens (*Finske medborgare och medborgarinnor!*). The speech provoked irritation among conservative circles not only because of its open reform programme but also its barely concealed tendency to accentuate the new ruler's commitment to reforms by referring to the legacy of Alexander I's speeches at the Diet of Porvoo:

51. *Wiborg* 27 June 1856.
52. *Wiborg* 3 June 1856.

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> [A]t the end of the Porvoo Landtag on July 18, 1809, he stated that 'the Finnish people has been raised among the rank of nations', and that 'he has himself harvested the highest fruits of his forethoughts, when he sees this people happy, free within itself, to commit itself, under the protection of its laws and customs, to agriculture and other lawful livelihoods, and by achieving true harmony in justifying his intentions'.[53]

In F. L. Schauman's speech the quotation concerning the Finnish people's position among the rank of nations was used for the first time since Ehrström and Arwidsson as a politically binding statement. In his speech Schauman also included the next sentence, which envisioned how the Finnish people, 'free in its inner life', would build its future.[54] In the spirit of the liberal reforms for which Qvist had yearned it was now perhaps felt as a less paternalistic understatement to expect that the Finnish people as a nation 'free in its inner life' would commit itself to 'agriculture and other noble livelihoods'. For Schauman the internal development of the nation depended not only on language and culture but economic progress as well.

Schauman emphasized the significance of the quotation as a binding commitment of Alexander I concerning Finland's constitutional status, which according to him his successors had thereafter confirmed.

> [A]nd it was in accordance with this that already before the Landtag he also confirmed and affirmed 'the religion and laws of the country and the privileges and rights of each and every estate in particular and all its inhabitants in common, both upper and lower, had hitherto enjoyed, promising to retain all these acquisitions and statutes firmly and immovably in their full force', which confirmation was renewed by our recently deceased Emperor Nikolai the First and now most recently by Emperor Alexander the Second.

In presenting the words of Alexander I as binding commitments of the ruler, Schauman had clearly touched the boundaries of the public expression of opinions. He was soon accused of improperly taking the floor to advance his own political goals and particularly of publicly suggesting the reconvening of the Finnish Diet. This accusation was later permanently to harm his academic career. In 1856 Schauman was the dean of the Faculty of Theology and acted as the university's vice rector. In the election of a new rector in 1863 he received all the votes but was not appointed to the post.

Schauman's speech should be understood in the context of the public breakthrough of the liberal constitutionalist position in Finnish political discussion. At the time, however, his statements concerning the constitution were not far from the opinions published by Snellman in his *Litteraturblad* and the opinions expressed by other Fennoman intellectuals.[55] Compared with Arwidsson's earlier politicization of Alexanders words, Schauman's rhetoric clearly loaded the status among the rank of

53. Schauman 1856.
54. Similarly to Ehrström's initial use of the phrase, Schauman combined his programmatic slogan by combining elements from two successive sentences of the original speech. Following Ehrström and Arwidsson, he sharpened his message by dropping the reference to relations with Sweden.
55. Jussila 1987, 92–98.

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nations with the idea that the recognition of Finland's constitutional status limited the ruler's powers in a spirit quite different from Arwidsson's appeal to the monarch's wishes.

Language and the place among the rank of nations

After the scandal of Schauman's speech the next time Alexander I's 'rank of nations' speech was publicly referred to was in 1859, during the celebration of the fiftieth anniversary of the Diet of Porvoo. New interpretations of the phrase were partly connected with emerging hopes for the resummoning of the Finnish Diet, as well as with the party division in Finnish political life.

In April 1859 a reference to the phrase 'rank of nations' appeared in an article published in the liberal periodical *Papperslyktan*. The article criticized the political views of J. V. Snellman who had returned to the university and the political life of the capital, and it is possible that even the use of the phrase was inspired by Snellman's earlier argument about the fate of the Irish. Metropoliticus, a pseudonym known to belong to the liberal journalist August Schauman, used the phrase 'rank of nations' in a discussion of the significance of language for the existence of a nation. Instead of the fate of the Irish Schauman raised Switzerland's history as an argument against Snellman's views.

> The existence of a Swiss nation proves more clearly than anything else that customs, institutions, and so on can sometimes be more powerful than language in determining nationality. But Mr J. V. S., and many with him, do not want to acknowledge this fact; in order to get their theories to hold true, a nation is rated outside the rank of nations.[56]

These passing references to the phrase in the debate can hardly be read as an indication of the birth of a canon for interpreting the words of Alexander I, but its use does imply a shared value judgement. For both Snellman and Schauman the position among the rank of nations is the highest goal, and the question of language is discussed with the significance of customs and institutions at a more instrumental level about how to achieve the goal. The repeated fierce polemics between Snellman and August Schauman have made it easy to interpret the language question as the core of the early Finnish party formation. How both Snellman and Schauman employed the phrase 'rank of nations', however, indicates that Finland's status as a nation was for both an even higher political goal.[57]

In the late summer of 1859 *Helsingfors Tidningar* published the article 'Folk och Nation', which explicitly cited the statement of Alexander I. At the time the paper's editor was Zachris Topelius (before August Schauman took over two years later), which is perhaps reflected in the pronounced loyalist tone that almost obscures the bold politicization of Alexander's words. In the text a rather precise citation of the speech is temporalized to a call for "an independent national development for the Finnish people".

56. *Papperslyktan* 4 April 1859 no. 14.
57. Kurunmäki 2007, 63–89.

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> The noble and honest Finnish people, raised for the future among the rank of Nations, shall bless the providence which has established the present order of things and under the protection of its Laws remember their former government, only to even much more firmly maintain the bonds of friendship which peace shall restore.
>
> With these words, Emperor Alexander I concluded the meeting of the Finnish estates on 11 July 1809. It should not be unclear to anyone that in these words Emperor Alexander clearly and strikingly expressed the idea, which has since firmly been the foundation of our national development, and which today has in its other manifestations become increasingly evident each year. ... This is not the first time an independent national development for the Finnish people has been called upon; it was already there for some time, fully established among the noblest and most intelligent of the sons of Finland.[58]

Since Arwidsson's writings the main line of argument in citing Alexander had been not only to present Finland's position among the rank of nations as confirmation of its institutional status as a separate political unit but also as the basis for a separate national development that was to be strengthened by promoting the position of the Finnish language. *Helsingfors Tidningar* presented an interpretation of the Porvoo decisions that emphasized both constitutional ideas of statehood and the modern conception of nation as a historical agent with the potency to act independently.

Evidently in the construction of a slogan-like phrase from quotations of the words of Alexander I these different interpretations of the bases of national existence were not always colliding. Compared with the discussion on the language question, the counter-positioning of liberal constitutional and Fennoman views seems significantly less pronounced between different attempts to politicize the words of Alexander I in support of political demands. *Helsingfors Tidningar*, at least, tried its best to balance these viewpoints.

> It thus seems clear that when, in 1809, there was talk of 'the raising of the Finnish people among the rank of nations', the idea of language emancipation seems to have played very little if any role. The matter was seen more broadly with the elevation of the Finnish people to an independent cultural position, with an independent historical development in mind. The Finnish people, undisturbed by external influences, would henceforth freely and in its own way develop the institutions and culture which had been introduced from the outside to us as to all others.[59]

Set in the political context of the day, this interpretation of Alexander's words could perhaps be read as a comment against the arguments of Snellman emphasizing the significance of language in his polemic with August Schauman. Contrary to his habits, however, Snellman did not react to the claim. Instead, he took up the issue some years later in his lectures at the university. In 1863 he further elaborated his view of the concept of nation with a reference to the same phrase – and in broad terms along the same lines of argument.

58. *Helsingfors Tidningar* 24 August 1859.
59. *Helsingfors Tidningar* 24 August 1859.

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> The very term nation is taken from language use that overtly means a civilized people – but in the doctrine of the right of nationalities to this is added the meaning of a people, whose right and determination is independent, sovereign existence, 'among the number of nations', that is, the provision to represent the moral (sedlig) world order in its action and realization.[60]

Instead of an either/or setting placing constitutional principles and language-based nationality against one another, Snellman operated in the first place with a world historical perspective in which both were ultimately part of the same process. Consequently, the interpretations of Alexander's words at Porvoo did not necessarily become directly part of the party division in Finnish politics of the 1850s and 1860s. They remained part of a rhetorical game in which different actors could give them their own significance without ruling out the other.

Yrjö Koskinen and the march of the Finnish people to the rank of nations

This setting was shaken when the leader of the emerging Fennoman movement of the 1870s, the historian Yrjö Koskinen, introduced his interpretation of the rise of the Finnish people to the rank of nations. Koskinen, who had made himself known as a radical Fennoman student leader, had already addressed the theme in an unpublished inaugural speech he delivered for the teacher's post at the local gymnasium in the remote town of Pietarsaari (Jakobstad) in 1854. In his speech Koskinen cited the words of Alexander I more directly than anyone had since A. I. Arwidsson thirty years earlier, and his translation of Alexander's words surely introduced a new dimension to what has become a standard feature of the phrase's later use.

In Koskinen's 1854 version the phrase was presented not as a wish of the monarch but as a completed political deed manifesting that Finland had been raised to the rank of nations at Porvoo. By naming Finland – and not the Finnish people or inhabitants of Finland – in the main role, Koskinen moved a step further in giving Alexander's words a more pronounced significance as a founding act of Finnish statehood. This rhetorical move can be seen as a model for the later dominant pattern of citing the position among the rank of nations primarily in terms of a recognition of statehood. For Koskinen this was, however, at the same time also the springboard for the development of 'national endeavours' (*kansallispyrinnöt*) that were the ultimate foundation of a nation's independent agency. While Koskinen thus gave Alexander's words the significance of a founding act of the Finnish state, he also linked them to the perspective of the internal strengthening of the national political community as its key-element.[61]

Koskinen returned to the theme on several occasions having become the central figure of the Fennoman mobilization in the late 1860s. In his textbook on the history of the Finnish people[62] (1869) he further distanced himself from Arwidsson's reading

60. Snellman 1998, 542.
61. Koskinen 1854/1904, 42–44, 52.
62. Koskinen 1869, 500.

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of the political significance of Alexander's phrase as 'the wish of the monarch' that should be taken as the leading principle of politics.

> It was only over time that it was better understood what Emperor Alexander had recently told the Finnish representatives, that the Finnish people had now politically (*valtiollisesti*) 'stepped up into the ranks of nations'.[63]

By referring to the Finnish people as an active self-determining agent Koskinen used Alexander's words to promote his political programme, which was built on employing nation and people in a new way as movement concepts. This rhetorical move stretched the original quotation by making the Finnish people the main actor in the process of taking the decisive step into the 'rank of nations'. As a part of the party competition of the time this can be seen as a counter move to the liberal reading that had stressed the recognition of Finland's institutional status. Koskinen shared this view and even emphasized the link with modern principles of statehood by adding the word 'politically' (*valtiollisesti*) to his citation but saw this as a double-sided founding act for both external status and internal national consolidation.

This can be read as a clear comment on the tradition that emphasized the significance of the emperor's words as wishes to be followed, which had tended to make the recognition of Finland's constitutional status a one-sided act. Instead of arguing that Finland's position was based merely on the decisions at Porvoo, Koskinen's history of the Finnish people was built on the idea that Finnish statehood was achieved through a process during which the people had itself actively taken steps towards and laid the foundation for a place among the nations. In the mobilization phase of Fennomania in the early 1870s Koskinen's political strategy relied on active civic engagement representing the 'will of the people', and his use of Alexander's words evidently tended to serve as a historical legitimation of this policy.[64]

In 1870 Koskinen returned to the topic in his book on G. M. Sprengtporten and the independence of Finland. This time he linked Alexander's words to the earlier independence plans (*itsenäisyystuumat*) of members of the Finnish elite but again chose a wording that gave the Finnish people the role as a main political actor. According to Koskinen's new formulation it was through this multifaceted interaction that 'the Finnish people entered the ranks of nations'.[65]

Koskinen's rhetoric of the nationally minded elite and the people playing the main role together can be seen as corresponding to his revision of the Fennoman strategy in the mobilization phase of the 1870s. In the 1860s Fennomania seemed to have lost its momentum and made to look like an old-fashioned political coterie stuck in the language question amidst the emerging liberal constitutional challenge and programme of social modernization. Koskinen revived the ethnolinguistic claim Arwidsson and Snellman had promoted by attaching to the concept of nation the capacity for active mobilization and a horizon of expectation of a self-determining

63. Wasta aikojen kuluessa tultiin selwemmin käsittämään, mitä keisari Aleksanteri äskettäin oli Suomen edusmiehille lausunut, että Suomen kansa nyt waltiollisesti oli "kansakuntien joukkoon astunut".
64. Liikanen 2003, 280–282, 288–292.
65. Koskinen 1870, 98.

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political community. He did not deny the significance of the Finnish constitution that Alexander I had confirmed but based the programme for protecting it on different grounds than those who emphasized the legal defence of Finland's institutional status. During the opposition period of the Fennoman movement in the 1860s and 1870s their strategy relied on voluntary associations and public meetings as representing the 'will of the people'. Obviously the priority of strengthening the national political community by making the people an active political agent was also at the core of Koskinen's interest in the politicization of Alexander's words and presentation of the Finnish people as the core historical actor in taking their place in the rank of nations.

Conclusions

Arguably, quoting Alexander I's speech at the Diet of Porvoo's closing ceremony in 1809 had developed into an established tradition in the 1870s. According to Osmo Jussila it was the historian and politician Yrjö Koskinen who formulated a slogan-like phrase from Alexander's words that had since begun to spread to the Finnish press and in public discussion. As we have seen, Koskinen undeniably employed formulations in his writings that were akin to the phrase's growing use during the years of the 'legal battle' as an argument about the Grand Duchy of Finland's political position. As the analysis of the early introduction of the phrase indicates, however, there were various attempts to politicize the phrase before Koskinen, and compared to those, Koskinen's use of Alexander's words can hardly be seen as a crystallization of an established canon. The varying wordings and political intentions of the early attempts to politicize Alexander's speech witness more to recurrent rhetorical innovation than to a linear development of a shared political argument.

When analysed in depth, it seems clear that the significance given to Alexander's words varied between and originated in diverse political discourses. If read in terms of the emerging new political vocabulary, the ascent to the rank of nations could be taken as a recognition of the Grand Duchy of Finland's institutional status as a state, a separate political unit. Alternatively, it could be read to refer to an emerging independent political agent, a nation that was gaining a capacity to command its own history. The attraction of these rhetorical moves that experimented with a modern political vocabulary lay in the radical horizons of expectation they opened that could be legitimized by referring – in accordance with the traditional discourse of princely power – to the highest possible authority, the Russian emperor.

These distinct discursive practices were all present with varying emphases in the first main attempts to make political use of Alexander's words. In 1821 A. I. Arwidsson was the first to present the position among nations as a recognition of the separate political existence of a Finnish state. Furthermore, Arwidsson mentioned that the monarch had confirmed the Finnish constitution, but he made no claims about the kind of political entity the Grand Duchy of Finland was. Despite using the modern concepts of nation and state, Arwidsson avoided challenging princely power and ruler's sovereignty. On the contrary, whether motivated by *Realpolitik* or true monarchist conviction, he backed his programme of further developing Finnish statehood in a loyalist spirit as the 'wish of the monarch'. At the core of his programme was the strengthening of Finnish statehood by promoting the status of Finnish as

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the foundation of the Finnish people's separate political existence. By presenting the nation as an independent historical agent with its 'free inner life', Arwidsson boldly connected its capacity for independent agency to a horizon of expectation for the strengthening of Finnish statehood.

Arwidsson's political programme led to conflict with the authorities, although many of his goals were not that far from those the Finnish high officials tried to promote behind the scenes in St Petersburg before Alexander I's conservative political turn in the early 1820s. Arwidsson's attempt to define publicly what Alexander's notion of a position among nations meant, and the bold backing of his political claims with the 'wishes of the monarch' were ill-timed, and they probably contributed to his expulsion from the university and Finnish politics. Arwidsson's fate in any case long marked the limits of political discussion in Finland. This warning example may also explain why it took several decades before anybody dared to interpret Alexander's words in public, with the exception of a few vague refences that reveal more about a guarded spirit and lack of perspectives than active politicization under Nicholas I.

Alexander II's rise to power saw new expectations of reform and political liberation arise in the mid-1850s. In this spirit F. L. Schauman was the first after a long silence to publicly endeavour to give the words of Alexander I a new reading. He interpreted the statement in the first place as a founding act of the Grand Duchy of Finland, which he saw as a separate constitutionally ruled political unit. In expectation of reforms Schauman also addressed issues that were to better the inner life of the Finnish nation. For him this internal consolidation was, however, politically secondary compared with the horizon of expectation that institutional reforms would open for strengthening the Grand Duchy of Finland's status as a separate political unit. This task culminated in his open suggestion that the emperor should summon the Finnish estates. Schauman's talk aroused disapproval among high officials and harmed his career. Ultimately, however, his quoting of Alexander I was presented in a loyalist spirit, though compared with Arwidsson, it explicitly referred to the principles of constitutional monarchy.

In the 1860s seizing and holding a position among the nations became part of both liberal and Fennoman rhetoric and became part of the so-called language strife concerning the position of the Finnish language. At the same time the phrase's use by both parties indicated that claims about the status of Finnish were not the ultimate goal but were instead subordinated to the various strategies of the political groupings for maintaining and strengthening the Grand Duchy of Finland's position among the rank of nations.

Already in the mid-1850s the young Yrjö Koskinen had mobilized the phrase in defence of the Finnish state's separate political existence, and actually even underlined this aspect with the formulation that suggested it was Finland – instead of its brave and honest people – that had been raised among the rank of nations. After the late 1860s Yrjö Koskinen returned several times in his historical writings to the words of Alexander I. He continued to read the phrase as a confirmation of Finnish statehood but presented it at the same time as an active deed of the Finnish people. Following the rhetoric of the Fennoman mobilization of the 1870s, Koskinen set the participation of the people and the 'will of the people' as the foundation of politics. His interpretation of the phrase stressed the constitutional foundation of Finland's status among nations but suggested that it was ultimately to be understood as a confirmation of the nation's

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inner consolidation as a political community that was the strongest foundation of a national political existence.

As has been seen, all the first major attempts to politicize the phrase merged various discourses of European political discussion by using rival conceptions of nation that in turn or simultaneously emphasized traditional princely power and bonds of loyalty with the ruler and experimented with ideas of ethnolinguistic national solidarity, liberal constitutionalism, or principles of popular sovereignty as bases for the status among the rank of nations. This was enabled by the Grand Duchy of Finland's undefined status in the sense that there were no clear statutes on what being a grand duchy meant. Alexander's speeches in 1809 were made in the middle of the Napoleonic wars, with no firm horizon on the coming international order and Finland's position in it. This made political actors cautious about drawing the wrong conclusions and publicly expressing their views about the emperor's intentions. This also allowed room for different readings of what the position of a grand duchy meant: did it refer to old dynastic ideas of imperial bonds to the person of the ruler or the kind of constitutionally ruled princely states that Napoleon had established in Europe in the previous years?

All in all, it seems the first attempts to politicize Alexander's words continued and even made use of the unsettled balance between the old dynastic tradition and the new European examples of grand duchies as constitutionally ruled separate political entities. Perhaps even the phrase's continuing rhetorical power is based precisely in how it combines in a few words political claims made in the name of the emperor and the proud claim for a position among the 'rank of nations' that has its roots in the European republican tradition. Ultimately, this loaded the phrase with an internal tension that gave it hidden rhetorical power and flexibility for use in support of different political strategies.

Rather than pointing to one established narrative, the first attempts to mobilize the phrase represent distinct rhetorical strategies that obviously did not merge into one established tradition in the 1870s. The phrase's later multilayered use offers a window for understanding how elements of the ethnolinguistic, liberal constitutional, and popular sovereignty based conceptions of the nation were intertwined with and contributed in different circumstances to the making of the Finnish state and nation. This is probably also the key to the phrase's later political usefulness. At the turn of the century, during the years of active Russification it could be mobilized both by those who saw their primary task as to defend the Grand Duchy of Finland's legal and administrative traditions and those who chose to work outside the prevailing political system and to promote popular mobilization to strengthen the nation's capacity to act independently. This duality may still be the key for understanding the phrase's attractiveness for the competing historical narratives of Finnish nation-building.

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From Statehood to Language and Back

Articulating the Role of the Grand Duchy between Swedes, Russians, and Finns

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The expression 'We are not Swedes, we do not want to become Russians, let us be Finns' has a special place in Finnish historical consciousness.[1] For many the phrase describes the essence of the political programme of A. I. Arwidsson (1791–1858), a scholar and journalist who is generally seen as one of the leaders of the movement promoting the use of the Finnish language. By extension, and perhaps more commonly, the phrase is used as shorthand for the entire Fennoman project of the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries – the process in which Finland gained its national existence. This article aims to show how the phrase gained this status, but also that it has been neither uncontroversial nor meant the same thing to all Finns. During the latter half of the nineteenth century the phrase's wording changed, and complementary new versions of it emerged. Overall, the transformation of the phrase and its meanings signifies a change in how the Grand Duchy of Finland was understood. Having first referred to the Grand Duchy's territory, the phrase morphed into one used to designate the country's language divide; having referred previously to the imperial constellation of Finland, it became a slogan for addressing tensions within Finland.

Although historians have found no evidence that A. I. Arwidsson actually uttered the phrase, the link to Arwidsson remains strong in the general historical consciousness. In 1951 the historian Liisa Castrén, who has written the most comprehensive studies of Arwidsson, showed that Arwidsson neither wrote this, nor was it likely to be an oral statement that Arwidsson's relatives and friends would have passed on for later publication.[2] Instead, historians usually trace the origin of the expression to J. V. Snellman (1806–1881), commonly known as Finland's national philosopher, and more specifically to an essay he wrote in Swedish about H. G. Porthan (1739–1804), another spearhead of Finnish intellectual history.[3] The essay was published in Snellman's own *Litteraturblad* in September 1861 and then immediately gained traction. It was published again in the same year in the newspapers *Wiborg*

1. A previous version of the text has been published in Swedish as Marjanen 2020. I would like to thank Ilkka Liikanen, Marja Jalava, Antti Kanner, Jussi Kurunmäki, Laura Mattsson, and Henrika Tandefelt for their comments and assistance.
2. Castrén 1951, 160–161.
3. See e.g. Engman 2016, 404.

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and *Finlands Allmänna Tidning*. The text was also published in full in the Stockholm newspaper *Nya Dagligt Allehanda*.[4]

In the essay Snellman wrote that 'this idea gave itself air, most notably through A. I. Arwidsson and E. G. Ehrström'.[5] This does not mean Snellman was suggesting that the expression came from Arwidsson, but that Arwidsson and Ehrström expressed something in their language policy programmes that Porthan did not do during his lifetime, and which could be summarized in the slogan, which is reminiscent of a syllogism. A syllogism is a logical conclusion based on two propositions, but in this case the logical conclusion is not really derivable from the two previous propositions. There is no logical reason for the Finnish alternative following from the fact that someone is neither Swedish nor Russian. Rhetorically speaking, the formulation is nevertheless powerful. Moreover, the fact that it defines Finnishness only through a negation makes the sentence very useful for various purposes.

As the expression has survived as an ambiguous rhetorical tool for several writers, its origins have occupied several historians. Castrén writes that 'it is likely that Snellman crystallized his predecessor's teachings in this slogan, which – although unhistorical in itself – nevertheless captures an inner truth'.[6] Castrén's interpretation has become the common view, and only Matti Klinge has really challenged it. He draws on the same material as Castrén but offers a broader interpretation of national thought in Finland in the early nineteenth century. Klinge claims that the idea's origins could in principle lie in several different key actors in the Finnish intellectual and political life of the period (he mentions E. G. Ehrström, G. M. Armfelt, R. H. Rehbinder, and Alexander I). Klinge considers the Arwidsson quotations that Castrén thinks may have formed the basis of the now familiar expression to be too radical and individually centred to serve as a source of its inspiration.[7] Kristina Kalleinen, who provides the best description of Finland's administrative history between Sweden and Russia after 1809, has claimed that it was Armfelt who expressed the idea behind our slogan in a letter: 'Our peace, our wellbeing depend on our becoming Finns in good faith and with a good heart, for it is now no more permissible for us to cheat with Swedish ideas in a political sense than it is appropriate to be Russians in a matter of honour and sentiment. The Emperor wants us to be Finns, and in the name of God let us fulfil our destiny.' While Armfelt's formulation clearly resembles this, it is also clear that his text, which deals with Finland's relationship with Sweden and the need to maintain political calm in the country, is not the source of our winged expression. The best proof of this is that Armfelt's statement was not disseminated, either then or later. Historians working on the topic before Kalleinen, Carl von Bonsdorff, and Keijo Korhonen use the same quotation from Armfelt but do not link it to the expression in question.[8]

4. *Litteraturblad för allmän medborgerlig bildning* 1 September 1861, 4; *Wiborg* 5 November 1861; *Finlands Allmänna Tidning* 30 October1861; *Nya Dagligt Allehanda* 23 November 1861.
5. *Litteraturblad för allmän medborgerlig bildning* 1 September 1861, 4.
6. 'Todennäköistä on, että Snellman on edeltäjänsä opin ytimen kiteyttänyt tähän iskulauseeseenen, joka – vaikka se sinänsä onkin epähistoriallinen – sisältää sisäisen totuuden' Castrén 1951, 161.
7. Klinge 1986, 35–44; Klinge 1975, 35; Klinge 1983, 187–88; Klinge 2021, 27–28.
8. Kalleinen 2017, 66; Korhonen 1963, 195–96. The original quotation can be found in Bondsdorff 1931, 117.

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Questions of provenance are usually of great interest concerning texts, concepts, or expressions of uncertain origin. In this case, however, no one who is really familiar with the expression's history has claimed that Arwidsson formulated it – not Snellman, Castrén, Klinge, or Kalleinen. That Arwidsson is not behind the quotation has been widely known at least since Castrén's study. Yet the expression's public image is strongly associated with Arwidsson, and his programme is still present in discussions of our winged expression.[9] As it is unlikely that the expression as such originated in the early nineteenth century, the research and public discourse has turned its interest to seeking an idea behind the phrase, assuming that the idea was there either in Arwidsson's or someone else's thinking. However, none of the passages Castrén, Klinge, or Kalleinen mentions as possible variants of the same idea is particularly close to the canonized phrase. This does not mean that there is no conceptual similarity, or that the texts are uninteresting, but that they are not directly relevant to how the famous phrase became part of everyday language.

My proposal is to turn the question around: instead of asking whether Arwidsson said or could have said these words, or whether someone else could have articulated something similar, it is time to see the expression as a powerful rhetorical tool with its own history that we can follow only through its use. The expression's history begins in the 1860s, when it first appeared in newspapers, and continues through different variations until today. From this perspective Arwidsson, Ehrström, and other candidates for ideological provenance are interesting only insofar as they appear in later renditions of the phrase. Research has noted that the expression has been adapted to different political situations, and that different interpretations usually denote different takes on the Fennoman tradition, but we really know very little about how the expression changed and was used.[10]

Focusing on the phrase's actual articulations has two benefits. First, I have been able to locate a previously unknown use of it by the historian and Fennoman leader, Yrjö Koskinen. Second, and far more importantly, the history of the phrase tells us how Finnishness within the Russian Empire was conceptualized anew. This shows that not only were the use and layers of meaning associated with the phrase political, but that it was used politically. By the end of the nineteenth century the Grand Duchy was about not only territory, state, and ruler, but the ethnic and linguistic component was becoming increasingly important. The phrase became instrumental in articulating different visions of nationality in Finland; and after that it became so prolific that it could be used for almost any political purpose. This is particularly clear in the period after the Second World War, when the language question had become less contentious in Finnish politics. In the setting of the Cold War the ethnic and linguistic dimensions became less pronounced, as the expression became a symbol for writing nineteenth-century Finnish history against the backdrop of Finnish-Soviet political relations. By this time the phrase had become a sort of *lieu de mémoire*, which no one addressing the Finnish nineteenth century could avoid.

9. Tommila 1989, 61.
10. Rommi 1992, 9–24; Forsell 1997, 858–859; Wassholm 2008, 2–3, 125–132; Virtanen 2002, 63–64; Katajisto 2008, 38.

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Approaching the history of an expression

As there is no systematic review of all published variants of the expression, I have used the collection of digitized newspapers and journals produced by the National Library of Finland to identify as many variants as possible through various free text searches. I have searched for the different parts of the phrase with different regular expressions to catch any surprising variants and circumvent errors in the optical text recognition. For this purpose I have mostly used the Finnish Language Bank's interface, Korp.[11] As the machine-readable text contains errors, it is clear that I have been unable to find all texts containing the phrase – but I have probably found most. There is a risk that important variants have been missed, but the number of hits is so large that I assume I have found the most relevant occurrences.

Although newspapers and magazines are not a comprehensive source for the discussion of nationality and language in Finland, my premise has been that if the discourse on being neither Swedish nor Russian but Finnish has had an impact on Finnish politics and culture, it has left its mark on newspapers. In the second half of the nineteenth century newspapers in Finland were already modern in the sense that they captured most of the themes in the public debate.[12] With the aid of newspapers we can also say something about the frequency of the expression's uses at different times. Although counting occurrences may seem trivial, previous interpretations of the slogan all assume that it was part of everyday language immediately after its coinage, which is clearly not the case. The number of occurrences does not in itself tell us about the phrase's importance but is indicative of whether the possibility or willingness to use the expression varied at different stages. Moreover, digitized newspapers in Finnish and Swedish constitute such a large dataset that they contain enough occurrences of the phrase to provide sufficient examples of the variations that were in use.[13]

The premise of this type of study is that an expression's historical variants tell us something about Finnish nation building. It is not important whether the variants are conscious or unconscious rewritings of the expression; what is interesting is that we can analyse how the rewritings were relevant to the historical actors. Here, Lea Laitinen's detailed and insightful study of the various nineteenth-century translations of the Finnish national anthem '*Vårt Land*'/'*Maamme*' serves as a model. When the national anthem's text was translated from Swedish to Finnish, the translation provided a certain freedom of interpretation and adaptation.[14] Concerning Swedes, Russians, and Finns, the slogan's expression differed in that there was no clear original on which to base different translations but only a kind of slogan that was subject to rewriting through repetition. It is also clear that the expression grew and became larger than its simple textual meaning. It meant something to individuals to express these words, and expression itself thus concentrated several different meanings that individuals gave

11. The material is available via two different interfaces: https://digi.kansalliskirjasto.fi; https://korp.csc.fi/.
12. Tommila, Landgrén & Leino-Kaukiainen 1988.
13. Marjanen et al. 2019.
14. Laitinen 2008, 84–114.

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to it to achieve different political purposes.[15] Those meanings stemmed partly from different times and political debates, thus constituting layers of meaning that could sometimes be downplayed and at other times re-actualized for political purposes.[16]

As with 'liberty, equality, and fraternity', the 'motto' of the French Revolution, the expression about Swedes, Russians, and Finns has its own story of lexicalization and in a sense as an unconsidered element of language. 'Liberty, equality, and fraternity' was already used during the build-up to the revolution, but it was far from an established slogan. Indeed, alternatives like 'fatherland, liberty, and equality' or 'liberty, equality, and order', or more often simply 'liberty and equality' circulated during and after the revolution. Some found it difficult to embrace the three words because of their various political connotations; others wanted a different syntax. Only later did the revolution's now well-known motto become shorthand for and a symbol of the revolution itself. In the process it also lost much of its politically mobilizing force.[17] The story of the expression about Swedes, Russians, and Finns is similar, if a little more complex, because the myth of its origins is much stronger in its lexicalization.

Snellman's historical interpretation

Although Yrjö Koskinen appears to be the first to use the expression, it is worth starting with J. V. Snellman, who made it famous. Snellman wrote his text 'What was Porthan?' in connection with a campaign to raise money for a statue of Porthan.[18] As a polymath in late eighteenth-century academic life in Turku, H. G. Porthan left a huge imprint on learned life in Finland, and his interest in Finnish language and history meant he also became an important figure for the nineteenth-century nation builders. A large part of Snellman's reflection is about Porthan's relationship with Latin, Swedish, and Finnish. He notes that no one in Porthan's time could consider Finnish a national language. After 1809 this was changed 'most notably' (but not exclusively) by Ehrström and Arwidsson, but Snellman saw the new political constellation as more important than the individuals: 'It is clear enough that changed political conditions brought it [the idea of a national language] to life.' Snellman then uses the phrase of interest, but the passage is more complicated than later versions of the same expression:

> We are no longer Swedes; we cannot become Russians; we must be Finns; and further: Swedish is the language of the Swedes; Russian the language of the Russians; the Finns must also be entitled to their own language, and fortunately they have one. The realization that national unity in language is also a necessary condition for Finland's self-preservation was then fully apparent.[19]

15. The idea of the concentration of meaning comes from Koselleck 1972; Skinner 2002, 103–27.
16. Koselleck 2018, 1–9.
17. Ozouf 1998.
18. Forsell 1997.
19. *Litteraturblad för allmän medborgerlig bildning* 1 September 1861, 4. 'Det är tydligt nog, att förändrade politiska förhållanden väckte den [nationalspråkstanken] till lif. Den lydde korrt [sic] uttryckt: Svenskar äro vi icke mera; Ryssar kunna vi icke blifva; vi måste vara Finnar; och vidare: Svenskan är Svenskarnes språk; Ryskan Ryssarnes; Finnarne måste väl äfven vara berättigade att ega sitt språk, och lyckligtvis ega de ett sådant. Äfven den insigt, att

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Snellman did not attempt to summarize Arwidsson's programme in this section. As the note on the changing political conditions makes clear, it was an interpretation of the overall situation in Finland after 1809. The latter part on the national languages seems to have been more important for Snellman, but it was the former that took on a life of its own. There are some details in the text to which I wish to draw attention:

1) The words 'no longer', 'can', 'become', and 'must': all were subject to rewriting in later versions of the expression. These words imply a kind of constructivist view of the nationality question, and it is unsurprising that later groupings primarily involved in the language dispute within the Fennoman movement needed less ambiguous formulations. As Snellman (and many others at this time) was aware that Finnishness was being created, it became a problem for later Fennomans to imagine that Finnish national identity did not always exist as they wished to define it.
2) A historical 'we' appearing in the first part, which then becomes a historical 'they' ('fortunately they have one'). The change in pronouns can be interpreted in several ways. It is possible that Snellman is writing 'they' of a group (the Finns) to which he does not belong, but it is more likely that the perspective changes in the second part of the text so that the viewer suddenly looks at Finland from the outside, as if Snellman is describing a distant observer's reasoning about Finland. Snellman therefore posits a historical 'we' in the early nineteenth century, arguing that past thinkers foresaw a future 'they' who had their own language. The pronouns are there to define a community that is about nationality and not only the Grand Duchy's institutional framework.
3) In the 'The Finns must also be entitled to their own language' section, Snellman's constructivist view of history becomes clear, but the expression's uncertainty is surprising. Here Snellman places himself as one of his listeners/readers and formulates their possible thoughts.

Snellman's formulation was the turning point in the phrase's history. As noted above, the expression is most often linked to Arwidsson in historical accounts, and when the writer has been unsure of their case, the link has been made to Snellman. The link to Snellman also appears in newspapers that reuse the expression. Its continued use, however, does not fully comply with Snellman's intentions in using it.

Yrjö Koskinen and Arwidsson's legacy

Newspapers and magazines used to be a relatively inaccessible source for historians interested in ideas and language, but the digitization of newspapers has changed this. My searches in digitized newspapers show that Snellman was not the first to use the phrase. In 1860 the magazine *Mehiläinen* printed letters from Yrjö Koskinen (officially still Georg Forsman at this time, but the signature used was 'Y. K.') from his European travels. In a letter from Stockholm Koskinen writes about a discussion with

> denna nationela enhet i språket är nödvändigt vilkor för Finlands sjelfbevarande framstod då fullfärdigt.'

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a Swedish man ('*mainion Ruotsin miehen kanssa*') about Värmland Finns, Swedes, and the different levels of development between Swedish and Finnish culture. Koskinen argues that the fate of the Finns could have been the same as that of the Värmland Finns in Sweden. The political situation after 1809 changed this and created a new opportunity to build a sense of Finnishness:

> It was perhaps our good fortune that from the beginning we seemed to say, as Arwidssoni (Åbo Morgonblad) concluded: We are no longer Swedish, nor are we Russians; but we have to be something – we are Finns.[20]

The phrase is instantly recognizable and was printed more than a year before Snellman's text quoted above. The letter was also included in Swedish translation in *Åbo Underrättelser* the same autumn, so Koskinen's formulation was used in both languages before Snellman's formulation.[21] The connection with Arwidsson here is even stronger than with Snellman, but it should be noted that according to Koskinen it was not primarily Arwidsson who coined the phrase, but that a historical 'we' said this 'like Arwidsson' from the beginning. This 'we' should refer to the Finns as a people, and it is reasonable to imagine that the word 'said' did not necessarily mean that someone actually said this, but that in a transferred sense it stands for the fact that according to Koskinen Finns in general thought in this way. The beginning ('*alusta asti*') here clearly refers to 1809, which is important given Koskinen's later interest in writing the history of the Finnish people during the Swedish period.

Some of the word choices are noteworthy:

1) Koskinen's formulation contains similar constructivist elements to Snellman's. 'No longer', 'nor are we', and 'we have to be something' refer either to the possibility of leaving a nationality behind or simply to being the subject of a country. The latter interpretation is unlikely: Koskinen could not have thought that Finns were Finnish subjects during the Swedish era, though he later emphasized that Finns were a separate people, as well as the Grand Duchy's role as a framework in the Swedish kingdom. It is more likely that belonging to a nationality and being a subject could not be completely separated, even in Koskinen's time.
2) The phrase 'it was perhaps our good fortune' may signal a degree of uncertainty, but it is also likely that Koskinen is comparing it with how he imagined Finns would have fared under Swedish rule and the situation with the Värmland Finns. In any case it seems unlikely that the leading Fennoman leader in the country would have thought it was *perhaps* fortunate that Finns began to see themselves as Finns.

The similarity in Snellman's and Koskinen's phrases may mean they have a common source. The source may even have been Arwidsson, but this is unlikely simply because there are no earlier occurrences of the phrase. It is likely that both Koskinen and

20. *Mehiläinen* 1 July 1860, 16. 'Se oli ehkä onnemme, että taisimme alusta asti sanoa, kuten Arwidssoni (Åbo Morgonblad) päätteli: Ruotsalaisia emme enää ole, Wenäläisiä emme myöskään ole; mutta jotain meidän täytyy olla, – olemme Suomalaisia.'
21. *Åbo Underrättelser* 22 September 1860, 3.

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Snellman mentioned Arwidsson to capitalize on his legacy. Arwidsson had died in the summer of 1858, and it is unsurprising that a phrase attributed to him was made a symbol of national mobilization at the same time as the recently deceased Arwidsson was made a symbol of early Fennomania. It is likely that Snellman picked up the phrase from Koskinen and changed the emphasis slightly by highlighting Ehrström and adding the line about language.

As Koskinen refers to *Åbo Morgonblad*, it is noteworthy that the paper, which appeared only in 1821, does not contain this or any similar phrase. Of the nine places where there is some discussion of Swedes and Finns, the majority appears in an extended article by E. G. Ehrström, '*Finska språket, betraktadt som Nationalspråk*', which was published over several issues.[22]

An interesting question concerns why Koskinen is not included in the historiography of Arwidsson and the expression. Researchers who have focused on Arwidsson and investigated whether Arwidsson may have coined the expression have recognized Snellman's role but not Koskinen's. This is not because Koskinen's text has been unknown. In Rafael Koskimies's 1968 biography of Koskinen we find almost the entire text cited from *Mehiläinen,* but Koskimies does not comment on the expression about Swedes, Russians, and Finns. He does, however, identify Koskinen's Swedish interlocuter as Anders Fryxell.[23] There is a remarkable and illuminating turn in Koskimies's biography about a hundred pages later when he comments on the same prolific quotation (in heavily modified form), but he does not do so as a comment on the text in *Mehiläinen*. He instead uses the quotation as a general principle for the country's Fennomans. The pattern follows the usual way of dealing with the phrase in Finnish historiography at this time, but the paraphrase is contradictory and awkward.

> This is what Arwidsson was already thinking when he uttered his famous phrase that we are Finns, and we want to remain Finns, because we have not been Swedish, and we do not want to become Russian. The phrase was actually, as we now know, uttered by Snellman.[24]

Koskimies's paraphrase is tightly aligned with a national agenda that was already under threat in the 1960s. The first and second sentences contradict each other regarding Arwidsson, but it seems to be a permanent element in the reception of the expression that Arwidsson is always mentioned. Moreover, the point that it was Snellman who coined the phrase is contradicted by information in Koskimies's own book. What is most special, however, is that in this variant Koskimies turns the syllogistic phrase on its head. Instead of emphasizing Finnishness through the absence of Swedishness or Russianness, it becomes constant, and the part about no longer being Swedish ('äro vi icke mer' or 'emme enää ole') has been replaced by 'we have not been' ('emme ole

22. The text begins in *Åbo Morgonblad* on 24 March 1821 and continues in five issues. For a discussion see Wassholm 2014, 97–104.
23. Koskimies 1968, 14–16, 301.
24. Koskimies 1968, 108. 'Tätä ajatteli jo Arwidsson lausuessaan tunnetun siivekkään fraasinsa siitä, että olemme suomalaisia ja tahdomme pysyä suomalaisina, koska emme ole olleet ruotsalaisia emmekä halua tulla venäläisiksi. Lausehan on todellisuudessa, kuten nyt tiedämme, Snellmanin esittämä.'

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olleet'). The rejection of Russianness in Koskinen's version is even more pronounced, as the historical 'we' does not want to become Russian.

Koskimies's representation of Arwidsson's thought is thus less constructivist than Koskinen's or Snellman's use of the phrase had implied a hundred years earlier. As Koskimies, in his 1968 biography, emphasizes Koskinen's interpretation that the Finnish people already existed during the Swedish era and wishes to make Koskinen a kind of champion of early independence efforts among Finns, it has been less interesting to attribute the phrase to him. Hence, writing in the 1960s from a very nationalistic perspective, the expression seems to have been something of a problem for Koskimies. The 'original' version was too constructivist, and the fact that it could only be traced to the 1860s was disappointing. Yet the phrase was a symbol for the Fennoman movement and could not be avoided in a book about the movement's foremost leader. My claim is that the phrase became prolific and gained its symbolic quality in the latter half of the nineteenth century.

Finnish applications create a future orientation

Searches in the newspaper material show that the expression about Swedes, Russians, and Finns was established in the late 1860s, and that the connection with Arwidsson was almost always present.[25] The use of the expression is slightly different in Swedish and Finnish, which is unsurprising. There is also a clear difference in the use of the expression if the writer believes that the Finnish nation should stick to one language, or if they advocate a bilingual or multilingual model. After Snellman it was quite rare for someone writing primarily in Swedish to advocate an idea of monolingual Finnish nationality.

Although the expression appeared in the Finnish press in both Finnish and Swedish during the period between 1860 and 1909, it was much more common in Finnish.[26] The phrase occurs 266 times in Finnish (with a relative frequency of about 0.1 times per one million words in the corpus).[27] The corresponding figure in Swedish is 19 (a relative frequency of 0.007).[28] It seems the Finnish expression is based on Snellman's variant, not Koskinen's, as most of the examples do not repeat Koskinen's 'we *are* not' ('*emme myöskään ole*') but are closer to Snellman's 'we cannot become' ('*kunna vi icke blifva*'), although different variants exist. The first new hits come in 1868, after which the expression appears almost annually in the newspaper material. It seems to have been particularly popular in the early and late 1890s, but these peaks are more about certain texts being published several times in different newspapers than about several specific debates involving the expression.

25. The link to Snellman is made occasionally: see e.g. *Wiipuri* 6 June 1906, 4.
26. The Language Bank's corpus is currently complete only up to 1909, though the National Library has digitized all newspapers up to 1929.
27. The figures are based on a search on "[word = "(r|R)uotsal.*"][word = "em.e"]" in korp.csc.fi with Finnish newspapers and magazines 1860–1909 as the corpus. This yielded 310 hits, of which 44 hits have been removed after a manual review of all hits.
28. The figures are based on a search on [word = "(S|s)(w|v)enska."][word = "är.+"][word = "(w|v)i"]" in korp.csc.fi with Swedish newspapers and magazines 1860–1909 as the corpus. This gave 21 hits of which two have been removed after a manual review of all hits.

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The expression's quick adoption as an established phrase is evident in that it was often reproduced in quotation marks.[29] As early as 1869 the expression is presented as something familiar, with the qualifications 'the well-known phrase', 'the well-known word', or 'Arwidsson's well-known words' ('*tuo tuttu lause*', '*tuo tuttu sana*', '*nuo Arwidssonin tunnetut sanat*').[30] Somewhat later the expression was established as 'the birth words of Finnishness' ('*suomalaisuuden syntysanat*').[31]

All parts of the phrase appear in different variants, suggesting it was in frequent oral use and was adapted when writers quoted it from memory. Sometimes, however, it is clear that the variants are deliberate rhetorical moves where revisions have been made to emphasize something. The most common rewriting concerns the first part of the expression about no longer being Swedish. This can already be seen in the first two occurrences in 1868. *Kirjallinen kuukausilehti* referred to Arwidsson and formulated the expression without the words 'no longer':

> We are neither Swedes nor Russians; we must therefore be Finns.[32]

Three months later *Tampereen Sanomat* referred to Arwidsson, reproducing the expression in a form that draws on Snellman's formulation but expresses the section on language much more effectively. This version, however, does retain the words 'no longer':

> We are no longer Swedes, we cannot become Russians, so we must be Finns in both mind and language.[33]

The word 'more' or 'longer' is crucial in both Snellman's and Koskinen's variants, as they were intended to describe a historical process in the early nineteenth century. In the variant used by *Kirjallinen kuukausilehti*, which drops this historicizing element, the expression becomes a programme in the present, especially as the article in question deals with language policy on the railway. A search in the newspaper material shows that the form without the word '*enää*' (longer) was more common and became increasingly so during the nineteenth century. The form with 'longer' or 'more' occurs 34 times (in about 15 per cent of hits) for the period between 1861 and 1909, while the form without it occurs 201 times. For both variants it is still common for Arwidsson to be mentioned before or after the expression. The differences largely depend on what the writer wished to do with the phrase, whether the intention was to write about a historical event, or whether they were making a programmatic statement in the historical present. It is likely that it was this less constructivist and programmatic

29. See e.g. *Kirjallinen Kuukauslehti* 1 September 1868, 24; *Sanomia Turusta* 7 November 1873, 1; *Ilmarinen* 13 March 1880, 3.
30. *Kirjallinen Kuukauslehti* 1 January 1869, 6 (Castrén 1951, 161, identifies the writer as Agathon Meurman); *Kaiku* 7 June 1879, 1; *Aura* 24 October 1890, 6.
31. *Uusi Kuvalehti* 31 January 1900, 4. The form '*tunnussanat*' appears e.g. in *Wiipurin Sanomat* 19 June 1899, 2.
32. *Kirjallinen Kuukauslehti* 1 September 1868, 24. 'Ruotsalaisia emme ole; emme myöskään ole Wenäläisiä; siis meidän täytyy olla Suomalaisia.'
33. *Tampereen Sanomat* 1 December 1868, 3. 'Ruotsalaisia emme enää ole, Wenäläisiksi emme voi tulla, meidän täytyy siis olla Suomalaisia sekä mieleltämme että kieleltämme.'

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rewriting in *Kirjallinen Kuukauslehti* that gave momentum to the phrase, as it appeared more frequently after 1868. Further to this revision, it is likely that events in memory culture also gave momentum to the expression. After the unveiling of Porthan's statue in 1864 Snellman's aforementioned text about Porthan was printed in Finnish translation and distributed as a brochure, which undoubtedly made the phrase better known among the public.[34]

Another fairly common paraphrase is to change the order of the lines. In several examples it is not the transition from Swedish that introduces the phrase but the statement that the historical 'we' is not Russian. J. V. Snellman himself made such a paraphrase when he noted in a speech on the centenary of the Finnish press that in the 1820s (without mentioning Arwidsson or Ehrström) a consciousness arose that was expressed in the form 'we are not Russians, we cannot be Swedes; we must be Finns'. Furthermore, the future-oriented message of the paraphrase lies in Senllman's addition: 'I consider this statement to be an expression of what our future peace held from this moment onwards.'[35] The speech was soon also published in Finnish translation (though not verbatim).[36]

In the 1890s and 1900s it became more common to begin the phrase with the line about Russianness. This accords with Pirkko Rommi's observation that the expression was politicized when the clash between Russian and Finnish nationalism became more evident.[37] Rommi gives no example of this politicization, but it is clear from the newspaper material that the variant with the negation of Russian as the opening line was repeatedly linked to Snellman's speech at the centenary of the Finnish press.[38] It is difficult to say whether the newspapers went back to an almost thirty-year-old speech for inspiration because it contained the phrase in a different order, or whether Snellman's text was brought to the fore for another reason, and the reformulation occurred by chance. What is certain is that it was again Snellman who was at the centre of the phrase's reuse. In addition to linking the phrase to Arwidsson, by the end of the nineteenth century it had become important for Fennomans to canonize Snellman as well.[39]

The part about not being Russian also varies slightly. The forms '*emme voi muuttua*' (we cannot change), '*emme tahdo ruweta*' (we do not want to start being), and '*emme tahdo tulla*' (we do not want to become) all appear in the newspaper material.[40] Although the variants signal different degrees of rejection of Russianness, they are not very loaded. One reason the phrase itself became so popular may be that it defined Finnishness through simple but rhetorically powerful negations that were not especially controversial, without offering a substantive definition. A definition that started with 'we Finns are' would have been challenged immediately or qualified

34. Forsell 1997.
35. *Hufvudstadsbladet* 18 January 1871, 2. 'Jag anser detta uttalande vara uttrycket af hvad vår framtids frid från denna stund tillhörde'.
36. *Uusi Suometar* 18 January 1871, 1; *Louhi* 27 July 1900, 1.
37. Rommi 1992, 13.
38. E.g. *Louhi* 27 July 1900, 1; *Aamulehti* 8 November 1899, 3; *Mikkelin Sanomat* 14 November 1899, 2; *Tampereen Sanomat* 9 November 1899, 2; *Opiksi ja huviksi* 1 January 1899, 4.
39. Jalava 2006.
40. *Suomen kuvalehti* 15 July 1876, 3; *Länsi-Suomi* 13 July 1878, 1; *Kirjallinen kuukauslehti* 6/1874, 8.

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with additions. A negation therefore worked better. Not being Russian or Swedish in the second half of the nineteenth century was not a position that was difficult to accept – especially if nationality and being a state subject were seen as related. If the question of nationality was internal in that it concerned Swedishness or Russianness in Finland, the issue immediately became more charged. The most programmatic political rewrites of the expression concern the language issue in Finland and Russian immigration to the country.

Statehood or language

The language issue was very tangibly raised in connection with the establishment of Finnish- and Swedish-speaking institutions.[41] In an article in the newspaper *Kaiku* in 1879 about a Finnish girls' school in Oulu, the school was described as important in the rise of Finnishness, and the final sentence referred to the expression about Russians, Swedes, and Finns. The article only highlights Finnish as opposed to Swedish (in Finland), however: 'So we renew the familiar saying: we want to be Finns, but we cannot become Swedes.'[42] The reference to the familiar expression suggests that the writer was keen for their newly modified version to gain a similar status, but this time as the slogan of the Finnish-language movement.

In *Valvoja* in 1890 Thiodolf Rein criticized weak-minded people for unpatriotic cosmopolitanism:

> Who can guarantee that a generation will not grow up here who, by rewriting Arwidsson's familiar words, choose a new slogan: 'We must not be Swedes, we do not want to be Finns, so we must – choose a third alternative'.[43]

Five years later Rein's dystopian version of a third alternative was reused verbatim in *Uusi Suometar*, but this time the writer claimed there were indeed groups in the country using Rein's formulation as a guiding principle.[44] I have not found any such examples, however, and it seems unlikely that the phrase in that form was used as a slogan for self-identification by anyone. Instead, it seems to be a form of rhetoric that seeks to discredit political opponents.

The issue of Russians in Helsinki shows how both negatively and positively charged threats could be recharged by using the phrase as a starting point. *Uusi Suometar* wrote in connection with an article on the increasing number of Russians in Helsinki in 1882:

41. Engman 2016, 176–235.
42. *Kaiku* 7 June 1879, 1. 'Sitten uudistetaan tuo tuttu sana: suomalaisia me tahdomme olla, ruotsalaisiksi emme woi muuttua.'
43. *Valvoja* 1 January 1890, 41. 'Kuka siis takaa, ettei täällä kasva sukupolvi, joka, muuttamalla Arvidssonin tutut sanat, ottaa tunnuslauseekseen: "Ruotsalaisia emme saa olla, suomalaisia emme tahdo olla, meidän täytyy siis – valita kolmas mahdollisuus"'.
44. *Uusi Suometar* 3 December 1895, 1.

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> In last Saturday's '*Helsinki*' [newspaper] we learn that Helsinki Finns 'are perhaps more strangers to the city as such' than Russians born and raised here. Arwidsson spoke in his time [...]. Perhaps in future we will still hear the following 'programme' instead: we cannot remain Swedes, we want nothing to do with Finns, we must become Russians![45]

Although it is a little unclear who is being turned into what in this future scenario, the background to the article concerns the strained language relations in Finland, as well as the Swedishness of Helsinki as a city. Yet the passage shows that the expression had become so established that it could be completely rewritten and still be recognizable and used for various rhetorical purposes. The Russian connection was clearly more powerful than accusations of Swedishness or cosmopolitanism (depending on the writer's political affiliation) and was therefore used more often in invective. A curious paraphrase is found in an imagined slogan for the *Suometar* circle (*suomettarelaiset*):

> We are not Swedes, and we do not want to be anything other than Bobrikov Russians after we have ceased to be Arwidsson's Finns.[46]

This example of agitation shows that the phrase bred new versions that could be used for new purposes. This is especially evident in jokes that obviously distorted the phrase's established wording,[47] but there were also complete rewrites. The newspaper *Elämä*, edited by the utopian socialist Matti Kurikka, wrote about the need to adapt to questions of international politics by launching the phrase 'We are not capitalists, we do not want to become anarchists; we must therefore be socialists'.[48]

The expression was usually used as a form of affirmation and generally had a positive evaluation of Finnish. Rare exceptions came from the Swedish-speaking world when the language dispute was raised, and occasionally in the socialist press. Although Fennoman sympathies were common among Finnish-speaking socialists, the socialist press wanted to emphasize the issue of class rather than nationality, suggesting that the phrase concealed more important divisions in society:

> In our country, too, a party has been sowing bitter racial hatred between different races for half a decade. In 1827 '*Åbo morgonblad*' contained the following text: 'We are not Swedes. We will not be Russians. So we should be Finns.' This phrase prompted great bitterness among Russians and Swedes.[49]

45. *Uusi Suometar* 18 October 1882, 2. 'Wiime lauantain "Helsingfors'issa" saadaan tietää että Helsingin suomalaiset "ehkä ovat enemmän wieraat pääkaupungille semmoisenaan", kuin täällä syntyneet ja kaswaneet wenäläiset. Arwidson aikanaan lausui [...]. Kenties tämän sijaan wielä saadaan joskus kuulla seuraawaa "programmia": ruotsalaisina emme woi pysyä, suomalaisista emme tahdo mitään tietää, meidän täytyy muuttua wenäläisiksi!'
46. *Kajaanin Lehti* 26 November 1906, 3. 'Ruotsalaisia emme ole ja muiksi kuin bobrikoffilaiswenäläisiksi emme tahdo tulla, sitten kuin olemme lakanneet olemasta niitä Arwidsonin suomalaisia.'
47. See e.g. *Uusi Aura* 8 April 1906, 3; *Velikulta* 23 January 1908, 2.
48. *Elämä* 14 March 1907, 1. 'Me emme ole kapitalisteja, anarkisteiksi me emme tahdo tulla; meidän täytyy siis olla sosialisteja.'
49. *Vapaus* 11 May 1907, 2. 'Meidänkin maassamme on eräs puolue wuosikymmeniä jo kylwännyt katkeraa rotuwihaa eri rotujen wälillä. "Åbo morgonbladetissa" esim. 1827 oli seuraawa

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The particular source reference to *Åbo Morgonblad* six years after the newspaper's closure (in September 1821) can be seen as a sign that the expression was so established in 1907, and that the connection with Arwidsson and his newspaper was so strong, that no one needed to check the original. Indeed, a reference to *Åbo Morgonblad* in 1827 was about as correct as a reference to the same newspaper in 1821.

In this passage the writer suggested that the expression had caused bitterness among Swedish speakers, and this was apparently true in the early twentieth century. It is difficult to see how this could have been so in the time of *Åbo Morgonblad*, however. The interpretation marks a shift in how the phrase was understood. In the 1860s, with Koskinen's and Snellman's variations, the phrase was placed in the context of the post-1809 imperial shakeup. It concerned the formulation of a state identity for the Grand Duchy of Finland, but a few decades later the phrase had been reloaded with an ethnic component. The expression could be about statehood or language, but the latter now dominated.

Swedish reactions and ethnic tension

As previously mentioned, the phrase appeared less frequently in Swedish-language newspapers and magazines. Here lies an interesting dynamic in the expression's history. Despite the fact that Koskinen's first formulation was in Finnish, the Swedish version was perceived as the original source. An imagined Swedish variant emerged, which various writers supposed Arwidsson had uttered in the 1820s. The idea of a Swedish original is also present in the Swedish use. Although the expression has been variously modernized – for example, by replacing the word 'more' (*mera*) with 'longer' (*längre*) to follow the modern Swedish idiom – most uses retain the old plural form '*äro*' as a reference to the nineteenth-century nature of the text, though the plural verb form is no longer used in today's Swedish.

As the expression was used more frequently in Finnish, the Finnish use created a Swedish reaction. It was then that more innovative reformulations also emerged in Swedish. This happened especially after the early 1920s, when new language legislation gave Swedish speakers a certain amount of security, while state independence meant there was a stronger need to defend the relatively new category of Finland-Swedes (*finlandssvenskar*).[50]

After Snellman's first variant of the expression in 1861 and his second version in the 1871 speech, I have found a commentary in Swedish in the magazine *Vikingen* 1871 on Snellman's speech.[51] The next time the phrase appears in Swedish is in 1881. It does not seem to have become particularly common in Swedish until the Finnish variants became so common that the expression could not be avoided in Swedish either. In the 1881 occurrence in *Morgonbladet* it is clear that the inspiration comes from the Finnish-language newspapers' fairly frequent use of the expression. In short, the phrase reads: 'We are no longer Swedes, we cannot become Russians – we must

kirjoitus: "Ruotsalaisia emme ole. Ryssiksi emme tule. Siis meidän täytyy olla suomalaisia". Paljon katkeruutta tuo lauselma synnytti siihen aikaan wenäläisissä ja ruotsalaisissa.'

50. Meinander 2016, 23–24.

51. *Vikingen* 27 February 1871, 3.

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be Finns.'[52] The text describes the history of national endeavours and focuses on Snellman's work, but the expression is attributed to Arwidsson. The appearance of the expression in connection with a recapitulation of national history was the most common occurrence in both Finnish and Swedish. In 1881 this was already a standard feature in Finnish-language newspapers, while the Swedish-language press had not picked up the trope to the same extent.

The variations in Swedish are generally similar to those in Finnish. They mostly have to do with the different degrees of historicization of the construction of Finnish or its relationship with Swedish. It is also common for the variants to express different degrees of distancing from Swedish or Russian. A third level comes from the need to streamline and simplify the expression. I deal here with the first two levels.

The first includes the use of the word 'more' (*mera*) or 'longer' (*längre*) in the line about Swedes.[53] There are several examples in Swedish where the word '*mera*' is deleted, but they are all texts from Finnish-language newspapers that are part of a translation in a Swedish-language newspaper.[54] In some texts the original Finnish text is commented on not because of the use or modification of the expression but because of the language policy programme included in the Finnish original. The omission of '*mera*' made the expression politically mobilizing in the historical present, both in Finnish and Swedish. The inclusion of '*mera*' or '*längre*' made the phrase about the relationship with Sweden, whereas omitting the word opened the phrase to being about the language question within Finland. It was therefore more common to retain '*mera*' in Swedish-language uses of the phrase.

A particularly interesting article is found in *Nya Pressen,* which reported the celebration of Snellman's centenary at the Finnish Literature Society, the Swedish Literature Society, and elsewhere in the capital in 1906. The different perspectives on Snellman's language programme are evident. The report on a speech given by the author Maila Mikkola (better known as Maila Talvio) shows how the phrase could be turned into a programme for monolingualism:

> One language must prevail, either Swedish or Finnish. We are not Swedes, we do not want to be Russians. Then let us be Finns! We are taught love of country, but who can love a country in which a foreign language reigns?[55]

52. *Morgonbladet* 12 May 1881, 1. 'Svenskar äro vi icke mera, ryssar kunna vi icke blifva, – vi måste vara finnar.'
53. The version with 'longer' as opposed to 'more' was uncommon in this period. See *Björneborgs Tidning* 11 November 1902, 2.
54. *Hufvudstadsbladet* 22 July 1910, 6; *Nya Pressen* 21 July 1910, 4; *Western Finland* 23 July 1910, 2; *Eastern Finland* 21 July 1910, 1; *Nya Pressen* 26 January 1906, 3; *Nya Pressen* 28 January 1906, 2; *Finland* 28 August 1890, 2; Nya *Pressen* 28 August 1890, 1; *Nya Pressen* 8 December 1890, 2; *Wiborgsbladet* 9 December 1890, 3; Östra Finland 30 August 1890, 3; Östra Finland 9 December 1890, 2.
55. *Nya Pressen* 13 May 1906, 2. 'Det ena språket måste segra, antingen svenskan eller finskan. Svenskar äro vi icke, ryssar vilja vi icke blifva. Låt oss då vara finnar! Man lär oss fosterlandskärlek, men hvem kan älska ett land, i vilket ett främmande språk härskar.' I have been unable to locate the original Finnish-language speech. In an earlier version of the text (Marjanen 2020) this quotation is erroneously attributed to Danielson-Kalmari.

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Mikkola's use was completely detached from any assessment of the historical significance of 1809 but instead offered a language-centred Finnish vision of the future. It is obvious that *Nya Pressen* did not agree with Mikkola's programme, but the newspaper nevertheless reproduced the quotation in Swedish without comment as a kind of description of the country's mood. A report from the celebration at the Swedish Literature Society was included instead as a counterbalance, where the view of Snellman's language policy was treated more historically and subordinated to Snellman's other ideas.

The reference to Finns varies in the Swedish-language newspaper texts from being fairly definite ('thus, we are Finns' and 'let us remain Finns') to more constructivist formulations ('we must be Finns', 'we are therefore content to be Finns').[56] There does not seem to be a major charge in the choice of words. Nor are the Swedish variants of the line about the Russians particularly charged. The forms 'we cannot become Russians' and 'we do not want to become Russians' both occur, and although the latter allows a much more voluntaristic perception of nationality in principle, the choice of words does not seem to have been mobilizing in any way. The phrase does not seem to have been actively used to describe a Russian threat.[57]

I have found only two Swedish-language examples of the possibility of switching the phrase's order, which was quite common in Finnish: Snellman's speech from 1871 quoted above; and a commentary on the speech in the magazine *Vikingen* the same year. *Vikingen's* text is unsigned, but it is likely that the writer belonged to the circle of A. O. Freudenthal, Carl Berndt Federley, Rafael Shauman, and Axel Lille. The text criticizes Snellman's speech (without mentioning him). The text is cumbersome to read and contains a lot of interspersed subordinate clauses, but its essence is simple: the Finnish people consist of two nationalities (there is no mention of the Sámi, Jews, Roma, or any other group that could complicate the bifurcated notions of the Finnish people). The text reveals clear annoyance that Snellman's statement does not allow for two nationalities:

> a statement which, dating back to the 1820s, was repeated not long ago by a well-known speaker; its wording is: 'We are not Russians; we cannot be Swedes; we must be Finns.' These words [...] reveal a quintessence of truth. Nevertheless, they suffer from a shortcoming, that of not saying everything they should [...]. The words we have just quoted emphasize the truth [...] that we are and should consider ourselves through national unity a single Finnish people, completely united by common institutions, laws, and destinies. In this thought: we are one people for us, which these words express, lies their truth, their merit. Yet a circumstance is forgotten, which must also not be overlooked: namely, that within the unity of the people two nationalities, different in origin, language, and temperament, are united.[58]

56. *Åbo Tidning* 9 December 1890, 2; *Västra Finland* 23 July 1910, 2: 'låtom oss förbliva finnar'; 'vi måste vara finnar'; 'nöjoms derföre med att vara finnar'.
57. For one (but only one) example see *Björneborgs Tidning* 11 November 1902, 2. Original quotations: 'ryssar kunna vi icke bli'; and 'ryssar vilja vi icke bli'.
58. *Vikingen* 27 February 1871, 4. 'ett uttalande, som, härstammande redan från 1820:talet, för icke längesedan upprepades af en bekant talare; dess lydelse är: "Ryssar äro vi icke; svenskar kunna vi icke vara; vi måste vara finnar." Dessa orden […] uppenbara en qvintessens af sanning. Likväl lida de af en brist, den att icke säga allt hvad de borde […]. I de ord vi nyss citerat, betonas den sanning […] att vi äro och böra betrakta oss såsom en folklig enhet, ett enda

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The text echoes a debate between the friends J. V. Snellman and August Schauman ten years earlier about whether or not a people (*folk*) could be divided into two nationalities.[59] Although the two eventually reconciled their differences, the debate had led to a rupture in their relationship,[60] and this divide is visible in subsequent debates with other interlocutors on issues of language and ethnicity for the remainder of the century.

It is easy to see in hindsight a slow split in culture, education, science, and business where Finnish and Swedish interests were given their own organizations. As Finnish-language public life caught up with its Swedish counterpart, the notion of separate language spheres grew stronger.[61] This division can also be seen in the Swedish-language newspapers' sparse and reactive use of the phrase about Swedes, Russians, and Finns, as it was not a slogan for Swedish interests. Yet the phrase held a strong position in the Finnish-language press, and the expression was used so frequently in the 1890s that it was also noted in Sweden. This seems to have happened especially through an interview with Agathon Meurman published in several Swedish newspapers.[62]

In the 1910s and 1920s Swedish-language reactions changed, and more innovative rewrites of the phrase were used to mobilize Swedish speakers. Phrases such as 'We are Swedes, and Swedes are what we will remain'[63] and 'We are Swedes, and we want to remain Swedes'[64] were less common than variants of the expression that were almost always linked to Arwidsson, but they nevertheless appeared as rejections of the now Fennoman formula. In these paraphrases the historical dimension was completely absent and had been replaced by a Swedish-language-centred reaction to the Fennoman rhetoric.

During the first three decades of the twentieth century the discussion in Swedish in Finland about concepts such as 'Finns', 'Finlanders', and 'Finland-Swedes' brought up the phrase about Swedes, Finns, and Russians.[65] The phrase was challenging to the establishment of a Finland-Swedish affiliation and required dismissal or reinterpretation. The strongest expression of this is included in a speech given at an event celebrating the Day of Swedishness in Finland in 1921, which is reproduced in *Kaskö Tidning*:

> finskt folk, ett helt förenadt genom gemensamma institutioner, lagar, öden. I denna tanke: vi äro ett folk för oss, som dessa orden uttala, ligger deras sanning, deras förtjenst. Men å andra sidan förglömmes der en omständighet, som äfven den, icke får öfverses, den nämligen, att inom den folkliga enheten äro hos oss förenade tvenne genom härstamning, språk, lynne olika nationaliteter.'

59. Kurunmäki 2007, 63–89; Meinander 2012, 147–160.
60. Rein 1904, part II, 368.
61. Engman 2016, 176–235.
62. *Aftonbladet* 10 February 1894; *Göteborgs Handels- Och Sjöfartstidning* 15 February 1894.
63. *Tidskrift för folkskolan* 10 November 1928, 4. 'Svenskar äro vi, och svenskar skola vi förbli.'
64. *Studentbladet* 1 February 1919, 1. 'Svenskar äro vi och svenskar vilja vi förbli.' Similar quotations are also included in Thylin-Klaus 2012, 244.
65. *Kaskö Tidning* 7 July 1926, 1. 'Då påminner jag mig vad jag engång hört någon skall yttrat: Svenskar äro vi ej mera, finnar vilja vi ej vara, ryssar kunna vi ej bliva, låtom oss vara söner av vårt land.'

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> Then I recall what I once heard someone say: We are no longer Swedes, we do not want to be Finns, we cannot become Russians, let us be sons of our country.

A new kind of historiography connected with the phrase is important for the text. The idea was that a historical version of the phrase existed that was not Arwidsson's but could also suit the country's Swedish speakers. The writer continued:

> Therefore, we must never let discouragement get the better of us, so that we ever utter: we are no longer Swedes; but I have not the slightest doubt that he who uttered these words was still Swedish in heart and soul, for the words 'Finns we do not want to be, Russians we cannot be, let us be sons of our country' clearly refer to this, so that the real meaning of what he said was that nowadays we do not live within the borders of the Kingdom of the Swedes, for we have been separated from the motherland with which we were united: so now we must look after ourselves.[66]

The 'sons of our country' formulation allowed a notion of several nationalities within one people and one fatherland. The revision was not a one-off, and a very similar version of the phrase is appended in another example with a claim that Zacharias Topelius had been uncomfortable with the version of the phrase that was well established in Finnish politics and culture and had therefore added the remark about 'sons and daughters of our country'.[67] It is also likely that the speaker at the Day of Swedishness celebrations was referring to Topelius, not Arwidsson, when commenting on the degree of Swedishness of the speaker of the original quotation. The association with Topelius makes sense: like Snellman, he was regarded as one of the key Finnish nation-building figures but never as promoting a monolingual Finnishness. Rather, he defended bilingualism (paying little attention to smaller minority languages).

As with the emergence of the original phrase in the 1860s, this new 1920s version also sought a historical authority for the phrase by linking it to Zacharias Topelius. Despite the claim that Topelius would have uttered such a phrase, I have been unable to find it in his work. Yet the link is not too far-fetched, as Topelius wrote about the theme in *Boken om Vårt Land* / *Maamme kirja* ('The Book of Our Country'):

> Whether I call it *Suomi* (*Suomenmaa*) in Finnish or Finland in Swedish, it is always the same country. All its sons and daughters are the same people, whatever language they speak.[68]

66. *Kaskö Tidning* 12 November 1921, 3. 'Därför få vi aldrig låta missmodet få stort välde, att vi någonsin yttra: svenskar äro vi ej mera, men jag hyser ej det ringaste tvivel om att han, som yttrat dessa ord, var nog ändå i själ och hjärta svensk, ty orden: "finnar vilja vi ej vara, ryssar kunna vi ej bliva, låtom oss vara söner av vårt land" syfta ju tydligt därpå, så att verkliga meningen med det han sade var nog, att numera bo vi ej inom svenska rikets gränser, ty vi ha blivit avskilda ifrån moderlandet, med vilket vi varit förenade, så nu måste vi se till att reda oss på egen hand.'
67. *Kaskö Tidning* 7 July 1926, 2.
68. Topelius 2017. 'Antingen jag på finskt språk kallar det Suomi (Suomenmaa), eller att jag på swenskt språk kallar det Finland, är det dock alltid samma land. Alla dess söner och döttrar äro samma folk, hwad språk de än tala.'

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For the speaker cited in *Kaskö Tidning*, however, Topelius's very inclusive conception of nationhood was too strong a compromise, and he eventually proposed a mobilizing Finland-Swedish version of the expression:

> the future of our country rests in your hands: always act so that the county and folk that saw you being born can be proud of you. Then we will be able to say with full justification: Swedes we are, Swedes we always want to be, and Swedes we will always remain, for we are good sons and daughters of a beloved fatherland.[69]

Neither the variant attributed to Topelius nor the one pronounced at the end of the speech has become canonical in any way, but these variants speak to the political situation of the 1920s and show that the phrase usually attributed to Arwidsson could be used as a backdrop for different purposes.

Back to historiography in the post-Second-World-War setting

The phrase about Swedes, Russians, and Finns had undoubtedly become an established part of political discourse by the end of the nineteenth century. It then played a central role in conceptualizing what the Grand Duchy of Finland was in the Russian Empire. Its two main uses concerned interpretations of Finnish statehood and the country's ethnolinguistic tensions. Although in the wake of the First World War Finnish independence changed the situation in the sense that Finland's relationship with Russia was completely overhauled, the linguistic aspect remained dominant, as we have seen in the above examples. It was only after the Second World War that the statehood dimension clearly overshadowed the linguistic one. There are two main reasons for this. First, the linguistic tensions in the country became less pronounced. As a result of readily established rights for Swedish speakers and Finnish starting to dominate public life, there was simply less interest in using the phrase to mobilize ethnopolitical tensions. Second, Finland's relationship with the Soviet Union dominated foreign policy matters and affected how the phrase was deployed. These changes meant the expression became less attached to contemporary issues, becoming more a form of historiography.

According to Mona Ozouf the 'motto' of the French Revolution, liberty, equality, and fraternity, at some point lost much of its rhetorical clout. The tensions in the concepts and their potential political contestedness became less prominent. The motto simply became a more or less ceremonial symbol of the French Revolution during the nineteenth century, with inscriptions on buildings and representations on statues.[70] Something similar has happened to the phrase about Swedes, Russians, and Finns, as it has become a sort of *lieu de mémoire*, allowing anyone to recall the nineteenth century and use it as a vignette for speeches and essays. In this genre one of the most

69. *Kaskö Tidning* 12 November 1921, 3. 'vårt lands framtid vilar uti edra händer, handlen alltid så, att den bygd och stam, som sett eder födas, också kan vara stolt över eder. Då skola vi med fullt berättigande kunna säga: Svenskar äro vi, svenskar vilja vi ständigt vara och svenskar komma vi alltid att förbliva, ty vi äro goda söner och döttrar av ett älskat fosterland.'
70. Ozouf 1998, 77–79.

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telling examples comes from President Urho Kekkonen, who in conjunction with the celebration of the fiftieth anniversary of Finnish independence in 1967 commented on the phrase, Arwidsson, and what it meant in his present.

Kekkonen first uses the phrase to provide a historical interpretation of the political situation in the 1820s and the later language question. He moves on to discuss the phrase as a double negation: 'After fifty years of independence we do not say: because we are not Swedes or Russians or Americans, etc. … For us it is uncontestably clear that we – so to say, without any subtraction – say: We are Finns, free citizens in a free country. From the time of Snellman we have also progressed towards unity in the question of language. We have two national languages, Finnish and Swedish, and the language we regard as our mother tongue does not generally separate us…' He further turns the phrase around by arguing that in his present it would be more opportune to say that 'we are Finns, and we are therefore no more Swedes than we are Russians, Germans, Americans, etc.'..[71]

Kekkonen seems to struggle with two issues in using the phrase. One has to do with the relationship with Russia, and he does indeed explain this with the particular nineteenth-century context. He argues that the part about not wanting to be Russians was about a 'national self-defence against a possible state oppression on the part of the Russian Empire'.[72] This may be a reference to the political tensions in the late nineteenth century and the historiographical debates concerning the 'years of oppression' (*sortovuodet*), but it fits poorly in the context of the 1860s. Here, the key word is *possible*, as Kekkonen clearly does not want to portray Finland's time as part of the Russian Empire as a century of oppression. The other difficulty lies in the phrase's obviously national framework and its poor match with internationally oriented young people. He notes that 'there are people in Finland who call themselves citizens of the world, who see a brother in all people regardless of skin colour, ideology, and religion'. He says there 'is no reason to judge such idealism', but that one 'cannot escape Finnishness, even with ideals or ideology'.[73] In sum, the phrase fitted poorly

71. 'Suomalainen' 2023: 'Viidenkymmenen itsenäisyysvuoden jälkeen me emme sano: koska emme ole ruotsalaisia tai venäläisiä tai amerikkalaisia jne., me olemme suomalaisia. Meistä on riidattoman selvää, että me – niin sanoakseni ilman vähennyslaskua – toteamme: me olemme suomalaisia, itsenäisen valtakunnan vapaita kansalaisia. Snellmanin ajoista lähtien olemme myös kieliasiassa edenneet yhtenäisyyttä lujittavaan lopputulokseen. Meillä on kaksi kansalliskieltä, suomi ja ruotsi, eikä se seikka, kumpaa kieltä me pidämme äidinkielenämme, erota meitä toisistamme pääasiassa, siinä, että me olemme suomalaisia. Ja jos joku pyytäisi meitä määrittelemään suomalaisuutemme Arvidssonin kaavan mukaan, voisimme siihen suostua, mutta me kääntäisimme Arvidssonin ajatelman nurin niskoin tähän tapaan: olemme suomalaisia, ja siksi emme ole ruotsalaisia, enempää kuin venäläisiä, saksalaisia, amerikkalaisia jne. jne.'
72. 'Suomalainen' 2023: 'Kun ohjelmalauseen toisessa negatiivisessa päätelmässä vakuutettiin: "venäläisiksi emme voi tai emme tahdo tulla", oli siinä esillä ajatus kansallisesta itsepuolustuksesta Venäjän suurvallan taholta mahdollisesti uhkaavaa valtiollista sortoa vastaan.'
73. 'Suomalainen' 2023: 'Suomessakin on ihmisiä, jotka sanovat olevansa maailmankansalaisia. Se on uudenlaista ihanteellisuutta, joka näkee veljen kaikissa ihmisissä ihonväriin, ideologiaan ja uskontoon katsomatta. Ei ole mitään syytä arvostella tätä ihanteellisuutta, toivottavasti se on tulevaisuuden tosiasia. Mutta se on varmaa, että suomalaisuutta ei pääse asenteilla eikä uudella ideologiallakaan pakoon.'

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in a setting in which good relations with the Soviet Union were vital for Kekkonen and in a situation in which nineteenth-century ideals of nationhood had begun to feel outdated. Yet the phrase itself had a certain status in Finnish historical consciousness, and it was – and remains – difficult to discuss Finnish history without it.

The Soviet Union, nationalism, and internationalism are themes that also feature in other uses of the phrase. A striking example is the establishment of the A. I. Arwidsson Society in 1972. The society profiled itself as a right-leaning patriotic organization that aimed to position itself against left-wing groups, especially in the university setting. The Arwidsson Society particularly targeted the Academic Socialist Society (founded in 1925), which in the early 1970s stood for a communism loyal to the Soviet Union. The Academic Socialist Society had campaigned with flyers of the Finnish flag gradually turning red, indicating a turn to socialism. The Arwidsson Society retaliated with flyers stating that the flag was 'a symbol of the nation's independence and the guarantor of its autonomous development'. Below a reprint of the flag turning red the society printed the words 'let us be Finns', echoing the phrase commonly associated with Arwidsson.[74] In the language of the A. I. Arwidsson Society the phrase was linked to Finnish independence but was also given an added layer in that it was deployed to criticize the political far left. In the period of close relations with the Soviet Union a critique of the far left also prompted broader reactions.

Johannes Salminen, a prominent Swedish-speaking liberal intellectual, wrote a long critique of the stunt by the A. I. Arwidsson Society. Salminen points out that the phrase about Swedes, Russians, and Finns could not be traced back to Arwidsson. He then criticizes the A. I. Arwidsson Society for 'communist phobia' and branding political opponents as unpatriotic, arguing that this ought especially to worry Swedish speakers.[75] Salminen's essay is interesting because it picks up the meanings of Soviet–Finnish relations, which were at the heart of the struggle between the Academic Socialist Society and the A. I. Arwidsson Society, but also taps into the much older layer of meaning associated with the language question and ethnopolitics in Finland. While the language issue was no longer central to most articulations of the phrase, the element was not entirely forgotten, especially among Swedish speakers. Although it is clear that the dominant modes of the phrase's use changed from talking about language and ethnicity in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries to using it more concretely to describe Finland's imperial history in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, the earlier layers of meaning did not disappear. It was possible to recall them – and they remain part of the repertoire of meaning associated with the expression.

Although the phrase about Swedes, Russians, and Finns was perhaps more commonly used by the right, it in no way monopolized it. In 1987 international political divides again played a role when the far-left MP Esko-Juhani Tennilä used the phrase in parliament: 'I would say to MP Lax, in Arwidsson's words, that we are not Swedes, we will not become Russians, so let us be Finns.' The thrust of the speech was against a Scandinavian orientation that MP Lax had highlighted. For Tennilä this represented a deviation from Finland's foreign and trade policy – a point that was underlined by a reminder that 'Norway and Denmark are NATO members', as

74. *Hufvudstadsbladet* 6 January 1973, 3.
75. *Hufvudstadsbladet* 6 January 1973, 3.

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if that were something of which anyone in the chamber needed to be reminded.[76] Tennilä's use of the phrase shows that its established character in Finnish culture made it deployable for any setting or any political leaning. Like notions of independence, the phrase could be used as a means of distancing Finland from the Soviet Union, but it could also be used to emphasize close relations with it.

In the postwar setting Finnish–Soviet relations were present in much of the everyday politics, and the phrase about Swedes, Russians, and Finns was no exception. Yet the phrase's main tenet was not about contemporary relations but about writing the history of Finland. It seems its most likely use in the last thirty to forty years simply concerns the writing of the history of 1809. This is clearly the case in President Tarja Halonen's use of it in a speech at the opening of an art exhibition in 2009,[77] in President Sauli Niinistö's inclusion of it in a speech at the Frankfurt Book Fair in 2014,[78] and in the then-future President Alexander Stubb's deployment of it when he accepted the nomination to run for president in 2023.[79] That three consecutive presidents of the republic of Finland used the expression ought not to be seen as a sign of their speechwriters' historical awareness but of the phrase's banality in political discourse. In such everyday interpretations of Finnish history the phrase serves to evoke a shorthand memory of Finland's imperial history, but it is void of the political tensions associated with it in the nineteenth century, regardless of whether the president is a socialist, a conservative, or a Swedish speaker.

Reception, transformation, and history of an expression

The phrase about Swedes, Russians, and Finns is still used as a popular slogan when discussing Finland and nationality issues. Some of the word choices remain subject to discussion. The revisions of the English-language Wikipedia page on Arwidsson illustrates this. The edits are related to the phrase's origin and the wording '*längre*'/'no longer'.[80] As there is no original to turn to (at least not one that can reasonably be

76. 'Herra puhemies! Ed. Laxille toteaisin Arvidssonin sanoin, että ruotsalaisia emme ole, venäläisiä meistä ei tule, olkaamme siis suomalaisia. Näin me haluamme jatkossakin ajatella ja pyrimme myös käytännössä toimimaan suomalaisina pysyäksemme kansaivälisessä kovassa paineessa. … Tässä piilotetusti puhutaan tästä asiasta, mutta siellä sisällä on ihan selvät poliittiset lähtökohdat. Muistutan vain edustajaa siitä, että esimerkiksi Skandinavian maista Norja ja Tanska kuuluvat Natoon. Kun te haluatte, että meidän samastettaisiin tällä tavoin Skandinaviaan, niin ymmärrän hyvin, mikä teidän ajattelunne perimmäisenä taustana on, kun te tämmöistä samastusta haluatte.' Retrieved from *Parlamenttisampo* (4 June 2024), http://demo.seco.tkk.fi/saha/project/resource.shtml?model=semparl&uri=http://ldf.fi/semparl/speeches/s1987_1_092_865
77. https://www.presidentti.fi/halonen/public/default609b.html?contentid=178390&nodeid=41417&contentlan=1&culture=fi-FI (read 4 June 2024).
78. https://www.sttinfo.fi/tiedote/18427836/tasavallan-presidentti-sauli-niiniston-puhe-frankfurtin-kirjamessujen-avajaisissa-7102014?publisherId=3981 (read 4 June 2024).
79. https://www.kokoomus.fi/alexander-stubbin-puhe-ylimaaraisessa-puoluekokouksessa/ (4 June 2024).
80. The edit history can be accessed here: https://en.wikipedia.org/w/index.php?title=Adolf_Ivar_Arwidsson&diff=845135047&oldid=839828052

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linked to Arwidsson), the variants are equally correct, but the wording remains a matter for dispute.

One might ask why it was originally so important to link Arwidsson to the quotation. A logical answer is that the Fennoman movement needed to write its own history. Porthan and Arwidsson could be made into symbols and fitted into a series of great men to form a canon of national thought in Finland. A longer tradition gave the political programme greater historical legitimacy. A related answer is that paternity issues tend to follow what might be called the maxim of the longest possible history. The same logic that makes the history of political thought seek the roots of different political ideologies long before those ideologies were named also applies to our famous slogan's history.[81] Although no one has found evidence of the phrase before 1860, most of the scholarly interest in it has focused on finding the idea behind it. The wording does not make it possible to go further back than 1809, and popular historiography at least therefore stops at Arwidsson. The other candidates from the early nineteenth century – Ehrström, Armfelt, Rehbinder, and Alexander I – expressed ideas that were closer to our expression than anything we know Arwidsson wrote, but their formulations were based on a bureaucratic-administrative perspective and were thus less interesting for a Fennoman movement that needed a slogan and a leader to move on from Swedish and Russian.[82]

We may yet find earlier occurrences of the phrase, but it seems Yrjö Koskinen was the first to use it. Snellman's formulation was decisive for the spread of the expression, however. Moreover, the expression seems to have become popular only after the words 'more'/'longer' were omitted. Remarkably, like so many other innovations in Finnish political history, the phrase seems to have arisen from frustration with a Swedish interlocutor's inability to understand the Finnish perspective and the need to reflect Finnish political life in Swedish models.[83] It is also noteworthy that Snellman, despite being seen in historical research as the person who took Arwidsson's programme further, tended to downplay Arwidsson's role.[84] While Koskinen referred directly to Arwidsson and *Åbo Morgonblad*, Snellman mentioned both Arwidsson and Ehrström as examples. In the latter case Snellman only mentioned the 1820s, without mentioning Arwidsson by name. It does not appear that Snellman felt the need to consolidate Arwidsson's role through his use of the phrase. Instead, the link between Arwidsson and the phrase became stronger when others took over the expression. Arwidsson became a symbol for later Fennoman actors, and the link between the phrase and its intended father became central nodes in political texts on Finnish nation building.

When the expression became popular in Finnish in the 1870s and was used to mobilize the Finnish party, it also became controversial. For the Swedish party, liberals, and socialists the expression's charge was not only positive. In the 1860s liberals and early Fennophiles were able to downplay Snellman's monolingual message and use the phrase to refer to Finns as a people with two languages, but the Fennoman mobilization made this more difficult. The tensions, various rewrites, and disputes are a sign that the expression had assumed a special role in Finnish political

81. Kurunmäki and Marjanen 2018, 256–82.
82. Kalleinen 2017, 64–73.
83. Kurunmäki 2004, 193–236.
84. See Engman 2016, 73, 404; Klinge 1986, 36.

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discourse. It had become a phrase with which everyone was confronted in some way. It appeared not only in general political debate but also in professional magazines such as the bakers' and confectioners' magazine *Leipuri*.[85] Even those who disliked it used it in paraphrases, as the examples from *Kaskö Tidning* show. The role of the term corresponds to Reinhart Koselleck's description of basic political and social concepts that are irreplaceable, inescapable, and contested.[86] The phrase can thus be seen not as a basic concept but as a basic phrase in Finnish political language. During the 1870s, 1880s, and 1890s it acquired such a surplus of meaning that it became unavoidable.

While it is also interesting to examine the ideas that may have been behind the expression in the 1810s and 1820s when the phrase was not yet in use, it remains problematic that previous research has not considered the reception and canonization that actually made the expression an important part of Finnish political culture. Digitized material makes such a study possible in a new way, but it also requires research to move away from the 'religion of first appearance'[87] and focus more on the reception of key terms, phrases, and discourses. Here, the actors who reuse and transform a phrase like 'Swedes, Russians, and Finns' themselves hold a large amount of agency. On the one hand, once the phrase had been established, it was hard to avoid its use; on the other, it provided opportunities and could be actively used for diverse purposes.

Another transformation in the use of this slogan is evident in the present. In post-Second-World-War Finland the role of the so-called language question has been less dominant in political life, and the phrase's use has in a sense been re-historicized. It still serves as a backdrop for any reflection about who 'we' are in a changing world dealing with issues of geopolitical tension and increased awareness of Finnish society's multiculturalism, but overall the phrase's uses are again more likely to describe the role of the Grand Duchy of Finland between two empires. It provides a neat description of how the Napoleonic Wars, the establishment of a Grand Duchy of Finland within the Russian Empire, and the consolidation of Old and New Finland created space for the developing Finnish statehood. In this take the focus is less on ethnicity or language than it is on territory and statehood and the time of the Grand Duchy as a stepping stone to independence in 1917. In the latter half of the nineteenth century, however, state independence was not in sight, and the linguistic and ethnic aspects were far more important. It is as if today's use of the slogan has strengthened the historical layer of meaning present in Koskinen and Snellman and weakened meanings that were dominant around the turn of the century 1900.

85. *Leipuri: Leipurien ja kondiittorien ammattilehti = Yrkestidning för bagare och konditorer* 1 January 1919, 8.
86. Koselleck 1996, 60–71.
87. Dufoix 2017, 15.

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The Strategies of Framing Regional Interests in North Karelia from the 1850s to the 1890s

A Regional Perspective on the Grand Duchy

ALINA KUUSISTO

Several reforms of the administration, economy, schools, infrastructure, and communication were enacted in the Grand Duchy of Finland during the reign of emperor Alexander II (1855–1881) and especially after the recall of the four-estate Diet in 1863. They enhanced the country's modernization and liberalization as well as the understanding of Finland as a separate political unit from the Russian state. At the same time as its inhabitants became aware of belonging to the nation and state, they also developed an attachment to a more restricted geographical region.[1] In Finland, as in other places in the north, the nineteenth-century development of regionalization supported nation building, and there was no separatist aim.[2] Nevertheless, regionalization entailed the sharpening of political aims concerning the regions, the intensification of rivalry between them, and above all the emerging visibility of the relationship between the regions and the state. In this chapter I discuss how the relationship between the regional policy discourse and the state appears in newspapers and Diet minutes from the 1850s to the 1890s and the regional strategies used to strengthen the regional political space. I examine the phenomenon through the prism of the region of North Karelia in Eastern Finland, which today borders the Russian Federation. Both geographical and cultural proximity to Russia and the regionalization that intensified in the nineteenth century make North Karelia a point of interest for studying the relationship of nation and region building.

The relationship between the regions and the nation-state in the nineteenth century has been studied to some extent in the field of nationalism research in recent decades. The interest has been especially in the interaction between national and regional identities[3] and recently in nation building from below, and how ordinary people were able to influence political processes above the local and regional levels.[4] Unlike traditional studies relying on modernization theory, which have seen regional identity as the opposite of national identity and as a kind of premodern stage on the journey to it,[5] academics have recently underlined the construction of the nations and regions as interdependent processes.[6] Nation and region building are thus in

1. Paasi 1984.
2. Stadius 2018, 194, 208.
3. For example, for the perspective of cultural identity see Applegate 1990.
4. For example, Dørum, Hallenberg & Katajala 2021, 3–22.
5. Applegate 1999, 1157–1182.
6. Núñez 2001, 483–518, 484–485; Núñez 2012, 16.

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many ways parallel processes, and in most cases there is no clear answer about which preceded the other.

Researchers have identified the progress of collective self-awareness, democratization, the expansion of the public sphere, industrialization, commercialization, urbanization, and the development of the education, transport, and communication system as phenomena which strengthen the compactness of subregions. Yet regionalization has been interpreted as a reaction to modernization and the rapid transformation of rural communities.[7] This chapter addresses a multilevel regional understanding. Questions about the regions the political actors feel they represent, and the kind of local communities with which they identify themselves, are inevitably related to their objectives. In research on nationalism and regional identities it has long been emphasized that people can simultaneously have several regional identities.[8] That is also this study's premise: social actors operate at different levels,[9] locally, regionally, nationally, and as representatives of the state administration, estates, parties, professions, social groups, and local administration. Accordingly they exploit different strategies in promoting their aims. Furthermore, the region is itself, according to current understanding, a constructive concept. The region is continuously redefined through social practices, public discourses, and constructs of power. Like identities, regional concepts are sliding, changing, and overlapping. They are shaped by natural geography, history, culture, and politics.[10] Despite the mobility of regional concepts, a new kind of regional political space was produced through them. According to Michael Keating the 'region is a political space when it provides an arena for political debate, a frame for judging issues and proposals, and a space recognized by actors as the level where decisions may legitimately be taken'. [11]

The nineteenth-century development of the Finnish nation-state has been extensively studied. Likewise, there is a rich research tradition of purely regional and local studies. The relationship between regionalization and the nation-state during the late nineteenth century, however, has gained less attention in previous research. Especially s. Risto Alapuro has analysed how variations in regional social structures and conditions have shaped the process of Finnish nation-building[12]. Alapuro also explores the modernization of the state and political life in Finland from a local perspective, but his focus is on the organization of various social groups and the local networking of people, not on regionality as such[13]. Ilkka Liikanen, in turn, studies the relationship of the Fennoman intelligentsia with associations and gatherings in the countryside[14]. He focuses on the interaction of local/regional and national aspects in political culture and language in the late nineteenth century, but like Alapuro's study, the emphasis is on the organization of civil society and the ideological influences of the time.

7. Storm 2012, 37.
8. Paasi 2003, 475–485.
9. Núñez 2012, 27.
10. Lähteenmäki 2009; Moisio 2009; Mishkova & Trencsényi 2017.
11. Keating 2003, 265–266.
12. Alapuro 1988.
13. Alapuro 1994.
14. Liikanen 1995.

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Research task, research area, and data

This chapter highlights the peripheral perspective of nation building throughout the region of North Karelia, the nation, and the relationship between them. I study the regional strategies in Diet material and regional newspaper discussions. How does the relationship between the region, the representation of the estates, and the construction of the state appear in them? How are the Grand Duchy of Finland's and the Grand Duke's status and the official symbols of the state discussed in the public domains of this peripheral border region, and how is the concept of the emperor situated within those discourses.

The starting point lies in the tradition of conceptual history, for my focus is on how various regional concepts are used rhetorically as part of political discussion and regional strategies. This perspective enables the interpretation of the political elements and various senses of regional concepts. Regional concepts above all obtain their meaning in relation to other regional concepts – the kind of 'conceptual store' from which they are drawn, and how they are used in various political situations.[15] The question not only concerns the representation of the abstract senses of the various concepts: they are used above all in tangible social interaction.

North Karelia is a relevant region for a study of regionalization in the context of nationalism and empires, as these processes occurred simultaneously and side by side. The third process, which connected the previous two, was the attachment of the region to the nation. This is related to the history of the region as a peripheral area of the Russian Empire and as part of the vast transnational region of Karelia. Through its Orthodox religion and cultural and economic ties it was even more connected to the old Finland and the Russian side of Karelia than to the western parts of Finland, which were influenced by Swedish culture. In the late nineteenth century, as the Finnish national movement strengthened, it became more important to emphasize the region's Finnishness and to show that despite its location and cultural features, it was part of a common Finnish nation as an equal area alongside other regions.

North Karelia's regional distinctiveness drew on several socio-political features. Apart from a few officials and members of the intelligentsia, it was an almost completely Finnish-speaking area, and it was characterized by the presence of the Orthodox, who coexisted with the larger Lutheran population. North Karelia was the northern part of the county of Käkisalmi (1580–1721). Savonia lay in the west, the Ladoga Karelian parishes Suojärvi and Salmi in the east, Ingria in the south, and the region of Kainuu in the north. In 1617 North Karelia was ceded from Russia to Sweden as a conquered land and as one of Sweden's eastern provinces. Although part of the Swedish realm, as a conquered land the region's status differed in many ways from the kingdom's core areas. After the peace treaties of Uusikaupunki in 1721 and Turku in 1743, Ilomantsi, Tohmajärvi, and Liperi were the only Swedish parishes remaining on the Swedish side. The border between the realms, at least in theory, separated North Karelia from the other parts of Karelia until 1809, when Finland became part of the Russian Empire. In the mid-nineteenth century North Karelia was beginning to develop as a separate region with its own identity. For the sake of clarity, although it was not an unambiguous concept at the time, I use the name North

15. Kurunmäki 2001, 142–143; Mishkova & Trencsényi 2017, 10.

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Karelia. One must also acknowledge the obscurity of the concept of *province*, even though I have attempted to use the concept of *region* to refer to North Karelia as much as possible. I use the term province in the chapter as an English translation of the Finnish *maakunta* in contexts where it is used in the original sources. The Finnish *maakunta* and English *province* do not completely correspond because province primarily refers to an administrative area smaller than the state, while *maakunta* has many connotations with cultural areas and communities.[16] It differs also from the Russian *governorate* (*guberniya*) of the imperial era, which was an administrative unit between the state and smaller local areas.[17]

Diet material has been little utilized in studies of Finnish history. Yet they are excellent from the regional strategies perspective, for they reveal the various and sometimes contradictory expectations of Diet representatives as spokesmen for their estate and region. Vuorinen has observed the special character of the Diet protocols.[18] They are not final protocols but are based on interactive and quite spontaneous oral discussion. Although some of the petitions (*anomusesitys*) were produced in advance or presented in writing, Diet speeches differed greatly from newspapers as a form of publicity. Even written statements were followed by a free conversation and were documented by the clerk. Moreover, the sessions were open freely to the public. The newspapers published most of the discussions, which meant the public received current information about the Diet's activities.[19]

Until 1906 the Finnish Diet consisted of four estates, the nobility, the burghers, the clergy, and the peasantry, who debated and voted separately. In addition to the government's propositions the estates discussed petitions drafted by representatives individually or as a group. The right to initiate petitions on any topic was established in the 1869 Diet Act, after which they were also recorded in the estates' protocols. Petitions are my study's key source material, especially given that issues considered important for individual representatives and their region arise from them. It should be realized, however, that the petitions were documented as they were written, regardless of how they were read at the session. The nobility and burghers used stenographers to draft the protocols from the outset, meaning the sessions' speeches were recorded as such. The clergy hired stenographers in 1872, and the peasantry in 1877. Previously, the secretary and his assistant wrote up the notes of the protocols, and summarized minutes were drawn up on their basis. This practice was motivated not only by cost issues but by the lack of stenographers who spoke Finnish. The drafting and printing of the protocols was considered important in all estates because it enabled new representatives to learn about the Diet's practices. Furthermore, the Diet's continuity was achieved through the protocols, as they allowed representatives to peruse the previous Diet's debates and use them in their own speeches.[20]

Yet although the main emphasis is on the Diet minutes, the opportunity to use the wide collection of digitized newspaper material allows a systematic interpretation of the long-term relationship between the region and nation. How did the names of the

16. Kuusisto 2023.
17. Heusala 2005.
18. Vuorinen 2010.
19. Pekonen 2014, 48.
20. Pekonen 2014, 150–151, 188, 192–198, 215.

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region develop, for example, and in what contexts and regional discussions were state-related concepts used? The material used in the analysis includes, first, all the Finnish-language newspapers published between 1850 and 1900, and second, a representative sample of the Finnish-language newspapers published and read in North Karelia during the period.[21] Finnish-language newspaper publishing was first established during the 1850s, achieving great social significance exceptionally quickly, even by international comparison. The principal reason for the rapid growth in newspaper circulation was local correspondence.[22] The spread of the press all over Finland and to a socially broad readership was also connected with the exceptional situation of the Crimean War, the Fennomans' Finnish publishing activities, and increasing literacy.[23]

I extend the chapter until the end of the 1890s, when regional self-awareness was becoming stronger all over Europe and in Finland. In the latter, newspapers, student nations, associations, and folk high schools began to work intensively for the culture and identity of the provinces. My contention is that North Karelian region building was more political than cultural before the 1890s, meaning North Karelia was more frequently highlighted in regional reports from the perspectives of economic questions and the allocation of state resources to the region than by an emphasis on the region's individual identity through art and literature.

In line with a pan-European trend it was not until the 1890s that educated locals began to produce more widely a literature that described their own region and its special characteristics and identity. Previously, research on regions had been founded on the promotion of national aims and was the preserve of the elites. In the context of North Karelia the *Savo-Karjalainen osakunta* (student nation) was one of the main promoters of Finnish nationalism and Fennomania from the 1840s, but its focus was for a long time largely on the language question and Finnish patriotism. Until the 1890s educational work among people in the province was limited to individual lectures and folklore collecting trips.[24] The establishment of the North Karelia Folk High School in 1895 was the first major regional project in which the *Savo-Karjalainen osakunta* was involved.[25] One of the first writers to focus on descriptions of nature in North Karelia was the Nurmes-born ex-member of the student nation and pastor Juho Reijonen (1855–1924), whose most active working period was in the 1880s and the 1890s.[26]

The second justification for the time outline is the beginning of the first russification period in the late 1890s: the 1897 Diet was the last meeting during its 'constitutional construction' period (*perustuslaillisen rakentamiskauden valtiopäivät*).[27] The next, additional, Diet in 1899 was called to discuss the extension of the general Military Service Act to Finns in situations concerning the defence of the whole Empire.

21. The newspapers are *Tapio*, *Suometar*, *Karjalatar*, *Pohjois-Karjala*, *Uusi Suometar*, *Laatokka*, and *Savo-Karjala*.
22. The chapter uses the Translocalis digital database, produced by the Centre of Excellence in the History of Experiences (HEX) at the University of Tampere, which contains all local letters published in Finnish-language newspapers between 1775 and 1885.
23. Kokko 2019.
24. Storm 2003, 251–265; Waris 1939; Ruutu 1939; Toikkanen 1997.
25. Tuominen 1999.
26. Juho Reijonen luontokuvaajana. Virittäjä 5–6 1924, 109–113.
27. Tuominen 1964, 87.

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This brought a radical change in the political atmosphere, which is why I define the discussion after 1898 as beyond the scope of the study. The chapter therefore focuses on the decades after the 1850s and before the end of the century, which I interpret as a *formative phase of modern regionality*. Several economic and political reforms were then in progress in Finnish society which required and created a need to construct the political role of the subnational regions and control their interests. The chapter therefore focuses on the conceptual meanings and changes of these region-building processes in the period when cultural region building was about to begin.

In the chapter's first section I analyse the nature of Diet representation and regional commitment in the different estates. I then consider Eastern Finland and the province more broadly as the regional context of Diet speeches, and how the state's role was interpreted from the perspective of a region perceived as peripheral. Finally, I explore the meaning of the concepts of 'grand duchy' and 'grand duke' in regional discourse.

Diet skills, cooperation, and regional representation

The North Karelian Diet representatives in all three estates (peasantry, burghers, and clergy) were Fennomans and therefore concerned with the promotion of Finnish. The language issue was not a factor dividing representatives; rather, the dividing line ran between conservatives and liberals, and later between Old Finns and Young Finns. Professor Uuno Tuominen's view of the division of the peasant representatives into two groups, the significantly smaller of which highlighted constitutional principles and had abstract and ideological views of the development of the state and society, while the larger was more vernacular and strongly promoted the tangible issues and benefits of the peasants, is too simple.[28] Regional and local issues were important for all the representatives, although most also took a stand on national questions. Appealing to the region, however, was a strong rhetorical means that could also promote the estates' interests.

Among the North Karelian peasants there were several longstanding representatives like the farmer Mikko Heikura (1863–1864, 1872, 1882–1894) from Nurmes and the farmer and folk poet Antti Puhakka (1863–1864, 1872–1882) from Kontiolahti, who as self-taught and enlightened peasants could use both national and regional rhetoric. Skilful Diet representatives of the peasant estate also emerged from the ranks of teachers, church workers, and merchants. One was a cantor from Nurmes, Heikki Hannikainen, who only participated in the 1877–1878 Diet meetings, but who belonged to the main supporters of popular education and Finnish in the northern parts of North Karelia. The representatives' skills in and knowledge of Diet practices and rhetoric increased with their years of representation and the general political development of society.[29] The men elected to the Diet followed the development of Finnish political life and gradually achieved positions of trust as members of important committees, for example. They made their region known, brought its conditions to national awareness, and increased the knowledge of local people about the state's affairs.

28. Tuominen 1964, 212.
29. For the Diet's learning and development processes see Pekonen 2014.

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The perception that the Diet dealt with both national and regional issues existed early in the local public sphere. In its editorial on 19 January 1877, the Finnish-language newspaper *Karjalatar*, published in Joensuu from 1874, advised local representatives to promote issues of common concern to the whole region: 'The work of the Diet concerns the whole of our country, but there are also matters that deal with a special region.'[30] *Karjalainen* highlighted Diet representation as a common collective channel of influence. The region's wishes were tangibly promoted in the petitions allowed in the 1863–1864 Diet, and they were not officially regulated in the 1869 Diet Act.[31] Among the peasantry Mikko Heikura was mentioned as having made a petition in 1863 regarding the channelling of the Pielisjoki river,[32] and Pekka Hakulinen from the Ilomantsi jurisdictional district in 1867 regarding the taxes payed to a lawyer[33].[34] During the Diet of 1872 Mikko Heikura made numerous petitions related to slash-and-burn cultivation, the Freedom of the press Act, and the channelling of the Pielisjoki river, for example.[35]

It is noteworthy that before the 1882 Diet there was little cooperation between the two Karelian jurisdictions (for regional divisions see Table 1). Cooperation between the representatives of North Karelia became more common towards the end of the century. The representatives of Karelian jurisdictions began to cooperate in petitioning about major issues like the expansion of the local lyceum to include high school classes, the northern extension of the Karelian railway to Nurmes, and the nationalization of the girls' school in Joensuu. It was also common for representatives of different counties to support each other's petitions. This also shows that over the years Diet representatives developed political networks that could be relied on and used to pursue goals. The increase of cooperation between representatives, especially in the peasant estate, shows that the importance of North Karelia as an interest area was strengthening towards the end of the nineteenth century.

The representatives' regional commitment varied and overlapped, however, and there were differences between the estates. Diet representation primarily entailed the relationship between the representative and his electors. The general perception among the Fennomans was that the delegates were not bound to the views of their

30. *Karjalatar* 19 January 1877. 'Mitä on seutumme toiwottawa waltiopäiwiltä?', 1. 'Waltiopäiwäin toimi koskee tosin yhteisesti koko maatamme, mutta on myös asioita jotka koskewat erittäin jotain eri seutua.' The author was probably the founder and first editor of *Karjalatar*, a colleague at the local lyceum, Henrik Piipponen, who himself served as a clergy representative in the Diet in the 1890s.
31. Pekonen 2014, 151–152.
32. Mikko Heikura 20.11.1863, 219, *Pöytäkirja arwoisassa Talonpoikaissäädyssä Waltiopäiwillä Helsingissä wuosina 1863–1864, Ensimmäinen osa, waltiopäiwien alusta lopulle wuotta 1863*, Helsingissä Suomalaisen kirjallisuuden seuran kirjapainossa 1864.
33. So called *laamanninkappa* in Finnish.
34. Pekka Hakulinen 27.2.1867, 121–122. *Suomen talonpoikaissäädyn pöytäkirjat valtiopäivillä v. 1867. Ensimmäinen vihko. Valtiopäivien alusta huhtik. 13 p:ään*. Helsingissä Suomalaisen kirjallisuuden seuran kirjapainossa 1893.
35. Mikko Heikura 17 February 1872, 41, 19 February 1872, 46–47, 49 50, 54–55, 20.2.1872, 67, 23.2.1872, 73–74, 85–87, 5 March 1872, 144, 16 March 1872, 260–261. *Suomen talonpoikaissäädyn pöytäkirjat valtiopäivillä v. 1872. Ensimmäinen vihko. Valtiopäivien alusta toukokuun 6 p:vään*. Helsingissä 1895, Helsingin sentraali-kirjapainossa, Fabianink. 6.

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electors, but the representative was to have a conversation with them and seek as best he could to promote the people's interests.[36] They emphasized personal conviction and the confidential relationship between the representative and the electors.

> In my opinion the representative is to act by listening to the voice of his best conscience for the purpose he thinks is most useful for his people. When the people elect a representative, of course they will trust him, and when the representatives decide something, the people, through their representatives, have agreed to the decision […]. [37]

Diet speeches included a specific personal element of responsibility, meaning they differed from other forms of communication. This emerged especially in the representative's commitment to his electoral district. The electoral district was a region, jurisdiction, town, diocese or deanery where the representative gained sufficient support from his electors. It paid the representative's travel expenses and a daily allowance and consulted with him about various hopes and tasks. The commitment to the electoral district, however, was above all a commitment to the electors, not to the district as such. This made it possible for the candidate to change electoral district if his home parish's political atmosphere did not favour his election.[38] In such cases it can be considered that representatives' political ambitions extended beyond their home region, and the support they received was more extensive than from their home region alone.

The peasantry's electoral district was essentially the jurisdictional district (*tuomiokunta*), which was the official district of the district court judge (*kihlakunnantuomari*), consisting of several court districts (*käräjäkunta*).[39] It was a clearly defined administrative district, which elected its representatives through the election of electors (*valitsijamiesvaali*).[40] Diet representatives acted as spokesmen for their jurisdictional district and were responsible in their activities to their electors. To please their electors, they emphasized the significance of issues but also justified raising matters that were less important for the interests of the estate or speaker. As mentioned above, in accordance with the Fennoman way of thinking, the peasant estate's discussions emphasized the representative's relationship with the electorate and the broader relationship with the area he represented.

36. Pekonen 2014, 131–133.
37. Juho Koivisto 20 May 1891, 1423–1424. Suomen talonpoikaissäädyn keskustelupöytäkirjat Valtiopäivillä vuonna 1891. Kolmas vihko. 2 p:stä Toukok. valtiopäiväin loppuun. Kuopio. O. W. Backman'in kirjapaino, 1892. 'Edusmiehen minun käsitykseni mukaan on toimiminen parhaan omantuntonsa ääntä kuullen, sillä tarkoituksella, jonka luulee kansallensa kaikkein hyödyllisemmäksi. Kun kansa valitsee edusmiehen, niin totta kai se silloin häneen luottaa, ja kun edusmiehet jotakin päättävät, on kansa silloin edusmiestensä kautta päätökseen suostunut […].'
38. For example, due to the division in the local Finnish movement, Mikko Heikura stood as a candidate and was elected in the 1891 parliamentary elections as a representative of Pielavesi (in Savonia) and in 1894 of the Liperi jurisdiction.
39. After 1863 North Karelia was into four judicial districts (Ilomantsi, Kitee, Liperi, and Pielisjärvi).
40. For more about the diet elections among the peasantry in North Karelia, see Turpeinen 1972.

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The burghers' representatives, meanwhile, being elected by the town's burghers, had a direct responsibility that was narrower than that of the peasants.[41] Joensuu's burghers emphasized their role as their electors' representatives less than the peasants, but they did promote Joensuu's significance as a commercial and transport centre. They thus also underlined the importance of the surrounding (Karelian) region as a sphere of influence of the town. The regional economic projects of the late nineteenth century were especially important for the burghers and their commercial targets, and it is evident that a rhetorical emphasis on the region of North Karelia served their best interests.

The clergy Diet election was separately arranged among the clergy of the diocese (*hiippakunta*) in each deanery (*rovastikunta*). Because it was possible to vote for all the diocese's candidates, not all the deaneries were represented in every Diet. The lower and upper deaneries of North Karelia (*Pohjois-Karjalan ylinen ja alinen rovastikunta*) therefore lacked representatives in 1882, 1888, and 1894. It is clear that the position of North Karelia in the election of clergy was weak in the late 1880s, and the region's deaneries lacked suitable candidates for nomination in all elections. There was, however, an ongoing generational change among the clergy: those with experience of education and parish administration were ageing and were replaced by pastors who had taken up a church post directly from university. Power in the Diet thus passed to the estate's lay representatives, especially to secondary school and university teachers. Another change took place in the social structure of the clergy when those with a background in the intelligentsia were replaced by those with a peasant background.[42]

41. Joensuu's representatives in the late nineteenth century were the merchant Petter Parviainen (1863–1864), the merchant and shipowner Antti Juhana Mustonen (1867), the merchant and shipowner Frithiof Neppenström 1872, 1882–1894, and mayor Johan Alfred Nystén 1877–1878.
42. Österbladh 1933; Österbladh 1934; Murtorinne 1964. In North Karelia the older generation of teacher-pastors had been represented by the experienced county deans Anders Johan Europaeus, pastor of Liperi, and Erik Johan Andelin, pastor of Tohmajärvi, who had already been members of the January committee in 1862. Meanwhile, Klas Erik Järnefelt, the pastor of Kontiolahti and brother of the governor of the county of Kuopio August Aleksander Järnefelt, had taken up his post immediately after ending his studies. Henrik Piipponen, a Diet member in 1891, 1897, and 1899, had a long career as a teacher at the lyceum in Joensuu, and he also worked as editor of the newspaper *Karjalatar* before taking up his post as pastor of Kontiolahti in 1892. Piipponen was the first North Karelian Diet representative of the clergy with a peasant background.

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Table 1. Regional names and divisions in North Karelia in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries.

Region	North Karelia	Information
County (*lääni*)	Counties of Käkisalmi (1634); Savonlinna and Kymenkartano (1721); Kymenkartano and Savo (1747); Savo and Karjala (1775); Kuopio (1831)	The state administrative area highest in the regional hierarchy. The 1634 form of government of the Swedish kingdom also established county administration in Finland.
Jurisdictional district (*kihlakunta*)	North Karelia (1721); upper and lower Karelia (1805); Liperi, Ilomantsi and Pielisjärvi (1851)	The jurisdictional district was a local government area of the state operating under the governorship.
Diocese (*hiippakunta*)	Porvoo (1723); Kuopio (1851); Savonlinna (1895–1925)	The administrative district of the Lutheran church, headed by the bishop and the chapter.
Deanery (*rovastikunta*)	Ala-Karjala and Ylä-Karjala	Ecclesiastical district, consisting of several parishes.
Parish (*kirkkoherrakunta, pitäjä*)		Ecclesiastical district, including chapels and prayer rooms in addition to the main parish.
Jurisdictional district (*tuomiokunta*)	Karelia (1722); Karelia upper (1788–1821) and Karelia lower (1788–1862); Ilomantsi, Kitee (1862); Liperi, Pielisjärvi (1821)	The district court office and the judge's office district. It consisted of one or more rural court districts.
Court district (*käräjäkunta*)	Kitee; Tohmajärvi; Ilomantsi; Liperi; Pielisjärvi; Nurmes; Kaavi	Sessions of the rural courts were held by court districts, consisting mainly of parishes.

Clergy were exceptional in that pastors had their own regular meetings outside the Diet. Synods or meetings (*synodaalikokous*, *pappeinkokous*, or *kirkolliskokous*) were arranged in the diocese every five years, and pastors' meetings (*kontrahtikokous*) in deaneries gave members of the clergy an opportunity to discuss and prepare questions for the Diet. Clergy representatives thus had a direct connection with their colleagues working in their diocese's deaneries. The diocese of Kuopio (1851) then covered the whole of eastern and northern Finland and northernmost Lapland, so the clergy's local representatives could position themselves as representatives of the entire sparsely populated area outside the two older dioceses of Turku (1276) and Porvoo (1554). Among the clergy there was a strong collegial connection between the electorate and the representative, but the affiliation of representatives to parishes on the one hand and the diocese on the other strengthened the commitment to the regional level outside the ecclesiastical context.

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Eastern Finland and the province as regional contexts

Beside the well-defined electoral districts, another important context of the nineteenth-century regional discourse among North Karelian representatives was the category of Eastern Finland. The stereotype of the wealthy Southern and Western Finland and the poor, remote, and oppressed Eastern (and Northern) Finland was especially marked in the speeches of the peasantry, whose representatives' election had the broadest regional context, and whose commitment, at least rhetorically, to its electors was most pronounced. The question concerned the juxtaposition between the country's peripheries/border regions and heartlands, which had a long history of constructing Finland's image in relation to the kingdom's core regions. The 'miserable Finland' discourse is already to be found in the writings of seventeenth-century scholars,[43] which, in contrast with the sphere of Swedish-speaking intellectuals, described the area populated by the Finnish-speaking peasantry as boring, monotonous, disease-ridden, and persecuted by the enemy.[44] Diet debates reveal this division was still visible in the late nineteenth century: Finland was divided into Finland Proper (Varsinais-Suomi) and the periphery, and Karelia was not fully integrated into the rest of the country. As in Finnish national historiography,[45] North Karelia's self-image also repeated the idea of Karelia as a battlefield between the great powers and a remote and mistreated corner of the world. It is also possible, however, to see the use of the misery discourse as a political resource in the regional discourse that could draw listeners' attention to the region's needs.

The difference between Eastern and Western Finland was the result first of natural conditions. The growing season in Eastern Finland was described as shorter and the climate as cold, harsh, and sensitive to frost. Slash-and-burn agriculture was a trade and cultivation method typical of Eastern Finland, originating in the region's natural conditions and setting special requirements for the development of economic life. Speakers suggested that Eastern Finland was treated, and had always been treated, consciously and deliberately worse than the southern and western parts of the country. Antti Puhakka quoted Christ's words in Mark's gospel: 'For he that hath, to him shall be given: and he that hath not, from him shall be taken even that which he hath'.[46] In this case the question concerned the foundation of the Finnish school in Turku, for 'nothing will be granted to Joensuu and Karelia, although it is in a miserable state and suffers both spiritual and physical hunger'.[47]

43. Also later, scholars like Henrik Gabriel Porthan and A. I. Arwidsson addressed the difficult circumstances and darkness of intellect of people in Finland but at the same time emphasized its potential for development in both the economic and national sense. Rantanen 1997.
44. Rantanen 1997.
45. For example, see Hannikainen 1864.
46. Antti Puhakka 18 May 1872, 522. *Suomen talonpoikaissäädyn pöytäkirjat valtiopäivillä v. 1872. Toukokuun 7 p:stä valtiopäivien loppuun*. Helsingissä 1895, Helsingin sentraali-kirjapainossa, Fabianink. 6. '[S]iltä, jolla vähä on, otetaan kaikki pois, ja sille, jolla paljo on, annetaan vieläkin enemmän.'
47. 'Joensuuhun ja Karjalahan ei myönnettäisi mitään, vaikka siellä on surkea tila ja sekä hengellinen että ruumiillinen nälkä.'

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Among the clergy the context of Eastern Finland was strongly felt, but the North Karelian representatives of the estate did not construct a similar confrontation to that of the peasantry's representatives between the badly treated Eastern Finland and the prosperous west and south. As has been said, the diocese was an important framework for the actions of the clergy, who used it more often than the concept of the province of North Karelia in pleading for regional interests, for example. Nor did the clergy paint the peasant estate's sad picture of conditions in Eastern Finland or Karelia; they even idealistically emphasized the region's position as an outpost of Finnish culture. The pastor of Liperi parish and dean of Ala-Karjala, Anders Johan Europaeus, in particular, avoided using the rhetoric of misery in his speeches in the 1860s, which was exceptional because cultural regionalism was still weak at the time. Europeaus said in his statement about the lyceum in Joensuu:

> it is the Finnish songs and poems of these regions that have contributed so much to the rise of the Finnish national consciousness and find their home, and the rest of the country can therefore be considered to be in its debt.[48]

Anders Josef Europaeus (1797–1870), whose background was close to the Turku Romantics and the Fennomans of Viipuri, was the first and most important early Fennoman in North Karelia. In his post in Liperi he promoted public education by establishing Finland's first rural library in 1845 and one of the first private primary schools in Finland in 1857. Europaeus was interested in history, and he also published a short book, *Karjalan ajan-tiedot* (1859), describing the history of Karelia until the end of the sixteenth century. Although a reformer, with his Finnish-minded thoughts and actions, in many other political issues Europaeus favoured moderate development. He was one of the most important conservatives in the Diet of the 1860s, and he strongly opposed the municipal administration's reform.[49]

Diet representatives typically used the rhetoric of justice in advocating for Eastern Finland. This was especially manifested in the requirements for education. The aim was both to expand the Joensuu lyceum (*yläalkeiskoulu*) with high school classes (*lukioluokat*) and to get the private girls' school into the state's possession. Justice was required for Finnish speakers in relation to Swedish speakers, for Eastern Finland as a matter of equality between regions (and towns) but also as a question of social justice. The regional discourse included a requirement to consider regional differences and the regions' equal development, which on the one hand demonstrated a strengthened regional awareness and on the other the perception that the state had a responsibility for all the regions within its boundaries.[50] Signs of competition between cities in Eastern Finland, which culminated in the establishment of the university after the

48. A. J. Europaeus 13 October 1863, 161–162. *Högvördiga prestaståndets pleni-protokoll vid landtdagen i Helsingfors 1863–1864*. Första Bandet. Från landtdagens början till slutet af år 1863. Helsinfors, Finska-Litteratursällskapets tryckeri 1864. '[A]tt det är I denna landsort der finsk sång och saga, som så mycket bidragit att höja finska nationalvetandet, varit hemmastadde, och att det öfvriga landet sålunda kan anses hafva att afbörda en hederskuld till densamma.'
49. Petersen-Jessen 1987; Ruutu 1937, 86–109.
50. See also Pekonen & La Mela 2023.

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mid-twentieth century, were already visible. Members of the Diet were united, however, in seeking the development of the whole of Eastern, and partly Northern, Finland.

The province was also used as a context in the late nineteenth-century regional policy discourse, even though it was an inaccurate and discursively varied concept,[51] lacking Eastern Finland's rhetorical power. The concept of North Karelia was not established in the contemporary regional discourse and was in a process of continuous conceptual bordering in relation to Karelia. The province of North Karelia was generally called Karelia. This was probably an echo of the concept of Swedish Karelia, established during Swedish rule. Yet it may also have been an attempt to distinguish it from the Karelia of Vyborg, which belonged to the 'Old Finland' that had been incorporated into Russia during the eighteenth century and was seen as an undeveloped and Russian-influenced area compared with other parts of the country.[52] The concept of North Karelia defined it as part of a wider Karelia; the expression 'Karelia on the side of the province of Savonia' referred to its administrative connections with Savonia and thus to the west rather than the east. According to Paasi North Karelia began to institutionalize[53] with the growth of Joensuu and the development of the school system. One of the region's first administrative breakaways happened as early as the 1830s, when the establishment of a separate county (*lääni*) of Karelia was discussed. Later, in the 1850s, 1910s, and 1920s, a Joensuu-centred county of North Karelia or Karelia was discussed, which would have connected North and Ladoga Karelia.[54]

As Joensuu, established in 1848, grew, the surrounding area began to be connected to the national network of cities and regions. Its inhabitants' understanding concerning the relationships between the regions had also begun to take shape. The town's conceptual importance was especially underlined by its position at the centre of North Karelia. Especially the burghers, for whom the town and its trade were the primary field of action, highlighted its central place, but they were also the most active group in launching the concept of North Karelia. When the concept became more common in the newspapers of the 1870s and 1880s and in Diet speeches from the 1880s, it was used especially to justify economy, infrastructure, and education initiatives. The concept became more political and exact. The North Karelia discourse was used to frame projects and represented the interests of a particular unified region, not just a social class or professional group.[55]

51. Paasi 1986.
52. Kuusisto & Merovuo 2021.
53. Paasi 1986.
54. Juvonen 2006, 421–434.
55. In the same way the use of the concept of Finland became more common among economists in Academy of Turku at the beginning of the nineteenth century. Marjanen 2017, 539.

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Region, state, and common good

The Fennomans introduced the Finnish word 'state' (*valtio*) alongside the older Swedish word *stat* in the 1840s, when a more specific and multidimensional concept was required to represent political action in addition to words like crown (*kruunu*), country (*maa*), realm (*valtakunta*), and Finland (*Suomi*). The use of the word *valtio* did not spread until the late nineteenth century in connection with the relationship between Russia and Finland. Before and after this the typical state discourses were international politics, law, administration, Finnish domestic policy questions, and above all the economy.[56]

North Karelian Diet members in the peasant estate often connected the state with the qualities of the economy. Expressions like 'at the expense of the state' (*valtion kustannuksella*), 'public funds' (*valtion varat, statens medel, statens tillgångs*), 'state aid' (*valtioapu*, *valtionavustus, statsbidrag*), 'state incomes' (*valtion tulot*), 'state expenses' (*valtion kulut*, *statens omkostnad*), 'state salaries' (*valtion palkat*), and 'state allowance' (*statsanslag, valtion määräraha*) were popular. The use of these concepts in Diet speeches in this sense was close to the state finance discourse, in which the state was primarily seen as a simple and practical administrative organization that focused on financial management and taxation, and the sort of state the governing council/senate of the first decades of the nineteenth century represented.

The state was therefore seen in regional political discourse mainly as a financier, which was naturally typical of later parliamentary debates too. What is essential, however, is that the role of the Senate as a representative of the state changed greatly from the 1860s, adopting a more varied political role. It received more power to make domestic reforms, and it developed from being a passive decision maker into an active initiator in the law and economy. It also gained an important role in the preparation of laws.[57] Speeches' content must therefore be seen in the light of the changed role of the state. Issues related to the modernization of society were discussed in the Diet, where public funds were of great importance. State funds were required to exploit the region's untapped potential and thus to develop it. The state's active political agency emerged in notions of the state as a financier with the opportunity to influence the regions' progress, and the regions depended on the state's political choices. It was hoped the state would be an active regional political player.

The activation of the state's role was reflected in speeches in several ways as the twentieth century approached. The state could offer care (1882), had needs (1882), provided help and influence (1888), and had duties (1888, 1894) and exclusive rights (1894). It is noteworthy that the state's role as an actor was most diverse in the protocols of the peasant estate, while in the clergy estate it played a minor role before the election of teacher and pastor Henrik Piipponen, who actively supported the nationalization of Joensuu's girls' school. In many cases, however, the Senate (also called the government) represented the state in Diet speeches, and it was also viewed contradictorily. Diet members among the peasantry saw that the Senate could act against the best interest of the people and treat regions unequally: 'Everyone knows how our Senate has behaved in this most expensive issue to our nation. One can say

56. Pulkkinen 2003.
57. Jussila 2004, 372–384.

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that the issue's implementation is far from satisfying reasonable demands and has been insufficient to achieve an honourable goal,' said Pekka Leppänen on 26 May 1885 in a discussion of the position of Finnish and Swedish in certain courts and offices.[58]

The relationship between the state administration and its local representatives was generally contradictory in regional discourse. It included mistrust and experiences of regionally unequal treatment. The mistrust could also extend to local officials of the crown like the police chief (*nimismies*), district registrar (*henkikirjuri*), and bailiff (*kruununvouti*), who acted as links to the county and central administration but were responsible to the crown instead of being representatives of the region. The relationship between the peasants and the bailiff, who was the highest officer in the jurisdictional district and was responsible for collecting tax, was distant:

> Especially, I heard common people, who always have something going on with the bailiffs and therefore know how things run, saying that the bailiff's office was unnecessary – like a fifth wheel on a wagon.[59]

In political actors' argumentation the common good was often what united the region and the state. Marjanen maintains that the common good or benefit of the wider region is a common rhetorical device in political language.[60] In the North Karelian context this was especially typical of large financial projects like the construction of canals or the expansion of the railway network. In these cases the economic benefits for Finland as a whole and the savings for the state during the hard years of crop failures were emphasized, as in the following quotation:

> … the canalization of the Pielisjoki would undoubtedly bring an advantage to the state, not only directly but also because passage through it on the Saimaa canal would greatly increase. There would also be a benefit to the state, which would over time become very noticeable, because in the frequently occurring dry years the considerable support required of the state to satisfy the hunger of distressed inhabitants of these parts of the country would certainly decrease with every year.[61]

58. Pekka Leppänen 26 May 1882, 1123. *Talonpoikaissäädyn pöytäkirjat valtiopäivillä v. 1882. Toinen vihko. Huhtikuun 25 päivästä valtiopäiväin loppuun*. Helsingissä 1891, Helsingin sentraalikirjapainossa. 'Kaikille kyllä on tunnettu, kuinka senaattimme tässä kansallemme mitä kalleimmassa asiassa on menetellyt. Voipi sanoa, että se tapa, jolla asiaa on täytäntöön saatettu, ei ole kohtuullisia vaatimuksia läheskään tyydyttänyt, eikä riittänyt kunnialliseen päämäärään pääsemiseen.'
59. Mikko Heikura 24 May 1888, 1626–1627. *Suomen talonpoikaissäädyn keskustelupöytäkirjat valtiopäivillä vuonna 1888.* Kolmas vihko. 2 p:stä Toukok. valtiopäiväin loppuun. Helsinki, Suomalaisen Kirjallisuuden Seurain Kirjapaino, 1890. 'Varsinkin kuulin yhteisen kansan, jolla on joka aika tekemistä kruununvoutien kanssa ja jotka sentähden tietävät miten asiat juoksevat, sananpartenaan sanovan että kruununvoutien virasto on niin kuin viides ratas vaunussa tarpeeton.'
60. Marjanen 2017, 539.
61. Mikko Heikura 23 February 1872, 46–47. *Suomen talonpoikaissäädyn pöytäkirjat valtiopäivillä v. 1872. Ensimmäinen vihko*. Valtiopäivien alusta toukokuun 6 p:vään. Helsingissä 1895, Helsingin sentraali-kirjapainossa, Fabianink. 6. '[S]illä Pielisjoen kanavoittaminen epäilemättä tuottaisi valtiolle etua ei ainoastaan suorastaan, mutta sitenkin, että sen kautta kulku Saimaan kanavalla suuresti lisäytyisi. Siitä olisi valtiolle vielä sekin hyöty, joka aikaa myöten

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It was important from the perspective of the common good to emphasize the region's potential, which became an essential counter-discourse to the miserable Karelia rhetoric towards the end of the nineteenth century. North Karelia was described as full of untapped resources awaiting harnessing. '[T]here are people living there, and there are life, imports and exports, and much currently unused capital.'[62] Local representatives described natural resources like waterpower, timber, and minerals, underlining the region's large population and extensive area. North Karelia's propitious location close to Russian Karelia's forest resources was also mentioned.

Diet rhetoric typically emphasized that Eastern Finland and later North Karelia belonged to a larger national entity whose parts were complementary. When one limb was sore, the whole body was sick. 'Fatherland' was a rhetorical concept used to connect different parts of the country. As a concept, it was emotional and encompassed moral dimensions. The concept's change in use after 1809 was remarkable because, according to Katajisto, the concept of fatherland under Swedish rule had meant for the Finns the whole power of the kingdom, a kind of loyalism, whereas in the new situation it began to serve as a concept that distinguished Finland from Russia and Sweden. Klinge, for his part, emphasizes the scenic nature of the concept of the fatherland, which, however, acquired social and historical features in the 1850s and 1860s.[63] Terms like 'patriotism' (*isänmaallisuus*) and 'patriotic mind' (*isänmaallinen mieli*) were used in Diet speeches, as well as 'friend of the fatherland' (*isänmaan ystävä*). 'Fatherland' was also associated with responsibilities, shared honour, the willingness to defend it and desire for its security, steady progress, and shared interests. Fatherland was an important concept that could also be used to promote the regions' status.

Loyalty to the emperor

The Grand Duchy of Finland was a more official concept for describing Finland's status in the nineteenth century than 'state' and 'fatherland'. The concept of Grand Duchy, however, was lacking in both Diet speeches and local correspondence concerning North Karelia. In the newspapers the concept was most frequently used in newspapers in foreign reporting concerning Europe's other Grand Duchies. In the Finnish situation the Grand Duchy was often mentioned in news borrowed from foreign newspapers. In reports and articles produced in Finland the Grand Duchy was connected with the situation in Finland and its administration and legislation. The Grand Duchy was also used in announcements, declarations, official notifications, laws, and regulations published in the name of the emperor. The essential element in both the foreign press and domestic reporting was the presence of Russia. One way or another reports and articles described the relationship between Finland and Russia

kävisi erinomattain tuntuvaksi, että ne melkoiset apuvarat, joilla valtion, useasti sattuvina katovuosina, täytyy tyydyttää yllämainittujen maanosien hätäytyneitten asukkaiden nälkää, ihan varmasti vuosi vuodelta vähenisivät.'

62. Juho Pitkänen 9 May 1891, 1217–1221. *Talonpoikaissäädyn keskustelupöytäkirjat valtiopäivillä vuonna 1891. Kolmas vihko*. 2. p:stä Toukok. valtiopäiväin loppuun. Kuopio, O. W. Backman'in kirjapaino 1892. '[S]iellä asuu ihmisiä, että siellä on elämää, tuontia ja vientiä, sekä suuria pääomia, jotka nyt ovat aivan käyttämättöminä.'
63. Katajisto 2009; Klinge 1997; See also Chapter 5 in this book.

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from either the Finnish or Russian perspective. The Grand Duchy was not therefore connected with domestic policy questions, the relations or interaction between the state and regional level, or the formation of regional identity as part of Finnishness. This is supported by the Finnish-language newspaper material (1820–1899), an analysis of which indicates the concepts most closely related to the Grand Duchy concerned both Finland's legal position and the emperor and his majesty (often in official rhetoric). Connections with the people are rare, as are adjectives describing the Grand Duchy of Finland or its identity.

The concept of 'grand duke' affords an opportunity for wider reflection. Discourse praising the emperor's mercy and favour was part of official rhetoric in the nineteenth century, and it is difficult to determine when the compliments were real or merely a convention. In the statements of Antti Puhakka and Mikko Heikura, however, the attitude towards the grand duke seemed something more than formality. It can be seen as a reflection of people's perception of the public sphere in the early nineteenth century, in which the emperor represented public opinion and was regarded as knowing what the public interest was.[64] For these peasants the grand duke represented the highest justice over Western Finland's oppression of Karelia by the Senate and unreliable officials: 'Our Grand Duke, who is beloved by all, would certainly not tolerate the linguistic defects that exist in our civil servants and court system. Both the Finnish and Russian people owe him a great debt of gratitude.'[65] This way of speaking of the grand duke occurred almost exclusively in the peasant estate, and it reflected the history of the cult of the emperor in Finland. The old tradition of peasant sovereignty included the possibility of making complaints and petitions directly to the king, which in turn was an indication of the mutual – though unequal – rights and obligations between the king and peasants.[66] Thus interpreted, the emperor's power could be seen by the peasants as implying a non-political power that itself exceeded the Finnish state's contradictory and sometimes undesirable exercise of political power.

For example, in 1861 *Tapio* reported a direct approach to the emperor by peasants from Eastern Finland (Kuopio, Kempele, Liminka, and Sääminki), who visited him in St Petersburg to present their case for raising the status of Finnish in the court and education systems.[67] The question concerning the status of Finnish was also part of an address of thanks to the emperor, signed by the chairman of the Joensuu town council Henrik Piipponen at the local *Seurahuone* social club.[68] The emperor's language edict had included a limit of twenty years, during which the courts and offices were required to produce documents in both Swedish and Finnish. This had now expired, and progress in the status of Finnish had been made on many fronts.[69]

Regional discourse about the grand duke had a tone of worship, directed at Alexander I (1801–1825) and continued during the reign of Alexander II (1855–1881).

64. Huhta 2001, 46.
65. Antti Puhakka 29 October 1877, Suomen talonpoikaissäädyn pöytäkirjat valtiopäivillä 1877–1878, toinen vihko, Helsingissä 1901, 1290. 'Sellaisia kielellisiä epäkohtia, joita on virkakunnissa ja oikeuslaitoksissamme, ei suinkaan sietäisi tuo kaikkien rakastama Suuriruhtinaamme, jolle sekä Suomen että Venäjän kansa on suuressa kiitollisuuden velassa.'
66. Katajala 1994, 175–177.
67. *Suometar* 12.4.1861: Suomalaisten keisarissa-käynti, 1–2.
68. *Karjalatar* 8.1.1884, 1–2.
69. Klinge 1997.

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The conservative Fennomans especially maintained a cult of the emperor, in which the tsars were seen as great patrons who had secured Finland's special status at the Diet of Porvoo in 1809, enabling Finland to evolve into a modern European state. The Fennomans saw the emperor's autocratic position paradoxically as a precondition for preserving Finland's autonomy. Liberals also felt loyalty to the emperor because they understood that only with the emperor's trust was it possible to sustain Finland's special status, both culturally and economically. The liberals connected the emperor's power, however, with the rights guaranteed by the constitution, not his personal power.[70] The fear of losing the emperor's favour was evident in the sorrow expressed in the regional press when Alexander II was assassinated in 1881.

In this context, attention should also be paid to the nuances between the concepts "grand duke" and "emperor" among Finnish peasant representatives. While the grand duke appeared in parliamentary discussions as a figure from whom concrete positions on questions concerning Finland were expected, and whose relationship with the Finns had its own special features, the emperor appeared more distant, primarily through his role as a legislator and an administrative figure. The emperor was part of the terminology of decrees (for example, "the emperor's proposal", "the emperor's decree") or appeared as the recipient of petitions made by the peasants. The emperor was the supreme holder of power.

Conclusions

The chapter has refined the picture of the relationship between the region and the state in the formative phase of the modern regionalism between the 1850s and 1890s, when provincialism as a political and cultural attribute was still taking shape, but when it was nevertheless used in various ways and in different degrees in political discourse. The question is discussed through the lens of the region of North Karelia in Eastern Finland, which also introduces the context of the relationship between peripheral and central regions. The formation of North Karelia's cultural identity was still in its infancy in the late nineteenth century, provincial borders were fluid, and regional builders lacked the mobilizing instruments like the regional associations nation builders had already used. The region's political space was strengthened, however, by demanding resources and rights. North Karelian representatives advocated state building and the emergence of a coherent nation-state, but appealing to the common interest of the nation and the equitable development of the fatherland was also a rhetorical strategy for promoting regional or estate-related interests. Indeed, the early 'regional policy' discourse of the nineteenth century must be seen as part of a change in the relationship between regions and the state.

As Joost Augusteijn and Eric Storm have stated,[71] the formation of regional identities and growing awareness of regional boundaries have been transnational phenomena with largely similar backgrounds but different manifestations across Europe. It must be remembered that Finland itself was a substructure that struggled throughout the nineteenth century to strengthen its own identity and the role of

70. Katajisto 2009, 152–154; Rasilainen 1986; Klinge 1997.
71. Augusteijn & Storm 2012a; Augusteijn & Storm 2012b.

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the state. North Karelia was thus a substructure of the substructure, which had a relationship with both the Finnish central government and the Russian Empire and its emperor. The development of Finland and its regions is thus not fully comparable with the nation-states of Central Europe like Germany, France, or Italy, all of which included culturally unique subregions or regions with a long tradition of self-government. What is common, however, is that the role of the state as a nationalizer of regions has been central everywhere. In both Finland and France, for example, a relatively strong central state has been able to tie the regions into a coherent national entity by developing its education system and infrastructure. As in many other emerging nation-states, based on this study, regional development in Finland served to strengthen the state.

In the formative phase of modern regionalism reliance on the nation-state afforded an opportunity to address the needs of the region's business community. In the North Karelian representatives' argumentation the relationship between the state and the region involved a certain mutuality: the Finnish state had a responsibility to take care of all its regions, while the capital and potential of the region existed to promote the state and the nation. Despite the economic emphasis of speeches, the state was seen as more than just an administrative or budgetary machine; it was considered to have the opportunity to influence the region's development, and it was also desired as an active regional policy actor. Yet the region's dependence on the state and its resources was evident. The country's smallness and the narrowness of its educated circles and political elite were also peculiar to Finland. This meant regional discussions were ultimately quite close to national ones, and parliamentarians were thus the few who had political networks outside their own region, especially in North Karelia. This in turn intensified the relationship between the regions and the state. An interesting topic for further study would be the connections of local elites with national ones, and how they were able to promote their (regional) targets.

The Grand Duchy was not an object of identification at the regional level, but the state was more relevant in this sense. The relationship between the region and the Finnish state was clearly political, in contrast to the region's relationship with the emperor, the Grand Duke of Finland, who was considered the representative of the supreme power. It was possible to see contradictions and faults in the activities of the Finnish state – and even a political game – but the emperor's power appeared, at least in the peasantry's public rhetoric, to be an apolitical authority and a representative of supreme justice. This shows the essential role the state played in Finnish (regional) political thinking and the understanding of the state as a participatory, responsible, and integrating societal actor. Comparative research is required to sharpen the focus and identify any anomalies and conflicts in the relationship between the state and the regions, and it will be necessary to study the state's role in regional discourse from the turn of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries to identify any regional differences.

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Parliamentarism as an Argument in the Grand Duchy of Finland

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Imperial dependence and sudden political reforms

In 1906 the Grand Duchy of Finland was the first country in Europe and the second in the world to introduce equal and universal voting rights for men and women, including the right of women to be elected in such democratic elections. It seemed the Grand Duchy, which was part of the autocratically ruled Russian Empire and had no functioning political representation before 1863, had suddenly joined the vanguard of parliamentary democratization. National mobilization in the form of mass movements and political parties, as well as popular engagement in the defence of the constitution, was crucial for the reform, but these factors alone cannot explain why the 1906 parliamentary reform was so radical and so early. Seemingly paradoxically, the early introduction of universal suffrage should also be viewed as a consequence of Finland's imperial dependence and the lack of political progress caused by Finland's incorporation into the empire. As has often been observed, the sudden decline of the imperial Russian regime's power because of Russia's loss to Japan in the 1905 war generated social and political pressure, resulting in Nicholas II's promise to convene the Duma, the Russian representative assembly, and to allow preparations for a reform of political representation in the Grand Duchy of Finland based on the principle of universal suffrage.[1]

However, another imperial factor should also be considered. As some contemporaries observed, the reform was possible only because it did not touch on the relationship between parliament and the government.[2] Without necessarily pointing to the lack of the introduction of parliamentary control of government as an explanation for the 1906 reform, later scholarly accounts have usually noted that governing power remained in the hands of the imperial government and the Emperor, the Grand Duke of Finland. The Finnish senate had no formal political responsibility for the representation, and even the attempt to introduce judicial responsibility failed. As Petri Koikkalainen aptly puts it, 'the ministers of the Grand Duke' could

1. For the breakthrough of universal suffrage in Finland see e.g. Mylly 2006; Sulkunen, Lähteenmäki & Korppi-Tommola 2006; Hentilä & Schug 2006; Kurunmäki 2008, 355–370; Ihalainen & Kinnunen 2022, 55–70.
2. I will discuss contemporary accounts later in this chapter. For a later account explaining the 1906 reform this way, see Teljo 1949, 36–38.

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not be transformed to 'ministers of parliament'.[3] Against this background we should also understand why Finland in 1917 was the first country in Europe to grant the principle of parliamentarism constitutional status.[4] This took place in the context of an even more dramatic decline of imperial Russian power than that in 1905, as the February Revolution in March 1917 brought down the imperial dynasty in the Russian Empire, followed by the October Revolution in November 1917. The empire remained, but in a state of revolution, and more importantly – from Finland's perspective – there was no longer a Grand Duke of Finland.

In this chapter I explore Finland's peculiar imperial dependency – its 'grand duchy-ness' – by analyzing how the concept of parliamentarism and the notions of representative or parliamentary government until the end of 1917 have been discussed in Finland. The study is about the history of an argument rather than an institutional development of the Finnish government, the senate.[5] Covering roughly the period from 1863, when Alexander II announced that the Grand Duchy of Finland was a constitutional monarchy, through the period when the notion of Finland being a constitutional monarchy had become a defensive argument used by the Finns, to the age of modern democratic reforms discussed above, I investigate how the relationship between representation, government, and monarch was conceptualized through the language of parliamentary government or parliamentarism. I thus hope to capture how the political relationship between imperial power, domestic government, and political representation was conceptualized, highlighting the role the division of the Russian ruler's political person into the Emperor and the Grand Duke played in the Finnish political struggles within the Grand Duchy and vis-à-vis imperial Russia.

I will show that many of the arguments concerning parliamentarism boiled down to the question of whether the Grand Duke was a different political person than the Emperor of Russia. An examination of the concepts of parliamentary government and parliamentarism makes it possible to provide a perspective on the Grand Duchy of Finland's changing political position when there were two strong conflicting political tendencies: the increasing imperial pressure against Finland's constitutional position on the one hand; and the growing demands for democratization on the other, of which the question of popular control of government was an important part. In analyzing arguments concerning the government's legitimacy and political role, the study will also show how arguments, theories, and political practices in other countries have been used as arguments in Finland.

Given that any parliamentary government or parliamentarism[6] was a far from reality in Finland before 1917, it is understandable that the concepts have gained less attention than the concepts of nation, state, constitution, representation, and democracy. Studies of parliamentarism usually start from 1917. That said,

3. Koikkalainen 2007, 36.
4. Ståhlberg 1927, 16.
5. I will use the words government and senate interchangeably, except when contemporaries made a distinction between the use of these words. I also follow the conventional way of using the word senate to mean the economic department of the senate unless the contemporaries explicitly referred to the distinction between the economic and the judicial departments of the senate in the analysed argument.
6. Although I use these two expressions synonymously here, I also note the historic difference between them. I shall discuss the difference in the analysis when necessary.

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previous studies of the Finnish senate, constitutional issues, political representation, mass movements and political parties, and political representation provide an important foundation on which this study builds.[7] As this study is an analysis of parliamentarism as an argument over time, the thematically closest previous research includes also historical analyses of the concepts of democracy, representation, and government, as well as the rhetoric of parliamentary procedures.[8] My analysis builds on this research, as well as public sources consisting of newspapers and periodicals published in Finland during this period and records from the Finnish estates and the *Eduskunta* (parliament).[9] Key texts have generally been identified through word searches in the digitally available material.

At the heart of my analysis is the Russian Emperor's dual role as both *Keisari* (in Finnish) or *Kejsaren* (in Swedish) – *Tsar* was barely used in Finland – and the Grand Duke of Finland (*Suuriruhtinas, Storfurste*). From the beginning of the Grand Duchy it created a situation in which Finns had to ask themselves whether the ruler had two political persons. This question was given various answers in the different political situations in which Finns had to conceptualize their 'grand duchy-ness'.

Constitutional monarchy and the monarch's divided political personality

Addressing the Finnish estates at the opening ceremony of the Finnish Diet in September 1863, Alexander II stated that he was maintaining 'the principles of constitutional monarchy' which were inherent in the mores of the Finnish people, and which characterized their laws and institutions. He promised to increase the estates' rights in legislation concerning taxation and to give them the motion rights he claimed they had traditionally enjoyed. He also promised to summon the Diet in three years and hinted at regular meetings of the representative assembly. The Grand Duke reserved to himself, however, the right to initiate legislation concerning the foundational laws.[10] It seemed Alexander II had finally confirmed that Finland indeed had a constitution, as the Diet had not convened since 1809, when Alexander I had summoned the four-estate diet, the *Lantdag*, and promised to maintain the traditional Swedish privileges and the constitution of the people. There had been 54 years without a meeting of the estates in Finland. The change was viewed as the birth

7. For studies on government in Finland, see e.g. Rauhala 1921; Ståhlberg 1927; Lindman 1935; Lindman 1968; Jansson 1982; Jyränki 2006; Nousiainen 2006.
8. See e.g. Pohjantammi 2003; Pekonen 2005; Pekonen 2014; Jakobsen & Kurunmäki 2016; Kurunmäki & Liikanen 2017.
9. Newspapers and periodicals have been explored through the National Library of Finland's research interface at https://digi.kansalliskirjasto.fi, and the estate and parliamentary records through the interface *People and Parliament*. See Ihalainen et al. 2022.
10. *Protokoll fördt hos Vällofliga Borgareståndet å Landtdagen i Helsingfors 1863–1864. Första Bandet: Från landtdagens början till slutet af år 1863*, 9. The speech was prepared by high-ranking Finnish officials and members of the Finnish senate. In addition to the Grand Duke himself, the authors of the speech included Minister State Secretary Alexander Armfelt and Vice Minister State Secretary Emil Stjernvall-Walleen, as well as the senators F. O. Brunér and J. V. Snellman. See Palmén 1916, 39; Krusius-Ahrenberg 1981, 126.

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of parliamentary life and was dubbed by Yrjö Koskinen the end of 'the night of the state' (*valtioyö*).[11]

What counted as a constitutional monarchy was a matter of interpretation, however. As the German historian Willibald Steinmetz has noted, 'constitutional monarchy' during the first half of the nineteenth century became the typical form of government in most European countries, but there were variations and exceptions. The most notable were Russia, Prussia, and the Habsburg empire, where the expression served as one of those anticipatory concepts that were used to guide the future course of politics.[12] In general, 'constitutional monarchy' could mean that a monarchy had a written constitution in which traditional estate-based political structures were conserved, as was the case in several post-Napoleonic constitutions. It could also mean a 'dualistic' system, in which the government was the sphere of the monarch, and the legislation belonged to the sphere of political representation, as in Sweden after 1809. What they all had in common was that there must be a representative assembly in a monarchy.[13]

Political representation was one of the most prominent political issues in the nineteenth century. After the French Revolution, and especially in post-Napoleonic Europe, political representation became a standard in all written constitutions – which was itself another new standard. This also explains why the inactive or non-existent assembly of political representation in Finland between 1809 and 1863 was so abnormal if one wanted to maintain the idea that the Grand Duchy had a constitution. Autocracies were obviously not constitutional monarchies, but an autocratically ruled empire may have contained political units which did have a constitution and which, at least nominally, were governed accordingly. The Russian Empire in the nineteenth century with the Kingdom of Poland (1815–1831) and the Grand Duchy of Finland (1809, 1863–1917) exemplifies such 'multi-layered autocracy' or 'imperial constitutionality'.

Calls for a reform of political representation were often associated with the question of the monarch's role as the political executive. There were therefore recurring demands for 'representative government', 'parliamentary government', and – towards the end of the century – 'parliamentarism'. British parliamentary government was the most famous and was commonly regarded as the exemplar of a constitutional monarchy with parliamentary government.[14] So if Finland was a constitutional monarchy, as Alexander II informed Finns in 1863, how should it be governed?

Many Finnish journalists, publicists, and other politically active people, usually called 'liberals', wanted to take the Grand Duke at his word. Indeed, some had already started to act as if they were living in a constitutional monarchy. Pushing the limits of what was politically possible, they adopted political ideas and concepts that were used in more advanced political systems. There was quite a significant presence of liberal opinion in Finland that saw the political system as requiring substantial reform, including the abolition of political estates and the introduction of political

11. Yrjö Koskinen, *Helsingin Uutiset* 3 January 1863; see also *Helsingfors Dagblad* 28 October 1862. For a discussion see Kurunmäki 2004, 193–199; Kurunmäki & Marjanen 2021, 575–576.
12. Steinmetz 2019, 295, 304.
13. See e.g. Boldt 1978, 192–200; Podlech 1984, 531–536.
14. See e.g. Eulau 1940, 33–55.

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responsibility between political representation and government.[15] Some liberals appeared to ignore the Grand Duchy's dependence on imperial Russia in arguing that Finland should be given neutral status if there were a war between the Russian Empire and a western alliance during the Polish uprising.[16]

J. V. Snellman, the intellectual leader of the national Finnish-language movement and a newly appointed member of the senate, claimed that liberals' enthusiasm was seriously dangerous for Finland. A few months before the opening of the Diet, Snellman, who was one of the Finns who had drafted Alexander's speech at its opening, pointed out a fact that he thought had been forgotten:

> But Alexander II is not only the Grand Duke of Finland; he is the Autocrat [*Sjelfherrskare*] of the Russian Empire. Whatever he confesses to Finland, he does so with the power to be able to deny it. [...] This is also what many true patriotic Finns often forget: that the Grand Duke of Finland is the Emperor of Russia.[17]

In a similar vein the Swedish political scientist Wilhelm Erik Svedelius pointed to the monarch's dual role in Finland when the attempted amendment (or indeed confirmation) of the Finnish constitution was left intact in connection with the drafting of the 1869 Diet Act. He maintained that the future of constitutional politics in Finland remained uncertain, as the government side of the constitutional state would be much stronger than that of political representation because 'the Grand Duke of Finland was also the Emperor of Russia'.[18]

Early 'parliamentarism' and 'parliamentary government' in the Finnish press

Given how important yet controversial the issue of parliamentary government has been in European struggles for the popular legitimacy of government and parliamentary democratization, it is quite surprising that the emergence of the very word parliamentarism has gone almost unnoticed in scholarly accounts. It has been customary to discuss the history of parliamentarism starting in eighteenth-century England, if not earlier, and proceeding to nineteenth-century issues regarding the relationship between the ruler, the government, and the body of political representation in Britain, France, Belgium, and other countries. Parliamentarism has been employed as an analytical concept under which institutional and theoretical developments, as well as national or cultural variations, have taken place.[19]

The word 'parliamentarism' is younger than accounts of parliamentarism might lead us to suppose. In noting the word's first use, reference has been made to

15. See e.g. Rauhala 1906, 147–169.
16. See e.g. Landgren 1995.
17. Snellman 1863, 274.
18. Svedelius 1872, 50.
19. For a conventional view see Selinger 2019. For a nominalist conceptual history view see Boldt 1978, 667–668; Kurunmäki, Ihalainen & Peksujeff 2025, 323--350.

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Victor Hugo's critical and satirical 1852 pamphlet *Napoléon le Petit*.[20] The famous French author and radical writer used 'parliamentarism' satirically as one of many ways to attack Napoleon III's coup. However, caution should always be exercised in identifying a word's first occurrence. 'Parliamentarism' appeared in the official Finnish newspaper *Finlands Allmänna Tidning* as early as 16 January 1852 in a news item that referred to the Belgian newspaper *L'Indépendance Belge* and dealt with the French political situation, the point being that Napoleon III had liberated Frenchmen from 'parliamentarism'.[21] Subsequent occurrences of the term in Finnish newspapers referred to 'English parliamentarism',[22] French political life,[23] and the 'displeasing parliamentarism' in Prussia.[24] The term was coined as a negative characterization, but it was soon also used in neutral or positive descriptions of parliamentary life, especially regarding British political life.

The first time a Finnish journalist used the word without quoting foreign news, the tone was clearly affirmative. Writing in his *Papperslyktan* in 1861, the liberal writer August Schauman argued that 'journalism and parliamentarism' constituted the 'backbone of modern freedom'. However, he was not commenting on the Finnish political situation but critically discussing how Napoleon III's regime was curtailing public debate in France.[25] Whether this should be taken as a comment on the political situation in Finland is a matter for speculation, but it is evident that Schauman belonged to those young intellectuals who were critical of Russia's imperial power over Finland.

The Russian imperial view of parliamentarism was sharply critical, and this was partly reflected in the Finnish public sphere in *Finlands Allmänna Tidning*'s reporting. The Finnish paper quoted an article in the Russian imperial French-language paper *Le Nord* in 1862 which dealt with the political situation in Prussia, where opinion was divided between two slogans: 'the kingdom rules'; and 'parliamentarism and people's power means revolution'.[26] In 1865 the Finnish official newspaper quoted 'a newspaper in St Petersburg' which held that if there were anything the government did not want in Russia, it was this 'anxious and demanding parliamentarianism'.[27] A year later, in connection with the Danish–German Schleswig issue, the Finnish paper, quoting the Russian paper, wrote that the conflict was caused by the attempt of 'Danish parliamentarism' to extend its power over Germans in Schleswig. According to the article 'constitutional parliamentarism is unsuitable for a state that is composed of different nationalities'.[28]

Before 'parliamentarism' was coined the phenomenon it supposedly sought to capture was often discussed using the expression 'parliamentary government'. The expression remained well established even after 'parliamentarism' came into use, which means the two must be studied alongside each other. 'Parliamentary government'

20. Hugo 1909 [1852], 208–209; see also Boldt 1978, 667.
21. *Finlands Allmänna Tidning* 6 January 1852.
22. *Finlands Allmänna Tidning* 17 February 1855; FAT 3 February 1860.
23. *Finlands Allmänna Tidning* 21 April 1858; FAT 27 May 1858; *Wiborg* 13 February 1860.
24. *Finlands Allmänna Tidning* 15 December 1858.
25. *Papperslyktan* 5 August 1861, 243.
26. *Finlands Allmänna Tidning* 11 April 1862.
27. *Finlands Allmänna Tidning* 18 February 1865.
28. *Finlands Allmänna Tidning* 27 September 1866.

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(*parlamentarisk regering*)[29] appeared in Finnish newspapers in 1839 in an article dealing with French politics. In subsequent articles parliamentary government was associated with 'liberal government',[30] 'progress',[31] and 'a new political epoch'.[32] At the time of the emergence of 'parliamentarism' the official Finnish newspaper referred to an English paper in presenting a positive view of Napoleon III's new regime, writing that 'the constitution guarantees the French people a parliamentary government'.[33] In the following years the references to 'parliamentarism' and 'parliamentary government' dealt mostly with French politics, though it is also possible to find 'parliamentary government' in England and Hungary, for example.[34] These two expressions were used synonymously, probably to avoid repetition, for the first time in 1864 in an article describing French politics.[35] Although these very early uses of the terms offered neither a theoretical explanation of their meaning nor whether parliamentarism or parliamentary government meant something positive or negative, they nevertheless gave the Finnish reader access to the practices and issues of parliamentary politics.

The beginning of parliamentary life and the issue of ministerial responsibility

The beginning of the Diet's regular meetings in 1863 made parliamentary concepts more relevant than before in the Grand Duchy. Several articles and some books addressing the constitutional position of Finland and the Diet were published at the beginning of the 1860s.[36] There were, however, no publications in which the relationship between the government and representation was discussed as a question of parliamentary government or parliamentarism, but some newspaper articles were clearly intended to be educational in this regard.

Koskinen's 1863 article, in which he coined the expression 'the night of the state' (*valtioyö*), is a prime example of such a practice. Although he did not use the terms 'parliamentary government' or 'parliamentarism', he spelled out some of the elementary principles of how the British government functioned while trying to mobilize a language-based two-party confrontation between his 'Fennomans' and the 'liberals' – the latter, according to Koskinen, being advocates of the privileged position of Swedish in Finland. Koskinen can be regarded as the first Finnish public

29. Given that there were more Swedish-language newspapers than Finnish ones until the 1890s, and that the word parliamentary is more foreign in Finnish than in Swedish, it is understandable that the expression *parlamentaarinen hallitus* appeared in the newspaper for the first time in the 1880s.
30. *Finlands Allmänna Tidning* 7 June 1839.
31. *Finlands Allmänna Tidning* 23 April 1840.
32. *Finlands Allmänna Tidning* 20 May 1840.
33. *Finlands Allmänna Tidning* 30 January 1852.
34. See e.g. Åbo Tidning 8 June 1860; *Finlands Allmänna Tidning* 15 April 1861; 22 November 1861.
35. *Helsingfors Dagblad* 5 September 1864.
36. The most important books include Palmén 1861; Rosenborg 1863.

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intellectual and politician who openly argued in favour of a party division.[37] He saw this as having developed in countries where political freedom had a firm foothold. It is noteworthy that his ideal was a two-party system, in which one party held the government position as the 'highest advisory body of the ruler (*hallitsija*)', while the other party attempted, as he put it, 'with all lawful means' to succeed it in office. In such circumstances it was natural that the party with the ruler's ear also supported the government, as its goals were the same as those of that party. It was the party of government.[38] Koskinen saw the role of an opposition as that of a unified party ready to take over the government when the government lost its support. Of course, such an idea was far from possible in Finland, but it suited his party-political purposes. It was also symptomatic that he said nothing about the monarch's role and powers – only that the members of the government formed an advisory board of the ruler.

The 'liberals', Koskinen's object of criticism, were mainly gathered around the newspaper *Helsingfors Dagblad*. They were more explicit about their sympathy for British political culture, leading Koskinen to accuse them of being British-style liberals while safeguarding the privileges of Swedish language at home.[39] In commenting on the ongoing debate concerning a parliamentary reform in Sweden, a reform that would remove estates-based representation and introduce a bicameral system, *Helsingfors Dagblad* not only claimed that Sweden would move to 'the age of the peoples, parliamentary government, and a constitutional state', but also that 'the existing constitution of Sweden is merely an improved version of the constitution under which we here in Finland still live'. According to the paper a Swedish reform would provide 'an example for us to follow'.[40]

The introduction of the principle of ministerial responsibility (*ministeransvarigheten*) in Finland was already raised during the 1863–1864 Diet when a debate on a petition regarding the organization of the higher state administration became a debate on the responsibility of the members of the senate.[41] Whether this meant the responsibility of an individual minister (i.e. a senator) or all the ministers (the whole senate) was often left unsaid, as was the question of whether it was of a judicial or political nature.[42] According to Professor F. L. Schauman even the monarch had expected ministerial responsibility when he had stated in his opening speech at the Diet that Finland was a constitutional monarchy. Schauman pointed out that such responsibility did not mean that 'the ruler's power would be transferred to the hands of his ministers, and that a parliamentary government would be introduced'.[43] He

37. When Koskinen was appointed Professor of History at the University of Helsinki in 1863, his inaugural lecture dealt with the English political system. See Koskimies 1974, 61.
38. *Helsingin Uutiset* 2 January 1863. I have translated the words *hallitsija* (in Finnish) and *regent* or *härskare* (in Swedish) with the word ruler, saving the words sovereign and monarch for direct traslations of *monark*/*monarkki* and *suverän*/*suvereeni*. The English word regent denotes someone who governs in place of a monarch.
39. See Kurunmäki 2004, 195.
40. *Helsingfors Dagblad* 29 October 1862.
41. The debate was conducted in Swedish. The Finnish expressions included '*ministerivastuu*', '*ministerien vastuunalaisuus*', and '*hallituksen vastuunalaisuus*'. See Rauhala 1906, 160; Lindman 1935, 7.
42. Rauhala 1906, 160.
43. F. L. Schauman, 7 April 1864, Clergy, 3: 661.

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claimed that ministerial responsibility had already been granted to Finland in the 1634 Swedish Instrument of Government, though the constitution had not been based on any idea of parliamentary government: such responsibility had been omitted in 1772 but was reintroduced in 1809 in Sweden. Not even then had the purpose been that the ministers would govern, only that they were responsible to the Riksdag for their advice to the ruler. Schauman concluded his speech by stating that a constitutional state would not come into existence if the monarch's advisers were not responsible.[44] His historical examples indicate that responsibility was of a judicial character, and the role of the representative assembly was involved through the examination of government decisions' judicial aspects.

In 1865 Koskinen argued that ministerial responsibility for the Diet was impossible in Finnish conditions, as the foundation of the ruler's power was not the Finnish people but that of another 'great empire'.[45] A far more critical view was voiced in 1864 at the noble estate by Major General C. L. N. von Schoultz. His argument against any implementation of ministerial responsibility illuminates the age's conservative rhetoric: judicial ministerial responsibility would entail a step towards the calamities of 'progress' and 'parliamentary government'. Using the Swedish Age of Liberty (1719–1772) and the French parliamentary government of the 1830s as warnings, he argued that a similar system was now being discussed in Finland 'in the name of progress'.[46] He claimed that the French system had ended in corruption and contemporary 'French imperialism', and that the money-based electoral system in England had caused scandals.[47] Finland should not follow that path but maintain and build on the historically rooted love of the ruler:

> [W]e are historically accustomed to revere, love, and obey our ruler, '*the Lord's anointed*', who does not wish to blindly carry out his ministers' decisions, but who commands them to execute *his* decisions. To make some ministerial dignitaries the holder of the actual power of the ruler, or through the proposed responsibility principle, indirectly transfer much of the current constitutional legitimacy of the two state powers to one of them, to the Landtdag, and thereby make the ruler a mere executor of its views, would be in *direct conflict* with our historical development, and were it completed, soon turn our peaceful Landtdag into a hotbed of party-political battles.[48]

Although von Schoultz's royalist argument may be considered thoroughly conservative, it proved to withstand the changes of the age better than Schauman's moderate liberal position. As we will see, not even judicial ministerial responsibility became a reality in the Grand Duchy before 1917. A plan to introduce a written constitution, the Instrument of Government, hinted at by Alexander II in his opening speech at the 1863 Diet, failed because of the Grand Duke's unwillingness to proceed

44. F. L. Schauman, 7 April 1864, Clergy, 3: 661–662.
45. Quoted in Pohjantammi 2003, 379.
46. von Schoultz, 9 April 1864, Nobles, 5: 689.
47. von Schoultz, 9 April 1864, Nobles, 5, 690.
48. von Schoultz, 9 April 1864, Nobles, 5, 690 [italics in the original].

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with the matter. The 1869 Diet Act did not touch on the relationship between the Diet and the senate.[49]

Explaining the principles of constitutional monarchy and parliamentarism in the 1870s

Regular meetings of the Diet enlivened public debate on Finnish politics. Just as modern political concepts gained practical relevance in Finland, there were attempts to explain how they should be understood. The first theoretical accounts of constitutional monarchy and parliamentarism, published in Finnish periodicals in the late 1870s, clearly had both educational and anticipatory purposes. In 1876 Leo Mechelin, a professor of law and the country's leading liberal constitutionalist, wrote two lengthy articles titled 'Constitutional Politics' in which he pointed out the difference between absolute and constitutional monarchy. For him the introduction of the constitution to a state was 'a turning point in its history'. Having a constitution meant that 'law should prevail instead of arbitrariness, that citizens are not only governed subjects but also participate in the decisions concerning the state's most important affairs through their delegates'.[50]

Mechelin argued that the introduction of a constitutional regime to an absolutist monarchy usually started from above. It is easy to get the impression that he was thinking of Finland when he argued further that the only way to achieve constitutional reform was to 'transfer as much as possible of the decision-making power in the affairs of the state to the representation'. This would limit 'the previously arbitrary power of the rulers'.[51] In Mechelin's terminology the opposite of constitutional politics was bureaucratic politics. He pointed out that when political life reached a level 'that can be described as parliamentarism', bureaucratic politics would no longer be possible.[52] In his famous critique of the estate-based political representation in the same issue of *Finsk Tidskrift*, Mechelin argued for the right of ministers to participate in the procedures of the estates. He also held this would enable the senate to gain support from the representation and to have a political programme it aimed to implement.[53]

A more explicit account of 'parliamentary government' was published a year later by the legal scholar Emil Furuhjelm, who averred that parliamentarism was 'a further development of the purely representative state'.[54] He argued that the modern content of the concepts 'parliamentary' and 'parliamentarism' had developed during a period of limited monarchy.[55] Focusing on the English/British development of 'ministerial government' (*ministerstyrelse*), Furuhjelm explained that the ruler's role had developed into a situation in which the monarch either had to accept the decision of ministers or create a new cabinet, which both expressed the cabinet's solidarity

49. See e.g. Krusius-Ahrenberg 1944, 219–433.
50. Mechelin 1876b, 19.
51. Mechelin 1876b, 24.
52. Mechelin 1876b, 27.
53. Mechelin 1876a, 166.
54. Furuhjelm 1877a, 43.
55. Furuhjelm 1877a, 44.

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with the monarch and the responsibility of the government to parliament. As he put it, 'legislative measures become acts of the government only through the support of parliament and the sanction of the head of state'.[56]

While Furuhjelm presented a more explicit mutual dependence between representation and government than Mechelin, he was still quite abstract compared to E. G. Palmén, who was a professor of history and one of the leading intellectuals among the new generation of liberal-minded language-nationalist Fennomans. He was clearly more focused on the contemporary state of parliamentarism than its history when he argued:

> In a country where so-called parliamentarism really does prevail ministers are men who indeed represent the opinions of the majority of the people; but those men who have lost the confidence of the people leave the government. In such a country the ruling party is, of course, like the other parties: weakened, it could enter opposition on any given day.[57]

Palmén's account unprecedentedly highlighted the political character of parliamentarism in Finnish public discussion. He was explicit concerning the principle that the government was based on the majority of the people being represented by the majority in parliament. He also spelled out the division between a ruling party and the opposition. It is obvious that Palmén had in mind British parliamentarism and its practice of rotation between the governing and opposition parties:

> The ministerial party and the opposition will then fight with the same weapons and let any party come to the ministry; the majesty of the people (so to speak) will always exist by allowing the real majority in parliament (*eduskunta*) to hold the reins according to principles the people consider right.[58]

Palmén's argument needs to be seen against the background of the political contest between a new generation of Finnish-language nationalist intellectuals and the 'liberals' associated mainly with *Helsingfors Dagblad*. His text illustrates the modernization of Finnish political language.[59] Most importantly, Palmén paved the way for the application of 'parliamentarism' in Finnish political life.

Adapting the language of parliamentarism and the politicization of the senate

Finnish political writers and politicians used quite advanced terminology for a political system that was based on estate representation in the context of autocratic imperial rule. As Ismo Pohjantammi has noted, adapting the language of parliamentarism to estates-based representation afforded a modern avenue to criticize domestic political

56. Furuhjelm 1877b, 139.
57. Palmén 1878b, 265.
58. Palmén 1878b, 265.
59. Palmén 1878a, 97–115. It is at this time we also find learned Finnish-language accounts of the concepts of liberalism and socialism. See Rein 1878a, 73–79; Rein 1878b, 169–179.

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circumstances.[60] In other words, when the concept of parliamentarism became part of political debate concerning Finnish circumstances around 1880, several issues were discussed as a question of parliamentarism that in principle did not fit any theoretical conception of it. The concept was applied to political circumstances where it really had no place, as the Grand Duke was also the autocratic Emperor. The language of parliamentarism was combined with an emphasis on deferential trust in the ruler, as the political system was based on the Emperor's good will. The main issue was whether the senate should be responsible to the Grand Duke or the estates. As there was only one answer to this question in Finland, the use of the language of parliamentarism in the Grand Duchy required some rhetorical acrobatics.

As Onni Pekonen has shown, the adaptation of the language of parliamentarism was particularly prominent in how the 'Dagblad liberals', by focusing on parliamentary procedure, sought to introduce a certain mode of parliamentary speech, debate, and deliberation that accorded with the British practice of parliamentarism. He also notes that the Fennomans, though less interested in the British parliament's debating culture, attempted to connect Finnish circumstances to the parliamentary system of government.[61] The liberals sought the parliamentarization of the Diet by attempting to introduce parliamentary debate procedures, the joint meeting of the estates (*plenum plenorum*) being deemed the main forum for parliamentary interaction between representation and government. Such joint meetings of the estates were organized in 1872 and 1885.[62] The intended interaction did not fully materialize, however, as the senate members were not allowed to attend. A petition to give senate members the right to participate in joint meetings was made in 1885, but it was not effected because of objections from both the Governor General and the Committee of Finnish Affairs. They argued that it would be a first step towards a parliamentary system of government, which contradicted estates-based representation.[63]

Nevertheless, the most active in using the rhetoric of parliamentarism in the 1880s were Fennoman intellectuals, who belonged to the *Valvoja* group, named after their new journal, launched in 1880.[64] Palmén was one of the leading members of the group and held, to say the least, an elastic notion of 'parliamentarism'. For example, despite his learned knowledge of how parliamentarism functioned in Britain or France, he argued that it meant 'the beginning of parliamentarism in Finland' when Snellman became a member of the government in 1863. As Snellman had to resign in 1868, however, Palmén concluded that 'it must be admitted that the members of

60. Pohjantammi 2004, 380.
61. Pekonen 2014, 51–56, 61–62; Pekonen 2017, 245–272.
62. Pekonen 2014, 148–174.
63. Pekonen 2014, 173.
64. Although it is often useful to see the language issue as the point of reference when trying to find political motivations behind the arguments regarding parliamentary government and parliamentarism, there is a risk that one ends up constructing two political groups with no significant internal divisions. This was clearly not how the political field appeared. Some 'liberals' were more radical or ideological than others, who in many respects could be characterized as conservatives. Many of the older Fennomans were politically conservative but radical regarding the language issue, whereas the *Valvoja* group had much in common with some prominent liberals. For the internal divisions of the Fennomans in the 1880s see Vares 2000, 22–47.

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the government in Finland usually come to their position based on autocracy or bureaucracy, and by no means because of parliamentarism; they are the trustees of the Emperor, but not always of the people'. Furthermore, he noted that '[i]t is, of course, not at all too curious if our Grand Duke seeks another adviser instead'. Yet he still claimed that '[j]ust because we practise parliamentarism, we do not want to break it into pieces by sometimes ignoring its demands and sometimes accepting them'.[65] There was a caveat regarding specific Finnish circumstances, however. Palmén claimed that 'the more extraordinary the circumstances that give membership of the government, the less real the parliamentarism that can be achieved in Finland'.[66] The notion of extraordinary Finnish circumstances became a common feature of arguments regarding the possibility of having something resembling parliamentary government in the Grand Duchy.

By the early 1880s the Fennomans saw the senate as a bastion of Swedish in Finland. One way to avoid the senate was to appeal directly to the Grand Duke/Emperor, a practice that was one of the most characteristic features of the imperial dependence of Finnish political life. It was known as the 'St Petersburg road'.[67] In 1878, in commenting on *Helsingfors Dagblad*'s insinuations regarding the practice, *Morgonbladet*, commonly regarded as Snellman's organ, accused the liberal paper of the hypocritical use of 'constitutionalism' and 'parliamentarism'.[68] The political issue in the background was that some Fennomans had appealed to the Emperor in an attempt to advance their quest for a language-equal law on elementary schools. In 1881 *Helsingfors Dagblad* called for 'parliamentary government with accountable ministers', but claimed that its Fennoman rival *Uusi Suometar* wanted a domestic government with ministers supported by 'a foreign autocracy'.[69]

Before the opening of the 1882 Diet the philosophy professor Thiodolf Rein, who also belonged to the *Valvoja* group, called for the right of the estates to make motions, arguing that it would enable the representative assembly to become constitutionally 'equal to our ruler'.[70] However, there is no doubt that Rein was aware that the right of the estates to make motions would not signify an equal status between the Diet and the ruler, whom he called 'our Grand Duke'.[71] He also argued, however, that there was a risk that a close link between the ruler and the senate might lead to 'a political development towards oligarchy'.[72] According to Rein it would be important to be able to change the senate 'so that, as far as our circumstances allow, it would be like some kind of responsible ministry'.[73] He also noted that 'in our peculiar political

65. Palmén 1878, 266.
66. Palmén 1878, 267.
67. The expression was first used as a political metaphor in the Finnish press in 1869 by *Helsingfors Dagblad* as '*petersburgska vägar*' (*Helsingfors Dagblad* 4 August 1869). The Finnish '*Pietarin tie*' appeared in 1878 (*Uusi Suometar* 25 September 1878).
68. *Morgonbladet* 1 October 1878; 2 October 1878; 5 November 1878; 10 February 1879. The issue was picked up again as a question of parliamentarism and in defence of a non-Fennoman position in 1883. See *Nya Pressen* 20 January 1883; 21 January 1883.
69. *Helsingfors Dagblad* 23 August 1881.
70. Rein 1882a, 1–2.
71. Rein 1882a, 1.
72. Rein 1882a, 2.
73. Rein 1882a, 8.

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circumstances' it was important that the senate had 'a firm and dignified position' because some issues which should be decided by the ruler himself had been left to it. It was a useful procedure, Rein argued, because the ruler lacked the opportunity to examine the special aspects of 'our case'. Therefore, Rein claimed, 'it is generally hoped that *His Majesty trusts the Finnish senate* and values its proposals'.[74]

What we find here is a description of the complicated nature of government in the context of autocratic imperial rule. Unlike constitutional monarchies, where the government increasingly depended on the representative assembly, and the monarch's governing power was limited, the logic of political dependence was the opposite in the Finnish case, despite the attempts to enhance the role of representation vis-à-vis the government. The ruler – there was no mention of the difference between the Emperor and the Grand Duke in Rein's account – needed to trust the local government. This was obviously a problem from the perspective of parliamentary government. If the government could not have a will that differed from the ruler's, how could it have any responsibility to the representatives of the people unless they shared the ruler's will?

It seems Rein wanted to create a bridge from the estates to the ruler rather than to create one between the estates and the senate. He argued that the question concerned 'how the relationship between the ruler and the estates should be organized so that the ruler's advisers would not become a third power in the state, which would contradict a clear provision in our form of government, that is, they would "rule" rather than "advise"'.[75] Rein turned this into an argument that the Diet should have a better opportunity to control the workings of the senate: '[T]here is hardly any protection against [the senate's] interference between the ruler and the people other than that the estates would get a better opportunity to check the details of the senate's actions.' This would then provide the estates with an opportunity to 'inform the ruler of their opinion about his advisers' official actions'.[76]

It was symptomatic of the Finnish political circumstances that when Rein, in the nobles, and Jaakko Forsman, in the clergy, proposed a petition at the 1882 Diet concerning the installation of an Audit Committee (*Ständernas granskningsutskott*) for the workings of the senate, the proposal was welcomed in Fennoman newspapers as an argument for the responsibility of the whole senate.[77] In the noble estate S. A. Antell, who had made a successful career in the office of the Governor General and as a member of the senate, claimed that Rein was attempting to introduce the principle of parliamentary ministerial responsibility to Finland.[78] Another representative of the nobles claimed that Rein's proposal would entail the senate's political rather than judicial responsibility. This was impossible, he held, because the members of the senate were the monarch's advisers.[79] Rein explained that his proposal was about the 'political control' of the senate, but his wording suggests that it was less about the

74. Rein 1882a, 8. Italics added.
75. Rein 1882a, 8.
76. Rein 1882a, 8.
77. See Pekonen 2014, 168.
78. Antell, Clergy 17 February 1882, I:145; see also Mechelin, Clergy 17 February 1882, I:146.
79. Victor von Haartman, Clergy 17 February 1882 I:152.

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senate's political responsibility than it was about the estates' right to receive 'complete information about government policy'.[80]

According to August Schauman, one of the country's leading liberals and editor of *Hufvudstadsbladet*, Rein was seeking a 'trustful relationship' between the Diet and the senate.[81] Schauman believed the petition proposal was motivated by Fennoman party interest, claiming that Rein's main purpose may have been to pave the way for the parties to exert control over the senate's members.[82] In defending Rein, Palmén noted that the debate had 'a strong aftertaste of the fulfilment of bureaucratic power'. He argued that in countries with 'a parliamentary system' members of the government always felt there was a danger of losing office. The proposed Audit Committee would therefore be 'an opinion board' that would enable 'the people's voice to be heard by the throne' in 'conditions as peculiar as ours'.[83]

The rhetoric of parliamentary government and parliamentarism was also fuelled when Koskinen and Mechelin became members of the senate in 1882.[84] This was seen as recognition of the major political parties' role in the government's formation. Rein drew quite a bold political conclusion from the change, claiming that the 'principle of parliamentarianism, that parliament's leading persons are to be included in the government, has thus come into effect for the first time in our country'.[85] Despite using the word 'parliamentarism', he noted that it was obvious that there were 'quite a few men who disagree with each other' in the senate, and he therefore described it as 'a coalition, as one says elsewhere'. According to Rein a coalition government was necessary in the current circumstances, in which two estates opposed the other two based on language majorities in the estate, and a coalition was the only arrangement that reflected 'the current state of public opinion'.[86] In 1885 the head of the central statistical office, K. F. Ignatius, was appointed a member of the senate. As he was a prominent Fennoman, the Fennoman press saw the nomination as a further step towards the domination of supporters of Finnish in the domestic government. One paper even predicted that the leader of the Fennomans would be a future prime minister:

> Only when the position of the leader of the Finnish party in the government resembles that of the prime minister in other more advanced countries so that he usually chooses the members of the council and presents its composition to the ruler, will the government be organized as would be desirable from the perspective of parliamentarism.[87]

80. T. Rein, Clergy 17 February 1882, I:159.
81. August Schauman, Clergy 17 February 1882, I:164.
82. August Schauman, 165
83. E. G. Palmén, Clergy 17 February 1882, I:169–170.
84. Robert Montgomery, who was close to Mechelin and the 'Dagbald liberals', became a procurator at the same time.
85. Rein 1882b, 244. For the argument on 'the entrance of parliamentarism' see *Wiborgsbladet* 13 February 1886.
86. Rein 1882b, 244.
87. *Suupohjan Työmies* 7 July 1885 [quoting *Wiipurin Sanomat*].

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In contrast, the liberals sought to link parliamentarism with the parliamentary manner of debate in the representative assembly. In particular the 1885 joint meeting of the estates, the *plenum plenorum*, was interpreted as an opportunity to develop 'parliamentarism and responsibility' between the government and the estates.[88] However, a division based on language preferences was not always politically decisive.

Parliamentarism versus absolutism

The difficulty of defending the practice of appealing directly to the ruler while demanding some kind of parliamentary responsibility of the senate led to arguments that included a great deal of conceptual stretching. The rhetoric of parliamentarism could sometimes contain quite radical statements. For example, in 1884 Palmén explicitly commented on the possibility of absolutism in Finland. He started conventionally by arguing that in countries where 'parliamentarism has been fully realized' the principle that the ruler was free of any responsibility had been recognized, 'while advisers are held accountable'. However, when the parliament criticized the government, it was actually 'appealing to the ruler', who would then select new 'advisers' from among those 'trusted by the representative assembly'. This was the case in England, 'where parliamentarism occurs in its most intact form'.[89] Although he noted the contrast between real parliamentarism and the Finnish practice, he claimed that 'turning to the person of the ruler is, of course, also permissible here'.[90] It would not have the same effect in Finland as in England, however, for he argued that because the members of the Finnish senate were only the monarch's advisers, the ruler, who superseded political responsibility, in effect also made his advisers untouchable. Palmén believed this meant 'the idea of parliamentarism has been killed' (*parlamentarismin aate on surmattu*). It also meant the senate's decisions would not be subject to any discussion.[91]

Palmén used the fact that the ruler did not live among the people to support his point: 'Where the ruler lives in the midst of the people and regularly follows its development, the situation differs from that in Finland, where the Grand Duke scarcely has time to think about our country's affairs for a couple of hours a week.'[92] Everything in Finland therefore depended on the ruler's advisers. To demand a change in this matter, he made what was certainly a very delicate political statement:

> [T]he role of [the ruler's] adviser must first and foremost be brought under scrutiny by the estates. It is the only path to responsibility that, without violating the rights of the ruler, allows the opinion of the people to be realized, whereas extending the ruler's personal

88. *Helsingfors Dagblad* 18 January 1885. For a thorough analysis of *plenum plenorum* as a rhetorical argument and in practice see Pekonen 2014, 145–174.
89. Palmén 1884, 127.
90. Palmén 1884, 127.
91. Palmén 1884, 128.
92. Palmén 1884, 128.

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> power of decision and influence in our strange circumstances easily leads to absolutism or autocracy (*absolutismiin eli yksinvaltaisuuteen*).[93]

While Palmén's argument made sense in both theory and practice in countries where constitutional monarchy had developed into a system of parliamentary government, his reference to the possibility of absolutism in Finland seemed very radical. Absolutism was a strong word – especially so when applied to the relationship between the autocratic imperial ruler, the domestic government, and the representative assembly.

However, the Finnish press had mentioned the notion of Russian absolutism, or Russia as a country ruled by absolutism, in various articles, most of which treated Russia like any other absolutist country.[94] There had also been cases in which Russian absolutism did have a Finnish connection. In 1863 Johan August von Essen, a well-known liberal, made a speech at the first Diet in which he attacked censorship in Finland: censorship was an institution that was 'completely at odds with our constitutional law'; it was a 'real parasite' that had nothing in common with Finnish society and its legal order. He claimed that even if censorship were based on law, it would be a law no constitutional society would tolerate. Indeed, 'even the most absolutist would not bear it for long'.[95] Referring to the situation in Finland, he asked: 'Is this constitutionalism? No, if anything, it is absolutism in its extreme.'[96] The main liberal newspaper supported von Essen's speech, whereas the official paper argued that press freedom could not be free of some kind of control, and that the uncontrolled power of the press was a sign of modern absolutism.[97] A few months later *Helsingfors Dagblad* linked the concept of absolutism with the relationship between the government and the opposition in Finland, arguing that 'absolutism is trying to prevent all opposition'.[98] Five years later, when the paper *Borgåbladet* ventured to write about 'the winds of absolutism' in Russia in an article dealing with a prayer to honour Alexander II's accession, the official *Finlands Allmänna Tidning* strongly condemned such an assault against 'the monarch [who has] lovingly opened the path of progress and a new independent development for our country'.[99] Despite these examples of Russian absolutism and its consequences in Finland, the main domestic issue generating the language of absolutism in the 1880s was language-political. For example, in one of his last articles at the end of 1880 Snellman claimed it was 'absolutism that had prevented the Fennomans' obtaining equal rights for

93. Palmén 1884, 128.
94. See e.g. Åbo Underrättelser 10 October 1879; *Morgonbladet* 13 October 1879; *Wiborgs Tidning* 2 August 1881; Östra Finland 12 October 1881; *Hufvudstadsbladet* 25 November 1883; *Helsingfors Dagblad* 19 January 1884.
95. Johan August von Essen, 20 November 1863, Clergy II: 585.
96. Johan August von Essen, 20 November 1863, Clergy II: 586–587.
97. *Helsingfors Dagblad* 23 November 1863; *Finlands Allmänna Tidning* 7 December 1863. Von Essen's speech gained some new currency in 1883 in connection with the publication of the second volume of Edvard Bergh's *Vår styrelse och våra landtdagar*. See e.g. Östra Nyland 11 August 1883.
98. *Helsingfors Dagblad* 18 April 1864.
99. *Borgåbladet* 7 March 1868; *Finlands Allmänna Tidning* 13 March 1868.

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Finnish-language schools in Finland.[100] In using the word, he was referring to Swedish-language dominance in Finland rather than to imperial rule. At the same time a Swedish-language paper saw the Fennomans' political rhetoric as oppressive and sometimes 'a sign of absolutism'.[101] Certainly, this use of the word absolutism in domestic political strife made the word quite vague, or even empty, compared with cases in which it was used as a category of political rule.

Because Palmén contrasted parliamentarism and absolutism, and because he was indicating that the issue dealt with the Russian Empire, we may now attend to how contemporary Finnish papers reported on the use of 'parliamentarism' in Russia. In 1881 *Helsingfors Dagblad* quoted Mikhail Katkov's nationalist paper *Moskovskie Vedomosti*, which held that 'the century that is approaching its end will probably be called "the century of parliamentarism"'. Rather than being a positive notion, the Russian paper claimed the century of parliamentarism would be followed by a period when the peoples would, after their experience, 'step out from the fictive fog of people's representation'. According to the paper Russia would then become a model for these peoples in their escape from 'the feverish and near-death atmosphere of parliamentarism'.[102] Some years later the Finnish newspaper *Savonlinna* published 'Letters from St Petersburg', which argued that the Slavophile party in Russia strongly opposed any imitation of western ideas and 'especially an installation of parliamentarism in Russia'. Turning to Katkov, the Finnish paper's correspondent wrote that his party was critical of Alexander II's reform policies, seeing them only as an attempted 'step towards parliamentarism'.[103] Regardless of whether the Finnish newspapers themselves supported parliamentarism, it is possible to see these examples of the attack on parliamentarism in Russia as showing how politically aggressive nationalist-imperial Russian opinion could be.

Parliamentarism in the shadow of imperial pressure, democracy, and socialism

Osmo Jussila has highlighted 1889 as the turning point for the Grand Duchy of Finland, when, having read memoranda concerning Finland, Alexander III asked whether the question concerned part of the Russian Empire or an independent state.[104] According to Jussila it was at this moment imperial policy towards Finland changed, and 'the years of oppression' (*sortovuodet*) began.[105] While the memorandum was known to only a small number of high officials, the following year made the change of imperial policy towards Finland commonly known in the form of the 1890 Postal Manifesto, which subordinated the Finnish postal service to the Russian Ministry of the Interior. According to the Finnish senate such a decision should be subject

100. *Morgonbladet* 31 December 1880.
101. *Tammerfors Aftonblad* 1 December 1882.
102. *Helsingfors* 16 June 1881; see also *Helsingfors Dagblad* 17 June 1881.
103. *Savonlinna* 13 March 1884. For a later report on the Moscow paper's attack on parliamentarism see *Tampereen Uutiset* 24 January 1893.
104. Jussila 2004, 530–531, 814.
105. Jussila 2004, 534,

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to the Diet. As this was not the case, Mechelin, the senate's most prominent liberal member, resigned.[106] After some senators associated with 'the Swedish party' followed his example there was an emerging opinion in the Swedish-language press that the senate had a bureaucratic character and was increasingly populated with compliant Fennoman senators.[107]

The imperialization of Russian policy towards Finland made it less appealing for some Finnish politicians and intellectuals to envision parliamentarism in Finland, though it did not render the word 'parliamentarism' rhetorically useless. Palmén, who had moved closer politically to the so-called Old Finnish Party and had become an advocate of a moderate compliance policy,[108] was no longer so sure of the virtues of parliamentarism. In 1895 he argued that 'the name of constitutionalism refers to the governmental system which, through the constitution, grants the elected representatives of the people a certain amount of influence on the government', whereas the meaning of parliamentarism was 'somewhat ambiguous'. As before, he explained that parliamentarism meant that the ruler should take the opinion of the representative assembly into account, and that the ruler chose 'his advisers from the ranks of the majority in parliament'. He argued, moreover, that parliamentarism was 'of course the clearest contrast to absolutism – that is, autocratic rule'. However, he now pointed out that '[i]n principle parliamentarism is, of course, a very pleasant system, and most of us are probably admirers of it or have at least for some time considered it a natural peak and ideal of political life'.[109] He explained that parliamentarism was difficult to achieve in underdeveloped conditions, and in particular when 'the small people' (*pieni kansa*) were in question. Among such people the political struggle became petty bickering and evinced the 'dark sides of party life'. Palmén explained that this was what had happened in Sweden during the Age of Liberty in the eighteenth century.[110] Although he was discussing how the Scandinavian countries had taken a 'parliamentary direction', it is obvious that he was also commenting on the situation in Finland.

It is possible to see a link to both domestic political contests and Finland's imperial dependence when the conservative constitutionalist R. A. Wrede argued in 1897 that calls for a reform of the Finnish Diet as a bicameral parliament would be interpreted 'beyond the borders of our country' as a step towards 'modern parliamentarism'.[111] A year later he claimed the Fennomans sought party government in Finland, with their newspapers demanding that more Finnish-minded men should be included in the senate: party government meant parliamentary government, which meant the government must be supported by a majority in parliament. He argued that a parliamentary government in Finland would be based on the majority party in the Diet – that is, the Finnish Party.[112] In constitutional monarchies the government

106. See e.g. Rauhala 1921, 380–382.
107. Cf. 'Öfversikt', *Finsk Tidskrift* 35:5 (1893), 387–390.
108. See Vares 2000, 43, 64.
109. Palmén 1895, 204.
110. Palmén 1895, 205.
111. Wrede 1897, 59. For a similar argument see *Nya Pressen* 11 November 1897. Even the Young Fennoman *Päivälehti* let it be known that 'no one here (*meillä*) was aiming at such parliamentarism that prevails abroad'. *Päivälehti* 14 February 1897.
112. Wrede 1898, 193–194.

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was in turn not politically responsible to the representation but to the monarch. This meant the government needed to stand above political parties, and ministers could not therefore represent any party.[113] According to Wrede a parliamentary system of government was completely unknown in Finland's foundational laws. While admitting that the advocates of Finnish were not aiming to 'introduce parliamentarism' in Finland,[114] he argued that calls for a party government were harmful for Finland because party controversies would weaken the domestic government's position, both internally and externally.[115]

In addition to the impact of imperial Russian policies, two political currents in Europe weakened enthusiasm for parliamentarism in Finland. One was connected with democracy, the other with an emerging class-conscious socialism. The concept of parliamentarism was both associated with and dissociated from the concepts of democracy and socialism. Consequently, when 'parliamentarism' was increasingly associated with the concept of democracy, it appeared both unrealistic in Finland's current political circumstances and too radical a goal. In other words, while the very concept of parliamentarism had been adapted in Finland to circumstances where it was in many ways out of place, it is possible to note that an increased critique of parliamentarism in western Europe due to its politicization as an ism also left its mark on Finland. One can thus say that Finnish political arguments were synchronized with more politically advanced countries. According to Zachris Castrén, one of the leading figures of the liberal Young Fennomans, the political division in contemporary Europe concerned the battle between aristocracy and political democracy. Parliamentarism was therefore under pressure. Castrén noted that even in England there was opposition to parliamentarism because people did not 'trust the ability of temporary majorities to resolve technically difficult issues'.[116]

While Castrén's argument can be taken as an analytical description of the political situation in Europe, J. R. Danielson, a prominent professor of history whose academic writings engaged in the constitutional battle, was openly critical in 1898 when he made the issue of parliamentarism an explicit question of democracy. Having been the first editor of *Valvoja* between 1880 and 1884, by the 1890s he belonged to the Finnish Party's Old Fennoman faction. According to him both 'democracy' and 'parliamentarism' were unsuitable for a constitutional monarchy.[117] Drawing on the German academic political and judicial literature, he noted the difference between the German and English views of the matter. For him a democratic system of government was ultimately based on the will of the people, which even the monarch had to obey. In contrast, a constitutional system recognized the monarch's sovereignty and thus the sovereignty of the state, though the ruler was bound by the law. This was the German view, Danielson argued. He also pointed out that for the English, French, and Belgians 'constitutionalism' and 'parliamentarism' often meant the same thing, as they seemed

113. Wrede 1898, 195.
114. Wrede 1898, 196.
115. Wrede 1898, 203. See also *Aftonposten* 28 February 1898; Österbottningen 9 April 1898.
116. Castrén 1892, 529–530.
117. Danielson 1898, 88–102. (According to Danielson the text was originally presented as a paper in 1895.)

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to think that 'parliamentary government' was an expression of democracy.[118] This, he claimed, was not the case. Like most opponents of parliamentarism elsewhere, he argued that the English [i.e. the British] system, where the political elite was divided into two parties, could not be copied.[119] Having Germany in mind, Danielson argued that a parliamentary system had proven foreign both regarding the country's history and its current constitutional law.[120] In Germany, he claimed, 'a strong monarch, standing above class struggles', was able to serve the common good and the unity of the people.[121]

Referring to the Finnish experience, Danielson argued that

> we know that the distinction made by the Germans between the parliamentary and so-called constitutional form of state is entirely appropriate. For centuries we have had foundational laws that limit the power of the ruler, but it was only during the so-called Age of Liberty that the king, like a parliamentary monarch, had to submit to the will of the Diet.[122]

According to Danielson political life in Finland was based on 'the strong, though constitutionally demarcated, power of the ruler'. He also echoed Palmén, noting that the Finnish peculiarity was that '[o]ur ruler is not living among us, and does not know our language, and it is therefore more difficult than elsewhere to let the ruler know about the people's real needs'.[123]

Regarding the class struggles Danielson had mentioned, the emergence of the politically organized social democratic parties in many European countries, and especially in Germany, was one of the main background factors for the re-evaluation of 'parliamentarism' in Europe and therefore also in Finland. In 1891 the conservative Fennoman paper *Uusi Suometar* noted that socialism and parliamentarism were opposite concepts that could not be combined. Being aware of the positive stance some leaders of the German Social Democratic Party had taken towards parliamentarianism, the Finnish paper concluded that the German party would be divided because of it.[124] The controversy within the German socialists was commonly known in Finland through numerous news articles in the newspapers. Like the German debate, the reception was mixed. Parliamentarism was deemed bourgeois by its nature on the one hand; it was held that the German socialists were aiming at advancement 'with the aid of parliamentarism' on the other.[125] Thus, as one paper put it, German social democracy was either 'stuck in the swamp of parliamentarism' instead of taking a

118. Danielson 1898, 89.
119. For a German critique of parliamentarism see Jörke and Llanque 2016, 262–263. For contemporary Swedish arguments rejecting British parliamentarism as a model for parliamentarism see Kurunmäki 2014, 172–174; Kurunmäki, Ihalainen and Peksujeff, 2025.
120. Danielson 1898, 93–94, 101.
121. Danielson 1898, 101–102.
122. Danielson 1898, 90.
123. Danielson 1898, 102.
124. *Uusi Suometar* 17 September 1891. For the German theoretical debate see Jörke and Llanque 2016, 264–267.
125. *Hufvudstadsbladet* 8 October 1890; *Nya Pressen* 6 November 1890.

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revolutionary way, or, as another paper put it, 'sober-minded German socialism' was committed to parliamentarism.[126]

Much of the controversy among different brands of socialists was related to the German Marxist Karl Kautsky, who was a leading theorist of socialism and the main author of the 1891 Erfurt Programme of the German Social Democratic Party (1891), published with explanations a year later as *Das Erfurter Programm*, as well as the booklet *Parliamentarismus und Demokratie* (1893).[127] In both publications he argued for the role of universal suffrage and parliamentarism as a means of the class struggle for a socialist state.[128] He thus presented a positive yet instrumentalist view of parliamentarism. According to the Erfurt Programme the proletariat should not abandon parliamentarism. Instead, it should strengthen its representation in parliament and thus create a counterforce against the bourgeois state. The demand for universal suffrage was therefore one of the proletariat's greatest priorities.[129] The Erfurt Programme was translated to Finnish in 1899, the year the Finnish Labour Party was founded. The Finnish programme's practical demands were partly based on those of the German programme.

In 1899 Santeri Ingman, who was one of the founders of the Young Finnish daily *Päivälehti*, saw the radicalization of the labour movement as a consequence of the Swedish-language conservatives' rejection of the reform of voting rights in the election of the burgher estate, but at the same time he questioned the labour movement's unwillingness to participate in the next Diet elections: this negative attitude indicated that the labour movement had no hope of victory 'through parliamentarism'.[130] In 1903, when the Labour Party adopted a more explicitly Marxist doctrine and changed its name to the Social Democratic Party, Kautsky's influence was prominent, as the new party programme was largely based on the Erfurt Programme.[131] Kautsky's booklet on parliamentarism was translated to Finnish in 1907.[132]

The theoretical influence of Kautsky's view of parliamentarism in the class struggle is important for understanding how Finnish socialists saw parliamentary politics and parliamentarism at the turn of the century. In practice it meant that the social democrats could in principle form a government but only if the party was big enough to govern alone. However, German Marxist thought (with its variations) was not the only important ideological impulse for Finnish socialists. As we will see, their view of parliamentarism also came to be influenced by revolutionary socialism in Russia.

Universal suffrage without parliamentarism

Political circumstances in Finland changed abruptly when a general strike broke out in Russia, reaching Finland a week later on 31 October 1905. On 4 November the

126. *Finland* 16 July 1891; *Åbo Underrättelser* 15 July 1891.
127. Kautsky 1922 [1893].
128. See Jörke & Llanque 2016, 266; Blanc 2021, 287.
129. Kautsky 1974, 228.
130. Ingman 1899, 648.
131. See e.g. Soikkanen 1975, 40–42, 51–58; Turunen 2021, 214–234.
132. Kautsky 1907.

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Emperor issued a manifesto regarding Finland which stated that a parliamentary reform based on universal and equal suffrage should be prepared. During these tumultuous days the whole senate resigned. The new senate was led by the 'constitutionalist' Mechlin and included only members who belonged to the parties that had previously been regarded as being in opposition. In practice this meant the Finnish Party (the Old Finns) formed the new opposition with the Social Democratic Party. It has sometimes been noted that the new senate formed in December 1905 had some characteristics of parliamentary government because the former senate resigned en masse and was replaced by a new one by members of the former opposition.[133] However, the new senate was the result of extra-parliamentary circumstances rather than any parliamentary procedure.

In addition to the preparations for the parliamentary reform and its associated questions of the implementation of universal suffrage and the unicameral organization of parliament, the senate was to make a proposal for a new Instrument of Government (*hallitusmuoto*) which would include parliament's right to scrutinize the legality of the actions of the senate's members. The Diet's Constitution Committee produced a supportive memorandum concerning this, and it was included in the Parliament Act. The last Diet of 1905–06 accepted the proposal, but it was not promulgated because it fell in 'the highest place'.[134] The attempt to introduce the principle of the government's judicial responsibility had failed.

However, some changes indicated a step towards the government's parliamentarization. According to the Parliament Act of 1906 members of the senate had the right to attend parliament's plenary meetings. This right has been regarded as a fundamental aspect of parliamentary government. In 1907 no fewer than 36 speeches were made by a member of the senate in parliament. Furthermore, MPs had the right to ask questions to the members of the senate, which was taken in parliament as the right of interpellation. Between 1907 and 1914 there were 25 interpellations in the Eduskunta/Lantdag. In March 1908 three interpellations dealing with the relationship between Finland and imperial Russia led to the resignation of the Mechelin senate.[135]

A closer examination of the 1904–05 Diet and the extraordinary Diet of 1905–1906 highlights the difference between the political situation before and after the 1905 November Manifesto, even regarding the issue of government in Finland. The principle of universal suffrage gained much support in the estates during the spring of 1905, but it was then thought it would be implemented in representation based on the estates or in a bicameral parliament.[136] In turn the question of the relationship between representation and government gained scarcely any recognition – unless one considers the question of whether participation in the Diet was acceptable in the first place given the prevailing conditions marked by the imperial degree of the Governor General's dictatorial powers.[137] It is symptomatic that the most straightforward comment regarding the relationship between the Diet and senate was expressed

133. See Lindman 1935, 10; Nousiainen 2006, 192.
134. Lindman 1935, 8; Jansson 1982, 21; Nousiainen 2006, 193.
135. See e.g. Jansson 1982, 24–26; Nousiainen 2006, 193.
136. See e.g. Kurunmäki 2008, 359.
137. For the passive and active resistance of the imperial power in Finland at the time see e.g. Federley 1976; Reuter 1928.

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ironically, when J. K. Kari, the Social Democratic Party secretary and a representative of the burghers, pointed out that the political opponents of a radical reform of voting rights should not be worried 'because we still have a government upon which all the decisions depend'.[138]

Debates in the Diet differed markedly in the late summer and early autumn of 1906 after Nicholas II had signed the Parliamentary Act. The estates had quite substantial debates on the report of the Committee of the Constitution regarding parliament's right to control the legality of the senate's members. As we know, this reform had been attempted since the 1860s. Now it was thought possible.[139] Although the starting point was the principle of judicial responsibility, the debates in the estates show that opinions varied regarding whether it could also be extended to mean the senate's political responsibility to parliament. Some speeches even raised the issue of parliamentarism. Importantly, some speeches reflected on the political nature of the democratic parliamentary reform and its impact on the government's political status.

Many representatives thought that the proposed judicial responsibility of the members of the senate was the only possible goal given the circumstances. They argued that an extension of the reform to political responsibility should be a matter for the future to avoid jeopardizing the current reform.[140] It is clear that judicial responsibility was not deemed irrelevant. As one clergy representative put it, 'the years of oppression' would have been impossible had the control of the legality of the members of the senate been possible.[141] Some prominent Young Finnish representatives, whose party belonged to the so-called constitutional coalition that ran the senate, argued that the principle of judicial responsibility was the only solution that could be effected through legislation. According to E. N. Setälä, a professor of Finnish language, the government's political responsibility could only be developed in practical political life through political struggles.[142] However, there were representatives who thought that even political responsibility should be achieved.[143] According to one clergyman the government's political responsibility was the only way to save Finland from 'the violence of bureaucratism'.[144]

When the word parliamentarism was used in the Diet, it was clearly something the speaker did not want. According to the noble representative G. B. Cronstedt the political responsibility did not 'fit our constitution', as it would mean political power would be in parliament's hands and lead to parliamentarism. For him 'true parliamentarism' was impossible without two constitutional parties that were 'prepared to take over the government [...] as public opinion in the country demands it'. Cronstedt was worried about a Finnish-national majority that would rule through parliament, which he called 'vulgar parliamentarism'. A 'governing parliament can be as unbearable a tyrant as a sovereign prince'.[145] He also claimed that the two-party

138. J. K. Kari, Burghers II, 14 April 1905, 977.
139. See e.g. Jonas Castrén, Peasants, 28 May 1906, 797.
140. See e.g. Arthur Hjelt, Clergy II, 30 August 1906, 890.
141. Peter Snellman, Clergy II, 30 August 1906, 890–891.
142. E. N. Setälä, Clergy II, 30 August 1906, 894. See also Th. Rein, Nobles II, 30 August 1906, 801; H. A. Ingman, Burghers II, 10 September 1906, 1077.
143. See, e.g., Georg Schauman, Nobles II, 30 August 1906, 798.
144. Iwar Nordlund, Clergy II, 30 August 1906, 892.
145. G. B. Cronstedt, Nobles II, 30 August 1906, 800.

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system that characterized English cabinet parliamentarism was impossible in Finland because 'in our country [...] live two different peoples that do not love each other'.[146] Cronstedt's speech shows not only the political importance of the language division in Finland but also English/British parliamentarism's enduring impact as a positive or negative model.[147]

By the late summer of 1906 the relationship between parliament and government remained an open question. The unclear political situation, of which the mutiny in Sveaborg/Viapori on 30 July and the subsequent unrest in Helsinki were tangible reminders, can be noted in many Diet speeches. Some were explicit about the fact that the parliamentary reform had not changed the senate's position. For example, Heikki Renvall, the editor of the Young Finnish newspaper *Helsingin Sanomat*, pointed out that 'our fate will not be decided in Finland but by a ruler who is the ruler of a great foreign country'.[148] R. A. Wrede, the law professor who in 1904 had been deported to Russia because of his staunch constitutionalist position, but who in 1905 had become a member of the senate's judicial department, noted first that the Parliament Act and the Electoral Law had reformed political representation 'to a significant extent in a democratic direction'. He added, however, that 'some increased powers for the people's representation vis-à-vis the government have not been significantly gained through these important laws'.[149] He also argued that Finland's 'external conditions' were unfavourable for the government's political responsibility, pointing out that 'the top of the government is outside the country, and […] the Grand Duke of Finland is also the ruler of a powerful empire'.[150]

Renvall's and Wrede's statements were by no means extraordinary – quite the contrary. The Swedish political scientist Pontus Fahlbeck pointed to the continuity of the imperial Russian power over Finland's political system. He saw Finnish parliamentary reform as the outcome of both a political and social revolution, yet he considered it less significant than the reintroduction of constitutional order in Finland.[151] He argued that although Finnish political representation was 'the most extreme from the perspective of its social basis, as a state institution, it bore the features of the eighteenth century'. In other words, the Finnish parliament was 'extremely democratic in its composition', but it was 'very limited in power and influence' because its place in the constitution was the same as in the old Swedish foundational laws from 1772 and 1789. According to Fahlbeck the parliamentary reform had a very limited effect on Finland's 'political freedom and self-determination'.[152] He also argued that the monarch had understood to distinguish between the reform's 'social and the political' aspects. He had given what was requested regarding the composition of the representation but had made sure its powers remained essentially the same, despite the Finnish side's attempts to extend them. According to Fahlbeck the Russians were

146. Cronstedt 1906, 808.
147. See also Lindman 1935, 9.
148. Heikki Renvall, Burghers II, 10 September 1906, 1078.
149. R. A. Wrede, Nobles II, 30 August 1906, 803.
150. Wrede 1906, 804–805.
151. Fahlbeck 1906, 236–238.
152. Fahlbeck 1906, 248.

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> completely indifferent to the new parliament's composition as long as the balance of power between it and the Crown was undisturbed. These peculiar circumstances mean Finland now has a representation which, in social terms, is the most advanced in the whole world and in political terms the least developed of all.

Finally, he asked: 'How is this going to go together?'[153]

It should be noted that although Fahlbeck was an outsider regarding Finnish politics, he was an insider when it came to the struggles for parliamentary government. He was one of the Swedish professors who participated in the campaign against the liberals' and social democrats' attempt to introduce parliamentary government in Sweden. In his book on the Swedish constitution and modern parliamentarism he argued that Swedish constitutional 'dualism' was in fact the domestic version of parliamentarism and as feasible as English parliamentarism, though different.[154]

Despite Fahlbeck's straightforward argument regarding the Finnish political situation, it still had the character of a calm academic analysis compared to the rhetoric of the Finnish social democratic intellectuals in the newly founded *Sosialistinen Aikakauslehti* (Socialist Journal). Otto Wille Kuusinen especially combined the rhetoric of Finland's imperial dependence and parliamentary government in a manner that must be seen as the most explicit call for parliamentary government in the Grand Duchy at the time.[155] Kuusinen's devaluation of the political importance of parliamentary reform had started before the reform was accepted. In March 1906 he claimed that a parliamentary constitution *(parlamentaarinen hallitusmuoto*) had already been promised by the Emperor in the Diet's convocation letter, in which it was stated that 'local governmental officials (*hallitusviranomaiset*) would become responsible to parliament'.[156] This led Kuusinen to blame the Finnish 'lords' (*herrat*) for watering down the reform, as the Parliamentary Reform Committee's point of departure was the government's judicial responsibility. It made it impossible to start 'the age of real internal self-government, democracy, and parliamentary government (*parlamentaarisuuden aika*)'.[157] It would mean that the ruler would be as autocratic (*itsevaltias*) as before. He called the situation in Finland 'a national comedy' and 'constitutional autocracy'.[158] He even claimed that the Parliamentary Reform Committee was begging St Petersburg to save Finland from democracy and a parliamentary constitution (*parlamentaarisuus*).[159] Pointing out that the reform would not bring about the sovereignty of Finland's people, Kuusinen argued in

153. Fahlbeck 1906, 249.
154. Fahlbeck 1904. See also Kurunmäki 2014, 174.
155. For the social democratic focus on the constitution and parliamentary government in 1906 see e.g. Soikkanen 1975, 122–123; Heikkilä 1993, 44–46; Turunen 2021, 259–261.
156. [Otto Wille Kuusinen], 'Taantumuksen aseenkantajat', *Sosialistinen Aikakauslehti* No. 6, 15 March 1906, 121–124, 122. The text is unsigned, but I follow here Jouko Heikkilä's identification of the author in Heikkilä 1993, 44.
157. [Otto Wille Kuusinen], 'Taantumuksen aseenkantajat', *Sosialistinen Aikakauslehti* No. 6, 15 March 1906, 121.
158. [Otto Wille Kuusinen], 'Taantumuksen aseenkantajat', *Sosialistinen Aikakauslehti* No. 6, 15 March 1906, 122.
159. [Otto Wille Kuusinen], 'Taantumuksen aseenkantajat', *Sosialistinen Aikakauslehti* No. 6, 15 March 1906, 123.

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the journal's next issue that 'a new Russia' was emerging, and it was with that new democratic Russia that Finland's future would be decided. Kuusinen claimed that a real reform would only be possible in Finland if there were a revolution in Russia.[160] Some months later, the journal developed the argument further, claiming that the Russian revolutionary movement demanded the abolition of autocratic rule, and that '[w]e have the same autocracy' in Finland.[161]

In the early autumn of 1906, when the 1905–1906 Diet was closing, the Socialist Journal announced that the Social Democratic Party was taking 'a parliamentary course' in its class struggle.[162] As part of the campaign before the parliamentary elections in 1907, Kuusinen returned to the issue of Finland's lack of parliamentary government. His argument bears significant similarity with that of Fahlbeck, as he argued that the parliamentary and electoral reform had to some extent democratized 'half our constitution'. According to him 'this reform does not in itself mean an increase in political democracy in our country' because 'as long as parliament lacks all the rights and powers of a modern parliament, the fact that that it is composed democratically or undemocratically does not, of course, mean anything'.[163] Like many others before him, Kuusinen discussed the Russian ruler's dual role, pointing out that as long as 'our head of state is at the same time the ruler of great Russia', it would be 'highly unlikely that he would ever follow the opinion of our parliament'.[164] Although Kuusinen saw no possibility of parliamentary government in Finland in the present situation, his party was nevertheless campaigning for it:

> [Our programme] requires parliament to have such effective influence on and control over the government that is in accordance with the principle of so-called parliamentary government. In such a case the executive power of the head of state must be handed over to a cabinet government that is independent of the head of the state and responsible to parliament.[165]

In seeking to explain this apparently contradictory assessment of what was deemed possible, and what was demanded, we must consider the domestic political struggle the Social Democrats had launched against the bourgeois parties. Kuusinen argued that it was not enough to claim that parliamentary government would grow through political practice as had been the case in Britain, and as some leading Finnish politicians (such as Setälä and Rein above) had argued. He claimed it would never happen in Finland without legislation. He argued that the bourgeois parties were, in fact, satisfied with the existing circumstances. Those parties were 'constitutional', but

160. [Anon.], 'Asema on selvä', *Sosialistinen Aikakauslehti* No. 7, 1 April 1906, 145–147.
161. [Anon.], 'Katsokaa Venäjälle!', *Sosialistinen Aikakauslehti* No. 13, July 1906, 289–290, 289.
162. [Anon.], 'Eduskuntataistelu on hyvä, vaikkei se yksin auta', *Sosialistinen Aikakauslehti* No. 15–16, September 1906, 337–339, 337.
163. O. W. K., 'Kysymys hallitusmuotomme uudeistamisesta', *Sosialistinen Aikakauslehti* No. 25, January 1907, 3–10, 3.
164. O. W. K., 'Kysymys hallitusmuotomme uudeistamisesta', *Sosialistinen Aikakauslehti* No. 25, January 1907, 7.
165. O. W. K., 'Kysymys hallitusmuotomme uudeistamisesta', *Sosialistinen Aikakauslehti* No. 25, January 1907, 9.

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they presupposed the Emperor's power (*keisarivaltaa*), whereas his party struggled for 'the supremacy (*ylivalta*) of parliamentary politics and parliament'.[166]

The Social Democrats' view of parliamentary politics was largely based on a combination of leading Marxist socialist's theoretical arguments regarding parliamentary politics, the confidence gained from the experience of the general strike, and the hope that Russia was heading for a revolution.[167] In effect their view of parliamentary government was the idea of a governing parliament. Regarding the role of representatives, the party adhered to the idea of MPs being party delegates, which their political opponents saw as a sign of the idea of an imperative mandate – that is, supporting the idea of a non-independent representative of the people.[168] In combining their view of a representative's role and the limited powers of parliament in relation to the government, the Social Democrats viewed the role of parliamentary debates as a forum for political agitation rather than legislative deliberation.[169]

The new parliament and the question of parliamentary government, 1907–1910

The results of the first parliamentary elections in March 1907 were a surprise, even for the winning Social Democratic Party, which won 80 out of 200 seats. As the second biggest party was the Finnish Party (also called the Old Finns), the outcome of the elections went strongly against the parties with a position in the senate, the Young Finnish Party and the Swedish People's Party, with their 26 and 24 seats respectively. These results raised the question of whether and how parliament's political composition should be taken into account in forming the senate. The political scientist Jan-Magnus Jansson's characterization 'the symptoms of parliamentarism' aptly captures the situation.[170]

In April 1907, just before the first democratically elected parliament was to convene, one of the leading Young Finns, E. N. Setälä, blamed the poor election results on the bourgeois parties' bitterness and lack of clarity, which led him to discuss the difficulty of the next senate's composition. The government should be able to play a firm role, he said, arguing that a change in the senate's composition should be addressed, and that the majority in parliament should be taken into account. Setälä pointed out that the Young Finnish Party had indicated that it should respect the election results and become an opposition party in accordance with 'the idea of parliamentary government'. However, he held that the Social Democrats appeared to view their party as being in a minority position against the bourgeois parties, and not even the Finnish Party showed any interest in taking a position in government. Only the Swedish People's Party's newspapers had demanded that the current senate

166. O. W. K., 'Kysymys hallitusmuotomme uudeistamisesta', *Sosialistinen Aikakauslehti* No. 25, January 1907, 7.
167. See also Heikkilä 1993, 45–46; Turunen 2021, 236–238, 353–256.
168. See Pekonen 2014, 135–137.
169. See also Turunen 2021, 255–256; Pekonen 2014, 144.
170. Jansson 1982, 21.

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remain intact 'in their disdain for "playing with parliamentarism"'.[171] He continued, 'it is desirable that parliamentarism be realized in our country as far as possible', meaning that parliament 'should have the right to influence the government's composition'. However, he eventually argued that 'in the current unclear circumstances, where no party has an absolute majority in parliament, the position cannot be decided in advance, though one believes we too must strive to follow the truly popular form of government of parliamentarism, regardless of party conjunctions'.[172]

Mechelin's senate remained in office until March 1908, when the Social Democrats went against the senate, and the Finnish Party abstained from voting in favour of it. In the letter of resignation to the Governor General, Mechelin pointed out that it was important for the senate's members (i.e. its economic department) to be trusted by the majority in parliament. Nicholas II decided to dissolve parliament, which has been interpreted as a political punishment for both the senate and the socialist agitation in parliament.[173] The next senate was a coalition between the two Finnish parties. It was led by Edvard Hjelt, who was considered a constitutionalist and a Young Finn with good relations with the Finnish Party.[174] The coalition lasted less than a year, as increased imperial oppression led to the resignation of the Young Finnish senators, soon to be followed by the Finnish Party senators. Parliament was also in a vulnerable position. Nicholas II dissolved it four times during 1908–1910. It is common to date the beginning of the 'second period of oppression' to these years, the main step being the 1909 decision that the Finnish political institutions only had the right to express their opinion to the Imperial State Council in matters deemed to have other than a local application. Obviously, the consideration of what could be considered local was not made in Helsinki. After this the members of the senate were mostly Russian-born officials, picked by Governor General F. A. Seyn.[175]

The lack of stability of the early years of the democratically elected parliament is evidenced by the fact that in parliament's debates the word 'parliamentary' dealt with the manner of speaking or other matters of conduct rather than the question of parliamentary government.[176] The word parliamentarism was used only six times between 1907 and 1910, after which the word was used in 1917. Despite this rarity, an enquiry affords a possibility to capture an illuminating thematic range of the concept's use.

When 'parliamentarism' was first used in parliament, it was employed against the instrument of interpellation by Karl Söderholm, a lawyer with a long career in the senate's judicial department and a member of the Swedish People's Party. According to him parliament did not have the right to make any decision based on interpellation. He argued this would go against the Parliamentary Act. Interpellations appeared only in countries with 'parliamentary government'. He added:

171. Spectator [E. N. Setälä], 'Kirje Helsingistä', *Valvoja* 27:4, April 1907, 333–343, 340.
172. Spectator [E. N. Setälä], 'Kirje Helsingistä', *Valvoja* 27:4, April 1907, 341.
173. See Jansson 1982, 22; Nousiainen 2006, 193.
174. See e.g. Vares 2000, 159; Jansson 1982, 22.
175. See e.g. Jussila 2004, 721.
176. See also Pekonen 2014, 276–278.

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> Concerning our country, we do not have parliamentarism in the sense that the word is usually used. The proposal regarding the government members' responsibility that was presented in the previous Diet clearly only concerned responsibility in the sense of whether a member of the government had acted against the law.[177]

While Söderholm argued that Finland did not have parliamentarism, and that it would be unsuitable given the circumstances, Heikki Renvall, a Young Finn, called for parliamentarism. In discussing the prohibition law proposal, he argued that the government should have the task of drafting proposed laws and then the parliament should be able to criticize these proposals and to 'overthrow the government that has not made the laws we want'. Such conduct entailed 'a natural development towards the healthy parliamentarism we should achieve'.[178]

The view of parliamentarism was quite different in speeches by two prominent Social Democrats, Edvard Valpas (also known as Hänninen-Valpas) and Yrjö Sirola. In 1907 both argued that parliamentarism in a bourgeois society was not enough for the working class.[179] Valpas stated that the Social Democrats had been claiming too one-sidedly 'the virtues of parliamentarism' (*parlamentarismin auttavaisuuteen*), but 'the capitalists want to show that parliamentarism alone does not help; parliamentary work does not help'.[180] Sirola, meanwhile, linked the social question, parliamentarism, and Finland's imperial rule by claiming that the bourgeoisie in 'the great countries of constitutionalism and parliamentarism' wanted to take over economic policy. He added that 'where the bourgeoisie must decide whether it wants to share this state's money bag and the management of state affairs with the people or with the autocrat, it has unfortunately proven everywhere to be willing to turn to the right. Would it be completely different for us?'[181] Sirola thus indicated that the bourgeois parties in Finland cooperated too easily with the imperial power, and that the Social Democrats were on the side of the Finnish people.[182]

Although there were no signs that parliamentary government was possible in the Grand Duchy, some parliamentary patterns could still be established. The Agrarian League's Kalle Pykälä pointed out that parliament should reorganize the parties' seating order in accordance with their political relationship with the current government. As the senate's members were all from the Finnish Party, they should be seated on the right, whereas the members of the Young Finnish Party and the Swedish People's Party should be on the left. Thus, Pykälä argued, 'we would, as much as possible, imitate parliamentarism – even if we in fact do not have it'.[183] Theodor Homén, the former member of the Kagal constitutionalist group and a representative of the Young Finnish Party, pointed out that a vote of no confidence, which was a normal procedure in parliamentarism, was useless, as the government it was intended to target no longer

177. Karl Söderholm, 12 June 1907, PTK 12/1907, 565.
178. Heikki Renvall, 17 October 1907, PTK 33/1907, 2223.
179. See Turunen 2021, 241–242.
180. Valpas 1907, 3171.
181. Yrjö Sirola, 26 February 1908, PTK 12/1908, 78.
182. For the national emphasis in Finnish social democracy see e.g. Kujala 1989; Heikkilä 1993.
183. Kalle Kustaa Pykälä, 3 March 1910, PTK 3/1910, 18.

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existed. Although he did not mention it, it was understood that governments had been dissolved for reasons other than their lack of support in parliament.[184]

What we can see here is a picture of the political conditions of parliamentary politics in the imperial Grand Duchy, as the above uses of 'parliamentarism' included a critical mark against interpellation; a modestly expressed hope for the development of parliamentarism; a notion of parliamentarism as a system of bourgeois class rule; parliamentarism as a matter of imitation; and parliamentarism as a hopeless ambition in the given circumstances. The influence the Imperial State Council wielded on policies concerning Finland from the late 1900s, and the fact that the domestic government was run by senators with little or no political bearing on Finnish politics, had led to a situation in which the Emperor Grand Duke's political role was perhaps the only way to raise the issue of the status of the Finnish government. The ruler's divided personality, discussed at the beginning of this chapter, therefore gained renewed interest. This led to some restatements of old theoretical arguments and to formulations that can be viewed as an attempt to introduce the principle of a modern *Rechtsstaat* (*oikeusvaltio*) to the discussion of the Grand Duchy of Finland's political status.

The Emperor, the Grand Duke, and a modern Rechtsstaat

The notion of the monarch's two political personalities was one of the most characteristic features of the Grand Duchy of Finland within the Russian Empire. It was idealized after the 1809 Diet in Borgå/Porvoo, and the notion was constantly invoked after the birth of parliamentary political life in 1863. The point has always been defensive, though in two different ways. On the one hand, the difference between the Russian Emperor and the Grand Duke of Finland was used as a warning against excessive political ambitions in modernizing the Finnish political system. On the other, the notion of the monarch's two political personalities was used as an argument for achieving something – or at least for defending the status quo.

In 1909 Mechelin wrote that it was obvious that the Imperial State Council aimed to make Finland more dependent on the Empire.[185] His point was that the Russian side's recent measures served the purpose of submitting Finnish matters to the imperial government before they were presented to 'Finland's Grand Duke' (*Finlands Storfurste*). This was, he argued, against Finland's constitution. Finland's situation was exceptional because its affairs were now dealt with in two 'advisory councils' (*rådskamrar*), the imperial Senate of Finland and the imperial Council of Ministers. The first 'shall, according to the principles of the constitution, recognized by the explicit words of the Emperor, stand in direct relation to the Emperor and the Grand Duke (*Kejsaren och Storfursten*)'.[186]

It can be argued that because Mechelin wanted to point to the difference between the Finnish senate and the Russian imperial government, he could have used only the title Grand Duke when discussing the Finnish senate. This would have gone against

184. Theodor Homén, 25 May 1910, PTK 33/1910, 909.
185. Leo Mechelin 1909, 3–14, 3.
186. Mechelin 1909, 4.

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tradition, however. Instead, he used expressions such as 'the monarch of Finland'[187] and 'the monarch of the country'.[188] His point was once again to claim that Finland was a separate state, albeit in union with Russia, and Finland's monarch should therefore respect Finland's foundational laws.[189] Mechelin's point was to distinguish between a constitutional (Finland) and an autocratic monarchy (Russia).

This very point was further elaborated and made public by Rafael Erich, a professor of international law. As Kyösti Pekonen has shown in his study of the concepts of governing in Finland, Erich had a great impact on the formation of a legal-positivist theory of a modern *Rechtsstaat* (*oikeusvaltio*) in Finland.[190] Some indication of this can be seen in Erich's 1908 article in which he spelled out the by then conventional view that parliamentarism had not brought about strong governments in France, whereas in England cabinet parliamentarism had created a strong executive power and reduced the monarch's power.[191] More importantly, he argued that in a modern state the monarch was bound by its constitution.[192] Erich set out to establish his view of the powers of an autocratic ruler in several short articles in the first Finnish-language lexicon *Tietosanakirja* (1909–1922).

In the entry 'Emperor and Grand Duke' (*Keisari ja Suuriruhtinas*) he distinguished between the two by arguing that '[i]t follows from the basis and quality of the state association between Finland and Russia that the position of ruler in Finland always belongs to the same physical person, that is, a human individual, who is the Emperor of Russia'. He then added that 'since Finland is a state, its ruler as a legal person [...] must be separated from the Russian Emperor. As a ruler, [...] he is determined by the Finnish constitutional laws [that] determine how widely and under which forms he is entitled to exercise Finnish state power'. According to Erich the title Emperor and Grand Duke expressed 'the difference that exists in the legal relationship between the ruler of Russia and the ruler of Finland on the one hand, and that Finland is part of the Russian Empire (but not of the Russian state) on the other'.[193] Importantly, he also argued:

> The [Emperor and Grand Duke] is not above the state or the legal order of the state, but his rights and duties are limited and determined by the constitution, although it cannot be denied that his power is more extensive than the rulers of modern states usually have.[194]

187. 'The senate of Finland makes its proposals and statements to the monarch of Finland based on the monarch's true respect for the country's laws and administrative system, as well as comprehensive knowledge of the country's needs and the people's wishes[.]' Mechelin 1909, 4–5.
188. 'The senate of Finland carries out its task responsible to the monarch of the country, as well as the Finnish nation and its representation. However, the Russian Council of Ministers stands in its usurped interference in Finnish affairs outside its mandate.' Mechelin 1909, 5.
189. Mechelin 1909, 10.
190. Pekonen 2005, 170–175.
191. Erich 1908, 208–211, 218.
192. Erich 1908, 220–221.
193. Erich 1912, 654. See also Pekonen 2005, 170–171.
194. Erich 1912, 654. See also Pekonen 2005, 170–171.

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Erich represented a legalist position of the Grand Duchy of Finland as a modern constitutional state, governed by a monarch who was bound by constitutional laws. Yet he also noted that the Russian ruler had more power in the Finnish case than other monarchs had in modern states. It is also noteworthy that he did not discuss the monarch's powers in the imperial state of Russia itself. As Pekonen notes, Erich's broadest and most explicit statement on the legality of a modern state came in the 'Monarchical principle' entry. He did not discuss Finland or Russia, but his argument was that autocratic rule went against the logic of a monarchy in modern times:

> It is often said that in a monarchy the highest power belongs to the ruler, and in a republic to the people, but this general statement has little practical value, and besides, there are monarchical states that specifically recognize so-called popular sovereignty. With full reason modern science tends to the notion that sovereignty – that is, the highest power – can be said not to belong to the ruler or the people but to the state itself, which of course does not mean that in every state the people are not the actual source of state power, and the ruler the highest state organ.[195]

Erich's rhetoric, targeted at a broad public, appealed to scientific knowledge, civilization, and modernity. He presented a path from autocracy to constitutional monarchy, the highest contemporary form of which was parliamentary government. For example, in his article on monarchy he argued that 'nowadays [...] all monarchical civilized countries have given up unlimited autocratic rule and adopted a constitutional form of government'. Furthermore, he pointed out that a constitutional monarchy had been 'further developed into a "parliamentary" monarchy in several countries'. This meant that the difference between a monarchy and republic 'in practical political relations has largely disappeared'.[196]

A parliamentary government had a particular place in Erich's articles. In addition to his article on the subject, which was a learned account of English and French political developments, as well as on the mainly German scholarly critique of parliamentarism,[197] he wrote a separate entry on parliamentary monarchy. Again, he was critical of theories that divided monarchies into 'unlimited absolute monarchies, constitutional monarchies, and parliamentary monarchies', for parliamentary monarchy was only a subcategory of constitutional monarchy, not its opposite. His point was that in a contemporary monarchical form of government the monarch had to obey the principles of parliamentary government.[198] As Erich was writing in the first Finnish-language lexicon, his texts should be seen as attempts to educate the public about what a modern state was. Nevertheless, national lexicons are also conscious attempts to write down current political-cum-national preferences.

195. Erich 1914b, 634.
196. Erich 1914a, 633.
197. It should be noted that Erich saw 'parliamentary government' and 'parliamentarism' as synonymous. Erich 1915a, 268–269.
198. Erich 1915b, 269.

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The Grand Duchy without a Grand Duke: the principle of parliamentarism becomes law

The February/March Revolution in Russia was the end of monarchy in imperial Russia, as Nicholas II abdicated on 15 March 1917. It also meant there was no longer a Grand Duke of Finland. Russia's provisional government claimed to have assumed that role, but this was contested in Finland. The question arose, however, of whether the Russian political organ could represent a monarch, or whether it represented the Russian people. It was generally thought in Finland that the country's relationship with Russia had been based only on the Romanov dynasty, and that bond no longer existed. Yet most Finnish politicians and legal scholars accepted the Russian provisional government's authority; the question was always whether it was reasonable to expect the current Russian government to remain in power. The political situation in Petrograd was volatile to say the least. Yet, in connection with the power struggles in Russia, there was a strong opinion in Finland that claimed parliament should take supreme power, the role of the Grand Duke. This was how the Social Democrats, who had 103 seats in parliament after the elections in 1916, saw the issue, as did the leadership of the Agrarian League and some Young Finns.[199]

It is noteworthy that whatever position one took in Finland the idea that governmental power should be controlled by Finns had become prominent. The years of oppression especially had shown that the location and nature of governmental power over Finland really mattered.[200] Even many conservative opponents of parliamentarism thought the government of Finland should be under the control of the Finnish parliament rather than a Russian power. However, there was a serious problem with parliamentarism for most Finnish non-socialists, as they feared socialist rule in the name of parliamentarism, possibly supported by the revolutionary Bolsheviks in Russia.

On 26 March the provisional government appointed the Finnish senate. It was an all-party government, led by the Social Democrat Oskari Tokoi. On 4 May the parliamentary committee led by K. J. Ståhlberg introduced the principle of the government's political responsibility to parliament in legal form. Parliament accepted it on 22 June. On 18 July parliament voted for the Law of Supreme Power, or Power Act (*valtalaki*), which was supported not only by the Social Democrats but also many representatives of the Agrarian League and the Young Finns. The decision made parliament the supreme political power and governing organ in Finland, while leaving power in foreign policy and military issues to the Russian government. On 31 July, however, the Russian provisional government dissolved parliament. The Social Democrats generally saw the dissolution of parliament as being orchestrated by the Finnish bourgeois parties. After the elections parliament now had a non-socialist majority and on 15 November decided to use the power that had belonged to the Emperor and Grand Duke, which again made parliament the supreme power in Finland. It is noteworthy that this happened during a general strike in Finland and the Bolshevik Revolution in Russia, underlining the dramatic and conflictual political situation. On 6 December the senate, led by P. E. Svinhufvud, announced that Finland

199. See e.g. Lindman 1968, 43–52; Ihalainen 2017, 178.
200. See e.g. Jansson 1982, 30; Ihalainen 2017, 173–174, 209.

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was an independent republic. On 21 December parliament decided to confirm the law of the previous June in which the principle of parliamentary government was accepted. The law gained the status of a constitutional law on 31 December when parliament confirmed the reformed Parliament Act.

Given the dense and dramatic circumstances of 1917, it is unsurprising that the political language at the time both reflected and created antagonistic views in society. In his study of the political language of socialism in Finland Risto Turunen has shown that socialist language became exceptionally aggressive, especially during the electoral campaign after the dissolution of the parliament that had accepted the Power Act.[201] Political parties in Finland had radically different conceptions of democracy, ranging from the language of class hatred to the language of legalism. Debates on democracy, the powers of parliament, and its relationship with the government were often marked by ideological conflict and aggressive rhetoric.[202] According to Pasi Ihalainen much of the Social Democrats' democratic rhetoric was borrowed from Russian revolutionary discourse, a phenomenon he calls 'discursive transfers from Petrograd to Helsinki'.[203]

Despite the harsh rhetoric, it should be noted that there was broad support for parliamentary government, though there were differences in the content of that principle. Clearly, some conservatives rejected it altogether. The key issue of contention was whether parliament should nominate the members of government from within parliament, or whether the members of the government could also include members whom parliament trusted. The former was the Social Democrats' standpoint as expressed during the Power Act debate; the latter the non-socialist advocates' view of parliamentarism.[204] The former meant a ruling parliament; the latter implied a certain dualism between parliament and government. Some conservatives drew parallels with the eighteenth-century Swedish Age of Liberty when the estates (especially the noble estate) ruled over the monarch. This time it would be a socialist-dominated parliament. Speaking during the debate on the Power Act, Karl Söderholm (Swedish People's Party) argued that 'an autocratic popular representation just like an autocratic monarch can abuse its power to the detriment of the country and the people'.[205] Speaking on the day of the decisive voting on the Power Act, Ernst Estlander (Swedish People's Party) referred to the left's willingness to display their parliamentarism, arguing that Finland's constitution had often been violated from above and from outside, but the threat this time came from parliament itself.[206]

In comparing the situation in 1917 with 1906 and the subsequent democratically elected parliament, we can see some similarities in political rhetoric but also some important differences. The similarities are that there was a sudden decline of imperial power; there was broad support for constitutional parliamentary politics; and there was a class-conscious socialist party in both contexts. Reading Otto Wille Kuusinen's commentss on parliamentarism and parliamentary government from 1906 and those of Social Democrat politicians from 1917 reveals no great difference, though

201. Turunen 2021, 276–279.
202. Ihalainen 2017, 174–175, 186–188, 199.
203. Ihalainen 2017, 200.
204. See e.g. Jansson 1982, 38.
205. Quoted in Ihalainen 2017, 210.
206. Ernst Estlander, 18 July 1918.

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Kautsky had lost some political relevance for Lenin and other leading Bolsheviks by 1917. There was, of course, one crucial difference: the autocratic Russian Empire did not collapse in 1905, but it did in 1917. While most constitutional liberals in 1906–1907 saw parliamentarism as something to achieve in the future but sought the government's judicial responsibility, a political parliamentary government was the goal in 1917. Even many conservatives changed their mind in 1917, though in both contexts there were conservatives who never wanted parliamentarism. Both around 1906 and in 1917 they opted for a German-style constitutional monarchy. Nevertheless, the most tangible difference from the perspective of parliamentarism was that in 1917 there was no longer a Grand Duke of Finland.

Some days after the Bolsheviks had started the revolution in Russia, and shortly before parliament in Finland claimed supreme power, the socialist member of the Finnish parliament and editor of the socialist newspaper *Työmies*, Edvard Hänninen-Walpas, addressed the issue of the Grand Duke of Finland as the holder of supreme power in Finland. He accused the bourgeois parties of giving the Grand Duke's role to the provisional government in Russia without considering who was currently in that government's leadership. Toying with different names (Miliukov, Nekrasov) he made fun of the bourgeois submission to the provisional Russian government (ignoring the fact that his party had played the same game).[207] In arguing ironically about who could be the Grand Duke, Hänninen-Walpas was in fact showing how important the Grand Duke of Finland had been, and how much it mattered that this political person no longer existed.

Conclusions: imperial parliamentarianism?

In this chapter I have attempted to capture the 'grand duchy-ness' of Finland by focusing on how the words parliamentarism and parliamentary government were used in the printed press and in the Finnish Diet's debates. By focusing on the use of these words, my take is admittedly narrow. To create a broader view of parliamentarism's development, it might also be possible to focus on the themes of representation, deliberation, and sovereignty, for example.[208] However, focusing on the arguments in which 'parliamentarism' or 'parliamentary government' have been present provides a specific and targeted view of the relationship between the Finnish government and imperial rule. The Grand Duke's political role lies at the heart of that question.

Concerning the possibility of parliamentary government in Finland, the Grand Duke was always both the problem and the solution that could not be ignored. Those who wanted to imitate English-style parliamentary government either pretended the Grand Duke would be a constitutional monarch or ignored him, and stated their ideals knowing they were impossible to achieve 'in the present circumstances'. However, it is important to note that imitating parliamentarism and pretending that it would be applicable in the Grand Duchy was crucial for Finland's political development. References to English parliamentarianism were neither a matter of ignorance nor naive idealism but of a political rhetoric that aimed to achieve something. It is not

207. Edvard Hänninen-Walpas, 10 November 1917.
208. See Ihalainen, Ilie, &Palonen 2016, 1; Marzec and Turunen 2024.

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without reason that it at least changed the political imagination among the politically active population.

Regardless of what the imperial relations vis-à-vis Finland were, the idealist versus pragmatist view of the relationship between political representation and the government kept the idea of Finland as a constitutional state alive, based on the idea that the imperial monarch had two political personalities, the Finnish Grand Duke and the Russian Emperor. The recurring notion that the Grand Duke did not 'live among us' was useful in creating more room not only for daily political disagreement but for adopting the position that it was in the Grand Duchy that political matters should be resolved. Even if the language of parliamentarism failed to introduce parliamentarism in Finland before 1917, it provided the political and theoretical language of parliamentary government.

Although 'realists' like Snellman and Kuusinen or the Swedish political scientists Svedelius and Fahlbeck were correct in their view that political power lay not in Helsinki but St Petersburg, they should not be taken as necessarily having been politically wiser than their opponents. Nor should they be seen as more conservative and in principle opposed to parliamentarism (which some certainly were), or too radical to believe in parliamentarism in an empire (as Kuusinen obviously thought). What they did, however, was that they posed more explicitly than many others the question whether it was possible to have parliamentarism in an imperial subunit if the imperial centre is not served by a parliamentary government. Some of the Finnish intellectuals quoted in this chapter at least tried to evoke the idea that it was possible by underlining that the Grand Duke did not live in Finland. Others highlighted the contradiction of attempting to have parliamentarism when autocratic rule held supreme power.

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Abstract

Three recurring themes dominate the Grand Duchy of Finland's historical image. First, it is used as shorthand for Finland's status as a modern autonomous state within the Russian Empire. Second, seen from a longer perspective covering the Swedish period, scholarly works tend to present it as an empty relic stemming from old listings of royal titles. Third, in more popular representations it is part of the imaginary realm of Sweden-Finland and predestined to become a nation state.

This book strives to specify all these takes by investigating the historical meanings associated with the notion of grand duchy from the sixteenth to the twentieth centuries. It analyses different layers in the Swedish, Russian, and Finnish use of the concept, from medieval modes of princely power to modern ideas of national statehood in the light of the evolving history of the European concepts of state and nation.

In Finland the 'grand duchy' was seldom rhetorically confronted as a symbol of the declining old order. Nor, however, was it a synonym for the 'Emperor's Finland' and unbroken loyalty. Instead, its meaning was stretched in opposing directions as a frame for princely rule and an arena for representing the people. During its long history the Grand Duchy of Finland came to signify both Finland's imperial dependence and its constitution as a separate state and nation – until the overstretched concept shattered in 1917, both from without and within.

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