

A periphery lost: the representation of Karelia in Finnish national landscape imagery

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The article reflects how Karelia has been represented as a national periphery in Finnish national landscape imagery, understood as a dynamic system of social representations defining Finland as national space. Karelia may be likened to other national peripheries, analysed among others by Robert Shields as liminal zones allegedly at the margins of society. The particular aspects of Karelian landscape occurring in popular landscape imagery are discussed. It is pointed out how these anchor Karelia to a variety of contexts, of which Karelianist imagery originating from art constitutes only one. Similarly the ideological roles of Karelian landscape have varied, starting from the didactic narratives of Zachris Topelius and ending up in the post-war and post-Soviet Karelian revivals. However, the present-day Karelian landscape is a nostalgic construction, transferring the liminal zone outside history.

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Introduction

The study of the representations of Karelia has traditionally centred on art and literature, especially that of the Karelianist period around the turn of the 20th century (see Sihvo 1973; Sarajas-Korte 1989; Tarkka 1989; Riikonen 1995; Valkonen 1995; Varpio 1997; Waenerberg 2000; Konttinen 2001). Geographical and geopolitical studies have focused on the construction of the regional and ethnic image of Karelia and its role in the Finnish nation-building process (Paasi 1986, 1996; Raivo 1996, 1998; Harle & Moisio 2000). Yet other approaches are offered by the study of the Karelian ethnic self-understanding (Heikkinen 1989) and the nostalgic relationship to Karelia (Haataja & Lintunen 1990). Diverse as these studies are in terms of their source material, methodology and outcomes, one may discern certain interconnecting themes. The construction of the image of Karelia has been largely interpreted as a projection of Finnish – especially Fennoman – cultural identity to the national periphery, leading to an ambiguous situation where Karelia and the Karelians have

been viewed at the same time as essentially Finnish and as alien elements. This search of national roots has been compared with contemporary Western exoticism at large, similarly combining the artistic quest of original purity with personal escapism.

The aim of this article is to examine the specific role of Karelia in Finnish national landscape imagery. The latter is understood here as a dynamic system of representation defining Finland as a national space. The empirical study draws upon illustrated publications presenting Finnish landscape between the late 18th century and the 1960s. Theoretically one may describe landscape as a social representation that anchors phenomena experienced as new, strange or abstract into the lived world and environment, thus familiarising and neutralising them (Moscovici 1984). Landscape serves as a means of naturalisation, concealing its social and historical origin (Mitchell 1994). The production of visual landscape representations, according to uniform conventions, leads to the establishment of a homogenous landscape imagery, where singular landscapes form

hierarchies according to their intertextual relations (Duncan & Ley 1993). As a landscape representation, landscape imagery in the whole gains ideological momentum from its perceived verisimilitude, the familiarity and physical verifiability of its individual elements (Tarasti 1990; Palin 1999, 226).

Stephen Daniels argues that imperialist nationalism has had the tendency of incorporating peripheries into its identity myths as 'others' in contrast to the 'cultured' or 'civilised' core areas (e.g. the American Frontier or the French Orientalism; Daniels 1993, 5). A different case of an internal 'other' is represented by the Canadian North, examined by Rob Shields as a "masculine-gendered, liminal zone of *rite de passage* and economic recreative freedom and escape" constituting a cornerstone of the Canadian national identity (Shields 1991, 162–165 and further). Constructed or imagined peripheries of this kind are likely to be found from most nation states and have in the context of the USA, Canada and Switzerland been referred to as the "naturalisation of the nation" (Kaufmann 1998). Such natural peripheries may have provided neutral ground for identification in times of national conflict, as has been the case with the American West after the Civil War (Miller 1992). They have though not necessarily been stable, but may have changed both in terms of location and character, the American Frontier being an outstanding example (Bowden 1992). Several Finnish writers have approached Karelia as a natural national periphery with a utopic character (Sihvo 1973; Tarkka 1989; Raivo 1998).

Karelia represented as national periphery

I will now look at Karelia as a national periphery in the context of national landscape imagery. There my approach will resemble that of Shields, who speaks of an "imaginary geography" consisting of spatial stereotypes that define relations between physical places. In such ideologically charged readings of space, the role of periphery is to imply a centre in terms of a liminal zone where the standard norms of society are compromised. National ideological hegemony perpetuates such stereotypical images by repeating them (Shields 1991). My intention is not to grasp Karelia or its representations from a purely regional point of view, as a part of the national territory or

an ethnic milieu relating to others, but also as a part of imagery relating to other visualisations of the national space. In doing this I will put particular emphasis to the implication of distance and movement as an integral part in defining a periphery, as well as to the ambiguity of Karelian landscape discussed above and attempts to solve it. Similar ambiguity has characterised even the Russian view of Karelia (see Heikkinen 1989, 26–31).

Several writers have made the reservation that there is no such clearly defined area as "Karelia", rather a number of different and historically changing Karelias (Sihvo 1973; Kirkinen 1998). The stereotypical image of Karelia, as it appears in national landscape imagery, has largely ignored this fact, tending to lump the representations linking with the geographical area of Karelia – however defined – together regardless of the social or cultural differences. Nevertheless, both the relative importance and the characteristics of Karelia have varied historically in landscape imagery.

In a larger study pertaining to Finnish landscape imagery, based on the analysis of altogether fifty landscape publications, I have divided the material into three rather obvious historical periods; that of the autonomy (1809–1917), the pre-war period (1917–1939) and the wartime and the post-war period (1939–1967). During the first period, a tenth of all placeable landscape images represented sites from South Karelia, which however was not unambiguously defined: for instance the rapids of Imatra were sometimes presented as Karelian and sometimes not, if any regional connection was given. On the other hand, North and Ladogan Karelia were much less depicted, the former hardly recognised at all. The next period marked the heyday of Karelian landscape in national landscape imagery: there was a clear overall shift of emphasis to the east, and about a fifth of all landscape images originated from Karelia (north and south in equal rations). The disastrous end of the Second World War showed not only the disappearance of the ceded areas, but also the remaining parts of Karelia were practically wiped out from national landscape imagery until the 1960s (Häyrynen 2000, 2002).

These differences in the areal emphasis need to be put into a wider context. During the first period, landscape imagery focused on the cultural core area of South Finland in general, South Karelia making no exception. The eastern emphasis during the second period was paralleled by an equal rise on interest in the north (e.g. the areas

of Petsamo, Kuusamo and Salla and the Oulunjoki river route), thus marking a general reorientation to the peripheries rather than just a belated impact of Karelianism in popular landscape imagery. During the last period, Finnish landscape imagery polarised to the directions of the southern "Rush Finland" as well as Lapland, leaving even the other intermediate areas besides Karelia in the shade.

When looking at the sites represented, the city of Viipuri (now Vyborg) (Fig. 1) was the Karelian landscape the most likely to be represented in a

popular landscape publication until the Second World War. In the second period, even the rapids of Imatra – whether considered Karelian or not – were an obligatory sight to be represented, although their popularity was substantially diminished after their harnessing in 1929. Other sites salient in terms of the amount of their representation were the Canal of Saimaa (during the first period since its opening in 1855; Fig. 2), Lake Ladoga and the Valamo (Valaam) Monastery (both during the first two periods since mid-19th century) as well as the town of Sortavala with its sur-

Fig. 1. The historic town of Viipuri, the regional centre of Karelia, was the subject of the first published "realistic" landscape image from Finland. It remained a permanent feature of Finnish landscape imagery until its cession to Soviet Union in 1944. (Dahlberg 1716).

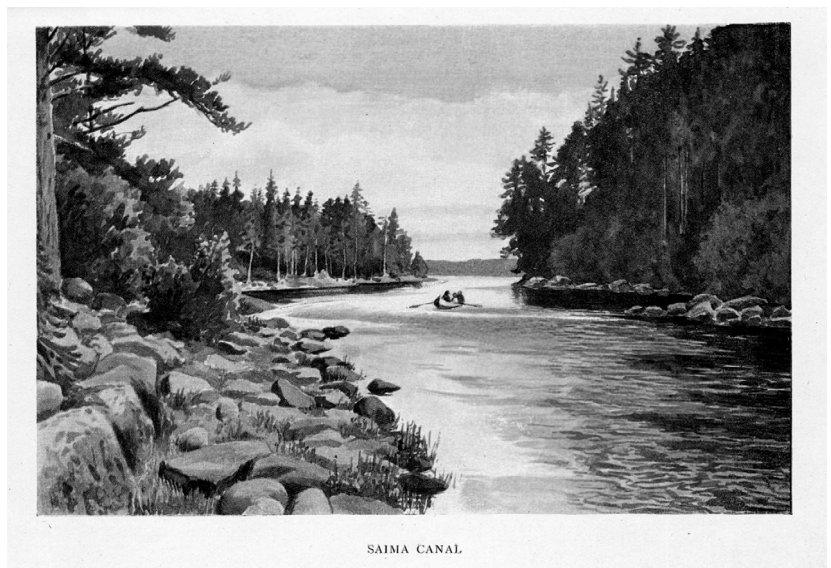
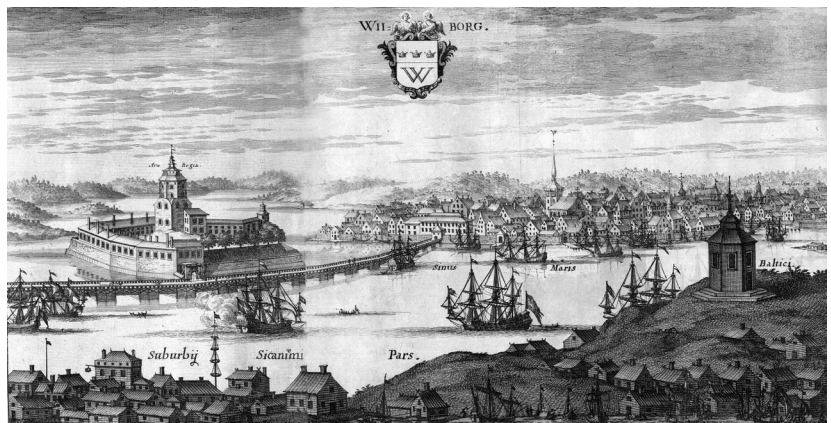


Fig. 2. The Saimaa Canal, opened in 1855 to connect the Saimaa water system to the Baltic Sea, was typically depicted in pre-independence imagery. (Fyra... 1890).

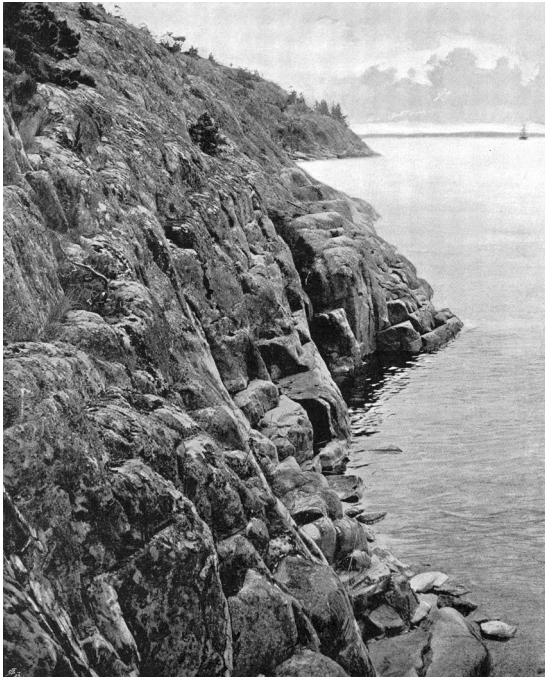


Fig. 3. The rugged cliffs of the Ladoga lakeshores represent a region and a landscape type characteristic for the period between the two World Wars. (Inha 1898).

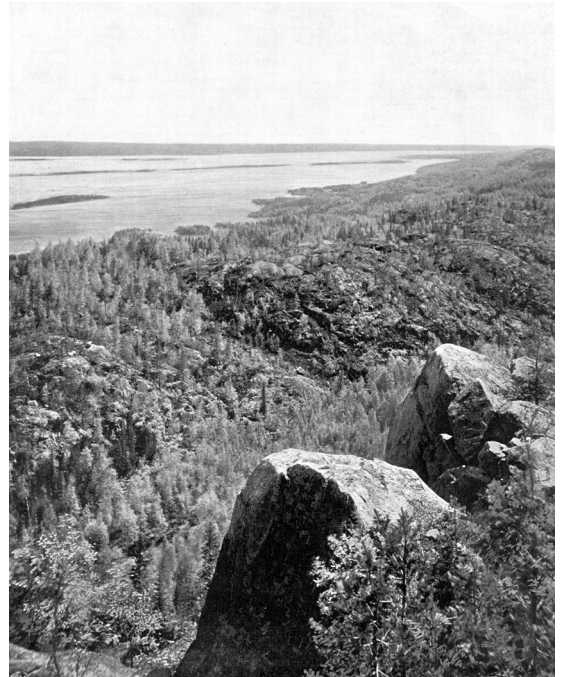


Fig. 4. The Koli heights were the only Karelianist landscape to remain on the Finnish side of the border after 1944. Their importance was recognised in the 1990s, when they were designated a National Park and one among the “national landscapes” of Finland. (Inha 1898).

roundings, the Koli heights and the Island of Suursaari (all mainly in the second period; Figs. 3 and 4). The picturesque Lake Tolvajärvi, an intended National Park, was typically depicted only in the second period. During the last period, only the Imatra rapids still stood out from the Karelian landscapes.

It is not argued here that the significance or national status of a landscape could be measured simply by the frequency of its appearance in national landscape imagery. The purpose of this part of the study was merely to reveal the hierarchic construction of landscape imagery and its change from a period to another. However, the connotations of the landscapes thus singled out merit a closer inspection. Firstly, the strong position of Viipuri would correspond to the general urban bias of the first period and the overall prominence of all larger Finnish cities in it, apart from which it was presented as a physical site anchoring the

national territory to the past. More specifically, Viipuri was portrayed as a site of historical and cultural confrontation between Finland and Russia, a border town, charging it with a particular kind of tension.

While the Saimaa Canal (Fig. 2) clearly was a manifestation of Finnish economical expansion during the latter half of the 19th century and a technological achievement of its time, the other “Karelian” landscapes pointed out above were or involved, except Valamo, natural sights, which thematically dominated pre-war landscape imagery. They all also were strongly connected with the touristic development of the area, actually forming two popular travel routes. The images of Valamo and Tolvajärvi stood for the two exotic aspects of Karelia, the eastern Orthodox religion and the celebrated Karelian folk tradition respectively. As for links with the Karelianist artistic movement, Koli (Fig. 4) would certainly stand

above the others, although Suursaari and the Sor-tavala area (Fig. 3) attracted wide artistic interest as well.

The historical trajectory of the Karelian landscapes follows a general pattern: initial recognition at last by the end of the era of autonomy, outright dominance during the second period and falling into oblivion during the last, even for those sites left on the Finnish side. This cycle could be described using a model by Denis Cosgrove (1989), inspired by Raymond Williams: Karelian landscapes in the first period could be termed as emerging alternative landscapes as opposed to the then dominant cultural and historic landscapes of the south. Between the two World Wars, they would rise in turn to a paradigmatic status along with the other peripheral landscapes. After the war, they ended up as residual landscapes in more than one sense, when the Karelian regions became lost or truncated by the land cessions and the national periphery largely shifted to Lapland. (This article does not deal with the “neo-Kareli-anist” renaissance of Karelian landscape, dis-cussed by several writers, e.g. Paasi 1996, 127–135; Raivo 1996, 163–238; 1998, 26–27; Petri-salo 2001, as this falls out of its temporal scope.)

Thus the tide of Karelian landscape in popular landscape imagery did not coincide with artistic Karelianism but followed it only after the independence. This observation is supported by Riitta Konttinen, according to whom Karelianist landscapes were not generally acknowledged in the 1890s in spite of their artistic appreciation, but were then still outshaded by the earlier Topelian landscape imagery (Konttinen 2001, 227–229). An excellent example is given by the photog-rapher I. K. Inha, whose influence in reinterpret-ing and mediating Karelianist imagery was decisive. His *Picturesque Finland* (1898) did contain representations of Karelian landscape but was nevertheless overwhelmed by the Topelian castles, estate buildings, farming villages and townscapes. In the first illustrated version of his *Suomen maisemia* (1925), his photographic renditions of Karelianist landscapes were on the contrary the principal subject matter.

The diversity of the landscapes described above reveals us one central function of national landscape imagery. They serve to illustrate various aspects of Karelia and thus refer to different contexts – often to more than just one. Multicontextuality is a typical characteristic for the focal landscapes in the imagery. In this sense they may be

likened to works of art, in which the aporic tension between the contexts provides depth for their interpretation. Art is indeed an important context for the national symbolic landscapes, yet not the only one: others may be pointed out from history, geography, science, ethnography, religion etc. Landscape imagery acts as an inventory, meticulously listing the different aspects of national space; in doing this, it selects and frames certain of them as “typical”, excluding others (Cubitt 1998). In this process also the less represented landscapes are necessary; their number being large, they add to the verisimilitude of landscape imagery by increasing the density of its network of references. This entails the presentation of a wider repertoire of contexts, including local, ephemeral or otherwise particular (exemplified in Karelia by the granite quarries of Pyterlahti or the lowering of the level of the river Vuoksi). Tourism plays a crucial part in mediating the imagery and corroborating its significance by offering personal enactment of the sites represented.

The ideological roles of Karelia

Let us now turn from the external structure of national landscape imagery to its ideological contents. In terms of landscape representations and imagery, Karelia has traditionally been considered within a geopolitical rather than social context – that is, national (Finnish or Russian) or regional i.e. Karelian. However, landscape imageries – as any cultural texts or discourses – are produced under specific sociocultural conditions. Thus one may discern not only different national imageries about Karelian landscape but different social layers in them. My argument is that historically the Finnish nationalistic imagery about Karelian landscape has varied according to its expected audiences among different sociocultural groups, leading to differences in its reception and interpretation. I shall start my presentation by describing the historical evolving of Karelian landscape imagery and its social dynamics in Finland, to continue with a discussion about its current state and sociocultural position.

The book *Finland framstäldt i teckningar* (1845–1852) by the writer and historian Zachris Topelius was principally intended for a narrow cultural elite: the mostly Swedish-speaking civil servants, clergy, great landowners and manufacturers, town merchants etc. forming the national ruling class

and intelligentsia at the time. Practically every prominent estate or manufacture building was portrayed, as well as every important township or settlement. In addition, natural sights were presented as 'common' property to be symbolically partaken by every patriotic Finn. Even some 'ordinary' landscapes were picked up in order to show how common people lived in the different parts of the Grand Duchy, showing it as carefully composed Sunday-clad staffage figures amidst geographically representative scenery.

In the book Karelia was represented by Viipuri (accompanied by the castle and the Monrepos Park in separate entries) and the Imatrankoski rapids (together with the entire Vuoksi river). Other notable sites were, judging by the length of their descriptions, Kiviniemi in Sakkola (mostly because of the cataclysmic fall of Vuoksi in 1818) and the monastery of Valamo. Other listed sites were the quarries of Pyterlahti and Ruskeala, the iron works at Puhos, the estates of Suurlahti and Pukinniemi, the town of Käkisalmi, the vicarage of Jaakkimanvaara, the parishes of Kaukola and Kurkijoki, the Pärnä bridge over Vuoksi and the Finnish-Russian border by the small river Rajajoki. Thematically one may group these images followingly: depositories of national wealth (towns, quarries, manors, iron works); historic monuments; rural beauty spots; and as unique cases, the sublime monument of nature and the border – the ultimate token of a nation state.

In the texts there are relatively few and mild explicit expressions of national ideology, made understandable by the strictness of Russian censorship in the revolutionary mid-19th century. Among the historical anecdotes and didactic accounts of geographical and economic facts, Topelius (1852) tells about Monrepos in his usual saccharine style:

It is an honour for Monrepos not to be an exception, but a truthful picture of the nature of its country; one must pay homage to the founders for the fact that nowhere in Finland, so abundant with originally beautiful sites, has the caring hand of art so gently but skilfully known to respect the grace of nature and brought it forth in the right manner. (Citations translated by the author.)

References to the 'otherness' of Karelia, such as the Orthodox religion, are likewise sparse and matter-of-fact. As for the Karelians, in some pictures may be seen traditionally clad figures with the kaftans and brimmed hats typical for the rural inhabitants of the Karelian Isthmus, but regional

peculiarities are not elaborated. With few exceptions, only historical characters or proprietors are referred to by names, the rest being simply 'peasants'.

From Topelius's later productions we get a very different picture, as he then is very consciously creating a national narrative, largely building on regional characteristics and reaching the entire population via the recently introduced elementary school system. In his school reader *Boken om vårt land* (1871), still well known from numerous reprints in Finland, he uses a fairy-tale to describe the country as a conglomerate of the different regions. Karelia is given the following characterisation:

Dear Sir, do you wish to own the country of the rising sun? Would you like to row on the shores of two seas, the Gulf of Finland and Ladoga? If you want to possess hills, lakes, rapids, mills by the hundreds or a noble stream such as Vuoksi; if you want to ride fast horses; if you want to listen to old poems; if you want to burn swidden in vast wildernesses or to saw boards in dark pinewoods, then I advise you to pick Karelia, because it may be compared with no other country.

Here Karelia is personified as a merchant advertising its regional brands in the marketplace. One hardly needs to recall David Harvey's description of the time-space compression that reduces the localities into images competing for a place in the sun (Harvey 1990).

Further on in the same book, the lowering of Vuoksi and Lake Ladoga are chosen to represent the region. Topelius points out the perceived "weirdness" of the monastery of Valamo in the Finnish context, but carefully counterbalances it with the holy character of the site. (Elsewhere also the two quarries are described.)

Karelians are now depicted as nothing less than the sunny side of the Finnish national character:

A Karelian is slender, he has brown curly hair and lively blue eyes. Compared with the people of Häme [the other Finnish "primary tribe"] he is more open, friendly, mobile and active but also more garrulous, boasting, curious and irritable. Travel and commerce are his favourite works; he travels long distances in his own country and brings his goods to Russia. He is sensitive, easily saddened and easily happy; loves play and beautiful songs, composed by his own poets. Therefore have the most beautiful songs been found from his country, kept in his memory from his ancestors.

In another passage Karelians come even closer to a patronising image of "primitive people" in 19th-century texts:

Karelian is as it were the light side of the Finnish people: open, permitting, volatile and frivolous, easily led and easily misled, gullible as a child, however not without Finnish stubbornness, but docile and talented, needing only good education to place him among the first of his people.

Topelius's stereotype of the lively Karelian has defied time and lives on in popular thought and media. The primary school reader, intended to form a body of shared knowledge across the population, gives a simple image of the area, anchored by a couple of geographical references and inhabited by the happy-go-lucky Karelians. A more nuanced image arises from the texts of the National Romanticism around the turn of the century, such as O. Relander's *Karjalan kuvia* (1893), I. K. Inha's *Kalevalan laulumailta* (1911), *Kalevalan kansaa katsomassa* by Louis Sparre (1930) and other picturesque travel accounts. Together with the artistic exploration of the area, these showed the keen interest the Finnish cultural elite had developed in the area. For them Karelia – mostly referring to Ladogan Karelia – was above all a pastoral "Kalevala country", and traits of primeval Finnishness were searched from the people as well as from the landscape. When these failed to fulfil the expectations – people being influenced by Russian culture, Orthodoxy, and Western modernity, landscape by being roadless, poor, godforsaken and mosquito-ridden – the result was ambiguity (cf. Sihvo 1973; Paasi 1986; Heikkinen 1989; Tarkka 1989).

Let us first quote Louis Sparre about the Karelian enthusiasm of the 1890s, where Karelia appeared as an idealised liminal zone beyond the sphere of culture:

After the dinner the two girls, one of them a perfect beauty, row us back across a small lake. Longingly we depart from them, and soon we hear their fresh and youthful voices as they sing a shepherd song on the lake behind the ridge. On our way home the hostess of Tarassia sits at the oars and sings a poem with Kalevala measure. Laying on the bottom of the boat, eyes half closed, one hears the rhythm of the poem as if in a dream, the oars rowing to it, and one is transferred by the imagination to the times centuries ago, to the world of Kalevala, gently rocked by the *Aallottaret*, *Vellamo* and other beautiful water goddesses. (Sparre 1930)

This euphoria is contrasted by I. K. Inha's account of the famous Tolvajärvi in Border Karelia:

How empty is the landscape here, how sad its ruggedness, how melancholic the splashing of the

waves on these rocky shores, even the pine trunks seemed to suffer the poverty of the land. (Inha 1925)

Inha had used similar choice of words to express the sadness of the landscape of Lapland, regretting the absence of culture that otherwise was used to glorify the periphery landscapes. The desolateness of Tolvajärvi did not prevent its becoming a popular sight in landscape imagery between the two World Wars.

The heroic pioneers were followed by the patriotic middle class, who wanted to experience in person the terrain sanctified by art and literature. It seems that the connections between National Romanticism and early tourism were almost immediate in Karelia (Waenerberg 2000, 112), accelerated by the quick reproduction of artistic imagery by means of photographic publications that popularised the landscapes, and facilitated by regular waterway and rail connections by the end of the 19th century.

In the early guidebooks particular attention was given to the surroundings of Sortavala, often compared with Alpine scenery, and to the exotic Valamo, not forgetting the cheerful and hospitable Kalevala people. Apart from tradition, the violent history of the area was presented as an attraction by itself, manifested in castles, fortifications and the 'mediaeval' Viipuri. The variegated *dachas* near St. Petersburg were marked as another curiosity. Although differences in the living standard on either side of the border were routinely explained by Russian domination, no anti-Russian feeling was evident. Apart from national sentiments, the nature was seen to offer recreational opportunities for sport fishing, etc. Here Karelia would appear as a middle-class landscape of consumption (cf. Urry 1990). The class distinctions inherent in landscape tourism at e.g. Koli and Punkaharju were noted among others by Pentti Haanpää as late as in 1928 (cit. Paasilinna 1990, 296, 301).

The results of tourism in the Sortavala archipelago are already dismissed with contempt by Inha in 1909 (reprinted in 1925):

It was travelled through and through, all lookout sites found, all curious earth forms, rarest plants and their habitats; the tourists could move around there as if 'by notes', knowing that they would see everything worthwhile by following the instructions.

Three different kinds of Karelian 'landscapes' seem to emerge prior to the Finnish independence: the high-minded, artistically inclined and

ideologically saturated 'high-brow' image, the culturally competent but consumption-oriented 'middle-brow' image and the rather basic 'low-brow' image deriving from the elementary school. One may pose a further question about the possibility of conflict between dominant national culture and local or regional culture. There is however little evidence of latter in terms of landscape imagery, apart from the study of Orthodox symbolic landscapes by Petri Raivo (1996). In it he shows how the pressure by the dominant culture towards the Orthodox increased after the independence, creating confusion among the Orthodox who above all saw themselves as loyal Finnish citizens.

After the independence the tone of travel accounts changes. Karelia, especially the Isthmus, is now explicitly rendered in terms of Finnish-Soviet confrontation (see e.g. Peltoniemi 1938). Russians are discussed in an openly hostile fashion, ridiculing the pre-independence St. Petersburg elite in Terijoki and the Russian immigrants and peasants as its pitiful remainder (Karimo 1929, cit. Paasilinna 1990, 328):

We remember the bygone time, when the so-called cream of St. Petersburg lay, danced, flirted, drank and smelled in Terijoki. There were then the long-bearded Ivan Ivanoviches with their sons and Anushka Panfilovnas with their daughters. The beach of Terijoki was at the daytime like a well-stocked butcher shop.

Another change in the attitude to Karelian landscape was the sudden visibility of the border pointed out by Anssi Paasi (1996): having ceased to be a mere formality, it now had become a boundary between two rival power blocks, constituting for the Finnish nationalists what they saw as an eternal frontline between east and west. Karelianism re-emerged as a militant agenda to free the neighbouring Fenno-Ugrian peoples from the Red Russian yoke, rather than a cultural movement. Apart from being perceived as a western bulwark, the border also started to be seen as a danger zone, radiating evil influence to the poor periphery on the Finnish side (Paasi 1996).

The wartime advance to East Karelia was a re-enactment of the Karelianist dream, as represented here by the writer Olavi Paavolainen interpreted enthusiastically the Karelian landscape, referring to Karelianism (1941):

But how startling and pleasing to the artistic eye is the picturesque grey, hundred percent Border Kare-

lian architecture! These houses are familiar from the childhood books that first told the fascinating history of the discovery of Kalevala. They are also familiar from the heyday of Finnish art, the end of the century "Karelianism's" sketches... The lifestyle born within those walls has inspired Eino Leino and Juhani Aho; the wilderness poetry of the surrounding landscape has echoed in the early symphonies of Sibelius! (Cit. Riikonen 1995)

Among the troops, the enthusiasm appears to have been remarkably cooler according to Väinö Linna's *Tuntematon sotilas* (*The unknown soldier*, first published 1954):

Looks as if there is little to steal around here, even the road turned worse. But the woods are similar... So, lads. We have marched through the Karelian songlands, then. Wasn't it here they had those old fellows and women singing poems and all sorts of laments? I must have heard that from somewhere.

The Karelian landscape had not remained unchanged. In 1942, Paavolainen already felt profoundly alienated from his childhood surroundings:

At the ruins of Kivennapa, decimated by the war, I was caught up by fond memories; but the two wars having rolled over the Isthmus had made the landscape as if leprous. Its familiar and beloved features had not yet turned totally shapeless, but it already belonged to an isolated atmosphere alien to me. One did not wish to touch it anymore. (Cit. Riikonen 1995, 134)

Karelia appeared as lost even before its loss.

After the war and the cession of Karelia, a new situation arose. The allegedly organic nation state had shrunk and its self-evident borders had been moved. Two results followed: an absolute absence of any reference to the ceded area in post-war national imagery and the occurrence of a particular nostalgic imagery primarily intended for the Karelians, showing the landscape frozen into its exact pre-war state (see Kyytinen & Marttila 1940; Paavolainen 1941, 1955).

Concluding remarks

In looking at the role of Karelia in Finnish national landscape imagery it appears that the notions of Karelia as a natural national periphery, largely based on Karelianist art and texts, do not tell the complete story. The specific role as a national periphery and a liminal zone between culture and nature, exemplified by natural sights, is evident

especially during the second period. They however coexist with other kinds of representations linking with other national discourses. It is as if regional imagery would replicate the structure of national landscape imagery in miniature, similarly claiming representativity and multicontextual truthlikeness. This becomes evident when looking at publications devoted to Karelian landscape, which in most cases are not limited to Karelianist imagery but also present parallel themes such as history, wood industry, army etc. Yet the emphasis is clearly put on natural landscapes and folk culture contrasting to the core areas. This position is underlined by the implications of physical distance and movement between the centre and the periphery as well as in the periphery. Karelia is gazed upon and visited from the centre.

Karelia's virtual disappearance from the national territory immediately after the war concretely shows how flexible a representational system national landscape imagery is when readjusting itself to the new historical situation. The gaze of the centre has avoided the trauma of the lost national space by redirecting its attention to yet another periphery, returning to the remaining parts of Karelia only after their sites and images have been rearranged or reconstructed. In the meanwhile, the lost area has lived on in a ghost imagery of memory, frozen to its pre-war state. After the dissolution of the Soviet Union in 1991, it has become violently challenged by the squalid images of the present-day ceded Karelia. As for national landscape imagery, the heights of Koli became a National Park in 1991 after a public campaign and, together with the Imatra rapids, designated National Landscapes by the Ministry of the Environment in 1993. Karelian landscape appears to live on, at least by state intervention, but now as an historic landscape nostalgically referring to the time of nation-building rather than a liminal zone outside history.

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