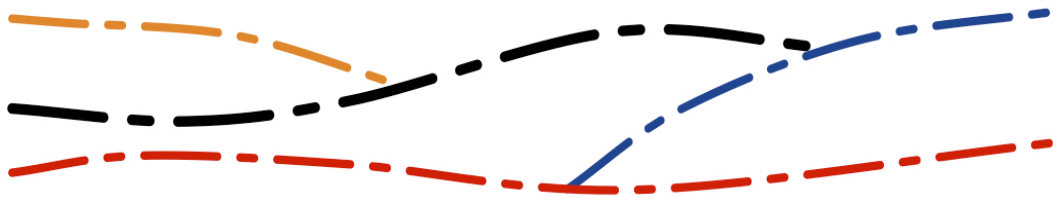


EUBORDERSCAPES



Working Paper 5

Re-conceptualizing the Finnish Eastern Border: a pilot study
on discourses in *Suomen Kuvalehti*, 1990-2010

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Abstract

The working paper analyses texts published in the weekly journal Suomen Kuvalehti between 1990 and 2010 in order to 1) map out main discussions related to the Finnish Eastern border 2) to test the fruitfulness of a quantitative screening of a single medium as a first step in approaching conceptual changes related to 'borderscapes'. The screening produced a sample of 942 relevant texts. In terms of substance and framing, these texts were dominated by political writing and national perspective. There were three clear peaks of writing, coinciding with 1) breakdown of Soviet Union (1991) 2) Finland's accession to the EU (1994) 3) EU's eastward expansion (2005). By 2000s, conceptions of borders as exhibited in Suomen Kuvalehti appear to have become more pluralistic and contested. New actors were 'let in' into debate, as is manifested particularly in opinion writing on Karelia. Together with the debate on Finland's Nato-membership, the debate on Karelia represented the most radical challenge to the post WWII status quo in positioning Finland vis-à-vis Russia. The waning of these debates, lowering trend in the amount of writing, relative rise of regional perspective and pluralization of topics during the second half of the research period are interpreted as signs of 'normalization' of Finland's post-Soviet borderscapes. Overall, the pilot suggest that the analysis of a single medium can already give useful insights on re-conceptualizing of particular borderscapes; but it is also clear that comparison with other materials is necessary in order to arrive at epistemologically and methodologically more reliable results.

Background and data

This working paper is based on collaborative work undertaken within the framework of the project *EUBorderscapes*, and its work package *The Reconfiguration of Post-Soviet Borders and Conceptual Change*.¹ In accordance with the research goals of this work package, the basic idea was to map out the main debates and discourses on borders and bordering processes² in the Finnish context, with a particular focus on Finland's Eastern borders with Russia. The original intention was to combine media analysis with a screening of debates in the plenary sessions of the Finnish Parliament. However, the latter proved difficult to realize in an intelligible way within the given time-frame. As for the media-analysis, the material chosen for the pilot study was the weekly journal *Suomen Kuvalehti*.

Suomen kuvalehti (literally, the 'picture magazine of Finland' – subsequently referred to as SK) is a 'quality' weekly, publishing high-profile commentaries and wide feature articles with a focus

¹ Main collaborative input to the pilot study has been given by Prof. Ilkka Liikanen, who also co-wrote the last section of the working paper ("What next?"). Additional input has been given by Dr. Jussi Laine, FM Saara Pellander, and BA Annina Vainio, who contributed to the collecting of the material.

² For more detailed discussion on the concepts used in this working paper, cf. Kolossov et al. 2012.

on national and international politics and culture. It has a circulation of about 100 000, and its estimated 400 000 readers make it one of the leading weekly journals in Finland. First founded in 1873, Suomen Kuvalehti is politically non-aligned, although it originally had centre-right political leanings.³ After the Second World War, it became a centrist media with often close connections to power-holders and leading intelligentsia from all creeds of the political spectrum. In the decades under study in this article, it could be depicted as a more or less politically neutral “mainstream” publication.

Aside from the thorny issues surrounding claims of journalistic ‘impartiality’,⁴ it is clear from the outset that a single weekly journal gives only a thin and potentially highly biased basis for reaching public discourses on any particular topic. Consequently, the epistemological and methodological challenges connected to this will be dealt with throughout this working paper. Indeed, besides empirical observations, the focus is precisely on the question of *what extent can a single magazine / newspaper be seen as reflecting changes in public discourses on a particular topic?* What do changes in writing in SK actually tell about? Can the observations based on give intelligible information on anything besides the editorial policy of the journal? Are there ways to distinguish between “real” conceptual changes from random fluctuation and screening processes involved in the everyday running of a commercial media such as SK? Here, also the agenda-setting power of a highly valued media with influential reader- and writership has to be considered.⁵

To try to assess the value of the material collected in the pilot study, comparisons are made especially with the recent research by Jussi Laine (2013) which used a roughly comparable but quantitatively much wider material (opinion writing in the main Finnish daily newspaper, *Helsingin Sanomat*) to study the shifting Finnish discourses on Russia, 1990-2010.

In the pilot study, SK was approached via what was called a ‘fast screening’. The aim was thus to base the survey, as far as possible, on the indexes of the journal’s issues, rather than in in-depth analysis of the actual articles. As the journal was not systematically available online, however, the 1050 issues published between January 1990 and December 2010 (21 years with 50 numbers each) had to be gone through manually, making the survey quite work intensive. Moreover, the necessity to engage constantly in difficult drawing of line between relevant versus irrelevant text material made the so-called ‘fast’ screening in fact relatively time-consuming. The articles related in one way or the other to Finland’s Eastern border included a huge variety of issues, from debates on Finno-Soviet YYA-treaty to the case of Irina Antonova, a grandmother of a Russian immigrant to Finland whose expulsion order caused a prolonged dispute 2009-2010.

In the Finnish context, a majority of policy writing can actually be seen as relating to Eastern border security questions in one way or the other; and talk on Russia and Eastern Border security is also often veiled or implicit (more of this below in section 3.1). Relations towards Soviet Union and later Russia have been a central foreign policy issue throughout Finnish independence, and in

³ As an indication of early political leanings, the first head editor of Suomen Kuvalehti, Matti Kivekäs, was killed in the Finnish civil war in 1918, fighting in the ranks of the “white” army. For more detailed discussion cf. Tommila & Salokangas, 1998.

⁴ Compare for example discussion on *Helsingin Sanomat*, Laine 2013 232-236,

⁵ Cf. Laine 2013, 228-229; Reah 1998.

the precarious political situation after the Second World War, Finnish political discourses assumed intricate and implicit ways of discussing the position of Finland vis-à-vis Soviet Union. Because of this, even in a 'fast screening' of discourses on the Finnish Eastern border, many *potentially* relevant articles had to be analysed closely in order to evaluate their relevance.

All in all, it is clear that the selection of relevant material is unavoidably subjective, despite pre-agreed criteria – for example, a story on Russian internal politics was not included, unless there was an explicit reference also to Finland and Finno-Russian relations.

From the 1050 numbers surveyed, a total of 942 texts were deemed as relevant – on average, little less than one per issue. Once a particular article in SK was deemed relevant for the study, the first step was to record basic information on it, including the *number* and *year* of the journal, the *title* of the article, number of *pages*, and whether or not there was a reference to the story in the cover of the issue in which it was published. Also the *type of text* was coded, with six different categories: "editorial"; "column"; "op-ed"⁶; "letter to the editor"; "feature"; and "news in brief".

After recording this basic data on an Excel-database, each article was coded along two fixed axis. Firstly, there was a code for the *substance* of writing, with five rough categories: "Politics" / "Economy" / "Social issues" / "Environment" / "Culture". Secondly, there was a code for the *frame* (or perspective) of writing, with four options: "Supranational" / "Interregional" / "National" / "Local".⁷

"Supranational" referred to texts which could be seen as primarily international in their framing and interest, and dealt with the position of Finland and its eastern border as part of wider international constellations, superseding local and regional level (EU; Nato; Eastern Europe; etc.). Respectively, a text was coded as "interregional" if it referred to issues elementally involving two or more neighbouring states, focussing on issues involving regional cooperation. Repeatedly, however, texts referring to international and interregional issues ended up being coded as "national". This was due to the fact that even when international and regional level constellations were referred to, in many if not most cases the actual perspective was clearly national; i.e., the wider context was only evoked as far as it had relevance to what was regarded as Finnish national interests. Finally, the code "local" referred to texts dealing with the "micro" level, while still referring/dealing with the Finnish eastern border.

To get intelligible results within the given time-frame, each article was given *only* one of the codes in the categories dealing with substance and framing. E.g., a particular article was coded as dealing primarily either with politics / OR economy / OR social issues etc, and from interregional / OR national etc. perspective.

As expected, coding in this way was a somewhat violent process. This was not only due to the fact that the rather abstract categories were often hard to fit with the complex reality dealt with in particular articles; but also that many of the most interesting stories clearly combined *several*

⁶ "Opposite-editorial".

⁷ The main substantial axis of the coding were suggested by Professor Ilkka Liikanen, and adapted to the material in the first stage of the analysis.

perspectives and substantial focuses. As examples, writing on topics such as the Baltic Sea gas pipe (2010) self-evidently combine political, economic and environmental considerations; any thorough article on such topic also necessarily touches upon international, regional as well as national perspectives.

In the excel datasheet, an asterisk was marked for such crystallizations – particularly interesting stories cutting through several substantial issues and perspectives – to enable in-depth analysis at later stage. Moreover, there was an free field in the database for keywords depicting the substance of each text. This proved to be important, especially in tracing specific recurring debates in the analysis, such as those on Finland’s possible Nato-membership and reclaiming the province of Karelia from Russia (See Section 3.1).

In the following sections, I will go through some main observations from the sample.

Main observations

1) Quantity of writing

In terms of quantity of writing, three clear peaks in writing stand out in the sample: 1991, 1994 and 2005, as can be seen from Figure 1:

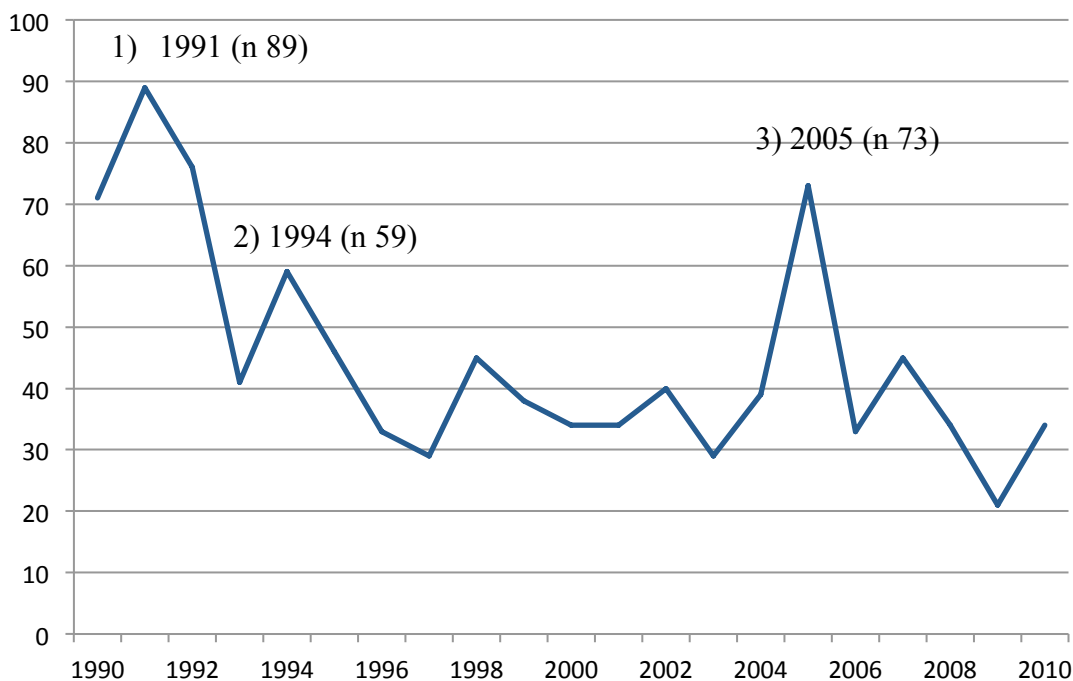


Figure 1. *Suomen Kuvalehti*: number of articles related to post-soviet (Eastern) borders/bordering, 1990-2010 (n = 942)

The peaks in figure 1 coincide more or less clearly with major geopolitical reorientations in the position of Finland. Thus, peak 1 coincides with the dissolution of Soviet Union in 1991; peak 2

precedes Finland's accession to the European Union in 1995; and peak 3 follows the eastward expansion of EU and Nato in 2004. Particularly the peaks in 1991 and 1994 would thus seem to make intuitive sense in light of Finland's changing position in Europe. Further, these peaks match well with Laine's observations of references to Russia in *Helsingin Sanomat*. Also the surge in 2005 fits well with Jussi Laine's observations of a rethinking of Finland's international position following EU's eastward expansion; in *Helsingin Sanomat*, this resulted in a clearly distinguishable quantitative surges not only in relation to writing on Russia, but also to EU, USA, Sweden and Germany.⁸

The above-mentioned peaks in the quantity of writing stand out also when the amount of writing is measured in total number of pages per each year, but with also the year 1998 forming a separate peak. This is mainly due to numerous long feature articles published that year (peak 3 in Figure 2), with no one substantial topic dominating (e.g. EU's eastern expansion; pollution of Baltic Sea; land purchases in Finland by Russians; etc.)

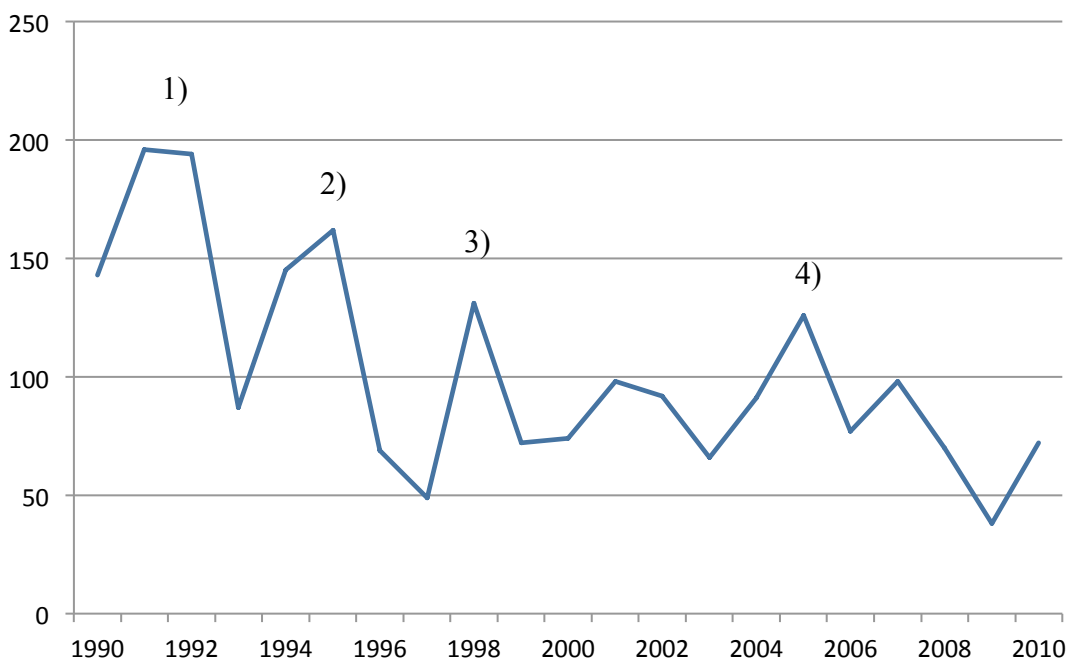


Figure 2. *Suomen Kuvalehti*: yearly total of pages in articles related to post-soviet (Eastern) borders/bordering, 1990-2010 (n = 942)

⁸ Laine 2013 238-240; Figures 24, 25 and 26.

2) Type of writing

In terms of the *type* of writing, the sample articles breaks down as indicated in Figure 3:

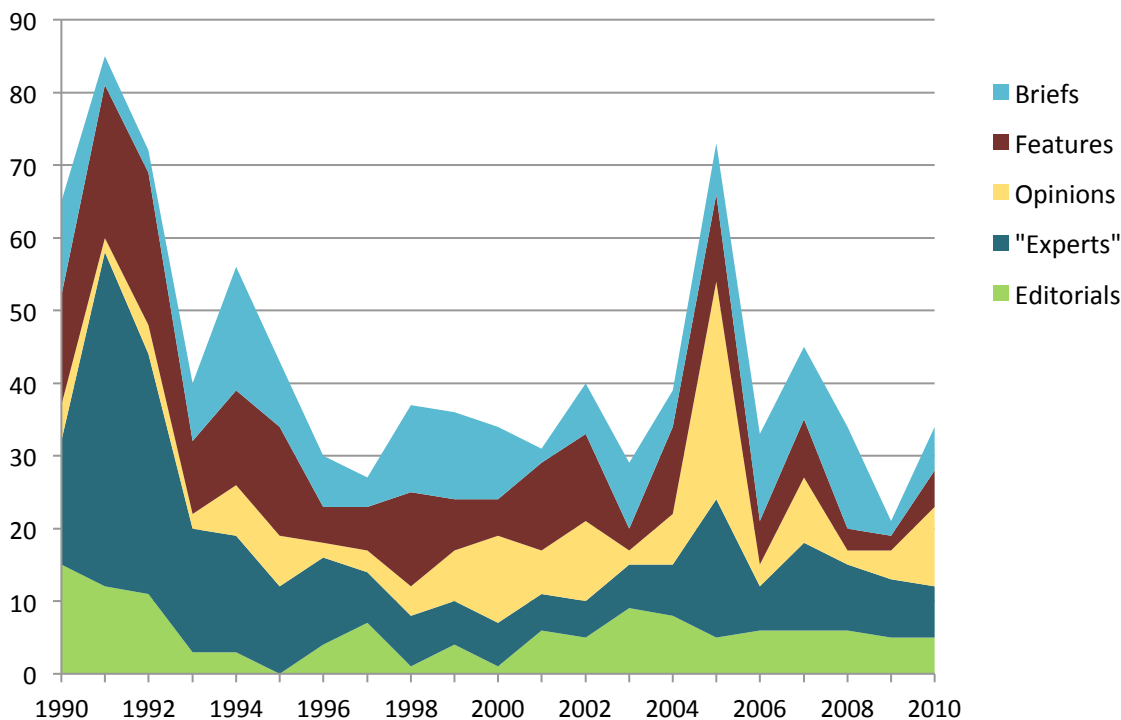


Figure 3. *Suomen Kuvalehti*: writing on post-soviet borders / type of text, 1990-2010

Again, two exceptional periods stand out quite clearly. Firstly, during the first observed peak on Eastern border-related writing related in 1990-1992, what could be called *expert* writing (op-eds and columns, often by foreign policy experts such as Jukka Tarkka or Jaakko Iloniemi) is highly prominent. Together with editorials, they account for 68% of the relevant texts in 1991, whereas the average for the whole period is 43%. This would suggest an interpretation of the early 1990s as a period of conscious, expert-driven reconceptualization of the “place” of Finland – understandable in a situation in which the unfolding collapse of Soviet Union caused the whole geopolitical environment of Finland and Europe to undergo profound transformation. Consistent with this interpretation – as detailed below – this period is also distinctive in terms of the high prominence of supranational and interregional perspective of writing. In other words, the expert-driven reconceptualization of Finland’s geopolitical place was highly international in its framing.

A second period standing out in terms of the *type and amount* of writing is 2005, the year following EU’s and NATO’s eastward expansion in 2004 (involving also the NATO-membership of Finland’s southern neighbours, the Baltic countries). What is exceptional about this year is the high prominence of opinion writing: 41,1% of relevant texts, deviating strongly from the yearly

average of 15,5% in 1990-2010. As will be shown below, the sudden barrage of letters to the editor in 2005 was largely a result of coinciding peaks on debates on NATO membership, and reclaiming Karelia, a former Eastern part of Finland ceded to Soviet Union in peace treaties of Moscow (1940) and Paris (1947). These debates will be discussed in more detail in Section 3.1.

The difference between expert-driven debates of early 1990s and the polemics of 2005 based above all on letters to the editor connects to a more general development of pluralisation of foreign policy debates in *Suomen Kuvalehti*. Accordingly, the share of “expert” writing goes down from 32,9% in 1990-1999 to 23,2% in 2000-2010; while the share of letters to the editor goes up from 8,2% in the first half of the sample period to 25% in the second. On the pages of SK, then, foreign policy becomes a field where so-called ordinary people are increasingly vocal and legitimate participants. This would seem to match with other observations of the pluralisation of the Finnish foreign policy debates, particularly in relation to Russia/Soviet Union.

3) Substance of writing

In terms of the *substance* of writing, there is a consistent and absolute domination of political writing throughout the sample period, as illustrated by Figure 4:

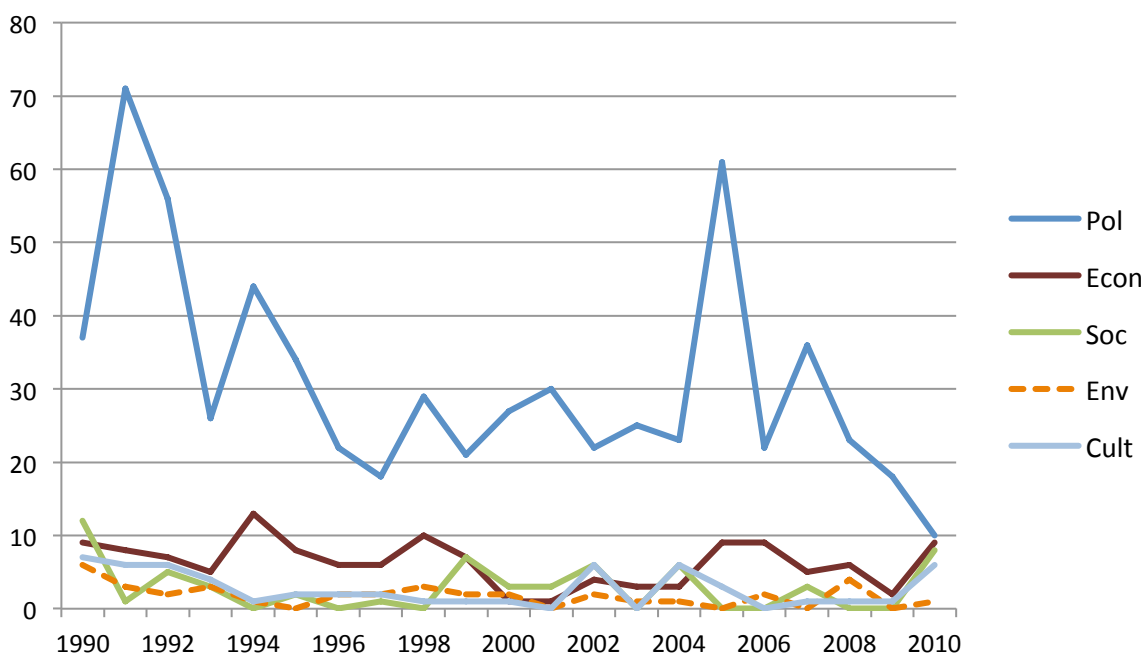


Figure 4. *Suomen Kuvalehti*: writing on post-soviet borders / substance of writing, 1990-2010 (n = 942)

The 655 articles in the category “political” make up almost 70% of the overall sample. In the peak years 1991, 1994 and 2005, their proportion is close to- or over 80%. It thus appears that it is precisely the activation of political topics which has driven temporary surges in the amount of writing in the peak years. With the major exception of 2010 – more of this below – there is little

temporal variation in the relative dominance of political topics. Aside from possible methodological biases in the choice of relevant articles, coding etc., this persisting dominance can of course be simply seen as a function of the nature of SK as a medium of traditional 'quality' journalism, in which political issues stand self-evidently in the focus of writing.

Some recurring ($n > 4$ / year) topics in the writing on Eastern border in SK in different substance categories have been gathered in the Appendix 1. Recurring political issues in relation to the Finnish Eastern border involve e.g.

- debates on turmoil in Soviet block, Baltia and its effects on Finland
- foreign relations with SU / Russia
- geopolitical debates on EU- and Nato-membership
- debates on Karelia

As already mentioned, questions relating to the Eastern border of Finland are sometimes dealt with on an implicit level, without necessarily mentioning Russia directly. This is the case especially in regards to delicate foreign policy issues such as possible Nato membership; again, this connects to the traditionally cautious attitude in Finnish political and media discourses towards Soviet Union.

In other categories, texts on "Economy" makes out 13,9% of the sample; "Social issues" 6,4%; "Cultural issues" 6,1%; and "Environment" 3,9%. In the "economy" category, recurring themes include for example trade relations and customs policies with the Soviet Union / Russia; and export successes of Finnish companies in Russia. In regards to environment, the most clearly recurring issues are the worries of pollution of Baltic Sea and of nuclear meltdown in Sosnovyi Borg. With social issues, reporting on social chaos in Russia and Baltic states and fears on so-called "Eastern mafia" are prominent in the first half of the period; increasingly in the period 2000-2010, refugee and immigration issues also rise on the agenda. In regards to culture, nostalgia-tourism in Karelia is one recurring topic; and as a sign of changing times, there is also for example a feature on Russian culture in Helsinki in 2010, with the title "Helsinki is getting more Russian".⁹

As said, the only exception to the primacy of political writing is the last year observed, 2010, which is also one of the most diverse years in its covered themes (e.g. immigration issues, arctic environment worries, cooperation on renovating culturally important buildings in Viipuri; Russo-Finnish child custody conflicts; etc.). If such plurality of topics could be seen in the following years, this could perhaps be interpreted as a reflection of an increasingly quotidian and "normal" everyday relations between Finland and Russia, not dominated any more by high-level security politics.

3.1) Debates on Karelia & Nato: from challenge to confirmation of status quo?

In terms of the substance of the writing, two recurring discourses can be distinguished in the sample, which arguably represent the most radical challenge to the status quo in the nature of the Finnish Eastern border. The first deals with whether or not Finland should opt its strict neutrality

⁹ *Helsinki on yhä venäläisempi kaupunki*, SK 38/2010.

out in favour of an explicit commitment to the Western military alliance Nato; the second, whether Finland should formally reclaim its former region Karelia from Russia. The former comes out in 171 texts (18% of the sample); the second, in 68 texts (7%).

Especially the debates on Karelia can be seen as challenging the deep-seated deferential- or *realpolitik* orientation in post-WWII Finnish politics towards Soviet Union and later Russia; as well as claiming an ethno-national rather than contractual understanding of legitimate state borders. A border region close to St.Petersburg, Karelia was a province of major significance for Finland before the Second World War. During the Winter- and Continuation wars (1939-1940; 1941-1944) it was the theatre of much of the heaviest fighting between Finland and Soviet Union. In what were felt as bitter humiliations by many contemporaries, Finland was forced to cede Karelia to Soviet Union in the peace treaty of Moscow (1940) and in the armistice of 1944; the ceding was finally confirmed in the peace treaty of Paris (1947). The ceding of Karelia meant the evacuation of about 410,00 Finnish Karelians, or c.12% of Finland's population. In the post-war decades, this group was active in matters relating to Karelia, whether as tourists or as a pressure group demanding official reclaims on the ceded territory.

After two wars lost against Soviet Union, the Finnish foreign policy and media discourses towards the Soviet Union were marked by extreme caution, amounting to self-censorship (sometimes dismissed as "finlandization"). There was actually a joint Soviet-Finnish declaration made in 1973 stating that "the mass media should refrain from harming the friendly relations between Finland and the Soviet Union".¹⁰ Editorial boards of magazines such as *Suomen Kuvalehti* certainly avoided risky topics such as the issue of Karelia, and foreign policy was considered too delicate matter to be a subject of public (non-expert) debates.¹¹

Consequently, what is challenging in the Karelia-debates is arguably not just the nationalist substance, but also the composition of the participating writers. Particularly in 2000s, the debates on Karelia were initiated and completely dominated by private opinion-writers. Debates on Karelia can thus be seen as indicative of a new pluralism in Finnish foreign policy debates. The debates also carry anti-elitist tones. The letters making the case for reclaiming Karelia are typically written by angry "men of the street" (almost exclusively male, sometimes war veterans), whereas the opposing arguments are usually made by "expert" writers, foreign policy columnists, university researchers etc.

In this sense, the debates on Nato are the complete opposite of the Karelia-debates. While also these debates challenge the post-war status quo of deferent neutrality towards SU/Russia, it is on the pages of SK precisely the elite of foreign policy experts (again Jukka Tarkka and Jaakko Iloniemi, Max Jacobson, a number of Finnish diplomats etc.) urging for a more pro-western policy. These writers are in turn opposed by numerous "lay" writers, replying the op-eds and columns with fierce letters to the editor.

¹⁰ Laine 2013, 234.

¹¹ E.g. Laine 2013 226; Jacobson 1992; Vihavainen 1991.

While the debates on Nato and Karelia can be said to be diametrically opposing in their social composition, there are interesting similarities in their timing. There are coinciding peaks in SK during Finland’s accession to the EU 1994-1995; and in 2005, after EUs eastward expansion and the NATO-membership of the Baltic states in the previous year (see Figure 5).

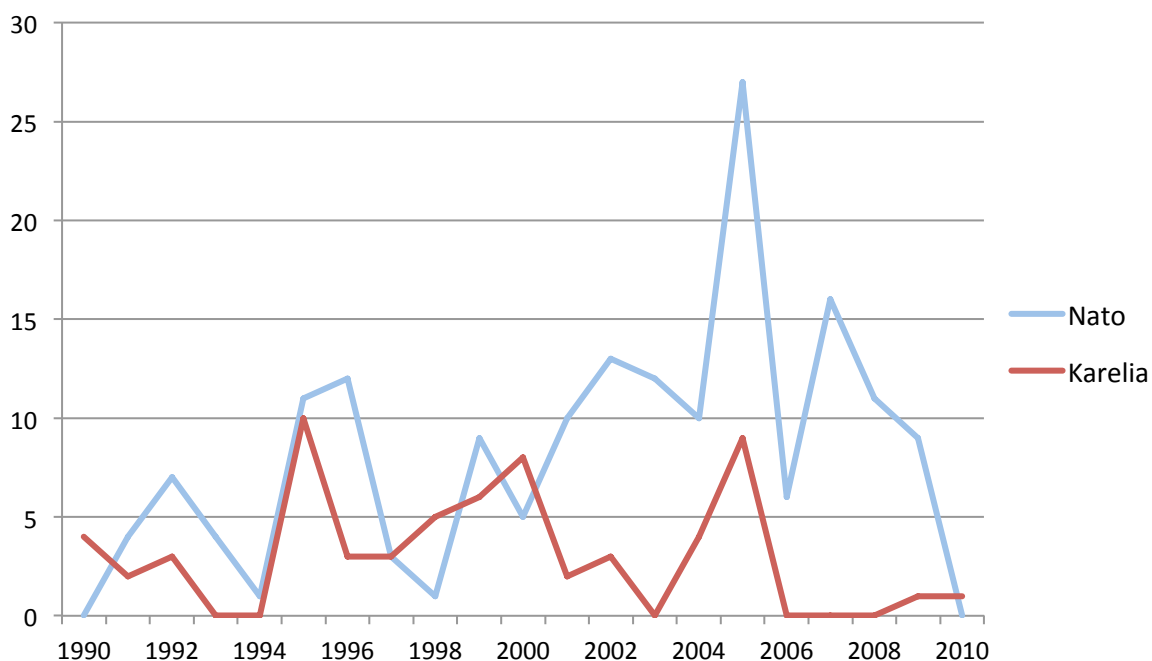


Figure 5. *Suomen Kuvalehti*: writing on Nato and Karelia, 1990-2010 (n = 239)

While too much should of course not be read from such small sample, the partial coinciding of Nato- and Karelia-debates seems to be predicated on a common ground: a new pluralism and room of maneuver in Finnish foreign policy debates. These, in turn, can be argued to derive ultimately from geopolitical changes, by far the most important of which was the breakup of Soviet Union. In a radically changed situation, new participants and issues could enter into what had previously been highly closed political sphere.

The waning of both the Nato- and Karelia-debates after 2005 could perhaps be interpreted as an implicit confirmation of the status quo. It seems also evident that after two decades of heated arguing but little substantial changes, it has undoubtedly made sound editorial sense to move on from these debates.

4) Frame / perspective of writing

In terms of *framing* the texts dealing with Finnish Eastern border, there is also a strong continuity: the predominant perspective is consistently national in its outlook and motivations (see Figure 6). 55% of the texts in the sample have been classified as having a national perspective, as against 20% supranational, 19% interregional and 6% local. As with the substance category “political”, writing with national perspective has its highest percentage in the peak years 1994 and 2005, suggesting that national-level considerations have been driving the surges in writing in these years.

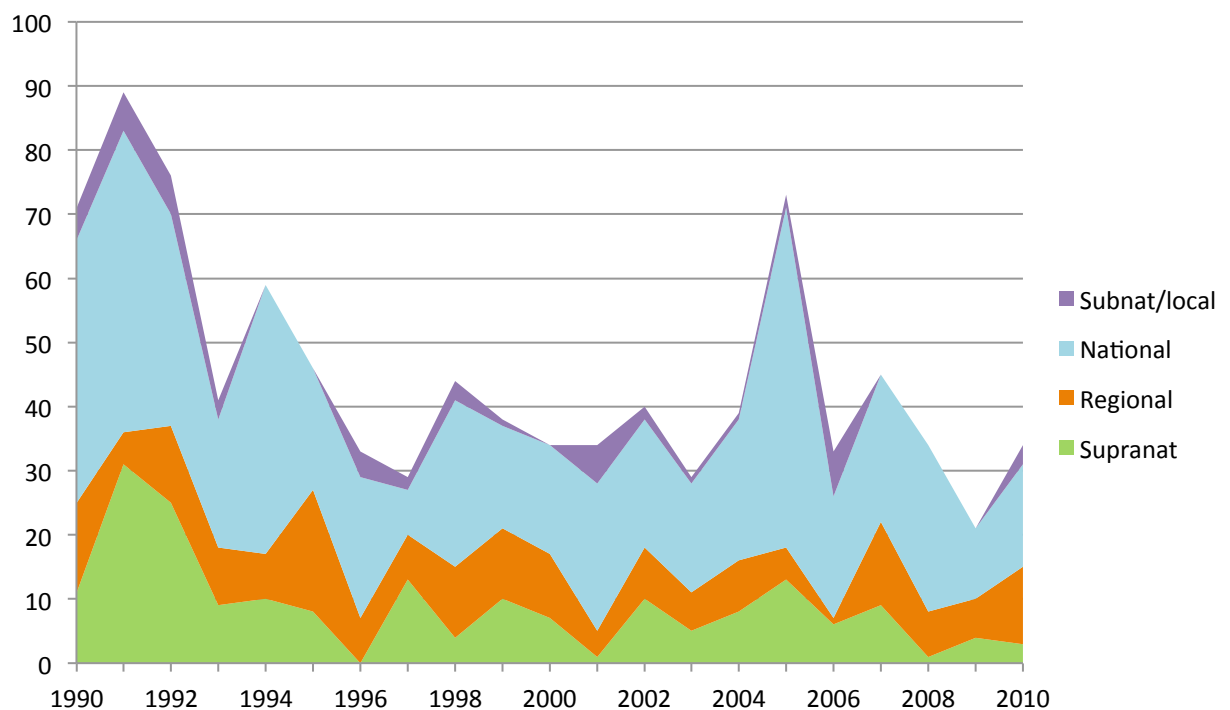


Figure 6. *Suomen Kuvalehti*: writing on post-soviet borders / perspective of writing, 1990-2010 (n = 942)

It is perhaps not surprising that *Suomen* (“Finland’s”) *Kuvalehti* is focused on a “Finnish” perspective; traditional ‘quality’ journalism can generally be seen as focussed in political analysis, which, in turn, has in national publications such as SK strong national roots.

In terms of other perspectives, there three main observations can be made. Firstly, and as already mentioned, there is a clear peak of writing with *supranational* perspective in first half of

1990s. This, again, is consistent with a picture in which there is an “expert”-dominated rethinking of the whole global system in which Finland was situated. With the collapse of Soviet block, end of cold war and expansion of EC, the need for such rethinking would appear to be fairly obvious.

Secondly, there is a rise in regional level writing in 1995, following Finland’s EU membership (with *interregional* writing making up 41% of all texts). Thirdly, in 2007-2010, there is another relative surge in the amount of interregional writing, with these making up 28% of texts in this period. While not dramatic, this is a consistent four-year rise in relative and absolute numbers of writing with interregional perspective, during a period when the overall level of writing is diminishing.

Summing up

Screening the 1050 numbers of SK published 1990-2010 produced a sample of 942 texts deemed as referring to Finnish Eastern borders, broadly understood. In terms of substance and framing, these texts were dominated by political writing and national perspective.

There were three clear peaks of Eastern border-related writing, coinciding with/following 1) breakdown of Soviet Union (1991) 2) Finland’s accession to the EU (1994) 3) the eastward expansion of EU and NATO (2005). The first peak during the early 1990s can be argued to connect to a re-conceptualization of the “place” of Finland in a situation of global geopolitical transformation caused by the break-up of the Soviet bloc and Soviet Union. This reconceptualization was made to a large extent by foreign policy experts, often writing with a distinctively international perspective.

By 2000s, conceptions of borders as exhibited in SK appear to have become more diverse, pluralistic and contested. New actors were ‘let in’ into debate, as is manifested particularly in opinion writing on the Karelian issue. This debate involved an ethno-nationalist challenge on formalistic civic understanding of borders. The predominance of opinion writers, particularly pronounced in 2005, can be seen as reflecting wider opening up of Finnish debates on foreign policy, particularly in relation to Russia.

In the second half of the sample period, there are several trends, which might together be interpreted as pointing to a ‘normalization’ or apoliticization of the neighbourly relations between Finland, Russia and Baltic states. These are 1) the near disappearance of the challenges on political status quo represented by the debates on NATO and Karelia; 2) overall waning of the level of writing; 3) rising relative proportion of texts with interregional perspective 4) pluralization of issues, at the expense of previously dominant security politics. Again, this can be compared with the results of Laine on the Finnish case, who suggests that Post-Soviet changes have meant that the Russians are increasingly not mere neighbours, but also “cohabitants, colleagues, fellow

students, customers, employees, and practitioners in Finland”.¹² It remains to be seen if we are in this respect talking about Finnish peculiarities or general European trends.

What next?

What kind of starting points the results give for deeper conceptual analysis of the key-discussions and for a broader European comparison? In terms of reliability and intelligibility of the so-called fast screening of *Suomen Kuvalehti*, it can be noted that the main results drawn from the sample seem mostly to be supported by the results of Laine’s (2013), based on a roughly comparable but wider material. This suggests that even the quantitative analysis of a single media *can* give useful starting point for mapping wider changes and making more accurate questions about the shifts in discourse; and that the results indicate changes beyond mere policies of SK’s editorial board. Yet, it is clear that the fast screening is a *rough* tool for forming subsequent research questions; and that comparison with other materials is necessary in order to arrive at epistemologically and methodologically more reliable results.

Besides widening the empirical basis to analysis of key-discussions, another future challenge could be to refine the analytical tools and coding in a way that makes it more sensitive. The analysis should move from quantitative changes in the volume of the discussion towards identification of actual conceptual change in terms of new vocabulary, new words and metaphors reflecting new rhetorical strategies and political innovation. This analysis can benefit a lot from an analysis on the way the actors themselves built new interpretations on previous patterns of talking about the border (typically the old, passed and buried way of their opponents as opposed their own new innovative thinking). Especially interesting are also the changing spatial imaginaries linked to conceptual changes, e.g. to what degree concepts like European neighbourhood or Euregio Karelia gain ground in the discussions.

In deeper analysis of the particular key-discussions it is, furthermore, possible to move from analysing the types of writing as basis for recognizing groups of actors (e.g. experts and opinion writers) towards identification of groups with particular interests and rhetorical strategies.

The analysis of substance issues can be elaborated towards recognition of different semantic fields where different types of concept families are applied. The absolute domination of the category “political” in the sample suggests this category could be further split up in terms of recognition of different strategies of politicizing issues. In practical terms the question is whether the texts should be given multiple codes within each semantic field; this, however, would necessitate a qualitative rather than quantitative approach. What does e.g. the fact that the border is at the end of the period no longer schematized mainly within the field of politics mean? Has it lost its potential of politicizing matters or has it become an object of active de-securitization or conscious normalization and apoliticization? How is this reflected and connected to changing

¹² Lounasmeri 2011, 8, cited in Laine 2013, 228.

scales of framing borders as a local, national or supranational phenomenon. The preliminary results from SK seems to suggest that new European or regional, border-crossing, perspectives are not able to take much root in the Finnish discussions. If this can be verified in the in-depth analysis, it is extremely interesting to see to what degree this is in a broader comparative perspective a Finnish peculiarity or a more general European trend.

Comparing the results of the “fast screening” will certainly open more perspectives to take the analysis further in understanding historical shifts in conceptualizing borderscapes, the following steps would appear useful:

- 1) **Identifying key periods of change and long term trends** in patterns of discussing borders; do the rising waves of discussion always testify of conceptual change and breakthrough of new hegemonic thinking modes?
- 2) **Identifying key debates** and political innovation and rhetorical strategies connected to these: who are the main discussants, and what kind of political strategies they use? What kind of legitimation or challenge for the status quo is presented in the debates?
- 3) **Comparison** with other material to reach a stronger grasp of general trends; what are the main continuities and shared assumptions?
- 4) Historical **contextualization** of the results; seeking out the multi-layered historicity of the shifting discourses and identification of the history politics of border narratives.
- 5) Recognizing general European trends and peculiarities of national political culture. As said, in the Finnish case, the results of the “fast screening” tend to suggest that main waves of discussion are connected to general European historical turning points: 1) the dissolution of Soviet Union in 1991; 2) Enlargement of 1995 and Finland’s accession to the European Union; and 3) the eastward expansion of EU and NATO in 2004. Comparison of peaks of discussion in other cases will certainly further facilitate selection of debates to be analysed deeper as part of more broad European discussions as well as examples of particular national trends reconceptualising borders.

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Appendix 1. Recurring topics on Eastern border in Suomen Kuvalehti according to category (n > 4 / year)

	Politics	Economy	Social issues	Environment	Culture
1990	Independence of Baltic states; EC membership; Collapse of Soviet block; Border security; Finno-Soviet YYA-treaty; Reclaiming Karelia	Finno-Soviet trade	Asylum seekers;	Cooperation against environmental catastrophes	
1991	Independence of Baltic states; Collapse of Soviet block; Dismantling of Soviet Union; Border security; Finno-Soviet YYA-treaty	Finno-Soviet trade			Karelia: culture & history
1992	EC membership; Nato-membership; Finland's neutrality; Post-Soviet security; Relations with Baltic states	Trade with Russia			
1993	Post-soviet security; EC/EU membership; Finno-Russian relations	Trade with Russia			
1994	EU membership; Finno-Russian relations; Finland's neutrality	Trade with Russia; EU & –“–			
1995	Nato-membership; Reclaiming Karelia; EU membership; Russian crisis & security	Trade with Russia; Economic cooperation	Immigration (Ingrians, Albanians); Crime		
1996	Nato-membership; Finno-Russian relations;				
1997	EU expansion				
1998	Reclaiming Karelia; Cooper. in Baltic Sea	Trade with Russia		Baltic Sea pollution	

	region				
1999	Nato-membership; Reclaiming Karelia; Russian crisis & security	Regional cooperation;			
2000	Nato-membership; Reclaiming Karelia				
2001	Nato-membership; EU & Russian relations; Defence reorganization				
2002	Nato-membership; Security of Eastern border		Immigration (Ingrians)		Travel (Karelia; Baltics)
2003	Nato-membership; EU common defence policy;				
2004	Nato-membership; EU expansion		Immigration (Estonia; Russia)		Russofobia
2005	Nato-membership; Reclaiming Karelia; Russian instability & security	Cross-border trade & cooperation with Russia			
2006	Nato-membership; EU expansion	Cross-border trade & cooperation			
2007	Security of Eastern border; Nato- membership	Trade & customs at Russian border			
2008	Security of Eastern border; Nato-membership	Trade & customs at Russian border		Baltic Sea pollution	
2009	Security of Eastern border; Nato- membership				
2010	Security of Eastern border		Immigration; “Grandmother- case”; Child custody disputes		