

Empire, Democracy, State, and Nation:  
Sociological Occlusions of the German and Russian Empires

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Submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the

Degree of Doctor of Philosophy

In the Department of Sociology at Brown University

Providence, Rhode Island

May 2019

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#### Articles and Book Chapters

- 2019 Korhonen, Juho and Niemeläinen, Johannes. "Brain Leakage Continues Despite Improved Economy in Finland" in *Siirtolaisuus - Migration, Politics of Migration* 1, 40-43. Institute of Migration Finland. [Published in Finnish, "Aivotihkuminen jatkuu Suomen talouden kohenemisesta huolimatta"]
- 2018 Korhonen, Juho and Niemeläinen, Johannes. "Solidarity and Competition in the European Union: Theory Reconstruction from an Extended Case Study of Welfare State Emigration". *Cahiers RESuME*, n. 7. [University of Luxembourg. *Resources on the European Socio-Economic Model* (<https://resume.uni.lu/story/solidarity-and-competition-in-the-european-union>)]
- 2018 Korhonen, Juho. "The Relation of Imperialism and Nationalism in the German Empire and its Aftermath: A Bourdieusian Field Theoretical Perspective", 167-187, in *Studies in Ethnicity and Nationalism* 18(2), Special Issue on Empires and Nationalism, edited by Ho-Fung Hung and Sefika Kumral.

- 2018 Korhonen, Juho and Niemeläinen, Johannes. "Finnish Brain Leakage: Hypothesizing National Welfare State and the Transnational", 112-126, in *Liquid Structures and Cultures* eds. Kozlova and Kolodziej, University of Szczecin Press, Poland.
- 2017 Korhonen, Juho. "Statehood at the End of the Rainbow? Agonistics of Potentiality in the World-System", 49-62, in *Global Inequalities in World-Systems Perspective: Theoretical Debates and Methodological Innovations*, edited by Manuela Boatca, Andrea Komlosy and Hans-Heinrich Nolte. Routledge.
- 2017 Korhonen, Juho and Niemeläinen, Johannes. "They Will Not Return, Brain Leakage from Finland. A Survey Study of Finnish Professionals Living Abroad" in *Siirtolaisuus – Migration 2*, 13-17. Institute of Migration Finland. [Published in Finnish, "He eivät palaa, eli aivotihkuminen Suomesta"]
- 2016 Korhonen, Juho. "Shared Divergence: Comparing Post-Socialist Peripheries and Predicaments" *Modern Africa: Politics, History and Society*. 4:1, 35-64.

#### Publications Intended for Professional Communities

- 2019 Kennedy, Kopyciok, Korhonen. Book review of *The Paradox of Vulnerability: States, Nationalism, and the Financial Crisis* by Campbell and Hall. *Contemporary Sociology*, 48(2).
- 2013 Korhonen, Seppänen, Najafizada. *Prospects for Peace Dialogue in Afghanistan*. Crisis Management Initiative. Helsinki.

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- 2017 Korhonen, Juho. "Finland's brain drain: what happens to small countries when the talent leaves?" Published in *Theconversation.com* (<https://theconversation.com/finlands-brain-drain-what-happens-to-small-countries-when-the-talent-leaves-79952>) and republished online by The independent; World Economic Forum; Quartz; EuropeNow Journal.
- 2016 Korhonen, Juho and Niemeläinen, Johannes. "Home is now elsewhere" in *Helsingin Sanomat*, 12.4.2016 (<http://www.hs.fi/sunnuntai/art-2000004891306.html>). Published in the Sunday edition of Finland's largest daily newspaper Helsingin Sanomat [Published in Finnish, "Koti on nyt muualla"].

#### Works in Progress

- Korhonen, Juho and Kennedy, Michael D. "Historicized Methodology for Historical Sociology: Geoff Eley, Ronald Grigor Suny and the Making of 20<sup>th</sup> and 21<sup>st</sup> Century Alternatives".
- RR Korhonen, Juho. "Devalued Knowledge: Colonized Post-Socialism". In *The Economics of Empire: Genealogies of Capital and the Colonial Encounter*. eds. Fadem, Maureen and O'Sullivan, Michael.

Revised and

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Korhonen, Juho and Bavbek, Yasemin. "Nation-Building from Northern Periphery to Mediterranean Metropole: *The Country of the White Lilies* in Turkey since the 1920s".  
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| 03/2019 | "Nation-making from Russian Empire's Periphery to Post-Ottoman Turkey" with Yasemin Bavbek. (Re)Writing Global Histories, Northeastern University, Boston. (Best Paper Prize).                                              |
| 10/2018 | "Transnational Social Capital in the EU" with Johannes Niemeläinen. Nations, Regions, Organizations, University of Szczecin, Poland.                                                                                        |
| 10/2018 | "Political Participation and Transformed Futures in Armenia, Bolivia and Tunisia" With J. Acosta and K. Wilder. 7 <sup>th</sup> Annual Sociology of Development Conference. University of Illinois, Urbana-Champaigne.      |
| 8/2018  | "Nation-making from Russian Empire's Periphery to Post-Ottoman Turkey" with Y. Bavbek. Imperialism, Nationalism, and Capitalist Crises: The Great War and its Legacies, 7 <sup>th</sup> Telciu Conference, Telciu, Romania. |
| 4/2018  | "Constructing and Defining Sources of State Power: Autonomy and Independence in/for the Grand Duchy of Finland". Bids for Autonomy in the Condition of Globality conference, Columbia University.                           |
| 11/2017 | "Grand Duchy of Finland and the First International Socialist State Treaty". Legacy of the Russian Revolution, Chestnut Hill College, PA.                                                                                   |
| 7/2017  | "National Problems in Transnationalizing Europe: A Finnish Case Study of Welfare State Brain Drain" with Johannes Niemeläinen. Council for European Studies Conference, Glasgow.                                            |
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Presentation title "Statehood and Knowledge Cultures in the Interconnected World".
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Presentation title "The Sea(s) as the Liminal Space for the Origins of the Logic of Modern States".
- 06/2014 Institutions in Context: The Free Market University of Tampere, Finland  
Presentation title "Between Marx and the Market – Post-Soviet Peripheries and Global Capitalism".
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Presentation title "Rereading the Systems Thinkers of Early Soviet Union and their Relation to Structures of Power".

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- 06/2013 Institutions in Context: Inequality University of Tampere, Finland  
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- 2015-2018 National Archives, Dar es Salaam, Tanzania; Bundesarchiv, Berlin, Germany; National Archives, Helsinki, Finland.

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- 2011-2016 Interlocutor interviews for a project on post-socialist knowledge production in Albania, Tanzania, Georgia and Kyrgyzstan

### *Survey*

- 2016, 2018 Online survey research of Finnish emigration, N=900. And follow-up survey.

## OTHER PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

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## *Acknowledgements*

First, I would like to thank my advisor Professor Michael Kennedy. Michael has been my advisor and intellectual and academic inspiration since the first day of PhD studies. I would also like to thank my two other committee members Professor Nitsan Chorev and Professor Josh Pacewicz for their intellectual engagement with and feedback on my dissertation project.

I wish to thank friends and colleagues for their support and especially for intellectual, academic, political, and everyday debates and arguments I have enjoyed with them, often over beers, throughout my academic career. Thanks to all of you! And a special thanks from time at Brown to Yasemin Bavbek, Jonathon Acosta, Keenan Wilder, Ricarda Hammer, Svenja Kopyciok, Geoffrey Wildanger, and Jakob Jensen; from my time at the European University at St. Petersburg to Nicholas Marmet, Jason Keysar, Joey Zoller, Trevor Pearson, and Olli Turtiainen; from my time at the Freie Universität Berlin to Zachary Gagnon, and Florian Targa; and from my time at the University of Helsinki to Akseli Peltola, Toivo Martikainen, Antti Lehtinen, and my co-author Johannes Niemeläinen. And lastly, also thanks to Aino.

I am grateful for financial and institutional support provided by the Emil Aaltonen Foundation and the Finnish Institute in Germany.

*Abstract of "Empire, Democracy, State, and Nation: Sociological Occlusions of the German and Russian Empires" by Juho Korhonen, Ph.D., Brown University, May 2019*

Contrary to most narratives of the twentieth century, the transformation of imperial into national states in the aftermath of World War One was neither a break with the past nor a condition of democracy's development. Instead, nation-state politics were a means of another kind of imperial rule limiting democracy's extensions; their sociological reflections subsequently make invisible democratization's possibilities *within* imperial formations. Empirically, I analyze democratization efforts of politically oppressed actors in a non-sovereign periphery of the Russian Empire and in the sovereign metropole of the German Empire to highlight democracy's actual expressions in this period, on the one hand, and on the other, to address subsequent occlusions in theoretical accounting for empire's alternatives. Political and historical sociology have failed to theorize the dynamics of empire and nation-state in this transformation. The discipline itself, formed in step with these political transformations, developed a perspective resonating with the political needs of Western metropolitan nation-states and their national historiographies. There is an alternative, most clearly evident in the rethinking of democracy's conditions.

I take democratization as my proxy and proceed from a comparison of two democracies under non-Western imperial states to theorize democratization separate from the politics of nation-states. Exploring the relations that informed and defined democracy in this context, I analyze the transformation of imperial states into nation-states.

In 1905-07 the Grand Duchy of Finland of the Russian Empire developed the most advanced democratic practices in that world, with unrestricted universal suffrage and the election of women to its parliament. In the German Empire the opposition German Social Democrats used the existing democratic platform within the Reichstag to extend proposals for democratization across the whole of the empire, across all of its economic, political and colonial ties. Both types of democratization sit uncomfortably with theories and findings of sociology, where democratization is understood as an incremental process of diffusion, originating in the nation-state metropolises of the West, and proceeding along, not against, existing hierarchies from men to women, rich to poor, white to non-

white, and from Western empires to their colonial appendages. Empires at the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century offered an alternative widely recognized at the time, but written out of subsequent politics and their accompanying academic expressions.

Concluding with a comparison of the sociology of democratization to democracy's articulation and mobilization by dominated actors under non-Western imperial relations in the Russian and German Empires, I highlight blind spots in the narrative and analytical lens organizing the sociology of democracy, nation, state and empire: 1) an intransigent social epistemology bound to nation-state sovereignty, 2) separation of core from periphery, metropole from colony, 3) separation of metropole from the imperial state, 4) Atlantic-centrism and the misrecognition of Western intra-imperial relations as international, 5) assumed incremental diffusion along existing power relations from privileged to non-privileged, 6) rigid structuralism on the international level, 7) vague relativistic definitions on the national level, 8) dismissal of non-sovereign democratization, and 9) dismissal of democratization of sovereign-to-sovereign economic and political relations. These occlusions speak to the co-constitutive development of sociology and western imperial metropolises, and reveal the continuities of empire in the transformation into nation-states, highlighting sociology's imperial entanglements along the way.

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# Introduction

## *Disposition*

We have come to identify state sovereignty with independence, state with nation, and democracy with the nation-state. This perspective has become so dominant that it occludes the relations underlying this political arrangement. In this dissertation I explore the entangling of the hegemony of the nation-state with sociology's analytical lenses and the consequential reproduction of a worldview premised upon that particular historical narrative by unpacking the relations of empire, democracy, state and nations in the Russian and German Empires.

One has to begin this analysis by unthinking the historical keyholes of the settlements of the First (WWI) and Second World Wars (WWII), that allowed only historical narratives and analytical packages in the form and wrapping of nation-statehood and national historiography to pass through them. This historical filter of national keyholes has thus created continuities into the past that fit some political units, include some relations, but also squeeze and repackage everything into comparable units of methodological nationalism<sup>1</sup>. This is the first and most base characteristic of sociology's occluding imperial lens that naturalizes the social epistemology of nation-states and the separation of imperial from sovereign relations as the *proponents* and *drivers* of historical change, instead of analyzing their *creation* and *reproduction* as historical change.

To historicize (to understand as a historical transformation rather than as an ahistorical force of history) and to analyze (to identify what it highlights and what it hides) this characteristic of the dominant narrative and to identify others like it I conduct four empirical analyses linked through a theoretical framework that seeks to reconstruct the stage of the creation and reproduction of this dominant narrative and its sociology, rather than assume it as the stage of history.

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<sup>1</sup> This way of understanding our present, and of bridging the past with the future, is what Bourdieu termed national metacapital, as will be discussed in chapter five.

In chapter one I construct the theoretical framework that pulls together main tenets of the *new sociology of empires* that identifies the ‘imperial entanglements’ of the discipline as one of the main research problems for rigorous analysis of so-called ‘alternative’ histories previously hidden by the dominant narrative and the analytical lenses that define separate objects of analysis and occlude relations a priori.

In chapter two, I outline the ways in which state sovereignty was managed by imperial states before the union of national independence and sovereignty. I show that sovereignty was debated and contested in the inter-imperial field, where imperial states argued for their own legitimizations of sovereign rule. This meant that the various states that comprised these empires were subject to but also actively navigated these overlapping definitions and forms of sovereign rule. In the case of the Grand Duchy of Finland, which the chapter discusses, arguments were made for domestic colonial sovereignty embedded within the imperial state sovereignty of the Russian Empire. Independence could be and originally was conceived of as taking place within, not outside of imperality. In this context, calls for the self-determination of nations developed out of the legitimizing symbolism of imperial states as the rulers of several nations. For example, with the annexation of the Swedish province of Finland by Czar Alexander I, he declared to have “elevated Finland to the position of a nation” by the act of becoming their ruler.

Democratic rule, i.e. power ultimately vested in the people subject to particular sovereign power is understood in sociology as the self-determination and self-control of independent political units. However, under the sovereignty of imperial states described in chapter two it meant a democracy of nations subject to those imperial relations. In chapter three, I then explore how democratization was understood and functioned in this regard in a colonial state that acknowledged the absolute rule of another political entity over it as compatible with democracy.

In chapter four, I expand the investigation of democracy to a case of democratization in an imperial metropole founded upon the idea of such sovereign rule over several nations and states. I look specifically at the German Empire where socialists had developed the strongest and politically most successful analysis and theorization of empire before WWI, anchored around calls for further

democratization. Together the two chapters provide an overview of democratization in a context of global politics in which statehood, nation, colonialism and sovereignty do not align. This meant a more flexible and open understanding of the emancipatory potential of democracy and independence, especially in relation to national and class struggles than what has come since in democratic sensibilities.

Chapter five then begins to arch my analysis back towards the binding together of statehood and the making of the keyhole of historical and methodological nationalism. It describes the overall political field of an imperial state that spans over a variety of statehoods and nations to assert its sovereignty separate from national self-determination.

Altogether, this alternative history contextualizes the creation of the union of nation, state, sovereignty and democracy from a perspective that sociologizes the historical relations that transformed from imperial into national states and historicizes the sociology analyzing its consequences, i.e. the nation-state present.

In the conclusions I summarize the relations of the empirical chapters to each other on the one hand and to sociological research on the other to investigate what it means, theoretically, to explore the conceptualization of nation-state democracy from the perspective of relations that its original purpose was to challenge and occlude. I seek to unpack the doxa, i.e. the relations that traditionally define the dimensions within which we locate the possibility of interactions. I work to move away from engaging hegemony in its own terms in sociological analysis and seek to provide an alternative less restricted by the Western historical narrative and more promising for historical sociology's future.

### *Empirical Roadmap*

I begin this dissertation with a theoretical synthesis of recent analytical perspectives developed for research in historical sociology that are particularly concerned with the ways in which sociological methods and theories may intervene in our analysis of imperial relations both over time and on various scales and interactions. This review and synthesis provide a set of analytical dispositions for engaging historical empirics previously occluded. In this case, particularly regarding

the question of democracy under imperial relations. This framework both outlines an ontological scaffolding for using different kinds of historical data for exploring similar and interconnected political relations as well as an analytical coherence in the interpretation of those data both separately and as a whole (see for example Go and Lawson 2017, 23).

The following four empirical chapters concern two cases of democratic politics; the Grand Duchy of Finland of the Russian Empire and the metropole of the German Empire. The chapters proceed so that in the first empirical chapter, chapter two, I use archival data to explore inter-imperial sources for political ideas and subjective political understandings<sup>2</sup> for Finnish politics; in the following chapter I use archival material looking specifically at the constitution and eventual disintegration of relational positions and politics within the Finnish colonial state field as actors navigate and engage political problems armed with the political ideas discussed in chapter two.

Similarly, chapter four uses historical debates within the German Social Democratic Party (SPD) to explore the ways in which they analyzed intra-imperial relations to create, find, and mobilize political ideas and subjective understandings regarding metropolitan politics specifically from and in their position within that field. The following chapter again then draws an overall outline of the constitution and eventual disintegration of the fielded politics discussed in the previous chapter, as chapter three did in terms of chapter two.

The differences between these two cases stem from the position of the Finnish field as a non-sovereign intra-imperially constituted field and the position of the German field as a sovereign metropolitan inter-imperially constituted field. Struggles over various forms of capital in metropolitan fields centered on the fields' roles as imperial powers that controlled and defined non-sovereign politics under them (though these fields themselves did rely on the legitimacy of the whole inter-imperial field of colonial governance).

Metropolitan fields are differently embedded in the imperial architecture with different scales and forms of interaction than peripheral and non-sovereign fields. In understanding democratic

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<sup>2</sup> Chapter 5 discusses these ideas in more specific Bourdieusian terms as *idees-forces*.

politics in the case of Finland I therefore ‘scale down’ from the symbolically powerful inter-imperial debates over a particular intra-imperial relation, that of the position of Finland in the Russian Empire, to that entire colonial field and its constitution. In contrast, in the German case I ‘scale up’ from the SPD’s particular position within the metropolitan field and its debates over intra-imperial relations in general to the definitional struggles of the overarching metropolitan field as the center of the German Empire.

After the discussion of the two cases from two different perspectives in the four empirical chapters, I return to my theoretical framework in conclusion so that I might synthesize the analyses of the four empirical chapters regarding the historical sociology of democracy and highlight previously overlooked understandings of democratic politics especially meaningful for fields constituted by imperial relations.

### *Selection and Analysis of Data*

In the first instance, drawing from my theoretical framework, each chapter analyzes empirics that reveal something about the (Bourdiesian) fielded nature of democratic politics under imperial relations. I have therefore in each case sought empirical and archival material that reveals “the more subtle and influential forms of power that operate through cultural resources and symbolic classifications that interweave everyday life with prevailing [fielded] institutional arrangements” (Swartz 2013a, 233).

In chapter two I specifically analyze the symbolically powerful debates of legal and political theory in sovereign empires over the politics of the small periphery of Finland. In chapter three I consider satirical representations, steeped in cultural stereotypes, of political ideas and actors in the public sphere of Finnish politics.

In chapter four, I analyze attempts to open new discursive avenues and define political relations in new configurations to overcome the downsides of the SPD’s political position in the German metropole while taking full advantage of that position’s upsides vis-à-vis imperial politics. In doing so the SPD had to reinvent and culturally redefine the politics of colonialism and its symbolic

classification in the empire. In the final empirical chapter, I explore the range of such political stances attempting to challenge metropolitan politics by redefining its symbolic capital. I look at texts that redefine the relation of nation and empire as well as cultural representations, such as songs and election propaganda, to illuminate changes in these attempts over time.

In both of my cases, my empirics focus on exploring attempts at defining, dominating or monopolizing “legitimate classifications”. This requires a particular sensitivity to how fielded struggles over power become misrecognized “as something other than power relations”, especially when it comes to initial access to power (ibid. 234). In this perspective, relations consequential for acts of symbolic challenge, constitution, and disintegration take priority and foreground the analysis of particular processes surfacing as dominant after conceptual and definitional closure (such as national self-determination in its Western and Soviet manifestations).

According to Monika Krause and Julian Go, the two dimensions of this type of fieldedness are the configuration of actor-positions and the subjective meanings that guide actors in the struggle for particular types of cultural, political and symbolic capital best understood as “collections of fluid and dynamic relations” (2016). Importantly, especially for imperial relations, and as a methodology seeking to escape both methodological nationalism and analytical bifurcations, scale becomes then an object of empirical inquiry. By understanding the constitution of fields within wider imperial relations, we can then empirically understand the role played by democratization as guiding and guided by interests of imperial political actors in specific fields.

In my first case the focus is on understanding democratization in a non-sovereign imperial periphery whose fieldedness is defined by the inter-imperial scale. I show empirically how inter-imperial debates relate to the constitution of an intra-imperial field and its democratic politics. In my second case I seek to empirically show how intra-imperial definitions and relations are mobilized and scaled for leverage in the inter-imperially constituted field. The fields of the two cases exist in different locations of a large architecture of imperial relations and are embedded differently in that space and thus constituted through different sets of fluid and dynamic relations. In the Grand Duchy of Finland, democratization is referenced inter-imperially and provides subjective understandings to

an intra-imperially constituted field. In contrast, in the German metropole the field itself is inter-imperially constituted and defines intra-imperial fieldedness; there I engage democratization's subjective meanings as they are referenced intra-imperially and mobilized through the actor-positions of the German Social Democrats, a position itself largely dependent on the inter-imperial constitution of the German Empire.

### *Outline of Empirical Chapters*

With the case of the Grand Duchy of Finland, chapter two outlines the inter-imperial making and sources of the subjective meanings guiding actors in their efforts and understanding of democratization in Finland. Chapter three scales down to the objective configuration of actor-positions, to the 'rules of the game' defining the interplay of those subjective understandings.

In order to understand the role of inter-imperial discussions I analyze debates by legal scholars and political leaders of empires over the position of the Grand Duchy of Finland in the Russian Empire. I compare the various ways in which the Finnish state field was positioned and defined, and the motivations behind those analyses to show how familiar the question of non-sovereign democracy could be and how it provided a set of fluid and dynamic meanings and definitions of that type of polity and democracy. The focus is on debates themselves reflecting, analyzing, or criticizing specific inter-imperial rules and system of governance and legitimization. These empirics outline the space and dimensions of debate and understanding that Finns themselves could engage and mobilize. The chapter explores how a particular colonial position is differently treated within inter-imperial contestations and which possibilities and relations are thus bestowed symbolically upon it.

The next chapter analyzes Finnish political cartoons that are a source of empirics reflecting debates and cultural classifications in the public sphere of the colonial field. These publications highlight the representations of political parties and their actor-positions in mobilizing subjective meanings. They show how the Finnish colonial field is constituted intra-imperially and how subjective meanings over that constitution are mobilized by the different actor-positions, i.e. what are

the shared understandings of the rules of the game. For example, these political representations and their change over time demonstrate how the limits of political contestation and cooperation are drawn by questions of non-sovereign autonomy. They particularly paint a picture of the meso-level of politics where the state's external relations meet the micro-level politics of individual parties. It depicts the interface, or translation, of subjective meanings in the network of fielded actor-positions with a focus on what becomes political and how. In this regard, I especially explore empirically how democratization becomes politicized and what role it played in these dynamics, and finally how this symbolic space of democracy transformed as the field disintegrated.

Moving to similar considerations and relations in German metropolitan politics, I use the analyses of three leading politicians of the SPD concerning intra-imperial configurations. I establish how the socialists, from their actor-position, mobilized the metropole's role in defining intra-imperial relations to argue for democratization. This chapter constructs empirically one particular position within the inter-imperial politics that defined intra-imperial politics and provided a source of subjective meanings through struggles in its metropolitan field, especially in its attempts to leverage politics that the relation of inter- with intra-imperial afforded. I seek to understand the fielded scales of contesting and defining democracy in the metropole and to do so trace the key dynamics and discursive openings of the socialists' mobilization of intra-imperial relations in recasting symbolic classifications. In this case the imperial field is constituted inter-imperially, but it is the specific intra-imperial relations of it, understood and analyzed by the contemporary actors vis-à-vis other such configurations located the inter-imperial constitutive space, that provide a source for making and leveraging subjective meanings for the particular metropolitan actor-position of the German Social Democrats. In contrast to chapter two, the focus here is on the intra-imperial dimensions of defining subjective meanings. I focus empirically on examining how these actors leveraged various colonial and national dimensions of imperial politics to universalize their position and its recognition.

Finally, chapter five outlines the axis of the German metropolitan field, within which the SPD's politics discussed in the previous chapter are situated. I use primary and secondary materials concerning struggles over redefining the imperial field of power through subjective meanings and

seeking to undermine previous understandings or incorporate new ones. I use political texts promoting nationalism and colonialism's conceptual rise to centrality paired with cultural reflections that map the major contours of that change over time in the German empire. I use them to illuminate the limits of challenges and the eventual limitations to change set by the field's inter-imperial constitution on the one hand and the specific intra-imperial symbolic challenges on the other.

| Empirical Chapters                       | Empirical Data                                                                                  | Analytical Description                                                                                                                                                                |
|------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Chapter 2 – State and Empire             | Debates over a particular intra-imperial relation in metropolitan perspectives                  | The role of the inter-imperial dimension in defining peripheral fielded politics                                                                                                      |
| Chapter 3 – Peripheral Democratization   | Peripheral actor-positions' interaction with inter-imperial subjective meanings                 | The symbolic limits and openings set by the interplay of subjective meanings over inter-imperial relations with actor-positions in a non-sovereign intra-imperially constituted field |
| Chapter 4 – Metropolitan Democratization | Debates over intra-imperial relations generally from a particular metropolitan actor's position | The role of the intra-imperial dimension in defining metropolitan fielded politics                                                                                                    |
| Chapter 5 – Nation and Empire            | Metropolitan actor-positions' interactions with intra-imperial subjective meanings              | The symbolic limits and openings set by the interplay of subjective meanings over intra-imperial relations with actor-positions in a sovereign inter-imperially constituted field     |

Table 1. Empirical Roadmap

## Chapter 1 – Research Puzzle and Theoretical Framework

### *Introducing the Research Puzzle*

In this dissertation I systematize a newly emerging research program in historical sociology and demonstrate its application through two historical case studies. I begin this introduction by reflecting upon the two cases of democratization in non-Western imperial states through the perspective of traditional sociological understandings of democratization on the one hand, and a historical sociology of empires on the other. This highlights some of the problems of studying democratization in non-Western imperial contexts, taking on both empirical and theoretical dimensions. Simply put, this dissertation illuminates the importance of two empirical cases of

democratization for our sense of democracy, on the one hand, and on the other, uses those cases' invisibility in sociological theories of democracy to clarify sociology's imperial entanglements.

With the emergence of the *new sociology of empires* (Go 2009, Steinmetz 2014a) sociologists have begun to pay more attention to how imperial relations have historically constituted social and political processes (Göcek 2015, Steinmetz 2008; 2016 ) and as a consequence have begun the work of revising sociology's core concern – the making of modernity (Bhambra 2007, Boatca 2016). Inspired by post-colonial critique and transnational and global history, the logical next steps and calls for action have been to empirically move away from sociology's Euro- and Atlantic-centric focus (Go 2016, Göcek 2013) and to take up the methodological challenge of historicizing our research (Adams and Steinmetz 2015, Bhambra 2016, Clemens 2007, Steinmetz 2013;2011, Zimmerman 2017) in different ways and from different perspectives, as I shall discuss below.

My research joins this movement by exploring the making of modernity from the perspective of imperial relations' role in modernization processes of the Russian and German Empires, with particular focus on democratization processes driven by socialist and nationalist politics under imperial relations. Traditionally depicted as inconsequential, these democratization processes were not only different from their Western variant, but also shaped the making of what has since been depicted as the universal form of democratization. Sociology's historical focus on Western modernity has delineated these processes of democratization outside the purview of traditional sociology of democracy. My theoretical framework, built on a systematization of the new sociology of empires, shows how in different ways this is more than a definitional problem.

Sociology has traditionally focused on democratization historically defined through the experience of metropolises of Western empires (see for example Tilly 2007, Moore 1966). This has been accompanied by a methodological tradition that in various ways has ignored the imperial states, within which those metropolises were located. The sociology of empires and especially postcolonial studies have, however, shown the importance of imperial relations in constituting Western democratization. Scholars have analyzed how those democratization processes were made via the construction of national metropolitan states that specifically exclude colonies and colonial relations

from the democratic polity (see for example Hammer 2017, Balibar and Wallerstein 1991). Fatma Müge Göcek has called this the “two-pronged” methodology of second wave (for second wave see for example Go 2016) postcolonial sociology; the analysis of the dominated “on its own terms with the intent to produce alternate sources of knowledge” on the one hand, and the problematization of the networks of “knowledge, meaning and power within the dominant” on the other (Göcek 2016, ISA Forum).

But, given the domination of Western European imperialism, especially as sociology’s own historical standpoint, this approach, according to Göcek, “privileges the vantage point and ensuing narrative of the Western European and later American hegemony in approaching the analysis of power inequalities” (Ibid.). Hence, Göcek continues, the Western gaze has been analyzed historically, and its reproduction up to the present to “sustain its power grip over the world” has been demonstrated, yet, “in spite of this persistent deconstruction of the dominant power, the expected ensuing destabilization is far from complete” (Ibid.). As such the focus has remained within the intra-imperial relations of Atlantic-centric imperial states, on an immanent analysis of the hegemonic narrative, and has prompted comparative-historical sociologists to call for work delinking from those theories and thereby the original Eurocentric canon’s standpoint (Alatas 2007, Connell 1997; 2007, Bhabra 2007, Göcek 2013; 2016, Tlostanova 2007, Boatca et al 2013, Mignolo 2008), as well as, more moderately, to focus on the non-Western empires: “The temporal intersection of the loss of Ottoman imperial power with the rise of Western European empires turns into an explanation in and of itself, thereby escaping thorough empirical analysis”, Göcek elaborates. She continues that “the same faulty logic applies to the German, Austro-Hungarian, Persian, Mughal, Russian, Chinese and Japanese empires”. Göcek then calls for the type of research which also motivates my own project. She contends, that “one needs to analyze such “marginalized” cases in order to recover the nature of their resistance to or negotiation with the West on the one side and the dynamics of the local processes independent of the West on the other” in order to “generate knowledge not influenced by the Western European historical experience” (Göcek 2013, 75-77).

The main focus of the second wave of postcolonial studies – one that Göcek considers insufficient and not having paid enough attention to non-Western empires – is on the deconstruction of the original imperial project of confining modernity into the nation-state cores of western imperial states, from where it is then seen to spillover to the rest of the world (see for example Tilly 2007, Wejnert 2005, Torfason and Ingram 2010 for this type of analysis). This has hermeneutically sealed processes of nation-building, state-making, democratization and progressive politics (both liberal and socialist) into interactions understood and analyzed only in relation to each other within the unit of analysis of the nation-state.

We have thus learned that the making of this nation-state lens, in which sociology was complicit, was indeed a Western imperial project rather than the natural progression of social development and universal history, civilization or modernization<sup>3</sup>. What is missing from the sociological picture is, how these processes of modernity and their interactions were constituted and interacted with each other in non-Western imperial states. This, Göcek suggests, could help destabilize the set of assumptions holding the Western modernization lens and its historical narrative together.

I have selected two empirical puzzles that should allow us to begin to sociologize<sup>4</sup> the imperial processes of the non-Western making of modernity. The first case is that of democratization within a colonial state of a non-Western empire: The Grand Duchy of Finland of the Russian Empire. This empire has been considered to have fostered the most oppressive and even feudal imperial relations, thus has been assumed by sociologists to have been denied the mantels of civilization or modernity.

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<sup>3</sup> Göcek calls this the conventional Western European rule of colonial difference predicated on race and calls for analysis of the exploration of the agency of imperial subjects, the deconstruction of the imperial center, and the articulation of basis of imperial dominance in non-Western empire, like the German, Austro-Hungarian, Russian, Persian, Chinese, Mughal, Ottoman, and Japanese.

<sup>4</sup> The term is taken from Julian Go (2009). I understand it as the effort to make such puzzles sociologically approachable that have previously been occluded, as Go describes elsewhere (Go 2014) by the Western centric methodology and its accompanying historical narrative.

The second is a case of an imperial metropole that was different from the picture of metropolitan modernity co-constituted and legitimized through the making of colonial backwardness and orientalism. In this case of the German Empire, the premise of metropolitan democratization and modernization was not the exclusion of continental and overseas imperial relations.

Both cases are explored through the developments preceding and leading up to their reluctant loss of empire and adaptation of the Western form of national self-determination following the First World War.

The Grand Duchy of Finland of the Russian Empire in 1905 discussed and in 1906 adopted, as the first state in the world, unrestricted universal suffrage for a single chamber parliament and when the conjuncture arose for nation-state independence, did not want to give up its imperial dependency. As such this case is antithetical to Western notions of modernization and, for example, to Tilly's description of democratization having to take place in an independent state (2007); it thereby breaks apart the construction of the relations of modernization processes confined within an independent nation-state or included within an imperial metropole and excluded from its peripheries.

The second case of the German Empire allows me to explore democratization in a non-Western empire's metropole<sup>5</sup> by focusing on how colonial relations shaped and were used in efforts to democratize and reform the imperial state. This then diverges from the Western narrative and methodological tradition, on which the second postcolonial wave has focused its critique. In this case of the German Empire, constructing modernity was not an exclusively metropolitan project. Unlike the traditional incremental narrative of Western modernization, political modernization in the German Empire was connected with wholesale issues of democratization, from universal suffrage to worker's rights throughout the empire. Most tellingly, socialist and democratic actors founded their political imagination and claims on empire-wide relations, instead of isolating colonial policies from

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<sup>5</sup> Some would debate that the German Empire was a Western empire. Göcek however defines it as one of those non-Western empires who were not constitutive in the making of modernization paradigm. I agree with Göcek, and emphasize especially the making and formation of the German Empire that was different from the Atlantic Empires, including especially its relation to the imperial others to the east and the south. I equally base my definition on the strangely persistent narrative of the German Empire as a close but failed case of Western type modernization.

metropolitan struggles (as Tilly amongst others describes to have been the case in Western nations (Tilly 2007, 192-193; 199).

In the declarations that led to the establishment of the Weimar Republic, these imperial actors in Germany gained universal suffrage sooner than their Western peers (as happened in the Russian metropole too). Before that, during World War One Germany provided the third imperial model for nationally emancipatory politics, in competition with the Soviet and Western models of national self-determination. But, as had been the case with the German Empire, and unlike the Soviet and Western models, this model portrayed emancipation as dependent on, taking place under, and enabled by imperial relations<sup>6</sup>.

Traditional sociology not only separates metropole from its imperial state in constructing democratizations narratives, but it also sees it as natural for democratization processes to abide by underlying power relations. We then move from privileged male suffrage, to male suffrage, to universal suffrage without the right for women to stand for elections, to finally unrestricted universal

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<sup>6</sup> We this see in proponents of colonial emancipation, such as W.E.B. Dubois or the Indian nationalist Har Dayal who after WWI shifted from supporting or sympathizing with the German Empire to promoting ideas of mandates system type of colonial governance.

suffrage. And we move with Western democratization from the rich in the metropole, to the rich on other metropolises, to the rich settler colonies, to the colonies of other empires (see Wilson's 14 points), and lastly to the colonies of the Western empires. This incrementalism, founded on a supposedly natural progression (where women and global subalterns come last), was considered antithetical to democratization by many, especially before the First World War (see for example Luxemburg's (1912) *Women's Suffrage and Class Struggle* and (1904) *Social Democracy and Parliamentarism*). This, Luxemburg-type of socialist thought, arguing against incremental reform lead by the patriarchal bourgeoisie state as antithetical to democratization, was behind Finland's democratization too; the socialists would cooperate in parliamentary reform only if unrestricted universal suffrage was adopted.

Paxton et al. (2006), for example, in the *American Sociological Review* base their analysis of women's political representation on the incrementalist model as the driver of historical change rather than as a particular form of hierarchizing democracy. Their analysis, based on thresholds that describe women's increased political representation, overlooks, for example, the Finnish case, where once democratization was possible, they adopted women's suffrage, the right to stand for election, and

## Table 2. Democratization's Western model

- Ignores the imperial state
  - Metropole separated from periphery
- Weight of the West in the historical narrative (Göcek 2013)
- Second wave postcolonial critiques misrecognize intra-imperial relations of the Western imperial states as global
  - Western imperial relations are not compared to non-Western
  - Non-Western cases are marginalized as Western relations are depicted as global
- Modernization processes and their Western qualifier democratization connected with nation-state independence (Tilly 2007)
  - Democratization and the national state collapsed together
- Incremental ideas of democratization confirming existing power relations (women and the subaltern gain suffrage last), hide alternative definitions of democratization

elected female parliamentarians, i.e. crossed three thresholds at once. A fourth threshold of electing more than 10 per cent of female parliamentarians was crossed in Finland a year later in 1908, and again in 1909, 1913, 1916, 1922 etc. This latter development is completely disregarded by Paxton et al. who in the third sentence of their peer reviewed paper falsely and without citation claim that the first country to cross the 10 per cent threshold of women's representation in the parliament was the USSR in 1946. Indeed, their analysis based on the incrementalistic procession of five of such thresholds would collapse if three of them were achieved at once in Finland. Including the historical example of Finland on the one hand, and the calls for non-incrementalistic democratization, such as those raised by socialists in Germany on the other hand, shows that instead of describing the historical force of the spread of democratization and women's rights, they describe the spread of a specific model of democracy based on exclusivist hierarchies and a slow procession from the privileged to the non-privileged. As I will discuss especially in chapters three and four, from another perspective this is specific form of democracy that prevents emancipation rather than aims for it, as it moves along the lines of existing domination and serves to reaffirm and legitimize them.

In this regard Paxton et al. exemplify the connection between a specific form of imperialism and the analytical lenses that sociology has uncritically derived from it. Thereby, their analysis of a slow diffusion and non-disruptive progression based on the incrementalist model also serves to normalize and unproblematicize facts such as the one that the United States crossed their middle threshold of 10 per cent women's representation in 1992, 84 years later than Finland.

Both of my non-Western imperial cases negotiated modernity differently from the Western experience. Their empirical elaboration challenges Atlantic-centric theories of imperial rule, such as Michael Mann's imperial rule predicated on compulsory cooperation (Göcek 2013, 75;96). Together, through the shared lens of democratization, the two cases provide an analysis of modernization processes' relation to imperial states outside of the Western model. With this I provide not only alternative knowledge but also insight into the making and domination of Western imperialism's knowledge culture around narratives of procession and methodological metrocentrism. Lastly, the focus on democratization within modernization is informative specifically because it was constructed

and sociologized as the characteristic defining the difference between Western modernization and its Soviet other following World War One, after the collapse and consequent subsumption of the imperial relations that I explore, by the Western and Soviet narratives of modernization. As such it offers not only an alternative but also a critical reconstruction of what was occluded and how.

In this chapter I introduce my two cases as illuminated by the puzzle of imperial state democratization. The immediate problem is that democratization in the sociological literature is not defined as taking place within or in association with imperial states. And, by focusing on the privileges of the Western metropolises within imperial relations even postcolonial scholars often misrecognize them as global rather than particular, which further marginalizes non-Western imperial cases. The Western-centric critiques of the metropole-periphery divides of democratization might not only be better distinguished but could help to erase the marginalization of non-Western imperial cases, if compared to non-Western imperial relations<sup>7</sup>.

In traditional sociological literature, modernization processes themselves are considered within units of independent nation-states and supported by national rather than imperial or transnational histories. The supposed correlation between democratization and economic success, as will be discussed below, is an example of this type of analytical binding when analyzing democratization against other processes of modernization. The latter furthermore again helps propagate an incremental model of democratization that assumes democratization to naturally move through existing power relations (from men to women, rich to poor, white to black, metropole to colony, West to East), and thereby prevents analysis of other models of democratization. This is a problem that is even characteristic of the Atlanticist model of postcolonial studies.

### *Situating the Research Puzzle – Two Perspectives*

In this section I discuss the ways in which my research puzzle is problematic from the perspective of traditional sociology of democracy that has been developed to best observe the Western

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<sup>7</sup> It is important, however, to acknowledge postcolonial contributions to the wider efforts to move beyond metrocentrism and methodological nationalism.

model of democratization and its historical narrative. I then begin the discussion of what it means for the puzzle of imperial democratization to be placed within the new historical sociology of empires.

I look at democratization in an imperial state's periphery and the effects of colonialism on democratic politics in another imperial state's metropole. As discussed above, one of the first problems one then encounters, when beginning to analyze the research puzzle, is the definition of these political units. Neither of them is a national state. Both are colonial and the Grand Duchy would be described by some as imperial while by others as proto-national or even as a by-state<sup>8</sup>. The German case most historians would describe as imperial, though many prominent sociologists up until recently would argue the opposite, as will be discussed below (see Collins 1997).

In other words, politics at the turn of the 19<sup>th</sup> and 20<sup>th</sup> century and the politics of sociology are mismatched. My cases do not fit in in the latter, even while they were central to the former. Indeed, the categories and understandings in use in sociology today are not made to describe and analyze all previous historical times and are rather made to describe some and not others. That choice over the ones they are made to describe and analyze has in most turns and shifts of the discipline been connected to and influenced by the politics of that time, in most cases then, by imperial politics. Moreover, succeeding generations of sociologists have interpreted, prioritized and mobilized those previous, often imperial, shifts in sociology, in articulation with the latter generation's own politics, which are again, often, imperial. This a relation underlying the challenge of this dissertation. It is difficult to develop a 21<sup>st</sup> century sociology suitable to cases from the 20<sup>th</sup> century's start that early on were excluded from the discipline's collective memory, cases that became the victims of its "disciplinary amnesia" (Agger 2000, 168 quoted in Steinmetz 2013, 1). They were present only as negative explanans of the Western model. Thus, in this dissertation, I not only must elaborate democratization's modality in the Russian and German imperial states empirically, but I must also contend with the challenge of their invisibility in the knowledge cultures of more than 100 years of Western sociology.

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<sup>8</sup> See chapter 2.

Considering sociology's layered history of imperialist and other politics of analytical selectivity, both of my cases have been early, later, and recent victims of disciplinary amnesia<sup>9</sup>. Consider the following examples. Most recently, Bilinski (2018), specifically tests pathways to democracy in Europe before World War One, and in the process, literally defines the Grand Duchy of Finland out of the problem setting. Bilinski considers unrestricted universal suffrage in a colonial state, without simultaneous constitutional monarchy<sup>10</sup>, unapproachable within the terms defined by previous sociology on democracy's character. Extending his analysis to cover this imperial model of democratization would breakdown his whole research setting.<sup>11</sup> And the case of the German Empire Bilinski defines and describes in such a manner that its imperial and colonial dimensions are ignored when it comes to democratization. Bilinski's work, of course, draws on great precedent.

Charles Tilly equally excludes by definition Finnish democratization by stating that it was part of the Russian Empire and thus "did not start operating as an independent democracy until 1918" (Tilly 2007, 62). The problem here of course is that the Western metropolises, on which Tilly draws to define democracy's trajectory, function, for Tilly, supposedly independent of their empires even while they were equally, if not more, embedded in their imperial states<sup>12</sup>. The Finnish state may even have had more autonomy vis-à-vis the imperial state than the Western metropolises had vis-à-vis their imperial states.

Furthermore, to take Tilly's model of strong state democratization (ibid., 163) – where political struggle centers on control over state power, rather than on local disputes – the Grand Duchy of Finland would actually be exemplary. Then, beyond the question of Tilly's ignorance of Finland,

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<sup>9</sup> Risto Alapuro (2019 [1988]) is the only sociologists to my knowledge to have addressed the making of the Finnish state in a historical sociological framework. He does so in the framework 80s second wave historical sociology. He does not address imperial relations, prioritizes state-making over democratization and portrays the Finnish state as a diffused off-shoot of general European developments.

<sup>10</sup> The question of the monarchical nature of the Finnish constitutional case, interestingly, was a question of debate at the time, and thus a perfect example of one those alternatives and struggles that is simply not considered. This debate is discussed further in chapter 2.

<sup>11</sup> This may be because Bilinski's argument about the failure of democracy is based on regime discontinuity and Finland experienced regime discontinuity but still survived as democratic after World War One, according to Bilinski's definitions that are drawn from the disciplinary canon.

<sup>12</sup> See for example the discussions in chapter 2 concerning the Grand Duchy's "distance" to and differences from its imperial state.

we can pose an even more crucial question: What if it was the imperial dimension of the grand ducal periphery that allowed for Finnish extreme democratization?

What is, thus, problematic, especially when thinking about the history of sociology's co-constitution within Western modernity, and of historical processes in general and in non-Western empires specifically, is the tendency to abstract from particular historical processes general transhistorical categories that in turn mislead. For example, Tilly superimposes, transhistorically, an idea of national state independence that was developed by Western empires in and after 1918-1919 upon Finnish democratization before 1918 to thus rule it a case inappropriate for considering democratization.

This also happens, with equal measure and an assumed universality, then on the analysis western imperial metropolises before and after 1918. While the case of the Grand Duchy of Finland is nowhere to be found in most sociologies of democratization, the case of democratization in Germany is present as the traditional case of failed democratization. Germany is understood as the meaningless dead-end pathway. It mainly serves to confirm previous models for understanding democracy's trajectory. But that misleads when we consider the pathway Germany had been developing as an imperial state. We shall discuss later the same logic, but much more crudely applied, with Randall Collins' musings about sociology not having developed in the Portuguese or Spanish Empires. This logic is another problem of sociology's (Western) imperial entanglements.

What of my research problem around democratization in the Russian and German Empires then? Has it been answered already or is it simply obsolete? Has all that is meaningful for the sociological program been said about them?

The new sociology of empires would answer in the affirmative, that is, it would answer that all that is meaningful for the sociological program of Western modernity has indeed been said about my two cases of imperial state democratization. It would point to the works of Weber, Durkheim and others in defining modernization and democratization as a metropolitan Western phenomenon. It would then point to works like that of Barrington Moore Jr. in comparatively testing that assumption

vis-à-vis other cases, and lastly it would point out, for example, the work of John D. Stephens in testing Moore's hypothesis with the latest methods and historical data. And then it would challenge this previous work by going to the colonies of those Atlanticist democracies to indicate the problem of inequality with metrocentrism, thus identifying the exclusionary logic of that model but not questioning its universality or exploring its relation to other trajectories, leaving intact Western imperial/sociological misrecognition.

As such, the occlusion of my cases has been pedantic, cumulative, sophisticated and argumentative through the sociological program that has defined democracy historically through Western metropolitan reference point and then its extensions and diffusions. This conventional progressive history of the cumulation of sociological knowledge depends on the erasure of the Grand Duchy of Finland by sociological definition as not democratic, even if it had all the conditions and more of democratization historically (see for example Eley 2007). And the German Empire has to be seen, in this framework, as a failed, negative case of democratization.

The new sociology of empires would see this cumulative path-dependency as yet another problem of sociology's (Western) imperial entanglements. It suggests that there are specific limitations as to what is observable by the sociological canon. These limitations cannot be remedied within the canon without going all the way back to the discipline's historical origins and working one's way up from there, inspecting all the major twists and developments that led to the continued exclusion of some cases. That is, of course, a task beyond any individual scholar. Considering this limitation, the new sociology of empires has devised research strategies that frame the research puzzles differently, with the imperial blinkers of the discipline in mind, to make puzzles outside sociology's traditional purview, nevertheless sociological.

I will briefly outline those strategies before discussing them in more depth in part two of this chapter. One of the strategies is to historicize and pluralize theorization. For example, instead of solving the puzzle of democratization in non-Western empires vis-à-vis traditional definitions, we make it a non-puzzle by creating a sociological theory of non-Western imperial democratization as separate from Western democratization. George Steinmetz has, for example, made the puzzle of

different metropole-periphery relations in the German Empire versus the Western imperial metropole-periphery divide a non-puzzle by theorizing the German colonial states as characterized by struggles that cut across its metropole-periphery divides in specific ways.

Julian Go has suggested turning to different methodologies that transform a puzzling difference, or an analytical divide, into an empirical interaction. The puzzle is then scaled up to explain the simultaneous existence of different models of democratization. Gurinder K Bhambra suggests on the other hand, that such differences and divides ought to be turned into questions of occlusion, into metapuzzles concerning the existence of the division in the first place. Bhambra asks, what is it about the historical constitution of sociology's tools that has occluded other cases? Her approach could be thought of as a refinement of our methods, something that was previously considered an outlier is made to matter, by seeing what it is in our methods that makes it an outlier, when we have reason to suspect that it is not one. Lastly, Fatma Müge Göcek has proposed something similar with what Steinmetz proposes, but added to it an aspect of Bhambra's approach. In a nutshell, Göcek suggest we find enough outliers and compare them with each other in order to unthink their status as outliers. It could be simplified, that Göcek then moves the research puzzle from asking 'why non-Western imperial democratization' to asking 'how non-western democratization', i.e. the difference between Western and non-Western democratization is taken as an assumption rather than as a puzzle.

A research problem then is a research problem only in reference to the disciplinary context within which it is posed. Finnish democratization has important continuities to its eventual nation-statehood even though Tilly reverses that and argues that only with nation-statehood did Finnish democratization become meaningful for sociological observation. And the German imperial state was crucial in shaping Soviet and Western responses to the making of modernity even though they defined their models for national emancipation in opposition to German imperialism in inter-imperial as well as intra-imperial forms, such as the socialist calls for comprehensive empire-wide democratization.

But, in reference to traditional sociology of democracy, my research cases are not puzzling. The pieces of this puzzle then, by definition, cannot fit together. Traditional sociology believes in the

progression of the discipline and the universality of historical developments. And is correct in doing so, in the sense that it is historically trained to observe models of democratization constituted by modernization in Western empires and traditional sociology has indeed become better and more encompassing in observing that particular model and defined other models against it. It has already formulated a view of the puzzle of democracy that does not operate within the dimensions of my cases. Andrew Abbot describes it as general linear reality (quoted in Clemens 2007, 529), connections can only be drawn along the specified linear continuum. While being aware of my cases for almost a century now, this sociology has continually argued, analyzed and described my historical contexts as meaningless for the puzzle of democracy and theories of democratization, except as possible negative cases, and as such has indeed built a stronger and stronger case, historically anchored in its original perspective, for why my imperial states are not cases of democratization. And while taking on this entire tradition is not my goal, the particular problem, if not a problem for traditional sociology but for my cases, arising from this discrepancy should be remedied.

### *Situating the Research Puzzle – Traditional Perspective*

Before moving to describe the new sociology of empires that I adopt as the theoretical framework for analyzing my research puzzle, I will first briefly discuss the traditional perspective more and how these two originally diverged from each other. This should highlight some of the issues that my adopted perspective then hopes to tackle.

For example, Charles Tilly's thirteen "payoff" puzzles in the study of democratization, i.e. the sociologically important questions, are each empirically, methodologically, or in both ways, out of the purview of my research puzzle, if not even antithetical to it. I will give two examples. First, Tilly suggests we should focus on the puzzle of why democratic national states emerge through the very same processes by which these states acquired their means of rule. But, in my cases democratization is not matching with or defined by national or state levels or especially the same processes through which those states acquired their means of rule. Tilly's specifying follow-up question is indeed antithetical to my research puzzle: why did truncated (compared to the national state) democratic institutions never become direct templates for democracy at a national scale, he asks (Tilly 2007, 192-

193). The historical assumption of the question denies my puzzle of the type of democratization observed there, and the question itself is out of the purview of my units of analysis. Tilly's question setting is rather based on the assumptions of incremental democratization and democratization confined to imperial metropolises.

In relation to the question, Tilly even indirectly himself states why my research question is out of the purview of the traditional sociological program. Why is it that national negotiations locked in place national dynamics of struggle for democratization, but that "only in tendentious retrospect can we imagine that self-conscious democratizers put these institutions into place" (Ibid.). Yet, this acknowledgement does not drive Tilly to make the needed next step to question sociology's tendency for that retrospective imposition, it does not prompt the self-reflexivity, that his retrospective imagination might indeed stem from a specific model of democratization historically constituted through Western imperial states.

Second, Tilly, asks what explains the spread of democratization and de-democratization from Western Europe to the rest of the world (Ibid., 199). This is against the historical empirical observation that is the basis of my research puzzle, since at least the type of democratization that Tilly suggests to have diffused from the West to the rest did not take place in my cases, and my cases predate not only the Western diffusion, but even the extent of democratization in Western metropolises at the time. It is also very different to ask what kind of democratization took place and to ask what kind of democratization was envisioned or struggled for<sup>13</sup>. My cases then cannot fit into Tilly's puzzle.

It is then not within my ambition or capacity to argue against the whole of this tradition; to hold my cases as the definitive arguments proving that all those who work and have worked within this tradition are fundamentally wrong, and to argue that their puzzles, constructed the way they are in reference to specific sociological literature, would not work within their own particular dimensions and reference points. As Gurinder K. Bhambra wonders, "given that the deficiencies and

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<sup>13</sup> Even in the United States, later court rulings and political decisions shaped the democracy to become even more exclusivist and to incorporate further racialization (see for example Immerwahr 2019).

inadequacies of the existing paradigm have been noted and articulated over a number of decades and there still is empirical contestation of the arguments being made, the question then arises – on what basis do practitioners, historical sociologists, continue to act as if the critique had not been made?” (Bhambra 2016, 337).

Indeed, if we were to take seriously at the same time both the postcolonial and historical studies on the imperialism of modernity and the Western state as well as the traditional sociological definitions of democratization (see for example Tilly 2007, Moore 1966, Stephens 1989, Usmani 2018, Wejnert 2005 for traditional definitions), then the beginnings of democratization should be traced to Eastern European and Eurasian empires and the non-imperial states of northern Europe<sup>14</sup>, with true consolidation of democracy taking place first in the former peripheries of those Eurasian empires. The Atlantic states would follow only way after the Second World War, sometime in the 60s and 70s. Furthermore, then the traditional type of democratization, especially considering its strong correlation with economic growth (see for example Kurzman and Leahey 2004), would present itself as an intentional tool of exclusion and inequality within the imperial states. If this indeed was to be made the narrative at the core of modernization as understood by sociology, then nothing less than a wholesale purge or revolution would be required.

However, even if I do not aim for a revolution, this is still a sociological dissertation. Even though it is historical research that has shown that my cases are cases of democratization and modernity, this is still not a historical dissertation. This means that the puzzle of my cases does not lie in their divergence from the outcomes of traditional sociology. It lies within the relationship of the sociological discipline and my historical cases, as new sociology of empires suggests.

The puzzle is, why these cases and historical contexts have not been theorized as democratization by sociological analyses? And, if with the initial question I found no support from previous sociological work on how to begin to connect the historical examples of my cases to the larger sociological canon, it is concerning this slightly re-oriented question that during the past two

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<sup>14</sup> Australia and New Zealand would qualify as non-metropolitan, though privileged, settler colonies, but disqualify due to their racial restrictions on democratization.

decades a burgeoning literature has emerged. It is especially evident within the field of historical sociology, where the mismatch of the theoretical sociological canon with new historical research is most manifest and closest to the researchers. There, efforts stemming from the mismatch of empirical cases with theory in understanding German colonialism (Steinmetz 2008; 2016; 2017), forms of governance in non-western empires (Göcek 2013), and sociology's imperial past (Go 2013) and imperial present vis-à-vis that imperialism's others (Bhambra 2011;2013) have made sociologists formulate research agendas and begin research programs that actively try to address the question of the relation of sociology with historical cases that it systematically fails to engage.

Historical research has shown the meaningfulness of my cases to questions of democratization, while sociology has over and over again proven their meaninglessness to sociological theories of democratization and democracy. In this situation then, an operational research puzzle cannot be about recounting the yes-answers of the historians against the no-answers of the sociologists. Neither is this a dissertation about disciplinary differences within history and sociology that have led to these different answers. My real research puzzle then is about the possible sociologicity of my historical cases. And this, as I show below, is also the research puzzle of the historical sociologists who in different ways are addressing sociology's imperial entanglements in order to argue for the sociologicity of their own cases and methodologies. This entails a handful of specific research considerations that those working in the traditional canon usually do not need to explicitly consider, namely critical consideration of some of the methodologies and assumptions stemming from Western imperialism's own historical constitution, that take centerstage with this type of a research puzzle. In doing so, also the systemic occlusions built into sociology's imperial constitution and lenses are revealed, and thereby the active relation between sociology and the (Western) imperial narrative. Next then, I describe this overarching research program and then identify four main trends in that type of historical sociological work in order to formulate the most up-to-date and pertinent research framework for addressing the sociologicity of my own cases.

### *Theoretical Framework – Origins of New Sociology of Empires*

While the problem of the imperial entanglements of sociology had been recognized and raised before, most prominently by postcolonial studies and scholars, the moment of wider self-awareness of the issue in Western and especially American sociology, that kicked off the formulation of concrete new research programs aimed at addressing, if not solving, the issue one way or another, could be traced to Raewyn Connell's 1997 *American Journal of Sociology* article *Why is Classical Theory Classical?*. Connell's main argument is that the making of sociology "can only be understood in the framework of global history, especially the history of imperialism", which in turn, if correct, "has implications for contemporary thinking about theory, beyond the calls for a more inclusive canon". The latter point is key for understanding the wider research program, not oversimplifying it, and doing justice to its various attempts and their differences at approaching sociology's imperialism. Its simplest consequence, as noted by Connell, is "to consider not only which *writers* are included and excluded, but also *which* problems", which in turn "is particularly important in relation to the formative issue of empire" (Connell 1997, 1545).

The importance of the problem of sociology's imperial gaze set forth by Connell's article was immediately confirmed by Randall Collins' rebuke that could not escape the very imperial logic that Connell was observing, and as such displayed the need for developing an overarching program. We can examine Collins' rebuke as a means of identifying the key problems with the discipline's imperialism.

Collins' argued that rather than being connected to imperial politics "these theories [of Marx, Weber, and Durkheim] were analytically sophisticated because they recognized that such processes [like the ones they themselves described] occur, in varying combinations, within all human societies". (Collins 1997, 1560). Thus, for Collins Durkheim's *Elementary Forms of the Religious Life* is "an explicit analysis of tribal rituals as the archetype of moral integration and symbolic concept-formation within all societies and treats the Australian aborigines as exemplars of what is most deeply human" (ibid.). Collins not only doubles down on sociology's universality and that of the historical narrative it imposes, but also argues for moral high ground for Durkheim for using anthropological data collected

of Australian aborigines during high imperialism to explain the progression to modern society elsewhere.

Similarly, Collins sees it as a rebuke against the idea of sociology's imperial gaze, that the comparative method, for example, was not of sociological origin but simply adopted from the natural sciences like chemistry, which themselves had developed before that in "nonimperialist contexts"<sup>15</sup> (ibid., 1561) (see for example Go 2014 for more on sociological scientism). Furthermore, according to Collins' version of the history of sociology, the imperialism and evolutionary theories prevalent in the US were a distortion caused by "American provincialism and intellectual dependence upon Britain" (ibid.). In Collins' narrative this was, however, fixed around the 1920s when US academia broke from this dependency and began to import non-British ideas, such as German ones. Another of Collins' rebukes is that sociology was actually much more of a French and German undertaking, and "for France and Germany the correlation of sociology with imperialism is poor." Collins then goes on to say that the connection suggested by Connell between sociology's particular treatments of race and gender being connected historically to its imperial gaze, is "trendy political sloganizing" (Collins 1997, 1563)<sup>16</sup>.

The overarching take-away from Collins's rebuke from as late as 1997, is his ignorance of historical research concerning all the subject matters he touches upon. He argues that "Germany had very little overseas empire to be concerned with" and that France became imperial only after Saint-Simon, Comte and Le Play (Collins 1997, 1561-1562). And these are only the matters of historical empirical research; a much more concerning factor is the ignorance exemplified by Collins of most basic reflections on historiography, historical time and historical theory; Collins sets as a counter-argument to sociology's connection with empire the fact that sociology had 'failed' to develop in the earlier empires of Spain, Portugal and Holland. This belies a larger problem, that the sociology of sociology could be deduced and analyzed ahistorically and at once universally, that the tools for self-

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<sup>15</sup> For example, Bruno Latour would be surprised to hear this (Latour 1988).

<sup>16</sup> For example, Silvia Federici would be surprised to hear this (Federici 2004).

reflexivity can be the very same tools traditionally mobilized for sociological research; that we can objectively observe the objective observer.

Indeed, perhaps the strongest undercurrent shared by all the approaches aiming to remedy, in one form, in one measure or another, sociology's imperial baggage, is the acknowledgement and importance of historical research's and historiographical contentions' importance together with their cultural and political dimensions.

Connell's article ends with a formulation of an approach for considering sociology's imperial baggage seriously:

*What we need instead of "classical theory" is better history – sociological history – and an inclusive way of doing theory. Sociology can be introduced to students not as a story of "great men" but as a practice shaped by the social relations that made it possible. The full range of intellectuals who produced "theories of society" can be recovered for this history, including feminists, anarchists, and colonials who were erased from the canonical story. The exclusions constructing the discipline can become part of the discipline's self-knowledge. (Connell 1997, 1546)*

The research program addressing sociology's imperial entanglements and attempting to sociologize previously overlooked empirics and connections has four main identifiable responses to addressing the question of sociology's imperial baggage, based on the works of four sociologists. All of these responses have been developed during the past two decades or so and have begun as reactions to and discoveries – raised outside and within sociology – from postcolonial critiques, transnational histories, relational theories and disciplinary self-reflexivity.

Systematizing the four responses provides an exhaustive list of the tools on offer in the new sociology of empires. I focus in my systematization on the sociologists who I see as representative of the different distinguishable contributions to that overarching research program. They have developed work persistently dealing with the question of sociology's imperial entanglements and have formulated consistent approaches for tackling the question. These historical sociologists are George Steinmetz, Julian Go, Gurminder K. Bhambra and Fatma Müge Göcek.

### *Shared Foundations*

The new research program to address sociology's imperial entanglements, has not been systemized and tested together before, significantly weakening the purchase of each of the approaches separately. I believe that together they complement and reinforce each other. After discussing some of the basic shared features beyond what has already been outlined concerning the research program as a whole, I will then discuss each of the four sociologists' approach individually.

The lack of systematization is especially curious since the literatures from which they draw, ranging from postcolonial studies to transnational history to relational and self-reflexive sociology, have tremendous overlap. All of them share the same motivation to address imperialism, and it is the dialogues and debates about the issue of dealing with sociology's imperial entanglements that these different approaches have developed with each other and their key interlocutors that have consolidated the wider research program. Thereby, since the approaches they suggest diverge from each other, without systematization and reference to the shared original motivation, seen from an outside perspective they may seem to conflict with each other. As the below discussion shows, if we simply juxtapose Julian Go's work with that of Gurminder K. Bhambra's for example, it might appear that they are arguing against each other. Bhambra hopes to reconstruct sociology's methods and concepts, while Go suggests we should aim for a synthesis with postcolonial thought. But, in reference to the wider research program, they contribute to different mutually non-exclusive sides of the same problem.

Discovering the mismatch between their interests in studying empires, colonialism and modernity with sociology's commitment to a "vestigial view of science as progressing in a linear fashion" (Steinmetz 2013, 1) these sociologists have translated Connell's view into a research program addressing the imperial entanglements of the discipline. And, in addressing the call to take empire seriously, they have discovered natural allies in historians and in postcolonial studies.

All the approaches are motivated by the same concern and fall under the same overarching research program. They start with the recognition and shared epistemology that "sociology can never

aspire to be a cumulative science in which earlier work can be safely discarded” (Steinmetz 2013, xi). The consequence of this recognition is not only the need to historicize sociology and its imperial past, but also to systematically consider the way in which “the much vaunted reflexivity of social sciences requires historical self-analysis” (Steinmetz 2013, xi). This in turn brings to the fore the identification of “latent and manifest colonial assumptions and imperial ideologies informing current sociological theory and research” (Steinmetz 2013, xi). These assumptions of sociology should be overcome in a manner that does not replicate the silencing of “the global and conjunctural nature of modernity, instead giving full agency to Europe as the *sole* producer and exporter of modernity to the world at large” (Subrahmanyam cited in Göcek 2013, 96). Some of the main issues identified in this respect are Western centrism, universalism, analytical bifurcation, reification, methodological nationalism, orientalism, unilinear or stage-based philosophies of history, objective observations, and objective self-reflection, transhistorical comparisons, and the treatment of history as data. These tie in with the empirical manifestations of some of the problems of my specific cases as summarized in Box 1. Instead of the traditional canon that was shown to be incompatible with my puzzle, I argue that I can sociologically approach it, rather by mobilizing the approaches of these forerunners of sociological research against the grain of Western modernity.

### *Expansion and Pluralization Approach*

Next, I will discuss each of the approaches individually, moving from one to the other based on the differences in focus amongst them, before finally summarizing the approaches as a whole.

Sociologist George Steinmetz hopes to address aspects and cases previously overlooked due to the discipline’s imperial entanglements. He does so by expanding both theory and empirics while maintaining a separation between them. The assumption is that we can maintain some presence of the objective observer, understood as the disciplinary field itself, if we acknowledge that its self-reflexivity cannot be similarly addressed as an objective observer. Steinmetz himself has focused on critical historical analyses of sociology’s history (see for example 2011: 2013; 2017b; 2018b) and on new and expansive research theorizing empires and imperial relations (2007; 2008; 2016), which

together triangulate a deeper and more historicized understandings of sociology's other key concepts such as the state (Adams and Steinmetz 2015, Steinmetz 2017a).

Steinmetz thinks, following Bourdieu, that intellectual work itself, by taking self-reflexivity seriously, can incrementally reconcile the imperial gaze of sociology with its critiques. Steinmetz traces the resurgence of interest in understanding sociology's imperial entanglements to transformations in the disciplinary field itself, to the increasing prevalence of critiques of methodological nationalism and "the emergence of historical sociology out of its defensive crouch vis-à-vis the rest of the discipline." He continues that "once historical sociologists no longer felt compelled to legitimate themselves in pseudo-scientific ways, they were free to stop proving they were sociologists by ignoring work in imperial history being done by historians." (Steinmetz 2013, x). That citation captures the Steinmetzian motivation and thrust of addressing imperialism. It moves from a recognition of historical imperialism to an expansion and pluralization of historical sociology that could reveal "sociology's disciplinary amnesia about its own engagement with colonialism and empire" by recovering "earlier sociological work in this area" (ibid., xi). New research and theoretical work on empires goes hand in hand with "critical reflection on the ways in which sociology has been shaped by empire" (ibid.) in the Steinmetzian approach.

Thus, Steinmetz theorizes varieties of state-formations under empire and expands Pierre Bourdieu's theory of the state to make it applicable to research on pre-WWI colonial fields. He also engages the work of forgotten sociologists (see for example Steinmetz 2013; 2014b) to expand our toolkit and situate existing theories better. The effort is to provide a larger variety of sociological concepts and research areas. And the idea is that an expansion of theoretical tools will loosen the sociological field's historical interests and make it more open and prepared to engage a wider set of historical empirics so that graduate students, such as myself, could actually write dissertations on what have been considered obscure empires outside of modernization's purview by using newly standardized sociological tools and theories.

Steinmetz lists the reasons for attending to sociology's imperial history as 1) increased self-reflexivity 2) the finding of forgotten work 3) identifying social processes that may now be taken for

granted, 4) understanding periods of and conditions for scientific flourishing and decay, 5) and understanding the effects of social sciences on the extra-scientific world. He gives as a canon-related example the importance to understand why modernization theorists reintroduced Max Weber into sociology in a manner that erased Weber's rejection of any universal covering laws (Steinmetz 2018b). Here it is useful to note that Bhambra also addresses the false interpretation of Weber's works, though not in order to understand what it can tell us of the disciplinary field's history, but to fix and historicize our usage of Weber (Bhambra 2016).

In its core then, Steinmetz's motivation for addressing sociology's imperial entanglements arises from his Bourdieusian view of what is successful social science, which is based on the acknowledgement of the "recursive relations between social science and its context" (Steinmetz 2019, 7). This requires a self-objectifying approach to scientific reflexivity, i.e. understanding where our own scientific categories and concepts come from and the origins of the extant division of social scientific labor" (Steinmetz 2018c, 4). Steinmetz, sees that with a "distinctly historical social epistemology that is open to conjuncture, contingency, and radical discontinuity" Bourdieu has allowed "sociology to historicize itself" (2011, 45-46)

This approach then expands and pluralizes sociology through historicized self-reflection. It, however, leaves sociology vulnerable to accusations of historical complicity in justifying and building empires and to accusations of contemporary corruption in upholding and reproducing its own position and epistemology through that historical base (Go 2016). In other words, simply bringing in new material and pluralizing the origins does not fundamentally criticize or lead to transformation of the disciplinary field itself, or necessarily lead to any change in its power structures. With this approach it is left at the discretion of the reader, the individual sociologist, and the wider disciplinary field to address the present-day nexus between power and knowledge, that sociology's historically imperial gaze produces (Göcek 2013).

The most important aspect of Steinmetz's approach then is taking critically, reflexively and seriously the historical study of sociology itself (see for example 2011, 2017b), i.e. avoiding the reproduction of sociology's imperial gaze in that regard. This is Steinmetz's style to respond to

Connell's call to go beyond a more inclusive canon, and not just thinking who is excluded and included, but also which problems are excluded or included. Steinmetz approaches this as a why question. Why did sociology become imperial the way it did, Steinmetz asks? Whereas Julian Go approaches this as 'how' question and situates the crux of the answer not in sociology's relation to its own history but in sociology's relation to other theories, their histories and their historical empirics, especially those that have previously been actively occluded by sociology's imperial gaze. How does sociology occlude the other and how does it replicate that imperial gaze, Go asks?

### *Synthesizing and Decolonizing Approach*

Julian Go shifts the Bourdieusian focus from disciplinary self-reflexivity towards theoretical relationalism to counter methodological issues stemming from sociology's imperial past, such as analytical bifurcation and methodological nationalism. This, Go posits, could connect sociology with postcolonial theory in a mutually beneficial way. For Go, the problem of sociology's imperial entanglements then becomes largely a methodological problem of synthesis by finding epistemological and theoretical middle-ground (2014; 2016; 2017). Go's end goal in this sense is not in "sociologizing" studies of empires and colonialism themselves, but in deploying them to "help critically reorient some of traditional sociology's limiting lenses and assumptions" (Go 2009, 775).

Therefore, Go suggests changing course instead of expanding within the old framework through self-reflection, i.e. transforming sociology with the help of the perspective of previously colonized and dominated standpoints. "To start from their perspective", Julian Go writes. By contrast, Steinmetz's fundamental starting point is still, to follow Go's terminology, our perspective. Go draws, from among others, from sociologist Zine Magubane's work on interrogating and expanding the postcolonial approach through African studies and thereby "emphasizing the centrality of African opinions, perspectives, and experiences" in constructing theory and making history and thus asking new and more challenging questions (Magubane 2005, xiv). For Go this means adopting methods that allows us to shift our standpoint. Go states, that "although postcolonial thought and social theory emerge from distinct historical genealogies and social contexts, their continued relevance today and into the future requires not their persistent mutual opposition but rather their synthetic elaboration: a

rising third wave of critical post/colonial knowledge that draws upon and elevates both”. The ultimate goal is “theory beyond empire” (Go 2016, 1). With Go’s example, we might caricature other perspectives: Steinmetz promotes a theory of empire, and as we shall see, Bhabra a theory against empire, and Göcek theory by<sup>17</sup> and across empire.

The Gosian approach puts the emphasis – in dealing with sociology’s imperial entanglements – on identifying methodological problems that have previously been complicit in reproducing the Western centric narrative and occluding others. By overcoming that complicity and suggesting new methodologies with postcolonial criticism in mind, Go suggest we can also remedy sociology’s “corrupt” imperial constitution. Go then specifically tries to tackle the accusations of historical complicity and contemporary corruption that the Steinmetzian approach was left vulnerable to. The approach is then well suited to sociologize previously overlooked empirics as it attempts to establish a direct connection with traditional sociology and its critical others, that together could lead to something more.

Go’s synthesis of sociological and postcolonial theory can help pinpoint some of the connections occluded by traditional methodology. For example, it helps connect the fielded relations of my two cases together without immediately falling into the same problems for which both Eurocentric theory and postcolonial thought are criticized. Go writes that “a redeployment of relational thinking for a postcolonial sociology helps cleanse our lenses. It permits us to overcome analytic bifurcations and analytically piece together that which has been torn asunder by the imperial episteme and its substantialist assumption of a pristine metropolitan identity.” (Go 2016, 140). Then, Go argues against analytically bifurcating “into distinct domains the ‘national state and ‘empire’ – ‘internal’ and ‘external’, ‘inside’ and ‘outside’ – that were never really separated in practice”, which creates a categorical elision occluding imperial relations (Go 2014, 127)<sup>18</sup>. Thus, Go’s synthesis would explain Finnish colonial actors’ position vis-à-vis the German and Russian Empires not via a

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<sup>17</sup> Positional.

<sup>18</sup> However, postcolonial thought’s focus on critiquing the making and politics of these divisions often equally occludes alternative imperial relations.

comparison of Russian and German intra-imperial relations. Indeed, as we shall see, what mattered were their perceptions of Finland's relative position to both empire's metropolises. The Finnish actors and the German socialists discussed in chapters three and four were therefore thinking transimperially rather than comparing separate (bifurcated) colonial relations or distinct separate empires.

Even though Go argues against sociology's tendency of analytical bifurcation, he insists on maintaining social theory as separate from historical research. Indeed, Go's hopefulness is based on a desire to take critique seriously while avoiding it to turn against the sociological observer. In a sense Go differs from the other three approaches in that he believes we may still glue together the Ming-vase of sociology that was dropped on the ground by postcolonial hoodlums<sup>19</sup>. As such, the synthesis approach can be read as a set of guidelines for keeping an unhappy relationship together, if for nothing else, then for the sake of the kids. Its strongest applicability is with research that otherwise, for historical or present-day reasons, would not seem to fall within the areas most occluded by sociology's imperial gaze, such as the British and American Empires that Go himself writes about. Or, this point might actually be considered in reverse motion. His approach may be useful for drawing methodological connections in cases that are not explicitly postcolonial vis-à-vis the Western empires but have been occluded by a specific imperially derived methodology of sociology, as it happens to be with my two cases.

Go puts his faith in embracing relational theory and its required supplements such as perspectival realism, while "suspending" Eurocentric analytic categories so that we may reorient and reform the discipline. This is where Gurinder K. Bhambra stands in opposition. She writes that "what is in prospect, is not an embrace of relativism, but a recognition that a truly global sociology with universal claims will derive from reconstructing present understandings in the light of new knowledge of the past and the present" (Bhambra 2013, 127). If Go looks to put sociology's imperial past behind us in order to move forward, then Bhambra wants a full truth and reconciliation commission.

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<sup>19</sup> And even, perhaps, thereafter return it – from gathering dust in the imperial metropole's museum – to its original owners. To continue the analogy.

*From Steinmetzian and Gosian Incorporation to Bhambraian and Göçekian Destabilization*

The synthesizing approach of constructing a new third wave of historical sociological research does not go far enough for Bhambra. It does not take the logical next step in its refusal to look back, to acknowledge that the relationship does not work, that the vase (and empire) is beyond repair, that progress cannot be found in conventional sociological practice. Bhambra suggests rather that forging new connections and changing standpoints without fundamentally reconstructing old concepts and theories does not alter imperially constituted understandings. Bhambra writes that “both a particular standpoint and a universal standpoint in historical sociology are strongly associated with methodologies whose constructions are derived from particular value-relevant selections” (Bhambra 2016, 347). In other words, synthesis and methodological critique does not address the question of how and why some connections are made over others even if focus is placed on the dominated. For example, in his own empirical work Go addresses methodological nationalism by focusing on intra-imperial relations within Western empires. But if he takes his own critique of bifurcation seriously, then it would imply that Go simply substitutes methodological nationalism with methodological Western imperial statism, i.e. he does get rid of one of the symptoms already identified by postcolonial critique and transnational histories but does in no way address the actual source of the methodological problem.

Bhambra’s strong point in putting forth her critique is in considering the fact that we are not simply faced with lost histories that should be recovered. Rather, there is a triple hermeneutic (see for example Korhonen and Kennedy unpublished, Alvesson and Sköldberg 2017) created by sociology’s imperial past in connection with its present imperial gaze. The lost and in some cases supposedly newly discovered histories “were not previously lost; rather, they were associated with activities that were not seen as significant within prevailing accounts but cannot now be recovered as simply additional to them” (Bhambra 2011, 662).

Thus, to give two examples related to my research puzzle, the matter at hand is first not simply about democratization theories’ recent occlusion of democratization in the Grand Duchy of

Finland or their inability to theorize democratization in imperial states beyond the model of metropolitan democratization of Western empires. Rather, this question can only be addressed hand in hand with the issue of the original dismissal of Finnish and more widely colonial democratization, especially in relation to rights of national self-determination and independence, which were being controlled through the particular imperial definitions of democracy. Secondly, it concerns the joint dismissal and opposition by Wilsonian and Leninist versions of self-determination towards social democratic calls for empire-wide and wholesale democratization, as discussed in chapter four, and simultaneous calls against any type of piecemeal democratizing that would not also democratize the wider imperial relations within which Western and Soviet democratization happened<sup>20</sup>. The latter example then also reflects back to the issue of analytical bifurcation and would, in Bhambra's perspective, speak to how it cannot be dealt with as a methodological matter only. Its original making and the implications of that making, up until the present, must be addressed as well. Bhambra's critique is in this sense in opposition with Go's statement that "whether or not we study colonialism or whether our theories are written by non-westerners is not what matters" (Go 2016, 43).

Julian Go's book titled *Global Historical Sociology* is both an example of Go's statement as well as an example of why Bhambra advocates a different approach. Despite claiming globality, the book contains contributions only by scholars working in British and Anglo-Saxon universities with studies dominantly concerned with the Atlantic empires and their relations with the rest of the world. As such, while promoting an improved approach, it fails to address the historically constitutive linkage between sociology's imperial past and its present imperial gaze in positing Western imperial relations and critical observations of those relations vis-à-vis the rest as global. But, together the approaches complement each other in that one addresses the causes of, in this case, analytical bifurcation, and the other its symptoms.

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<sup>20</sup> Thus, we are not simply dealing with problems of history written by the victors, but also with the original struggle that decided the outcome, because sociology itself functioned as a vessel for consolidating that outcome.

### *Reconstruction Approach*

*One of the main ways in which advocates of comparative historical sociology have addressed criticisms of postcolonial and decolonial theorists, then, is to suggest that, while they may point to the necessity of studying additional objects, histories, and peoples, this does not require reconstruction of core concepts, nor revisions of previously accepted histories, but merely additions to them. (Gurminder K. Bhambra 2016, 338)*

Then, to avoid such missteps as a positing a ‘historical sociology of the Atlantic empires’ as ‘global’ both in its present and past meanings, scholars like Bhambra suggest that work on overlooked and under researched empirical and theoretical cases and contexts must ultimately make us reconstruct sociology’s original categories and interpretations to create new understandings that transform previous ones, rather than only expanding them or synthesizing them with a different standpoint. Bhambra points out that it is not only substance that is at issue, but rather “how the configuration of substance is intimately linked to the methodological underpinnings of comparative historical sociology”. That is, “the failure to recognize prior global connections, or to regard them as substantively significant for modernity, is bound up with an elision of colonialism and empire as constitutive aspects of modernity’s development” (Bhambra 2016, 336). Thereby, Bhambra sees that extension, incorporation, and synthesis themselves lead nowhere if the reproduction of sociology’s pre-existing imperial baggage is maintained; “New conceptual frameworks within the standard historical-sociological accounts are frequently argued to ‘re-make’ our understanding of modernity, but, at the same time, they co-exist alongside pre-existing frameworks and do not ‘un-make’ them. In this way, understandings of modernity and its associated concepts remain, at a fundamental level, untransformed” (ibid., 337).

Only by going back to the constitution of sociology can the imperialism of the present be understood and addressed (Bhambra 2013, 122). This means, for example, fully reworking the core concepts behind the democratization theories discussed above and thereby abandoning previous work based upon them. Unlike Steinmetz, Bhambra sees that “the search for true origins, then, is a redundant task, all that is possible is the attribution of origin, and that is political”, which then

requires a “reconstruction of the forms of understanding – concepts, categories, and methods – within which particular events are rendered apparently significant” (Bhambra 2007, 150-151).<sup>21</sup>

In constructing this argument, Bhambra emphasizes connected histories, a concept that she draws from the works of historian Sanjay Subrahmanyam. But, while all four approaches acknowledge the need for connected histories, Bhambra mobilizes it differently. For her, it is not simply about the incorporation of new historical processes and connections previously overlooked or about putting an emphasis on the subaltern or the others’ standpoint. Neither do connected histories mean endless standpoints and relativism, or a political impasse by rendering all sociological categories false. Rather, the recognition of their falsehood confirmed over and over through connected histories is equally a political and intellectual engagement and as such open to systematic and rigorous reflection. Here Bhambra puts an emphasis on history’s political and ideological nature, rather than treating it as data. Hers is thereby a call to roll up sleeves and start the work of “recognizing and deconstructing – and then reconstructing – the scholarly positions that privilege a part of the world without any recognition of the lives (and deaths and living deaths of slavery) that have contributed to that part of the world becoming privileged.” (Bhambra 2007, 146). The logic has two steps. First, understanding the interconnections of the present means understanding them in the past. Second, reconstructing our understanding of the past with its full implications. “To put it most strongly, there is no connection where there is no reconstruction; and no understanding remains unchanged by connection”, Bhambra writes (2016, 348).

So, for example, Bhambra suggests that in the light of new evidence sociologists should reconstruct Weberian state theory as a theory of imperial states rather than national states (Bhambra 2016). In other words, sociological work must be re-evaluated given current more historically contextualized and precise understandings of our discipline’s history and its interpretations and usage of Weber. This is in line with how we usually think of sociological research, i.e. that if previous

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<sup>21</sup> Steinmetz too would not believe in uncovering true origins, but he sees value in pluralizing and reinterpreting origins without taking the step to actively reconstruct previous knowledge based on those discoveries.

perspectives have proven outdated or flawed, they indeed should be reassessed. But, without support from the other parts of the research program, the reconstruction approach is nevertheless left with some historical problems. Those problems partially emerge from the approach's confrontational relation with the sociological disciplinary field. Bhambra does not pay full attention to how the field itself does not follow its own rules of research and reflexivity.

Let us consider for example, the fact that Max Weber indeed originally wrote of an imperial state. The later reading of Weber's theory, even if dismissive of its historical origins and original intentions (as Steinmetz argues as well), nevertheless participated in interpreting and making a world and a sociology based on that false interpretation. It can be asked whether eventually some level of purchase was woven into it.

For example, the interpretation and dissemination of Weber's thought with a specific form and timing in American sociology speaks historically lengths of the developments of the American Empire and its connections to sociology (Steinmetz 2018b). At the very least, it is that interpretation of Weber that continues to legitimize the field's current constitution, and individual scholars will hold on to that rather than willingly undermine their own positions.

All later sociology should therefore not be reinterpreted and reconstructed with the understanding of an imperial state as Weber's true meaning, or in other words shed of its imperial Eurocentric baggage, but the historical context and its adaptation and reinterpretation from the early 20th century all the way up to the world of nation-states today, should be considered as another reality of the discipline's imperial entanglements, and thereby a reality of sociology as it is present in the world today. This indeed is Steinmetz's focus, analyzing the cracks in Go's broken Ming-vase, rather than fixing them.

While Bhambra's approach may seem radical, as a call to transform and reconstruct the entire foundations of historical sociology, it nevertheless upholds an engagement with traditional sociology and takes traditional sociology (in its imperality) seriously. In this sense, perhaps an even more radical call echoes from the discipline's American core, one that is more pragmatic and realistic about

the disciplinary field itself. The 2019 chair of the American Sociological Association's section for Comparative-Historical Sociology Fatma Müge Göcek proposes a strategic sense of disregard towards the foundations of sociology's historical narrative, almost a parental sense of disengagement towards the more childish demands for upholding the discipline's sense of self-containedness and -contentedness.

We can begin to outline the Göcekian approach via its differences with Bhambra. Both Bhambra and Göcek agree on the need and usefulness of delinking. Delinking in reference to historical sociology, at its core, can be interpreted as giving autonomy and independence to problems and empirical connections that would seem questionable or impossible to address in reference to the disciplinary traditions and narratives<sup>22</sup>. The matter of colonial democracy or democracy outside of independent states, as discussed in reference especially to Charles Tilly's works above, is a good example.

Bhambra and Göcek, however, diverge, if not in terms of the meaning of delinking, then in terms of its consequences. Bhambra sees that delinking promotes the "urgent need" to address and mobilize interconnections in the sense of connected histories as discussed above, rather than understanding delinking to mean the production of knowledge (in the disciplinary field) as alternative or parallel sociologies. For Bhambra delinking provides a richer understanding of the complexities of the historical processes that constitute the world (Bhambra 2007, 76), and thereby a better and more rigorous analysis for the reconstruction of sociology. Whereas, for Göcek, delinking enables the reproduction of spaces for alternative argumentation within the disciplinary field, if not quite the makings of a fifth column, by focusing on epistemic disobedience<sup>23</sup> (Göcek 2012, 550; 2016, 79). Göcek emphasizes the initial need for delinking by Ottoman historians, from whose works she draws, to justify, produce and then maintain new fruitful research discourses. The Göcekian focus moves away from the sharpness of critique to the making and maintenance of a source of critique.

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<sup>22</sup> See for example Mignolo 2008 (delinking cultural studies) for more on the uses and origins of delinking

<sup>23</sup> If Göcek promotes disobedience, then we could describe Bhambra as practicing epistemic resistance or rebellion, Steinmetz epistemic parliamentarism, and Go revisionism.

A similar difference is present in Bhambra's and Göcek's interpretations of Syed Farid Alatas' work on the sociology of Ibn Khaldun. Bhambra sees that Alatas is stopping short of bringing back home the sociological discoveries that could help us in the analytic work of reconstruction and revisions. Not taking that extra step to discuss the consequences of these new sociologies for standard conceptualizations means, for Bhambra, relegating, almost willingly, to Alatas' work the status of mere additions (Bhambra 2016, 338). Instead of portraying Alatas as compromising, Göcek sees him as successful in balancing and negotiating different criticisms. Alatas embodies postcolonial analyses while alleviating historical critiques of them and generates "an alternate historical sociology" that does not focus "on what does not work" (sociologically) but rather employs "locally generated sociological tools to survey what actually transpires on the ground" (Göcek 2013, 83). Göcek realizes that the promotion of such work requires time, work and strategic disciplinary support. It could be said that, unlike Bhambra, but like Steinmetz, Göcek emphasizes a pragmatic engagement with the disciplinary field. Even if Bhambra's logics, analyses, and arguments are impeccable, that may not be enough to promote alternative sociologies. Together, however, Göcek and Bhambra provide for the research program the means to better negotiate its interactions with traditional sociology. Bhambra emphasizes what the research program has to say to traditional sociology while Göcek strategizes how it can deal with what traditional sociology has to say to, and likely criticize or dismiss, the new program.

Before moving to the final Göcekian approach more closely, we could then describe the four sociologists, when observed against each other and in reference to how they all address sociology's imperial entanglements like this: If Steinmetz is methodical and formal in negotiating the meeting of alternative sociologies with traditional ones, Go is idealistic and diplomatic, Bhambra is uncompromising and systematic, and Göcek is strategic and realpolitik-oriented.

### *Delinking Approach*

Fatma Müge Göcek points out that scholars often "prioritize the deconstruction of such [Western] hegemony rather than engaging, at the same time, the production of alternate sources of knowledge, meaning and eventually power" (Göcek ISA 2016). A fourth track, therefore, of

addressing sociology's imperialism, exemplified by her approach, could be said to suggest unthinking rather than reconstructing theories and concepts. In her own words, Göcek calls this 'destabilization', referring to the destabilization of the nexus of power and knowledge. An emphasis on this type of destabilization is something that Göcek and Bhabra share vis-à-vis Steinmetz and Go.

Drawing from the works of Walter Mignolo, Madina Tlostanova and Farid Alatas, Göcek moves beyond previous attempts to compare non-Western and Western imperialism, such as the multiple modernities approach. The latter had successfully introduced non-Western cases into sociological analysis but done so "under the terms that were once again inherently set by the Western European experience of modernity" (Göcek 2013, 82), thus confining these other modernities to the role of an object of study. Whereas, Walter Mignolo suggests that since historically coloniality has been the driver of Western modernization, decoloniality is not a mode of critique or replacement of that mode, but the making clear, by thinking and doing, of alternatives. It requires the enunciation of ways of knowing that are not constructed through the interrelatedness of Western modernity and coloniality. To achieve this, Mignolo calls for "relentless analytic effort to understand the logic of coloniality underneath the rhetoric of modernity" (Mignolo 2011, 10-11;24). Mignolo and Tlostanova have used this concept of the coloniality of power to examine imperial differences in non-Western empires and the acts of deterritorialization and dehistoricization they evoke in the face of Western modernity in negotiating epistemic frontiers and divisions imposed upon them (Mignolo and Tlostanova 2006; Tlostanova 2007, 2008, 2011). Göcek adopts and mobilizes this approach for historical sociology. She extends it by thinking of research strategies that could more pragmatically produce and maintain those alternatives, such as non-Western empires, their formations and modes of domination, alternative imperial agencies, and their sites, and alternative methods of research for observing them.

One of Göcek's key points is to focus on empirical contexts that had withstood and successfully negotiated the impact of Western hegemony. Thus, we can find, for example, Finnish political actors negotiating their democratic gains in the process of drifting towards the coloniality of independent nation-statehood (see for example Korhonen 2018; Mignolo 2011, 162) despite the

American and British empires denying their right to national independence and democracy based on racial arguments of inferiority and deficiency, as will be discussed in the following chapter.

Following, Tlostanova and Mignolo, Göcek suggests showing the juxtaposition between non-Western empires and the West through research on their imperialism and coloniality, and analytically delinking from the West by exploring how these empires developed power relations unlike those of the Western European empires.

This still leaves the destabilizing approach open to critiques from historical theory, critiques of intentionally articulating difference in one context while leveling those differences elsewhere. Or in other words, it may “pluck stories” and “leapfrog legacies”, as historian Frederic Cooper has pointed out (Göcek 2013, 83). For Göcek, the sociologist Alatas is an example of how to alleviate this criticism. He avoids a Western standpoint by mobilizing the works of Ibn Khaldun to generate a separate historical sociology, thus demonstrating the existence of useful, working analyses arising from outside the Western canon, and thereby pointing out the insufficiencies of that canon. In other words, emphasis on the other cannot be founded upon a comparison of its differences with the West.

Göcek’s call for action arises from between these two approaches of Mignolo and Tlostanova on the one hand and Alatas on the other. She suggests that more local and comparative work on non-Western empires will push forward research that thereby is incrementally less and less confronted by criticisms of ignoring the West or by the need to ignore the West. One of the important take-aways of this approach for my research, suggested by Göcek, is to avoid “the traditional emphasis on the naturalized power of the imperial center at the expense of the periphery” (Göcek *ibid.*, 90) and avoid the traditional assumption of democratization in the imperial core as well as the postcolonial critique focusing on that aspect of Western imperialism that might assume different forms of democratization emerging as resistance and opposition to the West. Göcek shifts the focus to revealing “how imperial power was negotiated across the center-periphery divide” and thereby formulates “alternate bases of imperial domination from that of the Western power binarism” (*ibid.*).

What takes centerstage in this approach, vis-à-vis the three others, is to “generate knowledge not influenced by the Western European historical experience”, which “eliminates the epistemological

divide privileging either the subject or the object of analysis and restores the agency of all parties without prioritizing the standpoint of one over the other” (Ibid.).

### *Coda: Sociologizing Occluded Histories*

The following table (table 3) describes the four approaches as they appear in relation to each other and what different emphases they bring to the table in addressing sociology’s imperialism and suggesting a course of action to tackle it:

|                                              |                                                     | Object of Analysis     |                                |
|----------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------|------------------------|--------------------------------|
|                                              |                                                     | Overlooked Imperiality | Sociology’s Hidden Imperiality |
| Method of Addressing Sociology’s Imperiality | Theoretical or Methodological Incorporation         | Steinmetz              | Go                             |
|                                              | Destabilization through Delinking or Reconstruction | Göcek                  | Bhambra                        |

Table 3. Four Approaches Together.

In summary, Go engages sociology’s imperial entanglements to reform its methodology so that we may uncover objects of analysis previously hidden by the disciplines’ imperial blinkers, whereas Bhambra wants to reveal the hidden imperialism of the discipline itself. Göcek aims to promote alternative histories that could balance the dominant weight of the west in the disciplinary field. And Steinmetz wants to expand our theorizing on the empire-sociology nexus to slowly broaden sociology’s lens.

Both Steinmetz and Göcek keep an eye towards functioning of the disciplinary field itself and as such ultimately aim to address sociology’s imperial entanglements via that field. Steinmetz excavates the history of the discipline itself. Göcek mobilizes the required justifications and

sociological tools to isolate and allow for historical studies that otherwise would not emerge or survive within the disciplinary field, beginning from even small steps such as founding a new Comparative-Historical Sociology award under the name of Ibn Khaldun<sup>24</sup> (see also Göcek 2015; 2016).

Thus, the approaches are all interconnected. Go hopes to open sociological methods for analyses of connections, such as that of the Haitian revolution with the French revolution which he discusses, between histories and across levels of analysis that sociology's imperial gaze tends to overlook or reify as the other of modernity, if not all-together un-sociological. Go posits, that the goal is to address to sociology's "limiting lenses" and "speak back" so that in studying empire we could "see how some of sociology's core assumptions might be rethought" to produce a "new postcolonial sociological imagination" (2009, 775-776;784). This would stop sociology from applying a Western imperial gaze not only on imperial relations historically but objects of analysis in general. And it is this incremental incorporation of aspects critical of, or less affected by modernity's Western constitution, that Go shares with Steinmetz, even though in doing so Go does not turn into dissecting and historicizing sociology's imperialism, but rather hopes to move beyond it. Go and Steinmetz incrementally address the symptoms while Bhambra, and in a less overt manner Göcek, discusses the ways to also deal with their causes.

Table 3 can then also be broken down to these component parts displaying each separate approach for addressing sociology's imperial entanglements and its intended outcome (Table 4)<sup>25</sup>.

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<sup>24</sup> Tellingly, the three other awards previously existing are the Moore, Skocpol, and Tilly awards.

<sup>25</sup> It is perhaps not purely accidental that destabilization and search for more complete remaking of sociology, instead of self-improvement, is suggested by the two non-Western female scholars of the group.

|             |                                          | Approach                |   | Intended Outcome                    |
|-------------|------------------------------------------|-------------------------|---|-------------------------------------|
| Steinmetz → | Sociology's<br>Imperial<br>Entanglements | Expanding<br>'empire'   | → | Disciplinary Self-<br>Reflection    |
| Go →        |                                          | Dis-Empire              |   | Methodological Self-<br>Reflection  |
| Bhambra →   |                                          | Reveal Empire           |   | Historicization of<br>Methodologies |
| Göcek →     |                                          | Un/rethinking<br>Empire |   | Disciplinization of<br>Histories    |

Table 4. Four Approaches Separately.

By engaging my empirical cases through these four approaches, the dissertation analyzes and systematizes the ways in which historical sociology tries to deal with its imperial entanglements, i.e. the empirical cases will eventually be used to reflect back upon the ways in which they together constitute an emerging research program.

The joint objective of these four approaches and their particular links allows me to connect my chapters to each other and to the wider program of new sociology of empires. All chapters apply a Steinmetzian fielded perspective to reconstruct objects of analysis on their own terms. From there it is possible to draw Gosian relational links to examine the interconnected reproduction of particularities within such fields, for example to show the mobilization and importance of inter-imperial politics in the Finnish colonial state field, and this move beyond the bifurcation of Finland as separate from the Russian Empire, and the Russian Empire as separate from the Western (democratic) Empires.

Such relational tensions and suspensions across imperial fields are then not only accidental, contingent of unidirectionally diffuse. These relations form an ecosystem of their own within which multiple tensions compete. The matter is specifically one of tensions and entangled counter-forces and balances from which it is possible to locate webs of mutually reinforcing processes and developments,

explorations of the space of possible and the temporality of transformation that are never self-contained or distinctly delineated. Ideas and understandings that formulate the fielded rules as *illusio* and *doxa* shared by all, contested, transformed, or mutually collapsed, do not clash and are not chosen from a distinct selection of separate trajectories. Rather, the making of these trajectories as separate was and continues to be a political and imperial process, a particular value-relevant selection as Bhambra puts it. We should therefore counter-balance such selections with delineations based on logics of non-Western cases, as Göcek suggests. Together the Finnish and German cases suggest and outline such a selection, within which the relations of empire, democracy, state, and nation take different roles than in the traditional narrative. This understanding can thereafter be compared to the traditional narrative to reveal some of its hidden imperial assumptions, explore them in relation to my narrative and therefore analyze them not as assumptions but as specific historical constructs, and as such take first steps towards reconstruction, as suggested by Bhambra. Table 5 then describes how the four perspectives interact with my empirical research, work as a roadmap. I shall return to these connections in the conclusions.

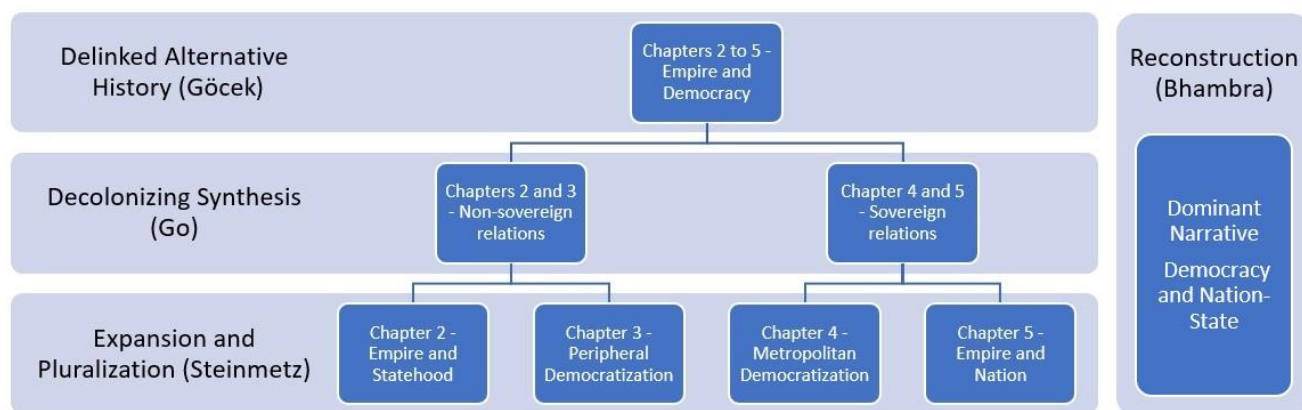


Table 5. Theory and Empirics.

On the first, chapter specific level, Steinmetz' theorization of imperial formations allows me to reconstruct the relevant fields in my cases as suspended between intra-imperial struggles outside of Western modernity (2007) but connected to via the wider inter-imperial field.

On the second level, Go helps bring together the intra- and inter-imperial aspects of democratic politics. Go scales up and connects together the separate fields as relational social

epistemologies into a transnational, transimperial approach that sheds the blinkers of the dominant Atlantic-centric approach (Go 2008, Go and Krause 2016). Steinmetz and Go together then especially help in analyzing the intra-imperial state fields in relation to inter-imperial debates and struggles. As I discuss in chapter four for example, the debates between German Social Democratic thinkers can be constructed as working within a shared field and a similar position, only if construed from a relational position between intra- and inter-imperial understandings. Otherwise the weight of previous divisions and divides which they sought to overcome and subsequent selections and bifurcations (such as Leninist theory as is shown in the chapter) that undermined their positions breaks down and occludes the unity of the Social Democratic framing of democratization.

Göcek helps me to think through the ways in which non-Western empires can be compared and used to generate knowledge of agency and imperial domination without referring to the canon. Her analyses of memories of Ottoman subjects as a way to analyze wider imperial politics is one example of this (2015). Another is her way to situate questions of religion and gender within spaces that negotiate their own imperality vis-à-vis Western empires, but autonomously. This informs my analysis of socialist and nationalist actors in the Russian and German Empires and their view on democratization under the respective imperial settings. Emerging from this focus is an amount detachment and delinking that highlights alternative relations and logics, autonomous from, even if connected to the West and to those narratives' trajectories that later overshadowed and occluded others.

Finally, Bhambra brings the final analysis back into contact with the traditional theories to show what the cases reveal of Western modernity's making historically and its constitution of sociology. Here specific focus will be on the making of nation-state self-determination and democratization, and the underlying assumptions of that formation in Bourdieusian field theory.

As a whole, in the next four chapters, I will analyze democratization in imperial state formations drawing from Steinmetz' work and seen through the lens of a Gosian relational perspective, detaching it from the Western historiographical frame on the one hand, and weaving the whole together on the other into a Göcekian delinked narrative, to understand non-Western imperial

democratization and ultimately what its consequences are for sociological research in relation to its previous occlusions.

## Chapter 2. State and Empire. Sovereignty and the Finnish Grand Ducal State in Inter-Imperial Relations

*Extensive analogies with the position of Finland are to be found in the legal position of the privileged English Colonies, as well as, of India (Wolf Baron von der Osten-Sacken 1912, 121).*

In this chapter I begin outlining an alternative connected history of statehood in the pre-1917-1919 context by exploring Finnish colonial statehood's determining characteristics and temporal (dis)continuity. In this period ideas of sovereignty, self-determination, and statehood were first defined in various configurations vis-à-vis imperial states. Following the fall of Central and East European imperial states these configurations were contested and in flux until the establishment of nation-state independence.

Sociologically, this chapter does two things. First, I reconstruct transformations of inter-imperial sensibilities about the articulation of sovereignty, self-determination, and statehood. I demonstrate that sovereignty was not a consideration for the Grand Duchy of Finland before World War I, and rather democracy was conceived *within* imperial terms, in contrast to most historical sociological work on democracy. In these considerations, contra Tilly (2007), there was no connection between democracy and independent statehood. Finnish independence, once accepted by the Allies after initial rejection at the Paris Peace Conference, was not considered an outcome of democratization, but rather came to be portrayed as an extension of the racialized civilizational logic of the Western empires; the Finnish race, not its political system, was developed enough for independence.

Secondly, I illuminate possible pathways beyond the nation-state model, most clearly in bourgeois entreaties to German monarchs and Soviet and Finnish socialist articulations of socialist international politics. All of them attempted to establish continuities to secure the Grand Duchy's

democratization<sup>26</sup>. None of these possibilities are typically apparent, however, because of subsequent reinterpretations of history to make national sovereignty history's teleology. As such, subsequent scholars, like Steinmetz and Go, must use field theory to unthink nation-state's power; one might, as I demonstrate here, realize that possibility by taking history seriously, even if outside the dominant narratives supporting the procession of sociological theory.

Lastly, this chapter foregrounds the intra-imperial analysis of the Finnish colonial state field in chapter three. It helps to understand the motivations and cleavages that Finnish colonial actors saw in their position as subject to inter-imperial sovereignty as part of the Russian Empire. For example, in the Finnish case national class-based distinctions were overcome in favor of full democratization because of the non-sovereign position of the Finnish state field and its founding *illusio* as such. Indeed, once that *illusio* began to break down, the disagreements of Finnish actors again followed largely inter-imperial motivations, from avoidance of an alliance with the West, to alignment with the Soviets or with the Germans.

In this chapter I rely on particular things to unshackle the imagination concerning the narrative of historical relations of statehood: a fictional text, contemporary scholarly accounts, a treaty, and contemporary US political commentaries. I draw on these particular documents: A book written in the 1920s about the political development of the Grand Duchy of Finland. Several pre-1917 inter-imperial analyses of the so-called "Finnish Question" (see for example Soovoroff 1910, Korewo 1911). The Finno-Soviet state treaty signed between Finnish and Soviet socialists in early 1918. And, lastly, Woodrow Wilson's correspondence and other American commentaries on Finland and the making of national self-determination.

Together these outline a picture of the Finnish colonial state field, from the perspective of the inter-imperial field of power within which it was nested (Steinmetz 2016). In understanding the defining struggles of a field Steinmetz points to the separateness of fielded practices from outside relations that are nevertheless constitutive to the field, while emphasizing that fieldness is a

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<sup>26</sup> This is discussed in more depth in chapter three.

continuous, not binary, variable (Ibid.). The inter-imperial definitions of the Finnish colonial state then sketch the continuum of the colonial state's fieldedness that constitute also the intra-field struggles discussed in the next chapter. This chapter describes those constitutive relations outside the field. In the next chapter, I investigate how the field's separateness was conceived, its continuum of struggles, and the field's ultimate breakdown when the field's defining separateness was lost with the loss of non-sovereignty.

My first section in this chapter deals with temporal (dis)continuity. I consider the post-Ottoman empire's appropriation of an idealized image of grand ducal Finnish statehood as an alternative to traditional understandings of continuities of statehood from the pre-WWI non-Western imperial context to the post-WWI context of nation-state independence.

The second section on the Finnish Question discusses the varieties and definitional issues of statehood under imperial relations from the perspective of inter-imperial debates. It identifies the flexible composition of sovereignty, political rights and statehood as the key hierarchical principles cutting across imperial relations. Under nation-statehood these were all (in form but not in content) brought under the same unit of nation-state self-determination; hierarchies among them were derived from Western ideas of development and civilization. I discuss this in addressing the report of the London Conference on the Finnish Question (1910) as well as in the third section on the making of Finnish independence in its Western form vis-à-vis the German and Bolshevik options.

Together the three sections describe the continued role played by inter-imperial relations in the post-WWI global context, despite changes in statehood's definitional categories.

## Background

Previous research has mainly focused on the intra-imperial relations between the Russian metropole and the Grand Duchy of Finland. Finland was the last remaining autonomous region of the Western frontier of the Russian Empire (Jussila 1984), a position that was quite common in imperial states, as examples below will show. Historiographically though, when isolated from the wider imperial context this relation has been interpreted through two different main perspectives. First, there is the so-called legalist perspective that derives from pre-independence debates about the legalistic rights of the Finnish state. This interpretation gets retrospectively confirmed by the post-independence need to rationalize independence. The main argument by those constructing this continuity rests on the founding of a state in 1809 by the Czar that was supposedly destined for future independence. Finnish statehood, according to this view, was given sovereignty through the absolute power of the Czar, which then naturally took the form of independence once the Czar capitulated and that sovereignty dissolved. This perspective fails to consider the transformations of imperial relations in the first decades of the 20<sup>th</sup> century: it also derives its logic from an idea of endogenous development of individual nations toward a civilizational status high enough to earn self-determination. With independence Finland then,

### Table 6. Grand Duchy of Finland – Brief Timeline

- 1905/06 – Single chamber parliament and universal suffrage as a result of joint action by bourgeois parties and the Social Democratic party.
- 1916 – Elections bring about absolute majority for the Social Democrats.
- 1917 march – Social Democrats form the world's first democratic socialist majority government.
- 7.18.1917 – Encouraged by the July revolution, parliament votes to transfer domestic power to itself, never reinforced.
  - In response Petrograd calls new elections, Social Democrats lose majority.
- 11.5.1917 – Bourgeois government strikes a deal with the Provisional Government.
- 11.7.1917 – October revolution.
- 12.6.17 – With Bolsheviks in power, Bourgeois government stops co-operation with Petrograd, declares "state independence".
- 12.31.17 – Lenin recognizes independence.
- 27.1.1918 Finnish Civil War starts.
- 1.3.1918 Finno-Soviet treaty signed.
- 7.3.1918 Finno-German treaty signed.
- 1918 May – Victorious bourgeois side sets out to establish an authoritarian monarchy under a German king.
- US and Britain recognize independence in May 1919.

abruptly, is no longer compared to colonial states globally, such as India as discussed below; inter-imperial comparisons based on Finland's intra-imperial position are replaced with linear historical comparisons based on levels of endogenous development as Finland joins the group of sovereign nation-states and is distinguished from its pre-1917/1919 comparison to colonies globally as is described below.

The second, newer, historiographical perspective steers clear of more fundamental questions and focuses on the administrative dimensions of the Grand Duchy within the Russian Empire: it sees Finnish developments to have originated from intra-imperial relations, rather than despite them (Soikkanen 2009). The latter tradition has highlighted the dependence of Finnish developments on political needs and calculations of the metropole. It has a better claim on continuities from different historical temporal standpoints and across the 1917-1919 divide, whereas the former perspective depends on the 1917-1919 standpoint for its continuity. Nevertheless, in focusing on the particularities of Finland within the Russian Empire, the latter perspective fails to address Finland as a case in the wider colonial system of governance; it is juxtaposed with the Russian imperial state rather than seen as constituting it. From this perspective Finnish independence is a result of the parallel or even divergent administrative systems of the grand ducal periphery and the metropole, a division that then becomes unsustainable during the imperial crises following 1917.

In contrast to later historiography, the Finnish political actors in the pre-1919 period imagined their relationships to sovereignty and independence quite differently. They focused on improving their intra-imperial position through the rules set by the inter-imperial colonial system of governance<sup>27</sup>. These rules are outlined in section two of this chapter, and can be found in the main points of argument in analyzing Finnish statehood pre-1917. The Finnish actor's argument of sovereign statehood granted by the Czar (which did not mean separation from the Empire) was not supported by others in the inter-imperial field, however. Its closest supporter was V.I. Lenin who, for example, in

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<sup>27</sup> This will be discussed further below, but especially in the next chapter. A good example for what is meant by this is how Finns refused to send delegates to the imperial duma, because they argued that the Finnish parliament and constitution were already directly mandated by the sovereignty of the Czar.

1913 wrote that “In Russia there are two nations ... which could quite easily exert their right to separate from Russia. They are Finland and Poland” (Jussila 1984, 100). Instead of endogenous sovereignty, Lenin rather believed in the right to secede from the sovereign rule of the Russian Empire. What separation meant for Lenin is discussed in more detail below.

However, after independence the first account, that of the legalists’ narrative of sovereign statehood, became official history. This aligned well with the Western empires’ own understanding of independence, where legal citizenship and lineages of sovereignty formed the foundation of the narrative of nation-statehood, development, civilization and democracy, even if citizenship was a means of exclusion, and sovereignty a means of colonial domination. And initially, up until the 1960s, the Soviet Union did not argue against this narrative either, for it portrayed the Finns as having struggled against the Czar’s empire and ultimately been saved by Lenin, who granted the Grand Duchy the right to secede in late 1917.

All in all, the actual dimensions of Finnish colonial statehood became retrospectively occluded and considered a pre-stage or an oppressed stage of national independence, the emergence of which was endogenous to Finland. However, for an imperial metropole struggling to come to terms with post-imperial statehood the situation was different. In the post-Ottoman context, the Finnish colonial past found surprising purchase in negotiating nation-statehood. It reveals not only that non-Western models of development could survive in a world of supposed nation-state sovereignty, but also that diffusion of the nation-state model was not a driver in itself but a transformation of relations of empire, state, democracy, and nation that was, could, and needed to be navigated differently in different context. It is prime empirical example in the Göcekian sense of how models of navigating imperialism are not bound to Western historical experience, even if that has gained a particular hegemonic place in our social epistemologies. While other cases in this chapter expand the Finnish case across the divide of imperial politics in the pre-1917 world, this case expands across the imperial temporal divide from both before, and after, 1919.

### *Section one. Afterlife of the Finnish Colonial State*

A book about the national development of the Russian imperial periphery of Finland by the Russian socialist priest Grigori Petrov, *The Country of White Lilies* (1928/1960), quickly became popular in Post-Ottoman Turkey and has remained an important part of its political bibliography and imaginary ever since it was first published in 1928. Most recently, there have been several editions of the book published and sold-out in 2017, and the book consistently figures in the most sold books of main publication houses.

The book was adopted as teaching material for prospective teachers by the Ministry of Education and was made mandatory reading in military schools in the 1930s, as an example of national development to be followed for the Turkish nation-building project (Taner 1960). The story of the book's journey poses a spatial and temporal puzzle of nation-state making. Why did a peripheral duchy of the Russian empire become the model for social organization in post-Ottoman Turkey? Why does a book produced in the context of contestations within the Russian imperial political field move across imperial, and post-imperial (national) spaces to become a particularly non-controversial node in the Turkish nation-state project? It is safe to say that Turkey did and does not simply seek to replicate the grand ducal model internally, and it did not seek to become a mainly agrarian dependent periphery of another empire. The answer must then be connected to the inter-imperial dimensions of the case of the Grand Duchy of Finland.

Much like with the issue of colonial democratization, sociological theorizing about the diffusion of developmental and nation-making models falls short of explaining the celebration of grand ducal Finland in the Turkish political imagination. This speaks to the interdependence, in sociology, of the imperial methodological gaze with its accompanying universal linear history. The end of the Great War is generally considered a triumph of national independence movements and the entrenchment of national self-determination in its Wilsonian and Soviet versions. Moreover, developmental projects and political models of non-Western spaces are subsumed under ambiguous and West-centric terms, such as 'Westernization' and 'modernization' that hold together the interconnections of various processes from democratization to nation-making and state-building.

Rather, this imposition was negotiated by different actors in ways that were not founded upon references to the West itself, and often sought explanations and ideas from elsewhere, as Göcek suggests (2013, 2016).

For example, in the case of ‘the Country of White Lilies’, the periphery of the Russian empire presents itself as a source of knowledge innovation and an object of appropriation for a post-imperial metropole refashioning itself as an anti-Ottoman nation-state (Philliou 2011, Adak 2003). The grand ducal Finnish development model as portrayed by Petrov is adopted as a case of successful nation-state making in Turkey, becoming part of the project to reject empire and cast it as the opposite of national development. In effect, through the book, a model of successful colonial development in the periphery of a non-Western Empire pre-1918 is adopted by a post-imperial metropole of another non-Western empire as a model for nation-state building, instead of Wilsonian or Leninist ideals or even any other metropolitan state models. The Grand Duchy of Finland’s national development since 1810 is spatially and temporally displaced from its imperial context unto the political existence of post-war Finland and Turkish nation-state building, creating an afterlife for the Finnish colonial state.

### *The Country of the White Lilies*

Due to his controversial political beliefs, Petrov went to exile from Russia to the Yugoslav Kingdom, where he published the *Country of White Lilies* in 1923. The Bulgarian edition of the book came out in 1925 and became a success in Bulgaria. By 1928, the book had been translated into Turkish and had also become a success especially amongst educators who pursued the Turkish nationalist project after the disintegration of the Ottoman Empire. Subsequently, from the Turkish edition, it was translated to Arabic and was published in several countries of the Middle East and North Africa.

The book opens with the imagery of the Russian State Theatre, cracking apart due to its wooden foundation not suitable for its environment. The architects who are tasked with dealing with the danger the building poses then decide to renew the foundations piece by piece while the building stands, slowly and carefully, rather than destroying the whole building. Petrov makes an analogy with

this situation, and the development of nations. We need not tear down the whole previous structure, or construct a new one, but can maintain the existing situation even while strengthening its foundation. What is important is not the edifice or the frame, but the foundation. Upon this example, Petrov then compares two approaches<sup>28</sup> to the relationship between great men and their nations.

Petrov writes that on the one hand, heroes that are imbued with a specific morality and strength of character make the history of their nations. On the other, the movement of the people of a nation is what provides the dynamism and success of the 'hero'. Petrov poses the question; are these mutually exclusive views? Do we have to choose between them? For Petrov, both aspects are revealing two sides of the same truth.

After this introduction, Petrov introduces Finland with two important characteristics; it did not have its own independent state until 1917, and this nation has not autonomously produced great men that stand only upon the ground of the nation. The reason for the cultural and national development of the Finns is then not due to a state structures or exceptional men, but rather the result of "every member of the nation working without rest or stopping (Petrov 1960, 25)." What fascinates Petrov about the Grand Duchy of Finland during his travels is that, for him, this small nation has achieved a level of civilizational and cultural development without natural resources, in a notoriously swampy and desolate landscape, only by the enlightening presence of intellectuals teaching the Finnish peasants that they can achieve great prosperity and development if they work together to develop the nation from the ground up,

The rest of the book consists of Petrov's fictional lectures by the Finnish politician Snellman and other intellectuals, and stories in which teachers, doctors, and intellectuals with enlightened vision sacrifice their time and effort to enlighten the other members of the nation to achieve a superior level of civilization. This attitude bears fruit, and the swampy and desolate land turns into a bountiful agricultural land where white lilies grow everywhere; this being a biblical imagery of achieving the near-impossible. By the time Petrov wrote this book, Finland had acquired political independence,

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<sup>28</sup> Petrov attributes these approaches to two contemporaries, Tolstoy and Carlyle.

however, the book's timeline focuses on the period from about 1810's onwards, depicting developments that take place in the colonial state.

### *Reflecting back upon Finland*

The Country of the White Lilies portrays an idealized image of development and nation-building in a poor imperial periphery without state intervention. Next, I compare Finnish historiography with the developmental narrative portrayed in Petrov's book. How does the image Petrov paints relate to the Grand Duchy's historical developments?

It is true, that Finland had developed the beginnings of what was to be termed 'national awakening' by the turn of the century and in 1906 the Grand Duchy introduced a single chamber parliament, based on universal suffrage with women also standing for election, constituting the most democratic system at the time. These developments took place under the Russian imperial regime and a stark discontinuity emerged in 1919 as the colonial Finnish state, after several efforts to avoid it, had to turn towards national independence. Retrospectively, the Grand Duchy was then connected to Western European democratization as some sort of an early exception to a natural democratic development originating from the West; a perspective that originates from the portrayal in the West of the Grand Duchy before its independence, a politically motivated portrayal that sought to highlight the brutality and backwardness of the Russian Empire (Ruotsila 2005; Halmesvirta 1990).

After the Great War, democracy came to be connected with nation-states, which transformed it from the pre-1918 ideas of democratization and national development within empires. Finland, for example, having had to abandon its quest for a German king, instituted a strong presidential system to limit parliamentary power. Restrictions on the political participation of the left following the Finnish Civil War<sup>29</sup> further limited Finnish democracy up until 1945, until another empire, the Soviet Union,

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<sup>29</sup> The Finnish Civil War was fought between January and May 1918. The belligerents were the bourgeois whites and the social democratic reds. The whites were led by a czarist general of Finnish origin and had help from Finnish troops who had trained and fought with the German army previously, as well as from a German army division and Estonian and Polish volunteers. The red side consisted of Finnish paramilitaries with some assistance from former Imperial Russian soldiers sympathetic to the social democratic cause.

intervened and re-democratized the Finnish nation-state political space<sup>30</sup>, thus also launching the development of the Finnish welfare state. In a nutshell, the Petrovian model of idealized development in colonial Finland was no longer applicable to the independent Finnish Republic. Nationalist historiography, written and imagined in the aftermath of the civil war in the 1920s, draws a false connection with independence from Russia as the culmination of Finland's national awakening and democratization.

In 1926 the Finnish right-wing paper *Aamulehti* wrote a commentary on reforms in post-Ottoman Turkey, criticizing the Turks for relinquishing their imperial position in an effort to become “an insignificant Balkan state... in the backyard of Europe” (24.01.26). This commentary must be interpreted through how the same newspaper had had to relinquish its hope for importing a German king for Finland and bitterly accept becoming an independent nation-state with no imperial protection. The idea of a nation with a legitimate claim for imperial sovereign power embarking on a project of nation-state independence must have seemed to represent the ills of the era. In this sense, *The Country of the White Lilies* transfers the model of an imperial periphery, doing its best to resist national independence, to an imperial metropole attempting to dismiss its imperality in favor of nation-statehood.

Petrov, a liberal socialist priest, wrote against the imperial state's intervention in national development and its connection to the state. A logic opposite to that of the mandate's system and post-WWI colonial governance. Petrov detached the nation from the logic of the empire and its sovereignty. In this, Petrov circumscribed both Wilsonian and Leninist forms of development that married the state, the nation, and self-determination. Indeed, before 1918, and in the idealized world of *The Country of the White Lilies*, politics and resistance within empire, specifically in national frameworks, was not geared against empire or for empire, it was not colonial or anti-colonial. In this context, it would be false to speak of nation-building in the sense that the finished product, a self-determined nation, would then be something emancipated from empire.

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<sup>30</sup> The Soviets demanded lifting a ban on left wing, especially communist, political participation in Finland.

The lamentation of the Finnish rightwing newspaper about Turkey's wasted imperial position, speaks to the conditions within which the book became mobilized. While the Finns projected thus their own lost imperality, the Turkish actors embraced the alternative story of national development on their own terms, outside of and not brought about by the inherent imperality of the caliphate. Thus, Atatürk fashioned the caliphate and the sultan as the other of himself<sup>31</sup>, before he could become Atatürk, the father of Turkish nation (Adak 2003). These narratives coalesced in the event of national independence post-WWI, but in reverse temporality; the past of the Finns allowed the Turks to project into the future a past of national development that was confirmed by Finnish independence. By contrast, that future jeopardized this same past for the Finns. The temporal tension between the past and the future, was the opposite for the Turkish and Finnish nations, only connected by their then common nation-state independence in the contemporary present. The Turkish national project sought to retrieve from the past an imagined community for the future, whereas the Finns had to rewrite a nationalist historiography that escaped the Petrovian version of the past; national development under imperial rule.

The fact that this afterlife of the Finnish colonial state, mobilized for politics of independent nation-statehood, has remained largely immune to changes in Turkish national politics and historical understandings speaks to how it ties together the model of nation-state independence with inter-imperial considerations. It deliberately detaches evaluations, and especially possibilities of national development from nation-state independence and international comparisons. This Finnish model provides Turkey a counter-narrative that recognizes the restrictions set on sovereignty by the nation-state model and yet case for national development outside the developmental logics connected to nation-state independence. It has been able to replace something imperially foundational that the metropole of a collapsed empire, emerging anew in nation-state form, could no longer apply, unlike in the Western metropolises where the founding texts of imperial statehood continue to be mobilized for nation-statehood.

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<sup>31</sup> Something that the Western metropolises never needed to do.

*Section two. "The Finnish Question" – Inter-Imperial Legitimizations of Colonial Statehood*

*There are "non-sovereign" states. (Osten-Sacken 1912, 23)*

In this section I then turn to non-sovereign statehood and political rights and development as they were debated in the inter-imperial field and detached from sovereign rule. A whole literature and field of research was developing before WWI that analyzed relations between sovereign and non-sovereign politics. It however became obsolete with formalization of independent nation-state sovereignty in the West, even as that was the goal and justification of colonial rule elsewhere. Illuminating this are the commonplace comparisons before 1919 between the positions of Finland and India even if they became non-sensical after Finland became an independent nation-state.

In Finland itself, the legalist narrative crafted after 1919 tells us that the Russian annexation of Finland in 1809 as a semi-autonomous Grand Duchy granted Finland state independence, which led to a natural and singular trajectory of development, during which the Finns learned to govern themselves and thereby fulfilled the Wilsonian requirements for self-determination. The idea of nation-state independence as the justification of colonial rule, was transposed retrospectively to the Finnish narrative, and occluded the positions discussed below and in the next chapter. Reality before 1919 assumed the normality of non-sovereign rule as well as the possibilities of development and political rights under imperial rule and even despite that rule.

For example, the idea of state independence was initially developed by Finnish political actors across the political spectrum at the turn of the century. They contested Finland's inter-imperial relations to secure self-determination and an advantageous position within the Russian Empire as good imperial subjects, i.e. as a separate state equally governed by the Czar. This contradicts the later national history's need of rationalizing independence as a conscious effort towards full nation-state independence taking place and historically described as an intra-imperial affair. Inter-imperial dimensions of the German and Western Empires as well as Finnish activist agitation engaging other empires testifies to this context. In this section I contrast this Fennocentrism by sketching a picture of Finnish statehood in the inter-imperial imagination.

Indeed, in the pre-1917-1919 imperial context the issue of state autonomy under empire had been debated for some time with one of the most controversial cases being the question over the Grand Duchy of Finland within the Russian Empire (see for example Bornhak 1900, Danielson 1891, Habermann 1910, Hermanson 1900, Kuplewasky 1900, Minzes 1899, Sergeevski 1911). While most agreed on some level of Finnish state autonomy, the general opinion of the time nevertheless situated that autonomy directly under imperial rule. This was the conclusion reached, for example, by Baron von Osten-Sacken in his classic treatise *The Legal Position of the Grand-duchy of Finland in the Russian Empire* (1909/1912), as well as by the London Conference that debated the question of Finland in 1910. For example, Gladstonian liberals in England used the example of the Grand Duchy as “a useful argument for Irish political autonomy as a workable imperial policy” (Ruotsila 2005, 8). This shifted the debates to focus on two crucial questions: What are the relations between sovereign imperial states and non-sovereign states and what are the guarantees on the one hand and limits on the other of autonomy, self-determination, political rights and statehood in non-sovereign cases.

Beyond Finnish actors themselves, Finnish dependence on Russian sovereignty was also the favored conclusion in these inter-imperial debates. For example, in 1900 the Attorney General of the Kingdom of Norway, at the time in union with Sweden, B. Getz, published a booklet on the state relations between Finland and Russia (*Das Staatsrechtliche Verhältnis zwischen Finnland und Russland*). In it, Getz takes the stand that Finland received a constitution and thereby separate statehood during its annexation by Russia in 1809, but that this in no way diminishes the autocratic sovereignty of the Czar. In fact, Getz argues, that only if Finland has a separate statehood, can the logic of the Czar’s indivisible sovereignty be maintained. Sovereignty of the imperial state is thus premised, in Getz’s logic, on its accommodation of various political formations, thereby confirming its universality,

Getz compares the status of Finland to that of the individual German or American states; the relationship between the state and the sovereignty of the whole cannot be changed (albeit with a few exceptions), without the consent of the state in question. In this sense, the Czar could act only through his position as the Grand Duke of Finland, not as the sovereign of the entire empire. Getz’

problematization illustrates here a persistent strength, and problem, of the imperial structure. Intra-imperial relations were built for flexible interpretations and therefore for various alignments and political arguments formed around the organization of sovereignty and statehood.

“From it, that Finland is a state, follows however not, that it is a fully sovereign state”, Getz adds (1900, 23). It is unsurprising, of course, that the Norwegian attorney general would take this stance, as Norway was at the time struggling to secede from Sweden. This position allowed Getz to argue for Norwegian sovereignty. He sees that states can be joined together as equals, without forming a federation (Norway), or by uniting under a shared sovereignty (Finland). Getz departs here from the famous German legal scholar of the era, Georg Jellinek, who saw Finland as a province, or at most a fragment of a state, in his *Die Lehre von den Staatenverbindungen* (1882).

Interestingly, Getz’s argument relies on the power of the autocrat to create a state, whereas Jellinek sees that such power did not constitute the creation of a full state but was simply an act of statesmanship, thereby categorically different. This is understandable in the sense that autocratic authority was also the main argument of those favoring interference in the affairs of Finland by Russia, and in those of Norway by Sweden, against whom Getz was arguing. Therefore, Getz wanted to ground his argument in showing the distinction between the Norwegian and Finnish cases, in that the federation of Sweden and Norway did not share the same source of sovereign authority, whereas in the case of Finland and Russia the source was the same. By contrast, the liberal Jellinek was arguing in favor of the legitimacy of a unified German Empire, as a genuine liberal-judicial state, equally organic in its political development as its Western peers, not simply held together by the Kaiser. Jellinek therefore argued that besides legal considerations, empirical and sociological considerations also matter in defining statehood. This argument would have complicated Getz’s division between Finland and Norway, since with the perspective of what were called sociological considerations at the time, Sweden and Norway were much more connected to each other than Finland and the Russian Empire. But, Jellinek’s perspective on Finland was focused on the Russian metropole, as he was also arguing for the “organic” rule of the Prussian metropole over the rest of the German empire. He did not make a clear separation between the empirical and sociological conditions

of the periphery and the metropole. In contrast, the London Conference of 1910 focused on that separation.

### *Developmentalist Separation of Inter- and Intra-Imperial Logics*

This is where the London Conference picks up the debate over Finland's status and combines the organic and legalist perspectives. Between February 26th and March 1<sup>st</sup>, 1910, a group of lawyers from around Europe gathered in London in search of a "scientific explanation" of the relations between Finland and Russia. The resulting volume – published by a Privy Councilor to the King of England and member of The Hague Arbitration court, Edward Fry – begins by stating that, unlike what one might believe, it is not a political, but a legal question (*Finnland und Russland: Die internationale Londoner Konferenz*. 1911, 5). With this statement, they mean that it is not a matter of the Czar's sovereign political power, even when discussed through a legal framework, but indeed a matter of the development of socio-judicial relations in the two countries<sup>32</sup>. These scholars then base their inquiry on the British position of separating the imperial state and its power (inter-imperial legalist) from the countries of different civilizational levels (intra-imperial organic) that are nevertheless governed by that same power.

Amongst the signatories of the conference outcome were professors of law from the universities of Oxford, Cambridge, Berlin, Göttingen, Paris, Grenoble and Leiden. Their "scientific explanation" boiled down in the end to the history, race, temperament and customs, i.e. to the sociological (per the thinking of the time) side of the explanation; "giving form to political freedom, that cannot be removed from its substance", whereby political freedom is the 'highest pledge' of civil freedom and thereby of the individual public law<sup>33</sup> (ibid., 103-104). The ultimate grounding of their argument is that it is a 'legal' question of this matter, and therefore the Czar's sovereignty cannot

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<sup>32</sup> In retrospect this language seems of course to be contradictory, but that is an important aspect of the situation at the time.

<sup>33</sup> The Grand Duchy was perceived to have attained in sense a higher stage of legality through its particular politico-judicial social order.

interfere with Finland's position in the empire. The question is not one of politics or interests, but of "social development" (ibid., 103).

The important difference here is that these legal scholars state explicitly that the historical, racial, temperamental and customary right of Finnish autonomy is in no way connected to its statehood or the sovereignty of the Czar (ibid., 112). They saw that an integration of rights and legal codes of the empire could only happen if the Russian metropole would liberalize and "catch up" with the Grand Duchy, or if the Grand Duchy would willingly, through the will of its people, relinquish some of its rights to be on the same developmental level with the rest of the empire. The qualitative evaluation of 'political development' of intra-imperial constituent parts of the imperial state then trumps the inter-imperial legal framework of sovereign power. This theory displays the origins of what we might call the Finnish *Sonderweg* (i.e. the historiographical logic of a specific, non-normal, route through otherwise universalized developments that explains even long-term differences with comparable cases) as well as the similar but reversed political exclusion of the colonies and peripheries of West European empires from democratization of their metropolises. "[The Finnish question] could be seen [by the British] as a struggle of civilized Finns against barbarous and reactionary Russians" (Upton 1991, 1216).

However, this *sonderweg* only makes sense, if the flexible relationship between sovereignty and self-determination, as described by these pre-WWI debates, is retrospectively interpreted in the nation-state context of post-WWI that restricted and confined the relation of self-determination and sovereignty by portraying the struggle for autonomy as synonymous with independence. But, of course, Finnish autonomy was not a result of the higher civilizational stage of Finnish society vis-à-vis Russian society, just as Britain's position within its imperial state vis-à-vis its colonies, such as Ireland, was not. Rather, if differences existed, they were the results of the politics of imperial integration and administration that arguments such as those of the London Conference sought to naturalize and justify. Indeed, specifically the London conference's reasoning was mentioned by the Finnish Commissioner in Washington, in his report to the Secretary of State as an appeal to recognize

independence of the White bourgeois Government in Finland on March 1<sup>st</sup>, 1918 (State Department 1932, 759).

Baron von Osten-Sacken observed that there are historical differences in formations of imperial state relations, but he did not correlate those differences with a sliding scale from barbaric to civilized, from self-determined to to-be-determined, from capable of democracy to in-need-of-being-ruled<sup>34</sup>.

### *Historicist Separation of Inter- and Intra-Imperial Logics*

Osten-Sacken's treatise on Finland was widely respected and translated at least into English and Russian. The British issuer of the English translation suggests that knowledge of the Finnish case will be useful for the British Empire at the time, because "a reassertion of British virility would seem to be imminent" and in this situation a factual rather than emotional understanding of Finland's situation within Russia should be the goal. This was in line with a policy of rapprochement with Russia, popular at the time in certain British political circles as a means of balancing imperial competition. So, the translator writes:

*As such, if read with candour and without prejudice, it may assist in informing public opinion, demonstrating as it does, possibly to the surprise of well meaning sympathisers with the Finns, that there is much to be said for the Russian point of view, and that the Russian people, and even the Russian Government, have exhibited considerable wisdom and moderation, not to say self-restraint, in their attitude towards this interesting race. (1912, vii).*

Interestingly, a very recent reading by a Finnish historian still considers Osten-Sacken's treatment as negative towards Finland (Vares 2009, 323-358) for not supporting the idea of fully sovereign Finnish statehood under the Czar. Alternatively, it is clear though that Osten-Sacken uses the case of Finland to polemicize over new conceptions of statehood that move beyond the ideas of absolutist states and the need for unquestioned sovereignty; he rather favored considering political

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<sup>34</sup> Here we begin to see the origins of the incremental developmentalist model of democratization mentioned in the first chapter, where democratization is seen as a process moving from the most capable to the least capable, i.e. from privileged male suffrage, to male suffrage, to universal suffrage without the right for women to stand for elections, and from the rich in the Western metropolises, to the rich in other metropolises, to the rich settler colonies, to the colonies of other empires, and lastly to the colonies of the Western empires.

rights without sovereignty. This is a recognition that overall would have been most beneficial for the various colonial states or ‘non-states’, compared to a consolidation of sovereignty surrounded by universally defined formal imperial or nation-state formations. Osten-Sacken’s whole argumentation then moves from the perspective that the former connection<sup>35</sup> between statehood and sovereignty should be “regarded as one not in conformity with certain formations unmistakably political in their origin.” (1912, 23).

He argues that political communities now exist that, though legally dependent on (imperial) States, exercise functions “which otherwise belong only to the [imperial] States and to no other combinations.” (1912, 23). Osten-Sacken argues against the assumption of a necessary connection between statehood and sovereignty, and especially against a rigid, non-flexible conception of sovereignty. “The political relations of to-day have already far outgrown the narrow bounds, which had been set to the conception of a State by the intransigent theory of sovereignty.” (ibid.). If we were to take this type of thinking as our standpoint, then the post-1917-1919 ideas of self-determination would seem to have regressed back to the narrow bounds of statehoods “intransigent sovereignty”.

### Table 7. Summarizing Osten-Sacken

- a) Imperial states are sovereign.
  - Non-sovereign states exist. They are dependent on the sovereignty of imperial states.
- b) Non-sovereign states can nevertheless have domestic sovereignty, self-determination and political rights.
- c) Sovereign states can interfere in non-sovereign states and withdraw their political rights.
  - Recognizing the right of sovereign states to interfere means recognizing the configurations of internal sovereignty and self-determination of non-sovereign states.
  - Whereas, in relations between sovereign states, i.e. inter-imperial relations, this is a non-issue.
- d) Finland is a non-sovereign state or a by-state.
  - Almost exclusively regulated by local authorities, i.e. has autonomy and self-determination.
  - But this is not the consequence of its own powers, i.e. its right of sovereignty at home is alienable.
- e) Therefore, the relations between States with intransigent sovereignty, self-determination and political rights to non-sovereign states where these are transigent, must be considered, i.e. the relation of inter-imperial and intra-imperial.
  - The concept of universal nation-states occluded such considerations.

<sup>35</sup> He is referring to the sovereign, often monarchical, legitimacy of imperial states.

Osten-Sacken concludes, that “the decisive attribute of a State is the existence of sovereign authority. And this is lacking in Finland” (ibid., 103) “As then the Russian State has a right of interference of a fundamental nature in the internal affairs of Finland, the latter is lacking in the essential element of the State, namely, a sovereign authority of its own, a political authority which cannot be withdrawn from it. Therefore, Finland cannot be held to be a State.” (ibid., 104). This sets up the need for Osten-Sacken to theorize more specifically non-sovereign states, i.e. non-imperial states, those dependent on their sovereignty on others. Then, referencing other theories, Osten-Sacken agrees that Finland can be considered an “under-state” or a by-state that is subject to a chief State (ibid., 106). Osten-Sacken, further describes the general situation of places like Finland in the world as “intermediate semi-political formations” dependent on suzerain States (ibid., 109), not far from Steinmetz’s description of semi-autonomous colonial state fields (Steinmetz 2008). “The public life of Finland is almost completely separated from that of Russia, and is almost exclusively regulated and conducted by the local authorities. All this, however, does not happen in consequence of Finland’s own powers” and the “position of Finnish officials may be compared with that of the indirect Imperial Officials” (Osten-Sacken 1912, 115), he contends.

Osten-Sacken lastly points out that there are countries that “approximate to the case before us ... these countries lead a separate political existence, in that they stand far-removed from the life of the sovereign State, on account of the totally different nature of their national, cultural and economic circumstances”, and lists as such comparable countries Iceland (then governed by Denmark), Slavonia, and “the English self-governing Colonies and India” (Ibid., 117). The similarities between Finland and English colonies are based “on the one hand, independence of legislation and justice and (even if not in the same measure) administration ... and, on the other, the ever existing possibility of interferences on the part of the principal country”, whereas “India has a particular resemblance to Finland from the fact that it externally forms not merely a Colony but an Empire, and that the King of England thus appears under a separate title” (ibid., 122-123).

Without reference to Osten-Sacken’s thorough analysis, the same formal conclusion was reached in the American Political Science Review in 1910, that Finland “was always a subordinate

commonwealth” and may be “regarded as a non-sovereign-state or a “state-fragment”, or, finally, as “having the position Canada has in the British Empire ... though Canada has far wider powers and privileges than Finland ever had”. While this article makes note of “universal manhood and womanhood suffrage” in Finland (“Finland”<sup>36</sup>, 359-362) neither this nor Osten-Sacken see democracy as related to questions of statehood and sovereignty.

Osten-Sacken wanted to expand upon the legal definitions of state sovereignty and asked, “whether every State authority is from the nature of the case a sovereign authority?” As such, Osten-Sacken’s thinking, based on the Finnish case, was almost diametrically opposed to the later ideology of nation-statehood and sociological assumptions of state authority’s union with sovereignty, which still today form the basis of sociological inquiry into democratization.<sup>37</sup> Osten-Sacken argued that “historical and political formations have led to the assumption that sovereignty – if by it is understood the capacity of exclusive legal self-determination – is *no essential criterion whatsoever of a State*” (2012, 23), after which he proceeded to separate sovereignty from political authority in defining a state (*ibid.*, 24).

Traditional sociology reproduces the Western imperial idea of sovereign statehood as the foundation of self-determination and, therefore, democracy with that particular research framework<sup>38</sup>. Connecting ‘intransigently’ the ‘chain of sovereignty’ with self-determination is at the core of the difference between the Western model and the pre-1917-1919 situation. It prevents democratization in opposition or despite prevailing sovereignty. This later interpretation of statehood’s universal connection with sovereignty, displaced the pre-1917 strivings for a more transigent idea of self-determination and democracy. For example, Osten-Sacken wanted to argue that “every non-sovereign state possesses an alienable right of sovereignty at home” (*ibid.*, 24), i.e. he argued for the separation

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<sup>36</sup> The article does not list an author

<sup>37</sup> Baiocchi, Heller and Silva for example see the importance of their analysis of local democratization in contributing to our understandings of how to connect “chains of sovereignty” of a nation-state with self-determination (associational autonomy) to achieve “effective democracy” (Baiocchi et al. 2011, 11-12).

<sup>38</sup> The counter-argument of course is that this simply operates within the framework that is perceived to be true by most actors themselves. However, by operating within that framework, without treating it in the manner of new sociology of empires, i.e. one way or another explicitly recognizing its imperality, it nevertheless end up contributing to the reproduction of that framework.

of statehood from other sovereign rights, especially “exclusive legal self-determination”, which is something that human rights advocates and especially ethnic and indigenous minorities are still struggling with today. Osten-Sacken’s perspective did formally recognize imperial sovereignty over non-sovereign states. But, through that act it also recognized those non-sovereign states and their political rights and existence under imperial relations were recognized as historically having been developed, with unmistakably political origins, to exercise functions that otherwise belong to sovereign states. Whereas universal formal sovereignty across the cases, as nation-state independence, cemented together democratization, sovereignty, and statehood, and did so on the foundations of the previous imperial relations and the perspective of Western empires, as is discussed in the next section, *it occluded practical issues of executing sovereignty on the one hand, and the possibilities of self-determination without and across sovereignties on the other*. For Osten-Sacken the relations between States with intransigent sovereignty, self-determination and political rights to non-sovereign states where these are transigent, must be considered, i.e. the relation of inter-imperial and intra-imperial<sup>39</sup>.

Beyond the possibility of recognizing self-determination outside, beneath and across state sovereignty, the nation-state model then also blurred the distinction and variance between formal and actual sovereignty, and the different consequences of these formations for practical self-determination and governance as well as the variety of relations that such distinctions bring about for self-governance beyond a representative democracy under sovereign national statehood. In other words, formalized universal sovereignty occludes practical relations of sovereignty and democracy/self-determination, and statehood. Osten-Sacken concludes that “the existence of Finland is at the disposal of the Russian political authority. As a matter of fact, however, Finland enjoys the most extensive independence, since Russia, for political and practical reasons, makes no use of its higher right” (1912, 116).

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<sup>39</sup> Views close to Osten-Sacken’s were also expressed by C.C.V. Nyholm of the Supreme Court of Copenhagen (1901). He stated that we need to separately consider relations between sovereign states and relations between sovereign and non-sovereign states. The unity between sovereign and non-sovereign states should support the construction of relations between them, but “it is another question [beyond sovereignty] whether this construction can lead to dangerous consequences for Finland’s independence and statehood”.

### *Section Three. The Search for New Imperial Alternatives – German, Bolshevik, and Western*

How did this situation unfold with the dismantling of the Russian Empire? If we were to believe in the narrative that Russian actions in 1809 set Finland on a path to independence, we should then at the very least ask how and why the empire fostered Finnish autonomy and democratization? And why did Finnish political actors try to seek a new sovereign after the abdication of the Czar? P.E. Svinhufvud, for example, a bourgeois politician, retrospectively portrayed as perhaps the greatest champion of Finnish independence in the traditional nationalist historiography, stated just six months after he had declared Finland independent from Soviet Russia that a constitutional monarchy with a German king<sup>40</sup> is the “only form of government for Finland” (New York Times 5.22.18). This was no surprise to Finnish politicians; Svinhufvud had already in November 1917, before declaring independence, advised his colleague to “just get the Germans here, otherwise we won’t manage” (Klinge 1990, 15, cited in Kuisma 2010, 76). As Kuisma briefly puts it, “Finland in early summer of 1918 was a German vassal state, whether it wanted it or not” (Kuisma 2010, 81). Finnish soldiers had volunteered to serve in the German army so that they may one day return to separate Finland from Russia. Germans also intertwined in the Finnish Civil War and captured Helsinki from social democratic control. The Social Democrat’s motivations were then easily labelled in post-Civil War historiography as an extension of Russian rule, thus legitimating the use of force, initially intended against the Czar, against other Finns. This liberation process then almost saw its conclusion as the Kaiser appointed the Prince of Hessen as the future king of Finland, to the slight disappointment of Finnish bourgeois politicians who had hoped for the appointment of someone more closely related to the Kaiser.

Between Russia, Germany and Western empires, Finnish actors were seeking to navigate two processes: maintaining autonomy and securing the best possible position within imperial structures. While an independent nation-statehood solved this puzzle, it did so against the initial hopes of Finns

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<sup>40</sup> In chapter three this issue will be discussed further. Suffice to say here, that the constitution drafted at the time would have granted this king authoritarian rights over executive *and* legislative and judicial matters.

and against the prevalent imperial imagination especially in East-Central Europe; leading actors at the that time saw the creation of non-metropolitan nation-states to be in alignment with Allied desires. In tune with the politics of the era, Finns had thought their sources of societal autonomy and development were best secured within an imperial structure that recognized that position most clearly. While the Czar had done so for a large part of the history of Finnish autonomy (albeit often for practical political reasons) a German king appeared an equally symbolically valuable option and guarantee.

Imperial positions thus determined Finnish political actors' search for self-determination and autonomy<sup>41</sup>. One often forgets, for example, that the German Empire up until its defeat was a contender in promoting the rights of small nations. The German Empire has done to small nations "what Entente boasts it will do, but won't", the New York Times reported the Kaiser to have told to a Finnish delegation (8.6.1918).

After the Bolshevik revolution, Finnish political actors entertained several models of autonomy under different imperial politics before gaining recognition for nation-state independence in late Spring of 1919. The Finnish bourgeois side signed a treaty of protection with Germany in the Spring of 1918 and after winning the Civil War, ordered a king from Germany as late as September and October 1918 despite the German Empire's increasingly weakening position. Before defeat in the civil war, the social democrats established a state treaty (see for example Department of State 1932 for the treaty) with the Soviets. The latter was the first concrete test for putting Lenin's doctrine of national self-determination into play in international politics; signed before Brest-Litovsk it shaped later Soviet international politics. With the treaty Lenin attempted to base sovereignty on international socialist cooperation. For example, any later disputes about the treaty would have been adjudicated, not by the international court in the Hague, but by a socialist tribunal with the help of the Swedish Social Democratic Left party<sup>42</sup>, highlighting the ideological dimension of the treaty. It sought to

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<sup>41</sup> We can find similarities here to, say, W.E.B. Dubois' support for the mandates system instead of independence for African colonies or the initial considerations by Ottoman actors to invite themselves to become a US mandate instead of an independent state.

<sup>42</sup> Article 18 of the treaty: Any discords in creating the above-said additional agreements and in interpretation of this Treaty and signed above-said agreements and in the cases of breaking any of the articles of the treaty.

produce a new framework of sovereignty based on socialist organization, rather than aiming to change or alter the old inter-imperial framework. This strategy was not followed in later Soviet treaties, which rather based sovereignty on nationalism as self-determination, where socialism simply became an instrument allowing for this “right”, similar to the ideas of socio-political development set forth by the London Congress on Finland.

All through the developments of 1917-1919 and afterwards the Bolsheviks were in favor of full Finnish national self-determination. The treaty they signed on first of March 1918 was then the first test for implementing their policy of self-determination in real terms. It took place just two months after the Council of Peoples’ Commissars<sup>43</sup> had concluded a treaty with the bourgeois government of Finland, affirming the general idea that national independence was used instrumentally to advance and support workers’ revolutions. But on the other hand, importantly, this allowed for the signing of a treaty between two “independent” socialist states, thus signaling the Soviet move to transfer the field of contention from intra-imperial relations to the realm of inter-imperial relations. In other words, in line with contestations over statehood and sovereignty discussed above, it was rather in inter-imperial relations where the Bolsheviks initially saw the crucial field of contention to lie from the very beginning. The Finno-Soviet treaty exemplifies the process of trying to define what it could mean to be independent in a way that would challenge the imperial imaginations described above and redefine the inter-imperial basis of sovereignty. Its failure speaks to other imperial continuities that in their part eventually defined nation-state independence.

The position of the Finnish social democrats is curious, as for them the intra-imperial relations and maintenance of autonomy became unavoidable issues in terms of domestic politics vis-à-vis the bourgeoisie parties. At the same time though, their main ideological and programmatic influences were derived from German mainstream Kautskyism that rejected nationalist and patriotic politics. Yet, the Finnish social democrats interacted with and were essential to, just as the colonial

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or agreements are presented to the arbitration tribunal, the chairman of which is nominated by the executive committee of the Swedish Left Social Democratic Party unless it will be set otherwise later.

<sup>43</sup> Executive authority of the Soviets at the time.

state itself was, the Russian social democrats in organizing activities in the empire (2017 Lam, Kujala 1985). “In a sense, therefore a meeting occurred on Finnish ground between the Central European mainstream and an underground labour movement adapted to special conditions of Russia and specialized in illegal, conspiratorial activity” (Hentilä 1984). Indeed, historiographically the activities of the Finnish social democrats understood as strongly Kautskyist, yet “eminently “nationalist””, as Hentilä describes it, “is seriously conflicting” (ibid.). We can begin disentangling this contradiction by distancing it from post-1917-1919 frameworks. *Nationalist and patriotic politics were essentially different in colonial states vis-à-vis imperial metropolises.*

The Finnish case was important for Lenin, who had had spent considerable time in Finland and knew several of the social democratic politicians personally. Lenin had used Finland as an example of the need for national self-determination in the Russian context (Jussila 1984, 100), this is likely, in part, because the Grand Duchy had been the internationally disputed example within the Russian Empire already. And ever since the February events Lenin, Stalin, Kollontay and others were in constant communication with Finnish Social Democrats, urging them to take power<sup>44</sup>. On 24th of November 1917, for example, Lenin sent a personal letter to Finnish Social Democrat leaders, trying to convince them that they have all the capacity to put forth “a social reorganization” in Finland.

### *The Finno-Soviet Treaty*

The full text of the Soviet-Finnish treaty, signed on March 1<sup>st</sup>, 1918, was published in the Soviet magazines *Pravda* and *Izvestiya* on March 10th and, according to historian Marat Zubko (2017, 28), in several books thereafter.<sup>45</sup> This is to say that it did not go unnoticed at the time. Zubko accounts these publications as “extolling the treaty to the skies, calling it the coveted first-born in diplomatic relation with fraternal worker’s countries” (Ibid.). However, it was in contradiction with later Soviet nationalities policy and was actively forgotten until Stalin’s death, and thereafter only referenced in historical academic research. As such, it signals an alternative pathway that was

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<sup>44</sup> See for example Stalin’s speech to the Congress of the Finnish Social Democratic Labour Party, published in *Pravda* on November 16, 1917.

<sup>45</sup> It can be easily attained for example here: Department of State 1932, 773-776.

unsuccessfully sought, for reorganizing the relations of statehood, self-determination and sovereignty that Getz, Osten-Sacken and others debated.

Historian Zubko calls the Finno-Soviet treaty the “fundamental Finnish variant”, in the sense that this course was not actively developed going further (Ibid., 32). While this fundamental variant supported Lenin’s internationalist policy of sovereignty founded on international socialist cooperation, it also opened the door for subsequent recognition by competing powers, such as Germany, as was the case with Finland. This treaty sought recognition of sovereignty within the wider inter-imperial relations, but was not based on independent statehood, and rather on socialist politics as an alternate source of sovereignty. By contrast, Stalin’s more inward-looking variant isolated the Soviet version of national self-determination from outside claims and tied it together with Russian metropolitan communism.

This alternative vision of socialist international relations is not well known, for Stalin’s “socialism in one country” not only destroyed the memory of this Soviet/Finnish alternative. In making Russian metropolitan communism, it isolated the Soviet version of national self-determination from outside claims while erasing, within the USSR, their original attempt at remaking world relations in terms of socialist sovereignty. Sovereign socialist nations thereafter became equally dependent on their “non-sovereign source” of recognition, as was the case with newly sovereign racialized democratic nations.

But, all of this was not clear in 1918 before the Finno-Soviet treaty. Following the proclamation of Finnish independence, the Soviets celebrated the fundamental or more Leninist version of the policy of national self-determination. After visiting Finland, following the beginning of the Finnish Civil War, the Social Revolutionary Proshyan reported through the newspaper *Työmies*, that “When the Finnish Social Democrats recently applied for recognition of Finland’s independence, he, together with other comrades held the opinion that it would not be long before the Finnish proletariat began the revolutionary struggle and took the reins. The hopes were realized to a greater extent than could be expected” (Zubko, 2017, 33). Proshyan proclaimed and positioned the revolution as proof of the success of Lenin’s policy of national self-determination. This points to national self-

determination at this point simply referring to the right to secede from imperial sovereignty, what Getz and Osten-Sacken had seen to be impossible previously. Whereas, how state relations thereafter would look like, remained an unanswered question. National self-determination was being contested.

Considering the debates about state relations discussed in the previous section, the desire to establish a treaty between two socialist states as a precedent is understandable as the issue was contested at the time. For example, Osten-Sacken wrote, that “theory has not determined whether this combination [union between states] can come about only by an agreement between independent States, or whether also a superior will is capable of creating it, whether thus, for example, former provinces or fractions of a State, which have been taken possession of by another State, by recognition as a State on the part of conquering power, can enter into a real union with it or not.” And even in the case of such a union, Osten-Sacken continues, “the former do not [automatically] form organs of an “over-state” (suzerain state) or “collective state” (1912, 13-15). The state treaty then also could have justified the creation of a socialist suprastate sovereign organization.

Indeed, the ideational war over sovereignty’s form was just starting. On March 8th, 1918 Pravda reported on the success of what it called the “New Socialist and Soviet Finland” (Zubko 2017, 33). The important aspect here is that this was not just instrumental power politics of the Soviets with the aim to have voluntary detachment lead to voluntary annexation, as most historians have argued. Those are retrospective claims that could be made especially after Stalin rose to power. But at this time transnational and international – or rather trans- and inter-imperial – aspects were equally at play. And in that conjuncture the Finno-Soviet state treaty was crucial; it taught the Soviets that the treaties they established should not be made in the spirit of international politics in which socialist states would challenge capitalist states. Rather following the failure of the Finnish revolution, and thereby the creation of a hostile capitalist state right next to Petrograd/Leningrad, a state that sent war expeditions to the Soviet Union starting 1918, Soviet tactics shifted towards creating a closed-off, alternative international space. They sought something that was not in competition with but parallel to competing claims, where sovereignty would not be supported by socialism, but socialism by sovereignty. They wished to create their own system of colonial governance.

It was unclear at the time what was to follow; national self-determination for sure, as it was fundamental to the Finnish social democrats, but just as the Finnish bourgeoisie sought to realign themselves within the German sphere of influence to secure self-determination, the social democrats too were not daydreaming of a fully independent and sovereign statehood. Solving the question of positioning themselves within a socialist bloc was therefore an urgent matter for the social democrats. On the other hand, they had to formalize the claim that Finland could maintain autonomy, which purpose the state treaty also served. Here the social democratic and Soviet goals coalesced. As Zubko argues, the contents of the treaty itself were not urgent or important; the pure existence of the treaty was of greater importance in replacing the idea of imperial sovereignty with the idea of socialist sovereignty. How Lenin had specifically formulated this in a manner that displaced other socialist discourses focusing on imperial sovereignty is discussed in detail in chapter four.

Interestingly, historian Rinta-Tassi (1986) has shown that based on the Soviet Central Committee meeting's notes, Lenin and the Bolsheviks knew by 19th of February 1918, when negotiations for the treaty were already underway and a joint committee had been formed to that effect, that Red Finland would likely fall. They had accepted the German peace conditions and Lenin had stated: "Alright then, let them have revolutionary Finland".

Despite this Lenin hurried the preparations for the treaty between Finland and the Soviets and wanted to sign it before signing the treaty with Germany. The negotiations were moved under the direct control of the Council of People's Commissars in the end of February 1918. Furthermore, it is noteworthy that while Lenin and the Council of Peoples Commissars, after they took direct control over treaty negotiations, did not substantially alter the already prepared substantive contents of the treaty, which dealt mainly with practical material issues, but they did change its wordings significantly. For example, Lenin insisted on calling Finland a Socialist Republic, which was not what the Finns wanted, thus setting an international precedent.

We can then say that first and foremost, the treaty aimed to alter the norms of sovereignty politics; in this sense its failure contributed to the direction that the Soviets ultimately adopted for their international policy. This was to become parallel rather than in direct contestation with the West

and especially American Wilsonian Liberalism. This parallel position later made it more convenient and easier to join the United Nations as a front of different socialist states, for example. It can also be observed in the policies of the Comintern, such as the 21 conditions of the 2nd Congress of Comintern<sup>46</sup>.

This conjuncture that came to define nation-statehood and for which the treaty served as one of the first opening moves can be read in the differences in thinking between the Soviets and the Finnish socialists. The Finns sought first and foremost general recognition for the treaty, which had been their persistent line<sup>47</sup>, as the (formerly) colonized they were less interested in setting a precedent. This can be seen for example in the notes sent to the Finnish negotiators to Petrograd concerning a question over citizenship rights. Lenin wanted full political rights for the Russian working class residing in Finland and vice versa, which the Finns could not accept. Separate citizenship had been one of the cornerstones of Finnish self-determination under the Russian Empire.

This Soviet-proposed citizenship practice would have undermined the democratic autonomy Finland had just achieved, whereas the opposite held no political promise for the Finns. Lenin ceded and Russian citizens were given the possibility to obtain Finnish citizenship within a year, whereas Finnish workers in Russia gained full political rights, as the situation had been under the Russian Empire. Article 13 of the treaty thus declared:

*The Russian federation grants all political rights of the Russian citizens to the Finnish citizens that belong to the working class and non-using hired work peasantry, if they work on the territory of Russia.*

*On its part, the Finnish Socialist Workers Republic obliges to grant the citizens of the Russian Federative Soviet Republic in Finland the easiest conditions for obtaining political rights, especially taking into consideration the interests of the unsettled working people. (Department of State 1932, 773-776)*

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<sup>46</sup> <https://www.marxists.org/history/international/comintern/2nd-congress/ch07.htm> (Accessed 9.4.2018).

The conditions define the International as a monolithic union of communist nations with no internal variation or fragmentation vis-à-vis the capitalist West.

<sup>47</sup> See for example Press communiqué to the meetings of the Dutch-Scandinavian committee with the delegation from Finland, May, 1917: "the mentioned [Finnish] question must be looked as a question of international law character and should find their treatment there where international problems, inter alia, are all discussed."

The Finns built their argumentation purely based on previous understandings between Finnish and Russian socialists under the czarist regime. Emancipation could only happen within that older framework that had facilitated previous oppression. Whereas, for the Soviets it was crucial to legitimize their control of the imperial metropole. So, as historian Rinta-Tassi has summed up (1986, 426), for the Finns this was an inter-imperial treaty, and for the Soviets an ideological treaty. In this double role it stood squarely in the conjuncture of the time, both signaling towards and shaping the different pathways opening up ahead. Its existence speaks to the imperial context of the Russian Revolution, while its failure gestures towards the new imperial politics constructed through a redefined sovereignty legitimized by national contexts. In the ensuing treaties socialism was to make way for nationalism as the political foundation of sovereign rule.

### *Adoption of the Western Model*

*She [Finland] has not the political foresight of an independent nation, which has the experience and wisdom of years of self-guidance. ... And yet ... there are all the future, far-reaching, intricate, world-destiny problems of the tragic East, which might more easily be solved in favor of America and the Entente with Finland as a friend. (US Consul at Helsinki, Haynes, to the Secretary of State Lansing. 15<sup>th</sup> July, 1918)*

The Western powers initially refused to recognize Finnish independence. This was tied to previous pro-German attitudes, racialized understandings about the Finns and British plans for the restoration of the Russian Empire. After all other options were exhausted, Finnish businessmen were, however, able to leverage their contacts on Wall Street, who in turn contacted Herbert Hoover, who in turn was able to influence Wilson on the matter. In his argumentation Hoover referred to commercial and humanitarian interests and the fact that Finnish “political evolution” was sufficient for independence (Hoover, 4.26.1919, Wilson Papers). The Intel-Allied Trade Committee then took Finland under its control and national independence become the desired fate for the country in British and US considerations (Kuisma 2010).

Hoover’s letter was read out loud by Wilson at the Council of Four, which may have expedited the recognition of Finnish independence, as right before, on April 16<sup>th</sup>, the Council had

decided to only send a commission to study on site the constitution and future of Finland and its “strange situation”<sup>48</sup>. Furthermore, it was important for Wilson that recognizing Finnish independence would “not commit us or embarrass us with regard to the recognition of any other” (Wilson, 5.3.1919). Wilson’s hesitations were based on his own recognition of the hypocrisy of the model of self-determination he was offering.

For example, former president Theodore Roosevelt wrote in the *Kansas City Star* in October 18, 1917, a critique against USA’s instrumental use of democracy, especially vis-à-vis smaller colonial nations. Roosevelt critiques the idea that America joined the war to “make the world safe for democracy”. That phrase, he continues, “must have been used in somewhat oratorical fashion, anyhow, because we have ourselves within the last year or two made the world entirely unsafe for democracy in the two small and weak republics of Haiti and San Domingo” (Roosevelt, 1917 (State Department 1932). Roosevelt continued to criticize America’s international politics through 1917-1919. In August 1918, he referred specifically to the mode of applying the idea of self-determination that the United States and the West more generally were developing: “...we are committed to the principle that some nations are not fit for self-determination, that democracy within their limits is a sham, and that their offences against justice and right are such as to render interference by their more powerful and more civilized neighbours imperative. I do not doubt that this principle is true in some cases ... In any event, our continuing action in San Domingo and Haiti makes it hypocritical for us to lay down any universal rules about self-determination for all nations.” Roosevelt highlights how Wilson’s mobilization of America’s instrumentalization of its metropolitan democratic self-determination in the inter-imperial realm conflicts with its own intra-imperial relations.

Similarly, David Rowland Francis, a Wilsonian democrat and Wilson’s ambassador to Russia in 1916-1917 (during the Revolution), wrote to Wilson’s trusted secretary of state Lansing following the Bolshevik recognition of Finnish self-determination in late December 1917 and asked whether,

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<sup>48</sup> Mantoux’s Notes of a Meeting of the Council of Four, 16 April 1919. The Baltic States, considered to share the same “strange” situation, were not equally lucky to have had similar high level interjection on their behalf at this point.

“as the Russian Revolution has given this right [self-determination] to the peoples of Finland”, the Allies are “willing on their part to give the right of self-determination to the peoples of Ireland, Egypt, India, Madagascar, Indochina, et cetera”? Francis then clearly stated that “it is clear that to demand self determination for the peoples that are comprised within the borders of the enemy states and refuse self determination to the peoples of their own state or of their own colonies would mean the defence of the most naked, the most cynical imperialism” (Dawid Rowland Francis, 12.31.1917). Expressing similar sentiments, the US Consul at Helsinki, Haynes, sent a telegram to Washington on 24<sup>th</sup> of January, 1918, stating that “Immediate recognition Finland independence would save us from being slandered as boasted champion small nations who would sacrifice Finland in fruitless expectation of gaining a few feet of French trenches by clinging to a Russian corpse.” (State Department 1932, 743-744).

Just as Francis had compared Finland to colonies including Egypt, India, Madagascar, it was equally important for Wilson in 1919 to make sure that Finnish recognition would not undermine the racialized and developmentalist paradigm that was used to apportion nation-state independence and argue for the mandate’s system. Indeed, in early 1918 Secretary of State Lansing argued against recognition of Finland by directly connecting it to the “will of the Russian people” and to Wilson’s sympathy for democracy and self-government, thus having metropolitan self-government directly overrode colonial self-government<sup>49</sup> (Ibid., 743).

It was not surprising that these concerns were raised from Wilson’s ambassador to Russia, because already before Wilson had begun to define his thoughts about self-determination in reference to and against emerging socialist politics, the Bolsheviks simply accelerated this trend tremendously. With the first Russian Revolution of 1905 “even the liberal Woodrow Wilson, then Professor of History at Princeton University and later Churchill’s presidential antagonist, had begun to think that the cause of nationalism was being used as a cloak for entirely different purposes. Wilson represented

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<sup>49</sup> The Secretary of State, Lansing, to the Ambassador in Russia (Francis): “This Government not disposed as yet to recognize any independent governments until the will of Russian people has been more definitely expressed on this general subject. The public utterances of the President have defined clearly the sympathy of the United States for democracy and self-government”. January 15<sup>th</sup>, 1918. (1932, 743).

a sizable section of Anglophone observers when he stressed that in countries like Russia, no real conditions existed for genuine nationalism as long as they were deficient—as they then seemed to be—in a spontaneous communitarian consciousness. Wilson thus also regarded the Finns as deficient, and compared their level of civilisation to that of the Hottentots and the Iroquois.” (Ruotsila 2005, 13-14). In an evaluative study sent to the State Department by the US Consul at Helsinki regarding future US policy towards Finland, a section on the population stated that “the most unfortunate characteristics of the people are cruelty, stubbornness, treachery, and ungratefulness. Such characteristics, however, apply less to the Swedish-speaking population”<sup>50</sup> (State Department 1932, 801). Tying democracy to this type of national self-determination Wilson exported America’s system of intra-imperial rule to the inter-imperial dimension.

The British equally based any claims for independence on inter-imperial instrumentality. In accepting Hoover’s proposal, British diplomats actually derived their position from discussions with moderate Russians in Paris, whom they hoped would re-establish a Russian Federation. “In reality Britain tried to secure the birth of a moderate and anti-German Russia during the years of intervention and for this reason it became possible for Britain to recognize an independent Finland, because “democratic” Russia accepted it” (Sundbäck 1994, 375).

What was the relation between democratization and independence before 1919? Consider, for example, that Churchill and Wilson, following the events of 1905 in Russia, which led to the establishment of the Grand Duchy as the most democratic state in Europe, at the time nevertheless considered both Russia and Finland fully inadequate for nationhood and self-determination. Wilson was not alone in considering the Finns racially unfit for self-determination. The British liberal politician Lord Bryce suggested that “the Finns had become racially retarded through too long a contact with the ‘lower’ Slavic races” (Ruotsila 2005, 14). Ruotsila summarized, that “from the early twentieth century onwards quite a number of Anglophone liberals grew in the conviction that socialist revolutionaries were manipulating for their own purposes the supposedly retarded or lower races”

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<sup>50</sup> Overall the report did suggest that Finland is more civilized than Americans might assume: “There are homes in Finland as refined and cultured as the best in America and Europe”.

(ibid.). Similarly, with the first elections of a new parliament following universal suffrage, the New York Times focused, with amusement, on the oddities of “the bisexual election” and predicted that unless the 14 unmarried women elected to the parliament soon marry then “it will be clearly apparent to the merest tyro in politics that the bi-sexual Congress cannot flourish and bear fruit for the generations to come”. After this the paper goes on to affirm the Wilsonian view of socialism and race, by stating that the “Pickwickian” (read populist and unrealistic) policies of the now elected 80 Social Democratic parliamentarians will not farewell with the “stern and gloomy” Finnish race (NYT 5.26.1907). And Wilson’s later fourteen points specifically saw only the separation of Poland from the Russian Empire and undertook to keep the Russian Empire otherwise territorially intact.

A good depiction of inter-imperiality’s centrality to considerations of Finnish independence is Churchill’s mood shifts. After initial support, Churchill “ceased his championship for small nations’ self-determination precisely at the moment when British socialists took the lead in the cause (ibid., 13). Churchill then first accepted the Bolsheviks as partners. In early 1918, Churchill was ready to support an Anglo-Bolshevik cooperative arrangement. According to Ruotsila, Churchill was even willing to send former US President Theodore Roosevelt to manage the Russian armies for the Bolsheviks, and at one point was himself willing to become one of such advisers (2005, 20). But, following especially Brest-Litovsk Churchill began to hatch plans to attack the Bolsheviks and restore White Russia. Finland was in good position to march to Petrograd. Thus, Churchill’s plans crucially required Finnish cooperation, which the bourgeois politicians (who had just won the Civil War in Finland) were willing to give, but only with the condition that Finnish independence would be recognized by a future non-Bolshevik Russia<sup>51</sup>. Despite the fact that all of his efforts to snuff out the Bolsheviks depended on Finnish cooperation, Churchill nevertheless considered this demand of maintaining the already established independence (from Russia, not independence in general) of the former Grand Duchy as “preposterous and completely unrealistic” (Ruotsila 2005, 33). At one point,

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<sup>51</sup> Finnish actors were worried that the plans to establish a White Russia would lead to centralization and the impossibility of Finland regaining a guaranteed and equally autonomous position. These worries were well founded, as most White Russians would have subjected Finnish question to the decision-making powers of an imperial congress and refused to give any guarantees prior to its assembly.

when the commander of the Finnish army, Mannerheim, supported the plan, but the Finnish parliament did not, Churchill was even willing to lend his support to organize a coup d'état, overthrow the parliament and establish military rule in Finland in order to march to Petrograd.

This haggling for independence echoed fears characterizing political debate before 1917 within Finland concerning, above all, problems of maintaining autonomy within a democratizing Russia. Indeed, Churchill was not alone in his thinking. Finnish political actors also saw securing parliamentary self-determination and democratic politics to be connected with the security provided by imperial states, or by monarchic and socialist alliances; by contrast, the threat of autocracy and authoritarianism was linked to independence and the responsibilities and threats brought about with it in regards to inter-imperial relations.

It appears then that Finnish independence did not really take shape until early 1919. In this sense the country falsely celebrated the centenary of independence in 2017, an echo of the national historiography's motives. A more appropriate date would probably be the recognition by Britain and the US in 1919, when attempts to ally and align the state within desired imperial structures had come to nothing and nation-state independence became not only the only viable option but also an option acceptable to others. Or in other words, when Finland's independence all of the sudden rested not on definitions of sovereignty, but as Kuisma summarizes, "on Washington administrators, New York bankers, and the shifts in public American opinion" (Kuisma 2010, 196). Considering the prevailing British and American racialized views and the "strangeness" of the Finnish situation in Western eyes, it is clear that had there been an agreeable Russian Empire to whom Finland could have been handed to, that would have been to the option of choice for the Allies. In Wilson's correspondence Finland was described now as a newly born and newly liberated democracy in 1919, though Finland been democratic for 13 years and this liberation had been the fear of its political actors. With Hoover's intervention the Finns were now categorized as a race that has "gone through every cycle that the world could demand in political evolution, to the point of an independent people" (Hoover, 4.26.1919).

## Conclusions

In this chapter I discussed first the afterlife of the Finnish colonial state. It demonstrates the discontinuity imposed by the nation-state model on the one hand, and the continuities of pre-1917-1919 processes within and underlying nation-state independence, on the other. Once imposed, this model was negotiated in specific ways depending upon prevailing imperial relations, and in this way the Finnish colonial state found resonance in post-Ottoman metropolitan politics. The case of the *Country of the White Lilies* is likely the only existing case where the Finnish colonial state in its pre-independence form continues to be the reason for its usage in political imaginary. Elsewhere it is approached through the historical window of 1917-1919. It serves as a model for the Turkish state, initially excluded nation-state sovereignty and its civilizational logic – as a former imperial metropole consigned to a barbaric status and attempted to be divided by the Allies into mandates – to navigate that sovereignty against the grain of the Western historical narrative without directly undermining it.

In general, Central and Eastern Europe was the reason for Wilsonian and Leninist<sup>52</sup> rearticulation of statehood, nationalism and their accompanying democratic self-determination<sup>53</sup>. This conjuncture consolidated and sharpened the cleavage between pre-WWI and post-WWI imaginaries in these regions, in stark contrast to the ways in which the pre-independence histories of other colonial states overlap with the existence of post-1919 nation-state independence as a political concept.

Second, I've discussed inter-imperial definitions of statehood and their varieties based upon, on the one hand, configurations of statehood, political rights, and sovereignty, and on the other, on inter-imperial relations vis-a-vis intra-imperial relations. Thus, the British, for example, advocated a racialized civilizational model overlooking the imperial state both before and during the imposition of nation-state independence, whereas, German thinking emphasized the encompassing sovereignty of the imperial state. Lenin, and other (metropolitan) socialists as will be discussed in chapter four,

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<sup>52</sup> Other peripheries of the Russian Empire also mattered for the Soviets.

<sup>53</sup> Claims to statehood and self-determined governance were raised in other parts of the the Russian and Ottoman Empires as well, from Siberia to Egypt, were the trajectories for autonomy under imperial relations were similar to that of the Grand Duchy, but these rights were internationally limited to Central- and Eastern Europe. Especially in the Wilsonian ideology, colonial independence in Europe then initially served as a way to exclude from independence other areas that could be claimed not civilized or developed enough for it.

attempted to intervene and shift the basis of sovereignty away from statehood. The Finnish socialists, however, were constricted by the intra-imperial dimensions of self-determination and statehood as outlined by the pre-1917 debates and were thus concerned more with autonomy within imperial relations, like Osten-Sacken theorized, rather than inter-imperial issues of sovereignty. In the pre-1917 debates focus was based on the analysis of relations between inter-imperial sovereign states and intra-imperial non-sovereign states. The nation-state model formalized sovereign statehood, thus occluding these dimensions.

Lastly, I have described the contested moment of the making of nation-state independence for the Grand Duchy. Statehood and independence were secondary, instrumental issues during these negotiations, while the shifting motivations were based on the Western intra-imperial relations and their legitimation and consolidation vis-a-vis the wider inter-imperial colonial system of governance, such as the inner contradictions of Wilson's national self-determination. In these considerations, contra Tilly (2007), there was no connection between democracy and independent statehood. Finnish independence ultimately was not portrayed as an aspect of democratization, but rather as a secondary outcome of the racialized civilizational logic of the Western empires.

As George Steinmetz has extensively described, colonial state fields were semi-autonomous, i.e. metropolitan struggles and definitions were imposed on the colonial states, where they took specific forms in peripheral contexts. Colonial field autonomy, Steinmetz writes, was "entwined with the metropole" via bridging two spaces, the "global field of colonial strategies" and the set of existing other colonial states (Steinmetz 2008). In a Bourdieusian sense, the relational nature of these struggles as central analytic and the historicization of social epistemologies is required to reconstruct such fields outside of the dominant narrative, as Steinmetz suggests.

Instead of being a comparative alternative, pre-1917-1919 models of statehood and their (dis)continuities suggest that we should not only rethink historically statehood's trajectory, but also reconstruct the sociological definition of endogenous historical trajectories of political rights in individual nation-states. *The formal idea of Western definitions of statehood, should be an object of*

*analysis instead of a conceptual sociological category.* Special focus should be placed on the variety of stateforms and the relations of modernization processes within and across these different forms.

### Chapter 3. Peripheral Democratization – Making and Unmaking of the Finnish Colonial Field

In this chapter I focus on the developments of statehood and democracy in the Grand Duchy of Finland, specifically on the developments leading to democratic reform in 1905-07, and to independence in 1917-1919. Both of these moments were preceded by periods of russification, i.e. imperial centralization that tried to unify administrative and legal practices across the empire, respectively the first and second russification periods. In the Grand Duchy of Finland these periods were by and large perceived and politicized as attempts by Russian nationalists (the Finnish bourgeois perspective) or imperial bourgeois (the Finnish socialist perspective) as attempts to undermine the imperial sovereignty that had granted Finland autonomy and statehood.

This narrative is analyzed with the help of political magazines representing the four main political parties in the Grand Duchy. These parties were the Fennoman conservative Finnish party (Tuulispää magazine), the liberal nationalist Young Finnish party (Velikulta magazine), the liberal anti-nationalist Swedish party (Fyren magazine), and the Social Democratic party (Kurikka magazine). I analyze how these factions situated each other in the colonial state field on the one hand, i.e. how they recognized each other as actors in the same field, and how they understood those positions within the colonial state itself, extending from St. Petersburg to the local level, on the other. Why and how these parties understood questions of Finnish autonomy, stateform and place in the empire, and democratization. Why was democratic reform uncontroversial and why did the Grand Duchy embark upon a separate and more radical path of democratic reforms than the imperial metropole that simultaneously founded an imperial parliament, the Duma?

To answer these questions, this chapter identifies the founding *illusio* and constitutive social other that maintain fielded practices, especially inter-actor coordination and relative autonomy (Steinmetz 2016). Steinmetz further elaborates that “explaining changes at the societal level therefore

involves looking for events or forces that simultaneously erode the autonomy of several fields or bring them into a temporary harmony” (2011, 55). The imperial reforms of 1905-1906, the abdication of the Czar, and the following events in 1917-1919 are identified as the key explanatory moments in this regard. This outline will help understand social struggles in the colonial state field of Finland as “conserving or subverting the principles by which field specific capital is distributed” and ultimately how it led to a “change [in] the very definition of the field’s dominant form of capital”, as Steinmetz (2008, 591) characterizes such changes more generally.

A fielded perspective can help us understand the role and goal of democratization beyond its traditional sociological definitions and historical narrative. This connected history is then expanded when compared with Finnish statehood’s in the inter-imperial dimension in chapter two and democratization’s role in an imperial metropole in chapter four, as something beyond alternative histories and modernities.

Critically for theories of democracy, this deep and extensive democracy, in Tilly’s terms, was produced by empire and empires as a result of both the inter- and intra-imperial conditions of the Finnish colonial state field. Its evidenced by the ways in which political actors, radically differing in their class politics but agreeing on the importance of deepening democracy, collaborated in creating democracy as a unifying vision for the Grand Duchy of Finland. I establish this case with unusual data, for sociologists. By addressing the most popular and publicly accessible media of the day – political cartoons – across publications associated with each of the dominant political actors of the time. I establish their contesting positions and senses of their competitors. More importantly, I establish the common sense of the day, in Bourdieu’s terms the *illusio*, that enabled them to create a meaningful and coherent democratic field of contest. It ended only because the times of Russian and German empire themselves ended, to be replaced by a new kind of inter-imperial order defined by Western and Soviet intra-imperial logics. To miss this critical moment on the periphery of a declining empire also means to miss the historical sociological conditions of democracy’s formation, of our theories of democracy, and of the importance of understanding the constraints, and possibilities, of empire itself.

## Perspective

The main take-away of the chapter individually is that contestation over statehood and nationalism/patriotism were argued for and understood as embedded in intra-imperial politics, both antagonisms and cooperation between parties were entangled with imperial politics envisioned at once as the *raison d'être* of the Finnish state and as its 'other'. In this equation democratic reforms and thereafter the Finnish parliament took center stage as a form of excluding and distinguishing the Grand Duchy from metropolitan politics. This perspective led to a logic of encompassing democratic reform as universal suffrage and a single chamber parliament As Leonhard (2015: 637) has argued, representative institutions became forums for competing visions of the empire, but, as Sebastian Conrad adds, it was the colonial dimension that provided the different perspectives for those visions (2010). Unlike the imperial parliaments and the various self-governing privileged assemblies that were their extensions<sup>54</sup>, competing visions of empire in the periphery meant envisioning democracy differently. Democracy as the enlightened form of sovereign government was founded upon an imagination of civilizational hierarchies where metropolitan parliaments steered entire imperial states. Non-sovereign peripheral democracy rather promoted and showcased autonomous development and capacities. Recognition of subordination as the governing condition of democratization portrayed democracy as equalization and eradication of hierarchies. *Democracy did not serve to legitimize existing sovereignty, but to assert a right for autonomy outside it.*

Democratization's promise under imperial rule, instead of for imperial rule, is not in maintaining or obtaining sovereignty, as the sociology of democracy would have it, but in negotiating and navigating it. Under self-contained nation-states, this capacity of democratization to negotiate, especially statehood, vis-à-vis sovereignty was cut off and transferred into the realm of inter-imperial relations. Defining sovereign democratic government in relation to sovereign non-democratic

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<sup>54</sup> In Hungary, for example, as part of the dual monarchy, the parliament operated far from universal suffrage and itself acted as secondary metropolitan parliament, assembling delegates from surrounding colonies. Other forms of colonial self-government operated on a basis of privileged access, such as white settler parliaments and advisory boards in the British and German overseas colonies, and estate or property based local elected councils.

government hollows the concept of democratization itself into a variable<sup>55</sup>, and excludes the qualitatively different roles of democratization under different constellations of sovereignty, statehood and governance.

### *Political Satire as an Object of Analysis*

The narrative analysis of this chapter is complemented with evidence from four political satire magazines, one from each main political group of the Grand Duchy at the time. The rise of this type of magazines coincided with politicization at the turn of the century, as discussed below, and their circulation at best exceeded that of many major newspapers<sup>56</sup> (Uino 1986). These were the talk shows of the era<sup>57</sup>. They not only shed light on the political events and their interpretation beyond official and direct statements by focusing on the unspoken, illogical yet often apparent contradictions present in them, they also help map the political field as they reference and focus on the perception of other parties. As Bourdieu put it, “polemics imply a form of recognition; adversaries whom one would prefer to destroy ... cannot be combated without consecrating them” (Bourdieu, *Field of Cultural Production*, 42, quoted in Minin 2011, 223).

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<sup>55</sup> Not unlike the confinement of socialism under national self-determination that excluded qualitative differences and debates over socialism’s role vis-à-vis sovereignty and state, as is discussed in chapter 4.

<sup>56</sup> Circulations were somewhere below and above 10 000 copies, while Kurikka at its height reached 20 000.

<sup>57</sup> “Over four hundred periodicals of political humor and satire with an overall circulation of close to thirty million issues appeared across Russia and its regions between 1905 and 1908” (Minin 2008, 1).

To give an example, the Finnish socialists would never portray themselves as working with the conservative Finns, but from the perspective of the Swedish magazine, this assumption could logically be made. Thus, together the four magazines then paint a picture of the main fault lines and limits of the political field. Political satire is a product and source of the historical context, but at the same its value and success already at the time of its production was based on its capacity to interpret and analyze the politics of that context and reveal aspects or make connections that were not announced but would be intuitively understood.

Oleg Minin has written about the Russian satirical press from the same era from a Bourdieusian perspective arguing that social conditions crucially inform this type of art and news production, which in turn “exposes the existing sociopolitical environment” as it directly contributes “to these journals’ ability to generate symbolic capital” based on their popular appeal on the one hand, yet pronounced oppositional stance on the other (Minin 2011, 217).

### *Finland under the Russian Empire*

Political actors in the Grand Duchy invented the idea of Finnish statehood in the 1860s as part of the constitution of the Finnish colonial state field in the latter half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. The incorporation of the Swedish province of Finland by Czar Alexander I and his confirmation of the privileges of the Finnish Estates and Swedish legal codes from late 18<sup>th</sup> century was then interpreted

## **Table 8. Finnish Satirical Magazines.**

### Fyren

- Bourgeois
- Close to the conservative constitutionalist Swedish Party
- Swekoman
- Anti-Finnish Nationalist
- Anti-monarchist

### Tuulispää

- Moderate to conservative bourgeois
- Close to the Fennoman conservative Finnish Party
- Anti-Swedish
- Finnish nationalist
- Monarchist

### Velikulta

- Liberal bourgeois
- Close to the constitutionalist Fennoman Young Finnish Party
- Radical Finnish nationalist
- Anti-authoritarian

### Kurikka

- Socialist
- Moderately Nationalist
- Anti-monarchist
- Close to the Social Democratic Party and the worker’s movement

All magazines accessed at National Archives of Finland

as a founding moment of separate statehood. Previously, little attention or weight was given to the event. It was rather interpreted as Finland retaining a Swedish form of governance (Jussila 1987, 111) under the Czar.

The invention of a tradition of Finnish statehood was initially contrary to prevailing understandings and was harshly criticized not only by metropolitan, but also by Finnish scholars and statesmen. There was confusion over which laws these newly invented ‘constitutions’, inherited from Sweden, in reality were, not to mention what their content was. Moreover, they were considered both vague and hastily written (Jussila 1987, 104).

The reference point of this invention in wider inter-imperial transformations was described by an article published in the liberal Helsingfors Dagblad magazine in 1883, tellingly titled “The international position of Finland”. It portrayed the annexation not as an act of conquering, but as an intentional act by the Finnish people to secede from Sweden and join Russia, an international legal act that transformed Finland from a province into a sovereign state. The idea of an international dimension to imperial relations was new, set forth by the reorganizations of imperial and state relations in the early and mid-19<sup>th</sup> century, especially the European revolutions of 1848.<sup>58</sup> Drawing from the historian Hwasser, the idea established as the founding illusion of the colonial state field was that Finland had “emancipated” itself from Swedish rule by joining the Russian Empire, which had agreed to elevate it to the status “of a nation amongst nations”, whereas in reality the Czar recognized Finland simply as a Grand Duchy, a nation of the many nations he ruled (Jussila 2007).

Thus, inter-imperial considerations were making their way into intra-imperial relations. This logic and force of the illusion of secession as emancipation was almost flawlessly repeated in 1917 with separation from Russia and the search for a new sovereign to guarantee independence. But, instead of the invented tradition of an act of statemaking, Finnish incorporation in 1809 was a common imperial policy of annexation, created mechanistically from above (Jussila 1989, 115). The

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<sup>58</sup> Closest to the Finns, and touching upon the invention of statehood, instead of simple reorganization of monarchical relations, were, for example, the unification of Italy, the creation of the German Empire, the partition of Poland and its aftermath, the issue of Norway, and the making of the Austro-Hungarian dual monarchy.

picture below (Figure 1), published on the centenary of Russian conquest, depicts how the invented tradition combined the inter-imperial logic of “a nation among nations” as the form of annexation by Russia to the intra-imperial position of Finland a century later. Both acts take place under the two-headed eagle of the imperial state. The empire has forgotten its own promise and instead of taking the arms of Swedes, it steals the money and law of the Finns.



Figure 1. Velikulta. 26.03.1909.

However, during the 1860s and 1870s questions of the form of statehood and its connection to sovereignty that animated the Finnish question in inter-imperial debates in the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century were not yet fully formed. The main point was simply that Finland had a direct connection to the Czar, rather than having become a part of Russian imperial statehood. Sovereignty and statehood were being defined separately, though in connection to each other. The position of Finland was at that point compared, for example, to the Kingdom of Hannover, which, though part of the German confederation of states, was ruled by the British royal family until 1866. Its annexation by the King of England following the Congress of Vienna had elevated its status to that of a kingdom.

### *Imperial Transformations*

The Russian Empire was part of world politics and inter-imperial relations. The developments in the Grand Duchy took place as part of the Russian Empire, where governance reforms were affected by the convulsions of the growing and changing empire. The intra- and inter-imperial relations were intrinsically connected. Throughout the 19<sup>th</sup> century Russia waged war and annexed (though sometimes also lost) territories across its vast borders from Poland to Persia to China and Alaska, from the Napoleonic wars to the Crimean War, the Great Game and the Russo-Japanese War, to name just a few. There was almost no empire with which Russia would not engage in territorial transfers or disputes. During the time that the Grand Duchy of Finland was part of the Empire, Russia, for example, colonized vast territories in North America, negotiated (though never ratified) a treaty to annex Hawaii as its protectorate, annexed Central Asian Khanates and territory between Beijing and Korea, and at one point sailed its fleet to San Francisco and New York, to operate from there in the event that US and Russia found themselves at war with Britain and France<sup>59</sup>. The New York Times then, on October 11, 1863, reported American officials to have likened the reforms of the Russian Empire and the US to each other: “the improvements with which the Czar is binding together his dominions as we have been striving to do here; to the rapid and enlightened march of progress in his realm; to his having even forestalled us in his glorious proclamation emancipating the serfs”.

The abolition of serfdom (serfdom was never in place in the Grand Duchy) was planned since Alexander I's reign and took place in 1861. It was followed by local government reform. Other measures to reform and especially centralize and unify the vast and diverse empire were equally planned and, with varying success, executed throughout the 19<sup>th</sup> and early 20<sup>th</sup> century, especially the unification of the legal code. The changing politics of the Grand Duchy of Finland were connected to these political convulsions of the Empire. Finns took part in ending the Polish uprising in 1831 and

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<sup>59</sup> For example, Frank Leslie's Illustrated Newspaper from New York reported on October 17, 1863 the following: “When France and England a few years since assailed Russia, the American heart, by an instinct which nations feel as well as individuals, gave its sympathies to Russia. Instinct showed America her enemies in those who sought to humble the Czar, and that instinct was true. The last two years have shown us who in Europe are our friends and who our foes. Russia alone has addressed a word of sympathy ... The presence of the Russian squadron in our harbour has therefore naturally called forth an expression of national feeling...”. See also Golder (1915) “The Russian Fleet and the Civil War” in the *American Historical Review* 2(4), 801-812.

marched to the gates of Istanbul during the Russo-Turkish War. Finns served in various position in the Empire and for a long time St. Petersburg was the second largest Finnish city in the world.

Unlike other empires, specifically such as the United States or Britain, the Russian Empire was founded on the idea of indivisible rule under the Czar and the imperial state. And in the case of the Grand Duchy of Finland, for example, conflicts did not arise over exclusion in the empire, but over the various forms of imperial inclusion. In the literature on imperial governance, centralization in the metropole, without inclusion of colonial peripheries or minorities, is assumed to lead to separatism and oppressive imperial relations<sup>60</sup> and in this vein the representation of minorities became the cornerstone of post-WWI politics, then, ironically, under the auspices of nationally centralized states. However, the Grand Duchy of Finland of the Russian Empire presents a different image of imperial relations, one of a rejection of metropolitan democratic representation, and rather an embrace of an exclusive imperial relation, as will be discussed below.

### *Making of the Colonial Field, Invention of Inter-Imperiality – 1809 - 1904*

It would be fair to summarize that the originally separate position of Finland vis-à-vis the empire, boiled simply down to the fact that matters regarding only Finnish issues were introduced to the Czar separately. Since annexation to Russia in 1809 up until 1918 the direct linkage between Finland and its sovereign authority was the Minister-Secretary of State for Finland, who resided in St. Petersburg.<sup>61</sup>

From the perspective of St. Petersburg Finland was a “privileged province”. The privileges referred to those of the Finnish estates, not statehood or administration. In this sense Finland’s separation and autonomy within the empire was nowhere near that of, say, British India, to which Finland was later compared. From the position of the privileges of the estates Finland’s position was

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<sup>60</sup> Juliette Cadiot for example writes that “minority representative sought the right to guarantee a certain number of seats for their own deputies” (2017).

<sup>61</sup> This model of sovereignty guaranteeing representation from above was replicated in the attempts to replace the Czar’s sovereign authority after his abdication with a strong executive triumvirate, a king, and eventually, as came to pass, a president with the power to dismantle the parliament, with strong executive and appointing powers, and control over foreign policy.

even less autonomous. It was comparable to that of the privileges of the Baltic provinces, but unlike the Baltic German nobility, the Finnish nobility was scarce, weak, and not similarly influential in St. Petersburg, which to an extent made them turn inwards, to provincial matters (Jussila 1987, 118).

It is safe to say that it was the unimportant and peripheral position of Finland that, at least initially, kept it from being more closely incorporated with the metropole. One Russian Governor-General referred to his appointment to Finland as his “personal Siberia”. To make their voices heard in St. Petersburg Finnish political actors had to coordinate and co-operate from early on. And, reciprocally, as political parties then emerged, their domestic coordination and cooperation (or lack thereof) was formed on the basis of the relation to the metropole. Indeed, in this chapter we see that contestation over statehood and nationalism/patriotism were argued for and understood as intra-imperial politics, as Finland’s position within the empire. In this equation democratic reforms and thereafter the Finnish parliament took center stage as a form of excluding and distinguishing the Grand Duchy from metropolitan politics, which shaped the meaning of democratization itself.

### *Invented Statehood*

This coordination between Finnish actors became politicized with the resumption of the Finnish Diet in 1863 and set forth both the invention of Finnish statehood and the emergence of political parties. Furthermore, these developments coalesced with a rise of other forms of societal awakening and organization. Original political disputes concerning the positions of Finnish and Swedish languages and cultures in the Grand Duchy soon transformed into divisions based on the position of the Finnish state within the empire, and how to politically organize and secure it. Thus, the division between Fennomans and Swekomans for example transformed into a debate about the pros and cons of Finnish nationalism in maintaining autonomy<sup>62</sup>.

Once ideas of Finnish statehood were invented and began to spread, their absurdities were marked. For example, the esteemed Finnish statesman J. V. Snellman joked that perhaps this Finnish state needs to establish diplomatic relations with Russia then, and have its head, the Grand Duke,

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<sup>62</sup> See for example Fyren 19.05.1906 on page 33.

negotiate with the Russian Czar<sup>63</sup>, capturing the tension in mobilizing inter-imperial ideas to constitute a colonial state field.

In 1865 the Finnish estates themselves still defined Finland's position as "a part of the imperial state and inseparably united with Czardom"<sup>64</sup>. Indeed, even the most radical defenders of Finnish sovereign statehood based their arguments on domestic sovereignty, or what was defined as state sovereignty, not on international, i.e. inter-imperial, sovereignty. Considering this distinction, which Finnish claims to statehood hinged upon, it is revealing to compare the earlier mentioned article titled "the international position of Finland", with the title of the article published in the *Moskovskaya Vedemosti* in 1888, responding to increased Finnish agitation about its legal statehood, titled "The Legend about the Finnish State" (Jussila 1987, 143). The Russian responses to the Finnish position crucially recognized, by denying them, the invented tradition of Finnish statehood that was now promoted by Finnish actors to distinguish their politics from those of the metropole. They charged against the "windmill", as Jussila puts it, and summarizes the main importance of this invented tradition. As chapter two describes, the debate about Finnish statehood developed an inter-imperial dimension.

Some inconsistencies of this invention became clearer the more the political divisions in the Grand Duchy developed and consolidated around democratic representation. In the following picture (Figure 2) a member of parliament and member of its constitutional committee is confused, as upon requesting a Finnish law book, she is handed over the Swedish law of 1734 and she replies "but I was asking for Finnish law".

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<sup>63</sup> These two, of course, were one and the same person.

<sup>64</sup> 'Kejsarriket' and 'kejsardömet' respectively.

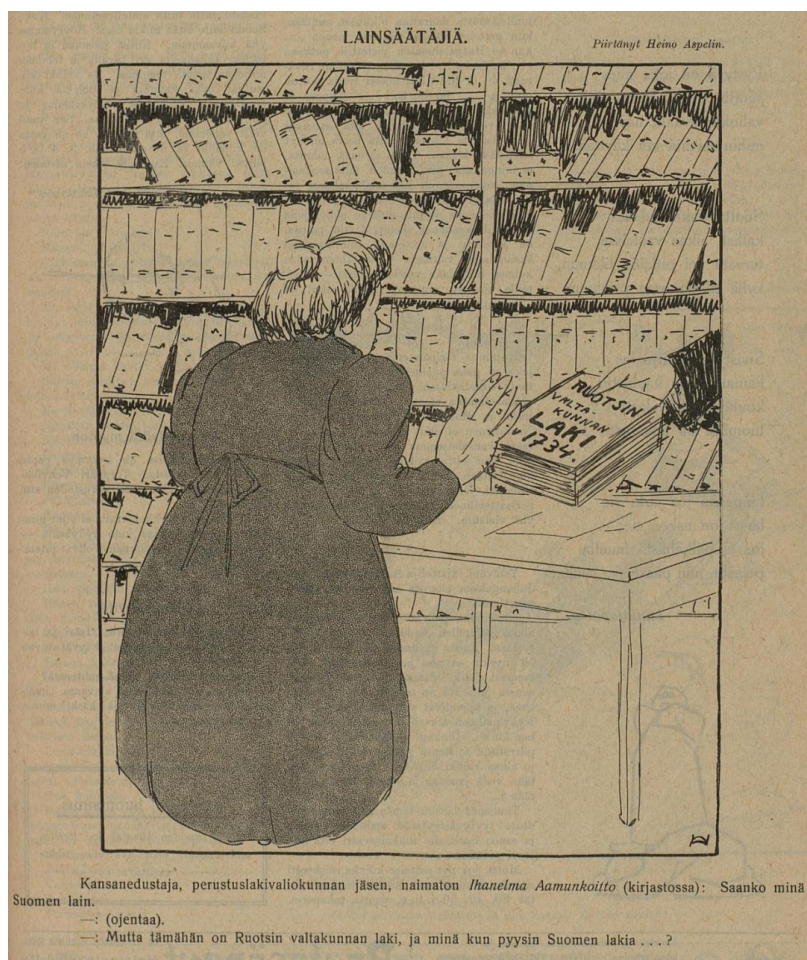


Figure 2. Tuulispää. 02.07.1909.

Besides the more amateurish and radical statements, Russian scholars were fairly moderate in their responses and in line with other inter-imperial debates. They did not deny the existence of Finnish political rights, comparable to those of Canada or India, but the idea of sovereign statehood parallel and equal to that of Russian statehood was considered impossible. The latter was promoted only by Finnish polemicists. Jussila characterizes one of the most famous and successful of them, Leo Mechelin, whose position was not scholarly, but rather purely political (1989). His search for sovereignty was nested entirely within the empire's sovereignty. It only made sense as an intra-imperial political position and under the umbrella of the Russian imperial state. No Finnish actor had the intention to portray Finland as an inter-imperially equal state with its own sovereignty, as the joke of Snellman, discussed in the previous section above, well revealed; as such the Finnish position crucially hinged upon the distinction of inter-imperial sovereignty from intra-imperial state

sovereignty or “Finland’s Internal Independence” (Danielson 1892) as one prominent Finnish volume about the matter was titled, as separate from inter-imperial sovereignty. Intra-imperial sovereignty was projected vis-à-vis the imperial state and its constituent parts while inter-imperial sovereignty could be held only by those imperial states together. Danielson himself, one of the most prominent promoters of Finland’s special position, noted that the word “province” could be used, if one remembered that it meant Finland’s position from the perspective of foreign policy, but not in terms of its (intra-imperial) relation to the Russian Empire (Jussila 1987, 155).

### *Politicization and Reform*

Newspapers become more numerous, widely circulated and political in the 1880s and 1890s. That period saw the founding of newspapers supporting the conservative and liberal Fennomans, the Swedish party and the workers’ movement together with the founding of the respective parties. These four parties came to represent the main political positions within the Grand Duchy up until the civil war. This chapter draws from four satirical magazines supporting each of the different parties in highlighting how the Grand Ducal political divisions were formed vis-à-vis each other, democracy, and the empire.

As information about the government structures of other countries began circulating, desire to reform the Finnish system of representation soon emerged. These calls largely stemmed from the three perspectives. First, there was a need to portray, based on prevailing thought at the time, that Finnish cultural development was high enough for statehood and self-government. But, the fairly antiquated system of an estates-based diet originating from the 18<sup>th</sup> century was not up to par with developments elsewhere and was considered feudal. Secondly, the four estates – nobility, clergy, bourgeoisie, and landholding peasantry – no longer represented the existing political divisions in the Grand Duchy. The consensus thus supported reforming the system. Thirdly, the previous system of administrative autonomy, before the reconvening of the Diet, had been seen as a good guarantee of Finnish autonomy so far, but with changing times and increased needs for legislative measures both in the Grand Duchy and the Empire, new thinking on maintaining Finnish interests came to be recognized as important.

In 1896 the nationalist and Finnish minded magazine *Velikulta* summarized the problem concerning people's will and the existing estate-based representation (Figure 3); "The peoples will on the election scales".

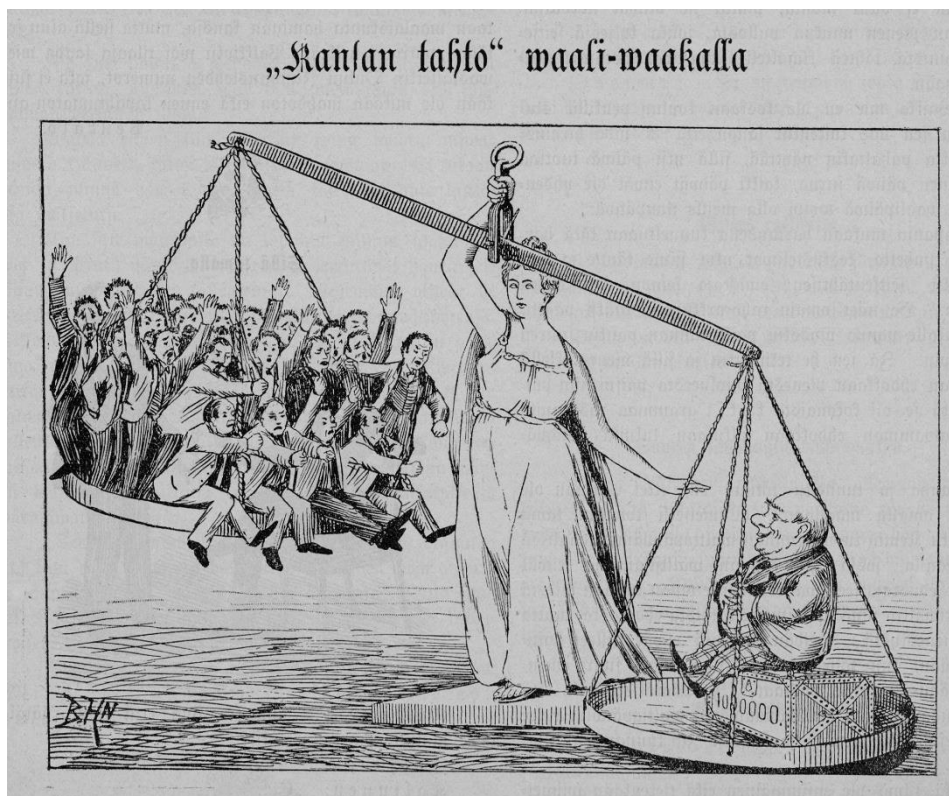


Figure 3. *Velikulta*. 06.10.1896.

Nationalist and socialist interests coalesced in the desire to enlarge representativeness. Finnish worker's organizations were originally founded and run by liberal nationalists up until the turn of the century. The nobleman and social democrat N.R. af Ursin personified these joined interests. His commentary on developments in Norway displays the logic behind demands for representative reform. He wrote in the workers' newspaper *Työmies*, quoting a Norwegian newspaper, that "those who wish to work for their fatherland's independence, with the condition that they may keep their own citizens in a state of governmental adolescence – they lack the correct patriotic mind, the mind that organically brings about power and victory" (12.02.1898).

The coalescence of nationalist and socialist interests was equally noted by a major newspaper in Tampere, one of the main working-class cities in the Grand Duchy. In a series of editorials already

in 1894, the paper stated that the workers' question in Finland was not one of class conflict but rather of national character (Salmelin 1967, 60). Finnish workers themselves were not keenly aware of the workers' question itself: in 1890 the Helsinki workers' association decided to acquire books in order to understand "what was meant by the socialist question abroad" (Salmelin 1967, 78). The tendency of working-class organization from above, by the Finnish bourgeoisie, is exemplified by the discussion of the Turku workers' association in 1892 about acquiring a flag for the association. It was recommended that the flag's color be red, because red is the color of freedom. This idea was thwarted however, since it was pointed out that socialists abroad use the color red in their flags, and thereby it should be avoided in Finland (Salmelin 1967, 80).

The landholding peasantry also argued for wider representation with a similar logic. One of their representative's appeal was published in the liberal newspaper *Päivälehti*, where it was argued that "several groups of people, of whose governmental maturity there are no doubts about ... remain without suffrage in the countryside" (18.02.1897). What was crucial about calls for representative reform was that they promoted this type of a logic of encompassing reform over incremental expansion. Any incremental steps would undermine the wider process of national awakening. *Päivälehti* summarized this stance already in 1894. They wrote, that "the smaller the nation, the more dangerous it is to select particular groups from its populace and leave general matters in their hands, and close off the breadth of people from governmental life" (12.08.1894).

Another representative of the peasant's estates argued that "the successful support of all of our citizens can be gained by our governmental life, only so that our representative organ in reality will represent the entire nation and all national classes' strivings and activities." The focus was on the character and position of the state, rather than political rights and the system of sovereign governance in it. The grand ducal state, as the middlemen of the nation in the empire, would require maximum support. To this logic it was natural to include support for women's suffrage. The appeal continued that women's suffrage they "consider just and reasonable" but, if implemented, "would have to also include the first and second estates". And already in 1895, when starting an article series on suffrage in different countries, *Päivälehti* pointed out that wider representation in most countries is both

universal and equal, in that the amount of votes is equal, but that this “universal suffrage”, written in quotation marks in this sentence by the newspaper, “if it is both universal and equal ... then on the other hand it is less than it appears, as it in most cases leaves all women without a vote” (05.10.1895).

From here the jump to full universal suffrage, i.e. the right to also stand for election, came naturally. A long opinion piece published by *Päivälehti* follows a similar logic, that just as wider suffrage is beneficial for national development, which itself must take place as a whole and for the entire nation, so too is women’s suffrage, and therefore also the right to stand for election, because “the right to vote and the right to stand for election are dependent on each other” (27.03.1897).

On the eve of the representative reforms an opinion piece in the liberal *Helsingin Sanomat*, summarized the logic that most signed up for: “women’s suffrage cannot be based on income levels, it would be doubly wrong. Reforms cannot be founded upon the old order of things” (17.11.04). The worker’s newspaper echoed this sentiment, stating that a reform cannot at once fix an issue on one side, while committing a worse deed on the other: “The greatest injustice is, that a society lawfully forces one side of the nation, women, to a shameful unlawfulness, in matters regarding the entire nation’s, i.e. equally women’s, happiness. This is such a great injustice that all talk of reforming suffrage to a more lawful basis is fraudulent, unless it includes a demand, that women must receive suffrage on the same basis as men” (28.19.1904).

The idea of universal suffrage became hegemonic in considerations of the Grand Duchy’s political future. Even before the restoration of legality and the commencement of reforms in the empire in late 1905, the Swedish language satirical *Fyren* captured the prevailing situation when the estates-based diet had considered only modest expansion of representation. In the cartoon you can see a plainly clad woman snapping away the Finnish flag from two noblemen who were trying to hold on to it with a Russian whip (Figure 4).

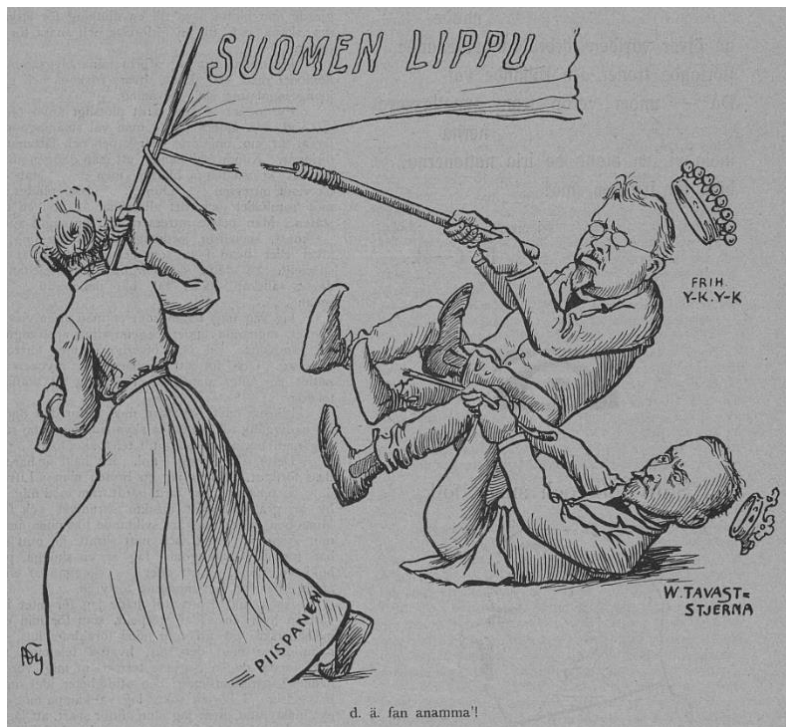


Figure 4. Fyren. 29.04.1905.

Universal suffrage developed into such an important political demand that it eventually finalized the politicization of the grand ducal state, by breaking the cordial alliance between the conservative Finns and the Swedish party, who had supported a more “enlightened” leadership as the best means of dealing with the metropole. The pro-Finnish Tuulispää depicts the reason for breaking the joint candy (the alliance), that the two parties had been unrolling together in anticipation of reform, as man carrying a flag with the text “down with opposers of suffrage” barges in (Figure 5).



Figure 5. Tuulispää. 28.04.1905.

### *Imperial Reform*

Governor-General Bobrikov of the Grand Duchy (1898-1904), who was assassinated by a nationalist-minded Finn in 1904, declared upon entering office that “Russia is one and indivisible, just as is one and indivisible the Imperial throne, which has sheltered Finland’s progress to its present welfare. That is why any Finn, to whom the interest of his country is dear, ought to be animated by a natural feeling of oneness with Russia”<sup>65</sup> This was not a specifically Finnish condition, even if the Grand Duchy enjoyed relatively more extensive autonomy; the Russification policies begun under Bobrikov simply led Finnish activists to closer contact with Russian revolutionary parties up until the upheavals of 1905-1906, thereby in effect living up to Bobrikov’s declaration. But, the restoration of autonomy in an extended form and the founding of a Finnish parliament, which clashed with parliamentary politics of the metropole, distanced Finnish activists from their metropolitan counterparts.

Before 1899 and the beginning of Russification Finnish radicals had stayed away from Russian opposition and revolutionary parties. It was the repressive actions of the imperial government

<sup>65</sup> Bobrikov’s address from 1898, quoted in Luntinen 1985, 26.

that increased Finnish interest in intra-imperial co-operation. Historian Antti Kujala's thesis is that Finnish radicals' relation to Russian opposition changed hand in hand with Finnish autonomy. The reforms of 1906 distanced Finnish radicals, on the left and the right, from the activities of metropolitan activists, once both had gained a more open and legitimate venue for their politics. The best example of that venue was how the Finnish right wing legalists moved from illegality, or in some cases exile, into the government, and thus, as Kujala argues, lost their reasons to advance reforms and revolution in Russia proper (Kujala 1989, 15-16).

This can be seen on the left too. For example, from the 1909 book on socialism by the influential Finnish Social Democratic politician Väinö Voionmaa (Voionmaa 1909), which hardly recognizes Russian socialism, paints it as Orientalistic and makes no mention of Lenin. Nevertheless Lenin was at the time was perhaps the only Russian activist supporting full Finnish self-determination, and one of the few socialists promoting small nations' right to secede. With universal suffrage the grand ducal parliament became the hegemonic stage that all political parties recognized as the forum for politics concerning Finland's position within the empire. And in this regard, they also recognized each other.

The socialists portrayed the different bourgeois factions as equal, and equally against the interests of Finland due to the bourgeoisie's internal competition against each other within a capitalist state. This picture and poem from the time of the general strike in 1905 portrays a worker sailing on Finland and swiping the self-interested bourgeois parties away with the broom of socialism (Figure 6).

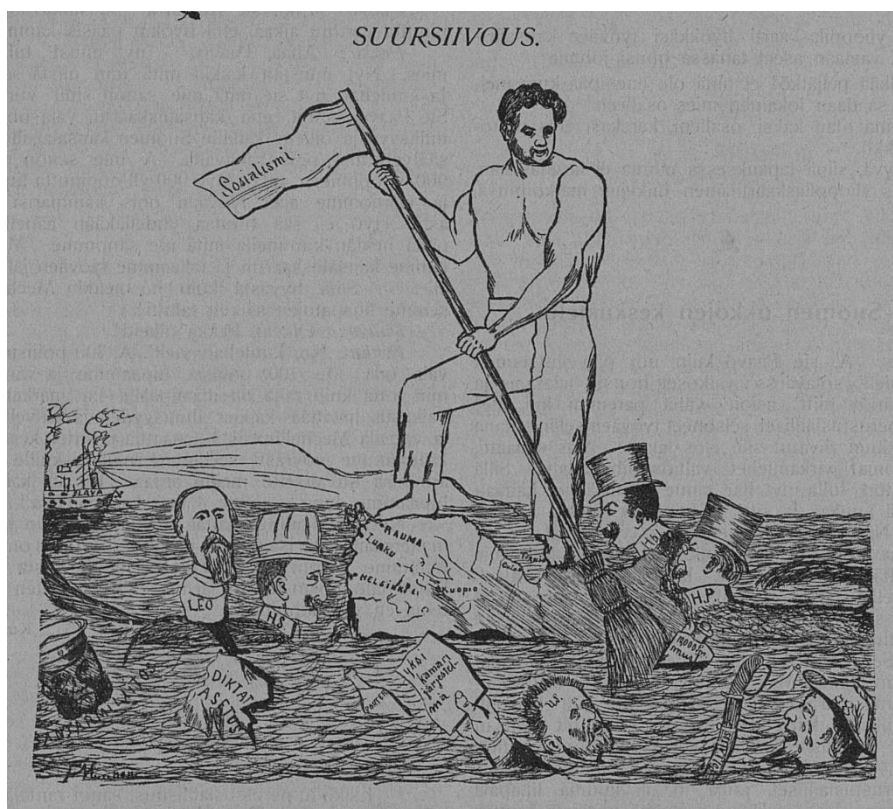


Figure 6. Kurikka. 01.12.05

The Bourgeois factions portrayed the socialists as reckless fighters undermining the foundations upon which national development and statehood were achieved and strived for. This cartoon from *Velikulta* portrays what would happen “if the socialists gained majority in the parliament”. Beyond undermining traditional values (such as a baby drinking milk from a cow as the mother is reading), interestingly also foreigners, what appears to be Chinese and Jewish people, would be allowed to simply march into the country (Figure 7).

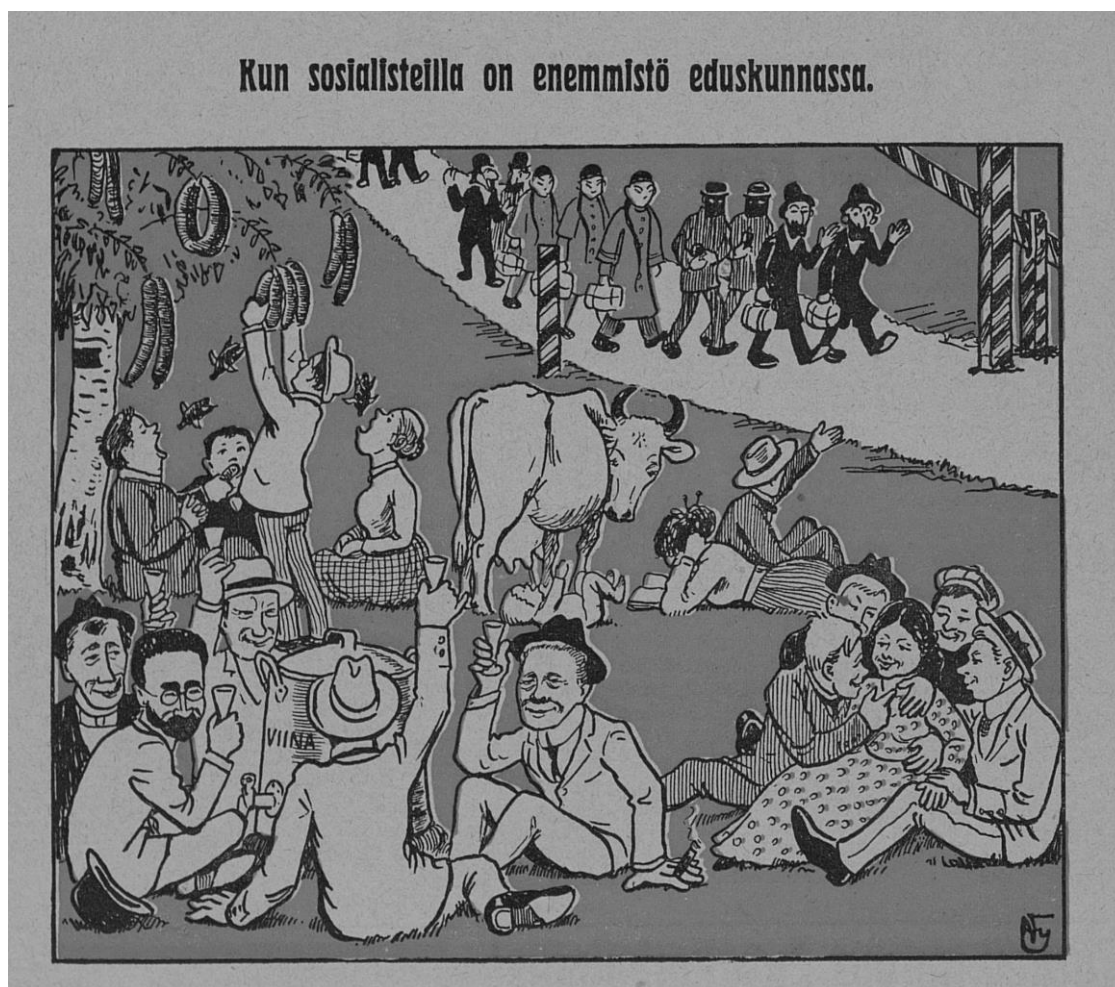


Figure 7. Velikulta. 11.06.1908

The Swedish language *Fyren* focused on the socialists supposed desire to break social harmony and wreak havoc, especially symbolized by dynamite. During the time of general strike and subsequent democratic reform, the outcome (universal suffrage and single chamber parliament) was praised by some social democratic voices and, one member of the party, school teacher J.K. Kari, was even taken into the senate that begun to prepare the reform<sup>66</sup>. However, in general the social democrats were disappointed at the result, as they had hoped for more direct democracy, if not the overthrow of the (capitalist) state. As a result, they threw Kari and others out of the party, which the *Fyren* magazine depicted as dynamite weighing more “in the reds’ scales” (Figure 8).

<sup>66</sup> Kari was likely one of the first socialists in government in the world.



Figure 8. Fyren. 25.08.06

The socialists portrayed the bourgeoisie to be in cahoots with the Czarist state and benefiting from it. Here we see all the bourgeois factions together helping to pass money to the imperial state in a matter over military payments, while the social democrats are walking away (Figure 9).

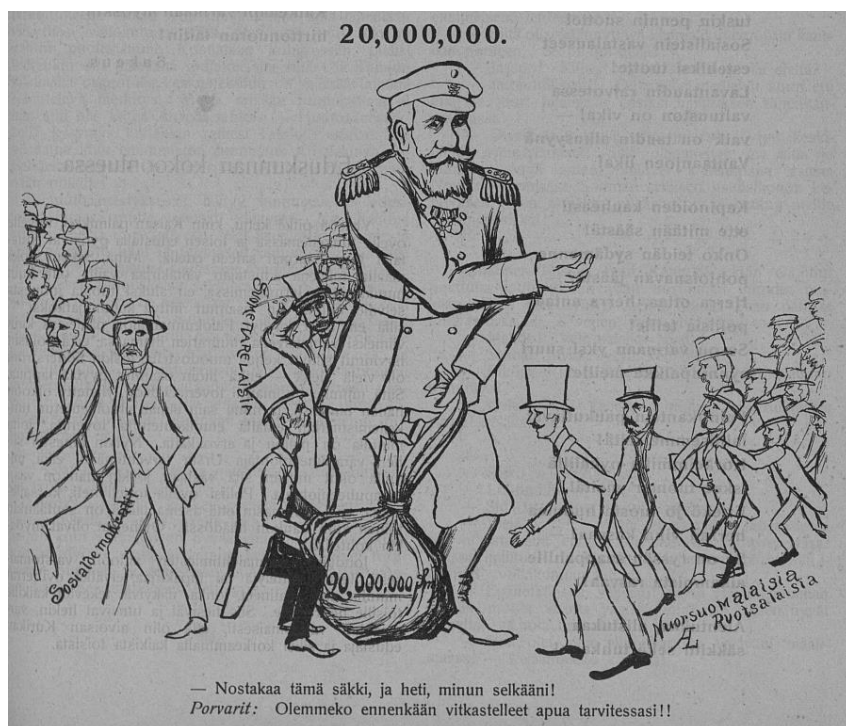


Figure 9. Kurikka 15.09.07

Similar arguments would be levelled against the socialists in the sense that their recklessness would favor and please the Russians and prevent successful Finnish politics within the empire, as this picture following the first election results in 1907 suggests. It portrays a Russian official looking on happily while the Finnish maiden is in despair and the socialist rooster is shouting on top of a box of dynamite, with the other parties at its feet (Figure 10).



Figure 10. Fyren 06.04.1907.

Where the parties found themselves united however, was in strengthening their autonomous position upon which their existence depended.

*Consolidation of the Colonial Field. 1905-1916 Universal Suffrage and Single Chamber Politics under Empire*

Following the failure of the Russo-Japanese war, a wave of strikes and revolution swept across the Russian Empire. Though the revolution was a failure, it instigated the Czar to agree upon the founding of constitutional monarchy with a representative Imperial Duma. In Finland the strike became a means to demand the restoration of its legal autonomy, which at this point would inevitably mean also internal political reforms as the estates-based system was no longer seen as sufficient in upholding Finnish autonomy.

The question of Finnish autonomy within the empire became part of the empire-wide revolution for people's rights and representation. And as such, it was also fully entangled with internal Finnish questions of reform and the logic of universal suffrage and a single chamber parliament. This logic had been voiced earlier and gained near hegemonic support (see for example Kujala 2016).

After the Senate had initially refused the proposals for universal suffrage and a single chamber representation, belief in the so-called moderate politics of the conservative Finnish party vis-à-vis them were abandoned. Only some elements of the Swedish party continued to support a dual-chamber system and to raise suspicion over the women's vote, as the depiction from the Finnish-minded Tuulispää suggests. Only some of the Swedish press remains, as "the last of the Mohicans", while others walk under the banner of universal suffrage (Figure 11).



Figure 11. Tuulispää magazine. 27.10.1905

A pamphlet from 1905 makes this clear. It begins by proclaiming that only a people whose every member feels that they enjoy the benefits and rights of its fatherland, will be guaranteed to rise to secure its fatherland's lawful state. From this reference to Finland's position within the empire, the pamphlet neatly moves to make the argument for universal suffrage and a single chamber parliament: "If the parliament is to be understood as the entire people's representative ... then the entire people must indeed be represented there ... women and men". The pamphlet then concludes, that only this solution will bring the entire Finnish people to understand one another, which is necessary to save Finland (Yksi pienimmistä, 1905). Universal suffrage was taken to represent Finnishness in general. In Tuulispää's depiction universal suffrage breaks down the power of old structures that had dammed the Finnish river and used that water flow – "from the backs of the Finnish people" – for the water mill of the old institutions that had produced "civilization [education], wealth and power for foreign people". The waves of universal suffrage now crushed that construction and "the new one to be built will be one owned by the Finns" (Figure 12). In other words, Finnishness and the nation were equated with universal suffrage, standing against was to stand for the interests of something else than the grand duchy and its inhabitants.



Figure 12. Tuulispää. Early 1907.

By the time the reform was being drafted, the Estates had little power to resist both popular demand and especially the needs of the political parties that had now organized behind each faction. Therefore, we see here the Estates decapitating themselves on the chopping block of patriotism. “The 11.59 o’clock of the estates’s diet” is the title (Figure 13).

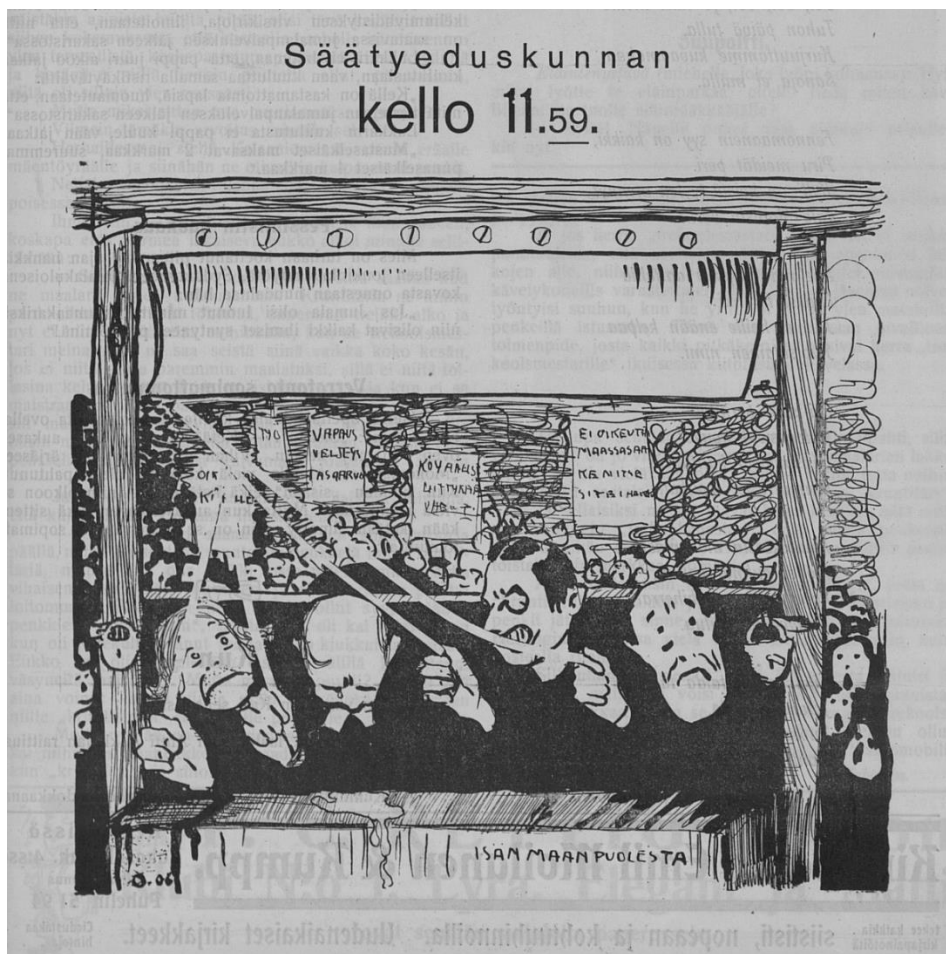


Figure 13. Tuulispää 25.05.1906

Also, the bourgeois side accepted more comprehensive suffrage now due to internal pressures on the one hand, and, more importantly, due to Russian democratization and the forming of the imperial Duma on the other. It was of importance at this conjuncture to create a representative organ in the Grand Duchy with strong claim for legitimacy and wide backing of the population. Following the reform, the number of qualified voters in the Grand Duchy went from 126.000 to 1.273.000 (Alapuro 2019 [1988], 107).

Democratization of the imperial state and any institutional and liberal reforms, rather than Czarist autocratic reforms, had long been one of the main fears of Finns regarding their autonomy. Jussila argues strongly that “it is indisputable, however, that any plan to create representative institutions (even advisory ones) in the Russian empire would have been a potential threat to the Finnish Diet in particular and its separate legislative system in general” (Jussila 1988, 242). Jussila

quotes Snellman from the mid-19<sup>th</sup> century already, pointing out that he “understood clearly that only a strong Emperor could protect us, and with liberal institutions coming into Russia, our troubles would only begin in earnest” (ibid.). Once the liberal reforms were on their way in the metropole, they needed to be countered by similar or, rather, more liberal reforms in the Grand Duchy.

Finnish fears over the democratization processes in the empire were not unfounded. A widespread Russophile depiction of the events leading to Finnish reforms of 1905-1906 concluded that “it remains only to hope that the State Duma in virtue of the rights of control conferred upon it will not fail to attend to this matter [of Finnish privileges] and will regulate Russo-Finnish relations on principles profitable to the whole State, not merely in the interests of Finlander separatism, as the Finlanders are endeavouring to do, by their efforts to secure all that is to be got out of the fact that the Finnish Diet existed before the State Duma” (Vladimirov 1911, 73). Similarly, with the beginning of the second russification period in 1910, the imperial duma was indeed, from the Finnish peripheral perspective, used by the government to dictate Finnish policy, however, as the following cartoon from *Fyren* shows, the Finns had their own democratic representation already, luckily for them. In the “great world theatre” prime minister Stolypin is shown whipping the imperial Duma, the bear, into eating Finland, but the task is difficult since Finland the hedgehog has spikes. As usual, director of the theatre, Europe, watches over (Figure 14).

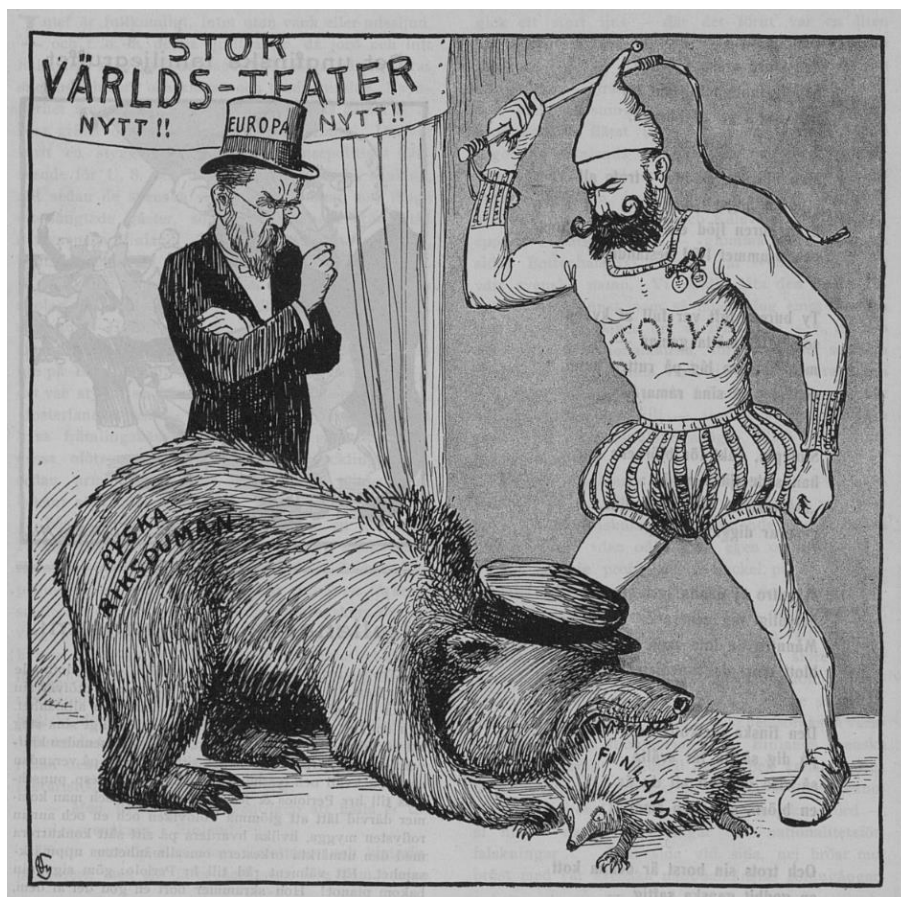


Figure 14. Fyren 11.06.1910.

In an even more glorious way, the Finnish minded Velikulta suggested that imperial administrators had gone hunting for the Finnish lion but equipped with tools that merely angered it. The imperial legal code, the cartoon suggests, is not good for catching the lion, which represents the Finnish state (Figure 15).

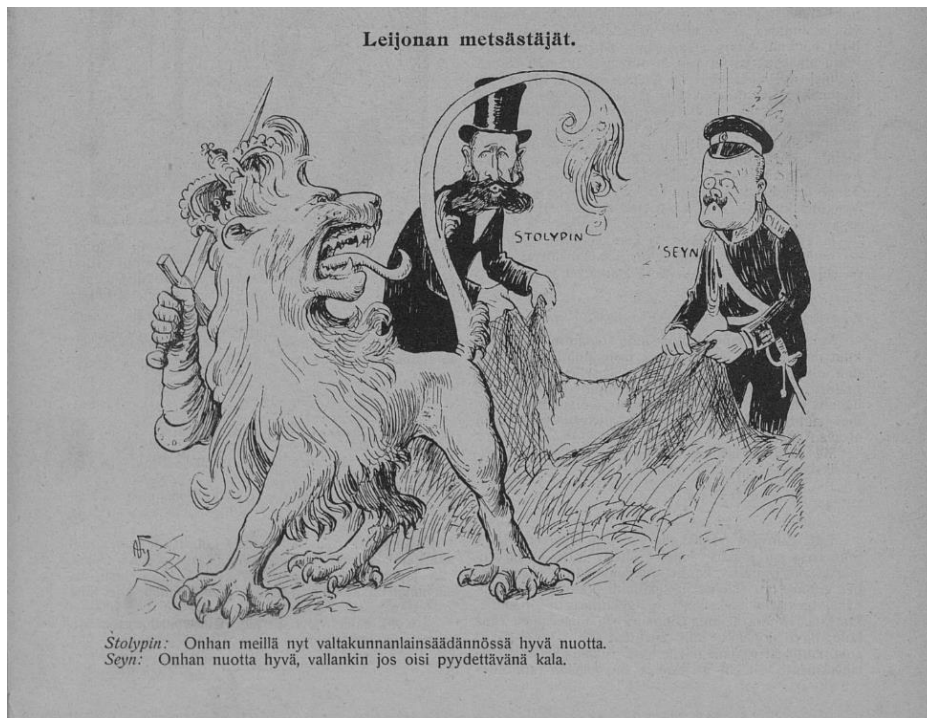


Figure 15. Velikulta. 20.10.1910

The socialist take on the resolution of the 1905 imperial crisis and the Czar's restoration of legality and acceptance of representative reforms throughout the empire is portrayed in the following picture, where, scared by the "crocodile of revolution", the Czar poops out his manifesto for reform (Figure 16).

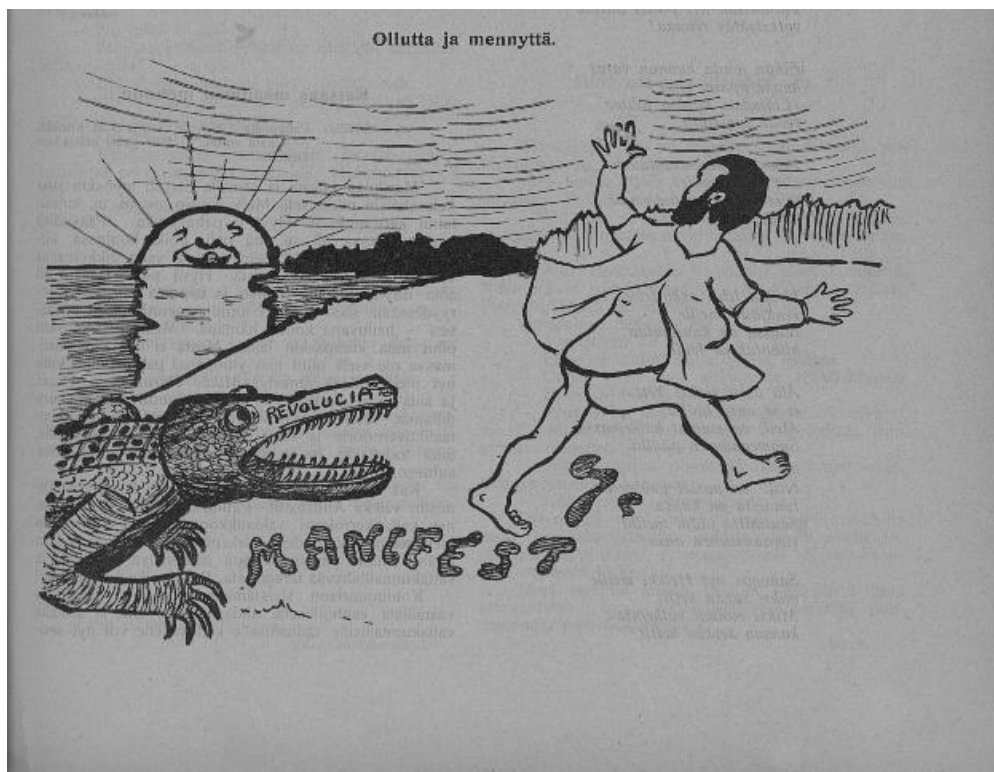


Figure 16. Kurikka. 15.2.1906.

The Social Democrats portrayed inter-imperial socialist ideas as promoting Finnish autonomy against imperial sovereignty and order in a particularly useful way in the politics of the Grand Duchy of Finland. The bourgeois parties needed to exhibit some form of respect towards imperial sovereignty (though not the state), their argument being that Finland's statehood and privileges was so derived. By contrast the socialists were freer to criticize that sovereignty and portray Finnish autonomy and democratization as equal to inter-imperial calls for reform. If people's and worker's rights were oppressed by autocratic imperialism socialists could promote national autonomy from the imperial state as a joint effort with the other peoples of oppressed by such capitalist structures. The socialist and bourgeois positions, while different in their inter-imperial imagination, coalesced and were mutually re-enforcing regarding autonomy within empire; in arguing for people's rights and against imperial sovereignty, the socialists prevented the bourgeois position from being undermined by other elements of the empire, especially liberal, socialist and progressivist representative politics. The bourgeois position on the other, in advocating for special Finnish status and statehood vis-à-vis other peoples of the empire, especially in the eyes of the imperial sovereign, prevented elements of

the metropolitan elite from undermining the calls for autonomy based on people's rights<sup>67</sup>. Yet, from a metropolitan perspective it would have seemed equally troublesome to give one of these factions the upper hand in the Grand Duchy; rather the metropole promoted pro-Russian (or less anti-Russian) policies across the board, which gave Finnish parties even further reason to unify under the politics of metropole-colony relations, i.e. the relation to St. Petersburg politicized as an overarching universal logic rather than as fragmenting the political field.

This cartoon from Kurikka, from the beginning of the second russification period illuminates. The Finnish maiden, holding onto her constitution, radiates "socialism" and hands the parliament's decision to the Russian, who is effectively cutting down the arguments and opposition of the English merchants, European progressive press, European legal scholars (who had just gathered three months before in London to debate the Finnish question, as discussed in chapter two) and the Russian lower classes. Those interventions fail against the Russian, but the declaration of the international socialists concerning the Finnish question, puts the knife to his throat. International socialism is the guarantee and support of Finnish legalism and parliamentarism against the imperial state (figure 17).

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<sup>67</sup> While the metropolitan state was fairly brutal against socialist and liberal factions undermining imperial sovereignty in the metropole or empire-wide, the Finnish socialists were never similarly repressed by the imperial authorities, despite their fairly equal mobilization in 1905, for example, which included a general strike and the founding of paramilitary red guards, and their continued support to Russian socialists often hiding in Finland.



Figure 17. Kurikka. 15.05.1910.

Yrjö Sirola, an influential social democrat, linked democratization in Russia directly to securing “internal rights of self-determination for Finland” in the fifth congress of the Social Democratic Party of Finland in 1906, while at the same time making the point that class struggle should be confined to “one’s own country” (Kirby 1975, 118).

This however, left the socialists open to criticism of collaboration and influence from Russian and international socialists, anarchists and other supposedly unsavoury movements. Domestically this could then be proclaimed as anti-patriotic. The liberal media even approached German socialist Wilhelm Liebknecht in 1899 and asked his opinion about the Finnish workers movement. Liebknecht replied that he had no knowledge of it (Salmelin 1967, 298). It is telling that the reply of Työmies, the

worker's newspaper, to these inquiries by Päivälehti was that they had attempted to show Finnish connections with foreign revolutionaries, but failed (Salmelin 1967, 298-299).

Under the new democratic system, Fyren portrays the socialist position in the search for autonomy vis-à-vis the bourgeois parties with following picture. Here, the socialist press, with some help from the Finnish press, guiding the hand of the people, blinded by “class hatred”, shoot the master. In the following page the magazine wonders, again drawing from inter-imperial imagination, “what will the European press say of us, who are the forerunners of freedom, if this is how we use it” (figure 18).

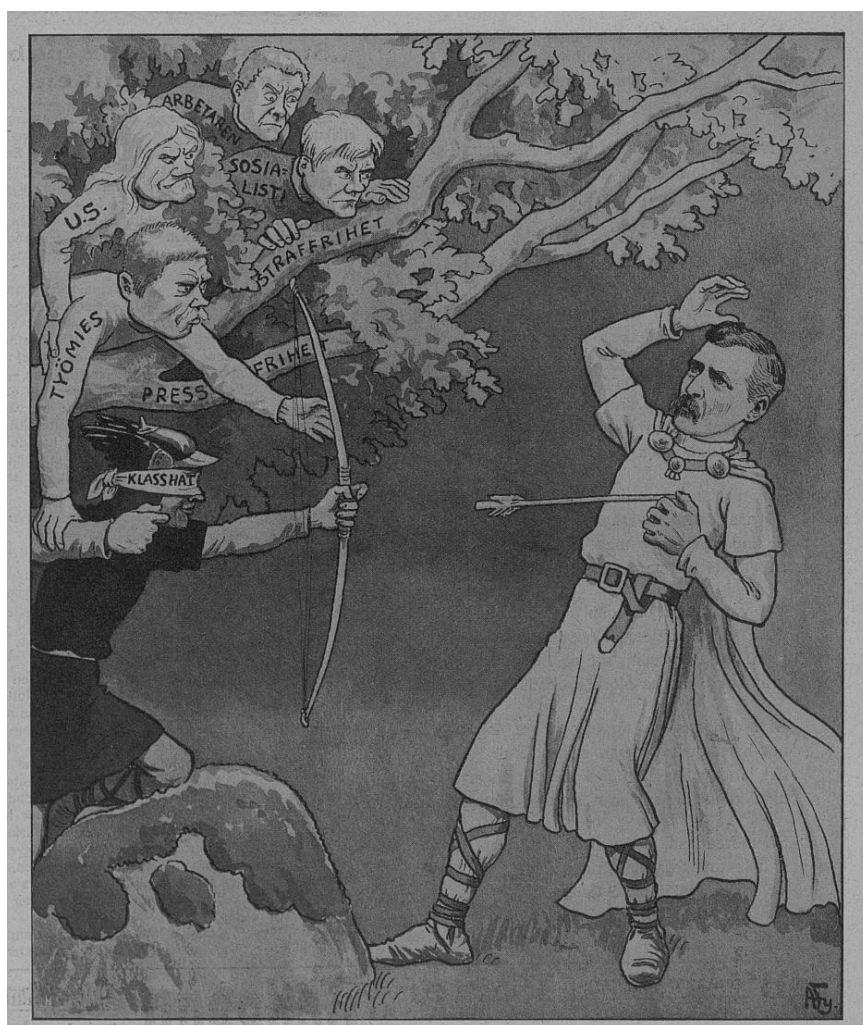


Figure 18. Fyren. 09.03.1907.

The more nationalist Tuulispää portrayed class struggle as leading to dangerous rapids. We see the worker and capitalist using the oars of the boat to fight each other, rather than steer clear of

rocks (figure 19). This in direct confrontation to the Finnish socialist efforts at defining the class struggle as the national struggle that guarantees autonomy, and the bourgeois parties as sharing a joined interest in Finland as a logic of intra-imperial cooperation. In a picture titled “as the elections approach...” we see the Russian and Finnish bourgeois holding onto a ravaged Finnish maiden. They speak to each other: “We make a deal. You kiss her on one cheek, and I kiss her on the other cheek. That’s a great deal! But our [Finnish] socialists want to liberate her. Ah, the socialists! You put down the socialists, I will give you a nagaika [a whip]. We’ll have much fun!” (figure 20).

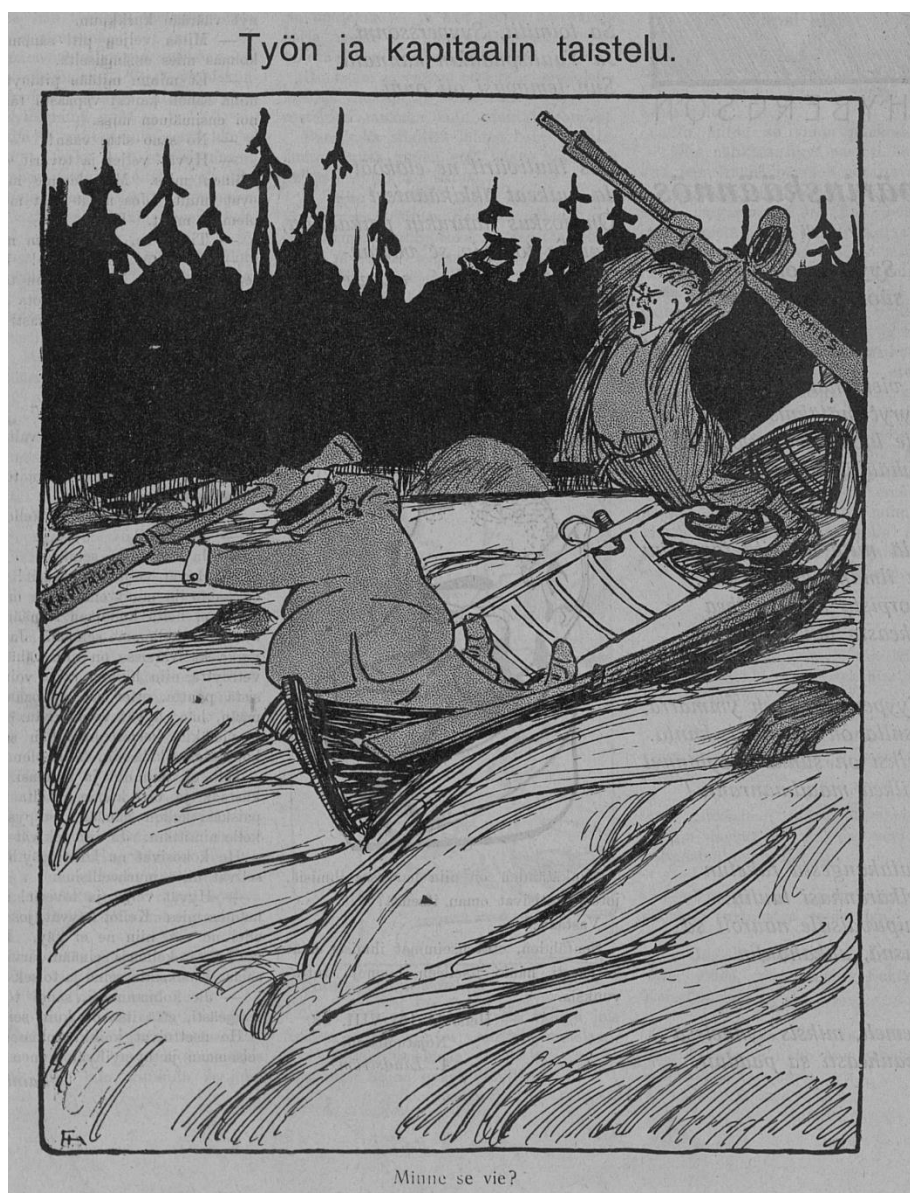


Figure 19. Tuulispää. 04.09.1908



Figure 20. Kurikka. Fall of 1917.

The socialist and bourgeois divide was perhaps the most symbolic and definitional, but by no means the only argument over Finnish politics vis-à-vis their consequences in the relationship to the metropole. For example in the next picture the Fennomans and liberal nationalist Velikulta portrays the bridge that the conservative Fennomans, more moderate towards the metropole, were building between Finland and Russia as having collapsed, while Russian officials fly to over to Finland on the wings of a nagaika (a whip infamously used for crowd control by Cossacks) and shout at the

conservative Finns: “You were crazy being bridge builders! In our times we take a zeppelin, especially when the wind blows the right way” (figure 21).



Figure 21. Velikulta. 21.10.1909.

The idea of other factions supporting or relying on the imperial state’s monopoly on violence was a prominent claim, often symbolized by the nagaika. This picture from the socialist Kurikka shows the ideologies of the three main bourgeois factions as the ends of the nagaika whip, being used by the Russian official to chase out the socialists (figure 22).

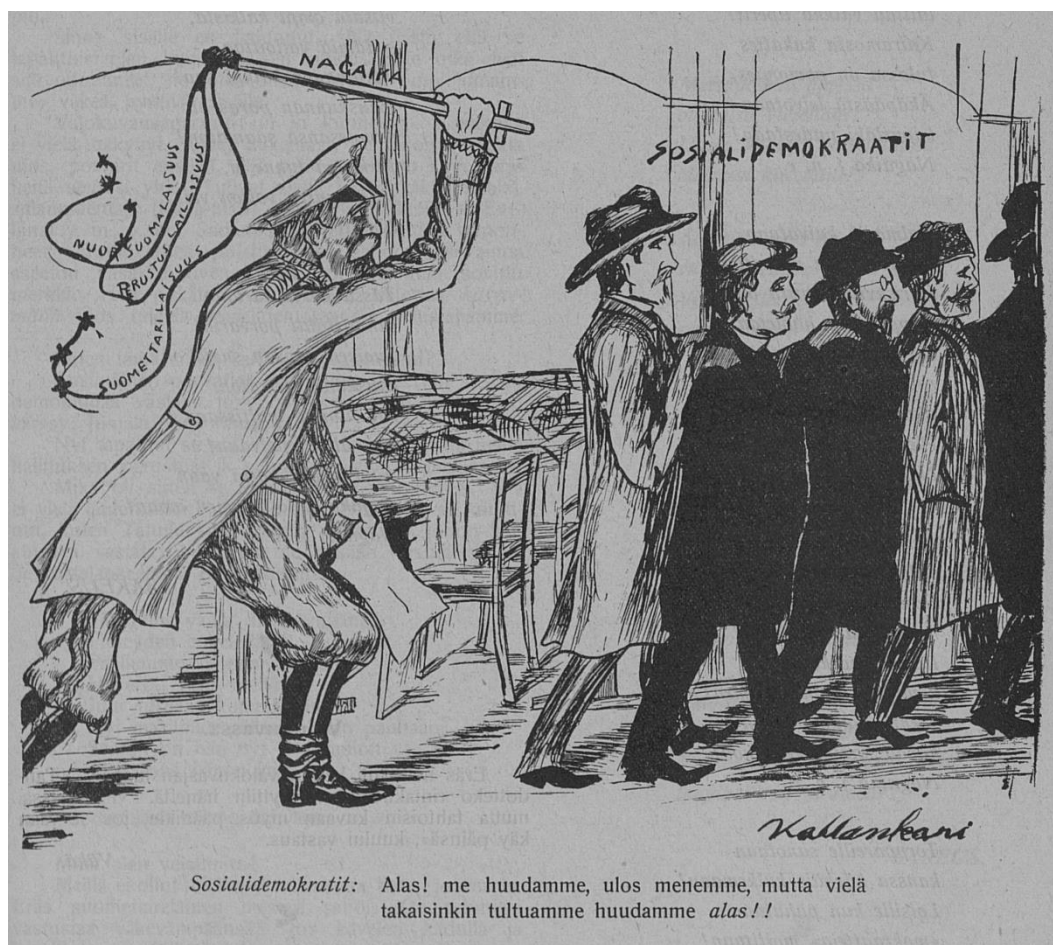


Figure 22. Kurikka. 15.04.1908.

But, at moments of seeking exclusion and isolation from imperial reforms, the two sides complemented each other, creating an alliance against both popular and top-down reforms, vis-à-vis the imperial Duma and state. In unison the Finnish actors could argue for special treatment while making sure neither side is undermined from one or the other perspective. However, when it eventually came to choosing which form of reform and rule Finns would prioritize, the alliance broke down, and civil war ensued.

In this manner, nevertheless, the reformed representative organ and its role quickly took the center stage in Finnish argumentation. When previously only legal arguments were leveled against infringement on Finnish affairs, the representative institution itself came to stand upon that legal foundation as the following picture depicts (figure 23).

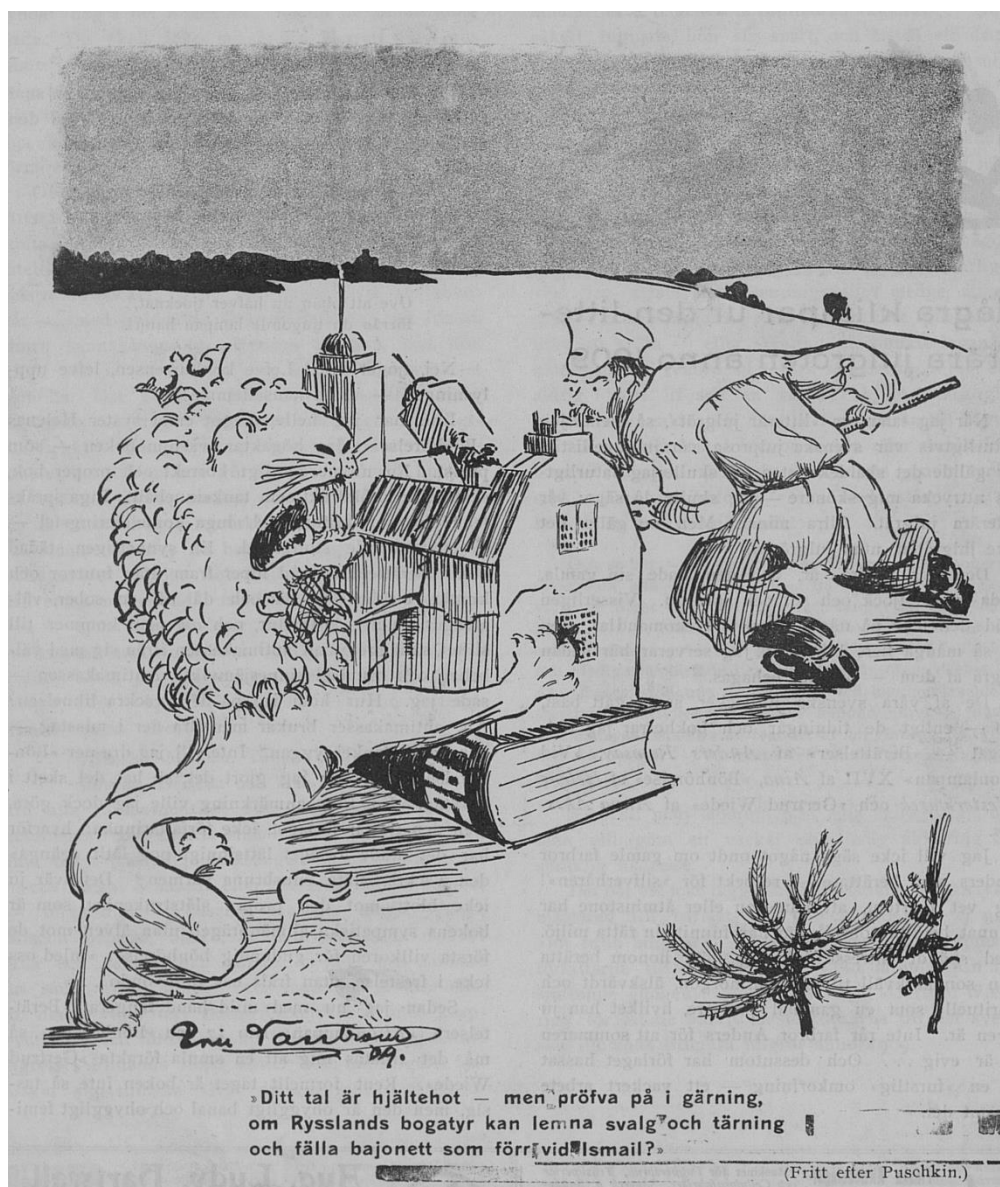


Figure 23. Fyren. 31.12.1909

The socialist Kurikka took to a mythological comparison depicting the election battle as the famous “defense of the Sampo” from the national epic the Kalevala, where the evil Louhi (depicted here as Stolypin) tries to take a mystical machine, the Sampo, that produces endless salt, flour, and gold from the Finns. Interestingly that machine is missing from the picture, but the title “Our recent election struggle, that is the defense of Sampo in modern times” hints that it is replaced in this allegory by democracy and the parliament. On the back of Stolypin, as the henchmen of Louhi we have bourgeois politicians. Interestingly and importantly the leader of the Finns in the real version of the painting, the hero of the Kalevala, Väinämöinen, is replaced in this picture not by a socialist but

by the Finnish maiden herself wearing the Phrygian cap of freedom, and her henchmen also not socialists but archetypal Finns. The socialist election struggle is thus depicted as an almost apolitical struggle of the people, the nation, and democracy (figure 24).

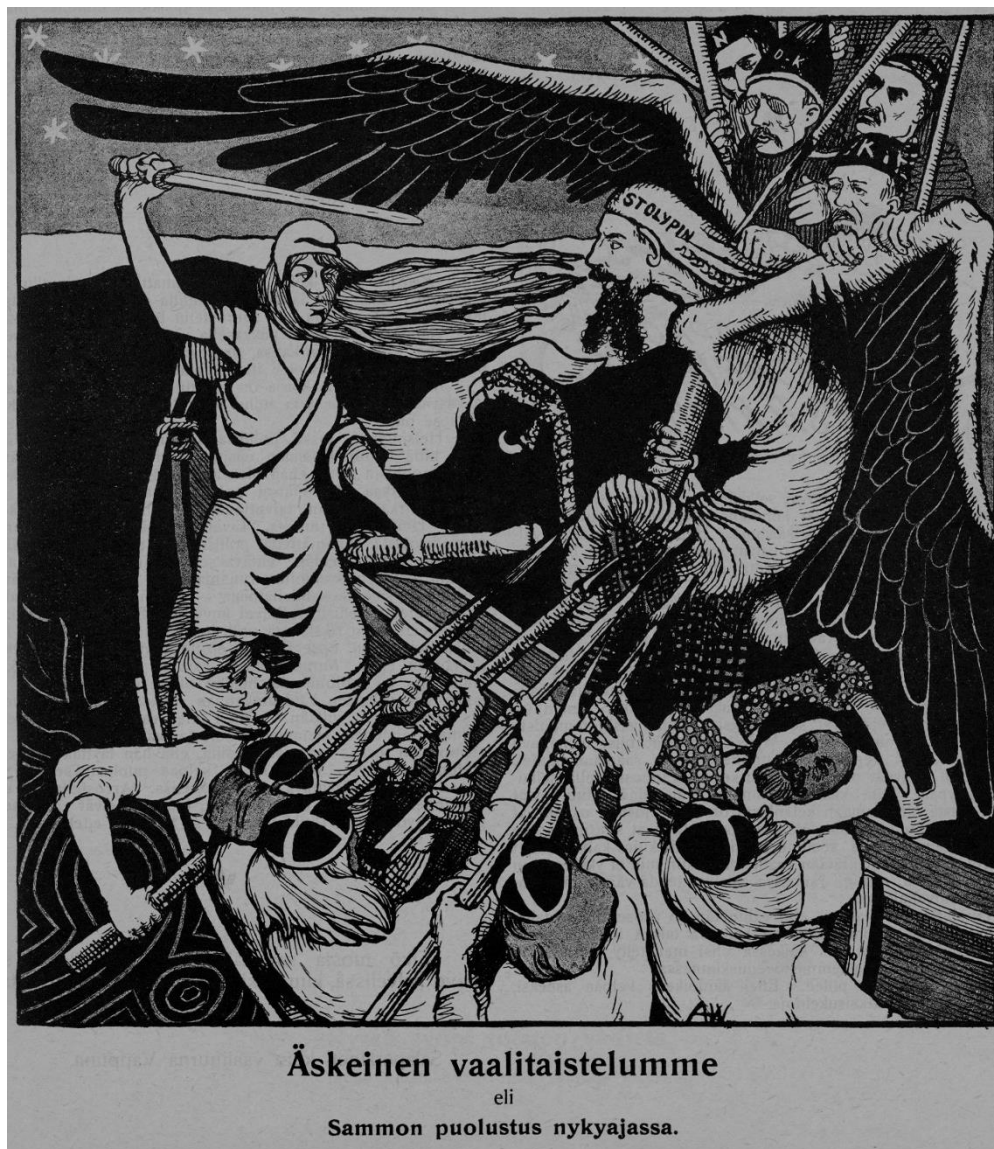


Figure 24. Kurikka 15.05.1909.

As with the legal argumentation over the Finnish position within the empire, similarly this representative institution, democracy, was seen to derive its power from inter-imperial considerations. It put Finland “in the lead” in the race of progress. The pro-Swekoman *Fyren* magazine proclaimed that, “the boat *Finland* (constructed by the Swedish) sets a world record in the freedom regatta ... but because of the rough eastern storm, the old main sail had to be switched to newer one”. In the cartoon

we see the estates taking down the old sail, while common people lift up the new one that helps navigate the storm from the east (figure 25).

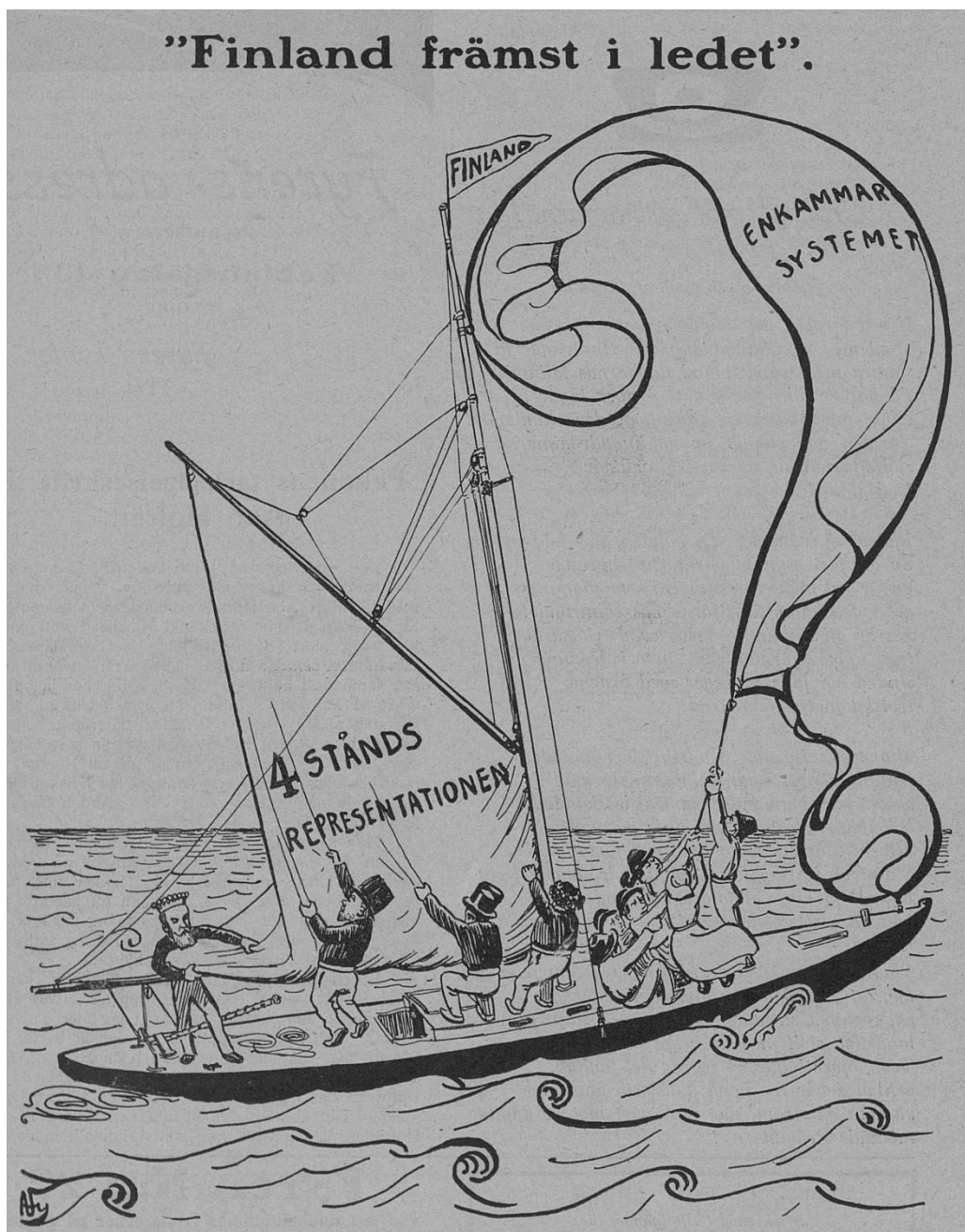


Figure 25. Fyren 09.06.1906.

The following picture from the time of the first elections continues with a similar theme and depicts the “international ski jumping competition in democracy”. After a miserable Russian performance Finland is making a beautiful jump and setting the world record. Importantly, all the major powers are portrayed as supposedly observing (figure 26). Though, as the chapter on inter-

imperial perspectives on Finland shows, democracy and statehood were not connected in reality in the inter-imperial imagination regarding Finland. Democracy was not seen as a feat, but rather as a privilege reserved only for those worthy. For example, with the first election results and the election of 19 female deputies, the New York Times made fun of the “bisexual Congress” and the “gallantry of the Finnish politician of the male persuasion” since 14 of the elected women were unmarried (N.Y.T. 26.05.1907)

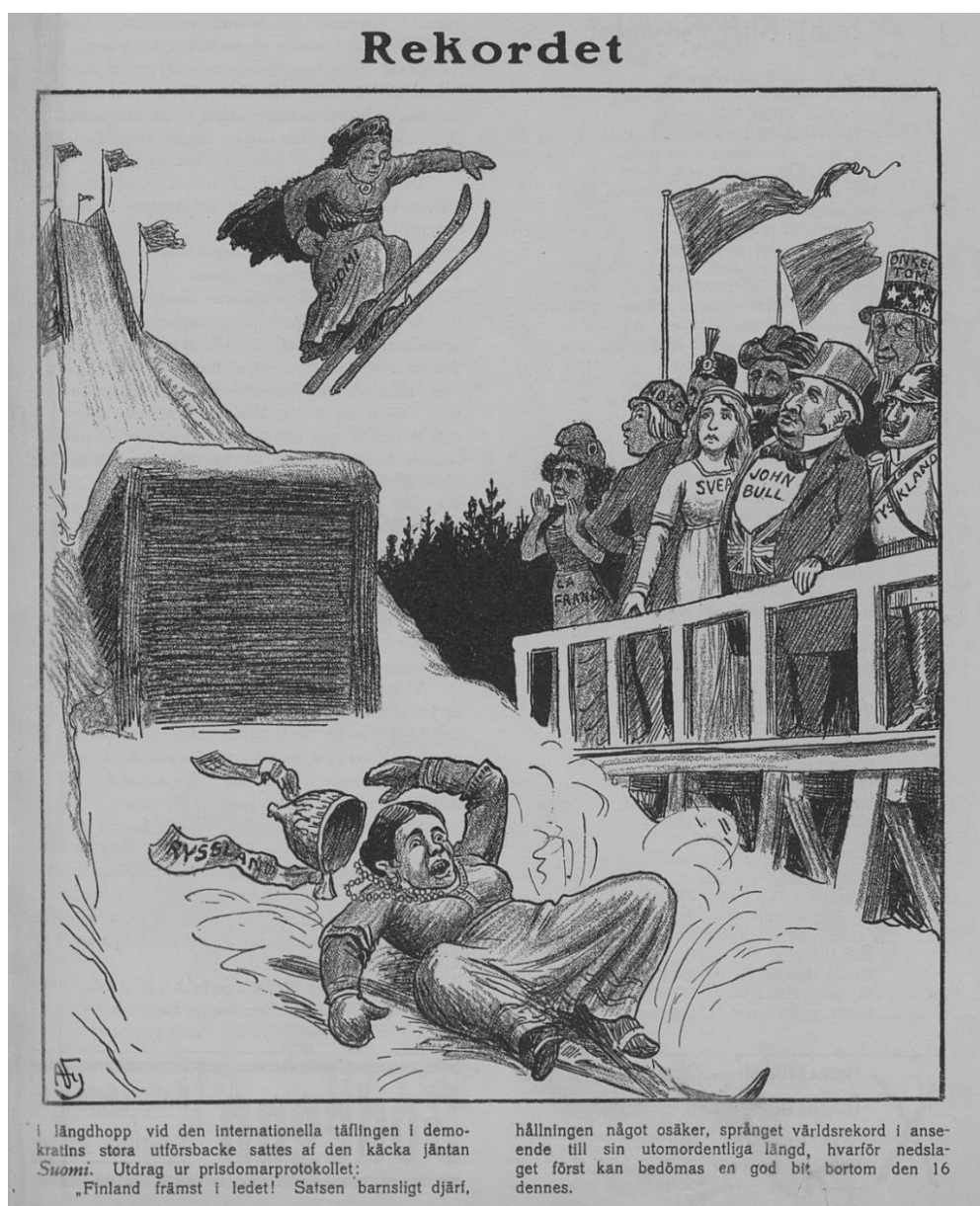


Figure 26. Fyren magazine. 16.03.07

The supporter of the liberal Finns had a similar perspective already on the making of the reforms, the picture is titled “From Finland and from Russia” and shows symbolically how the construction of parliaments is going respectively (figure 27).

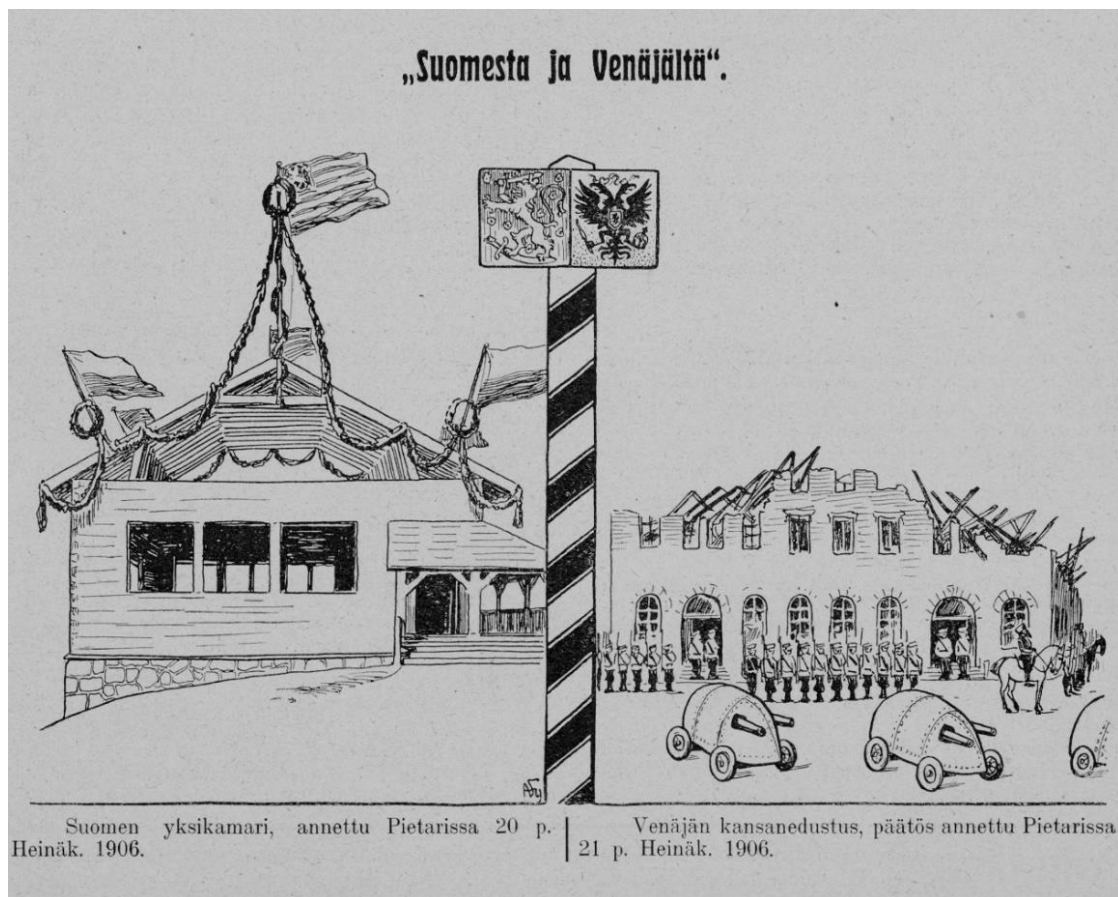


Figure 27. Velikulta. 26.07.1909.

While others celebrated the new parliament and elections, the socialists did not see its guarantees of a lawful order as sufficient. Following the elections Kurikka depicted the freedom offered by this reform as still very limited, constricted by the Finnish bourgeoisie working together with the imperial officials, as portrayed in this picture that on top quotes a bourgeois newspaper stating “We now have constitutional freedom” and below a workers’ newspaper stating “Freedom strangles social democracy” (figure 28).



Figure 28. Kurikka. 01.07.1907

In any case, misused or not, the parliament became central in establishing the distinction between Finland and the metropole that was foundational to the state field itself. Here is Tuulispää's suggestion on "how the Finnish parliament should deal with imperial legislation", which the metropole wanted to override, in cases of conflict, Finnish legislation (figure 29); just an empty chamber.

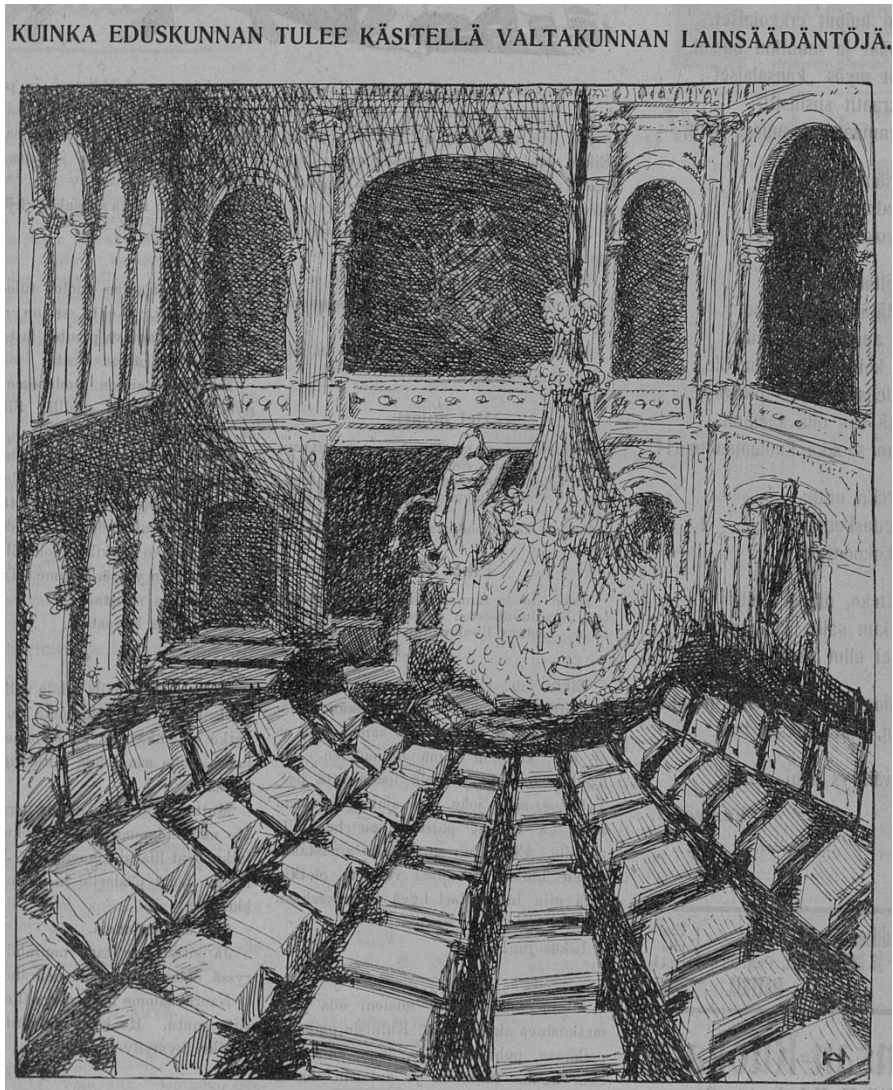


Figure 29. Tuulispää. 23.09.1910.

The cleavage between the Fennoman and Swekoman bourgeoisie remained as one over the benefits and possible excesses of Finnish nationalism vis-à-vis democratic representation and Finland's position in the empire. In this depiction from Fyren, an orangutan called Finnish nationalism is shown eating the Finnish nation (figure 30). In general, Fyren depicted Finnish nationalism as excessive, unsophisticated, and not-very-clever.



Figure 30. Fyren 19.05.1906

The differences between Finland and Russia did not amount to claims for secession from the imperial state. Such developments elsewhere were skeptically viewed. The Bulgarian declaration of independence in 1908-1909 was seen as the ambition of second-rate branch manager declaring his business independent, as Tuulispää described the act, and underlined it by depicting the new “court” as a peasant’s house (figure 31). Norway’s independence from Sweden in 1905-06 is also portrayed simply as a child “hiding under aunts’ skirts”, the aunts being the imperial powers (figure 32). Similar imagery of the foolishness of small nation independence pops up with the disintegration of Russian Empire and Finland’s own declaration of independence, as is discussed below.



Figure 31. Tuulispää magazine. 09.10.1908



Figure 32. Fyren. 23.11.1907.

While universal suffrage had passed without much ado, later it became a somewhat contested issue. All parties that hoped to take credit for it as democratic success had become part of the political narrative and of claims for autonomy. This is made clear by Fyren's critique of the small Christian party. It had resisted the women's vote and is clearly shown to fail (as the only one) in its efforts to retrospectively appropriate it (figure 33).



Figure 33. Fyren. 24.03.1910.

### *Collapse of the Colonial Field: World War, Imperial Crisis, and the Search for new Imperiality*

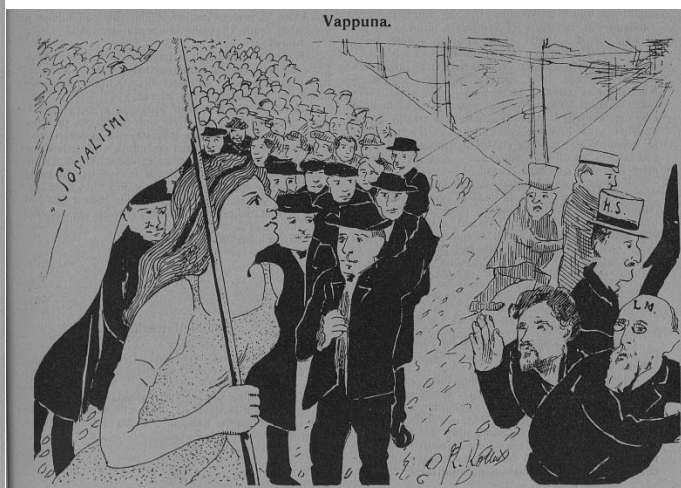
In the 1916 elections the Social Democrats achieved an absolute majority in the parliament. How was it possible that in Finland, in a mainly agrarian country the social democrats achieved a stronger position than in Western European countries? Only around 15 per cent of the population at the time worked in industry and almost three quarters in agriculture (Alapuro 2019, 26). Historian Pauli Kettunen explained this success in this way: the Finnish Social Democrats were able to cross the industrial/urban and agrarian divide by focusing not on the economic authorities, but on state

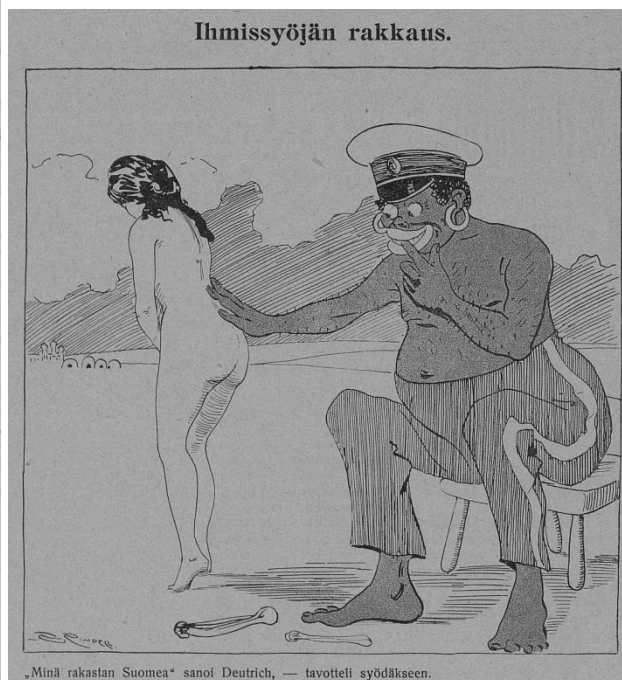
authority (Kettunen 1986). The roots of this logic were present, as discussed above, in the arguments for universal suffrage as the only sensible way to secure national development and enlightenment. This perspective should be complemented with observing how well Social Democrats cooperated with bourgeois actors, and especially so in the conjunctures crucial to Finnish autonomy: in 1905-1906 when they joined forces to demand universal suffrage and a single chamber parliament (and stopping there), during the second russification period starting in 1910, and again in 1917 in forming a coalition government, up until the dismantling of the Finnish parliament by the Provisional Government in late 1917 and the Bolshevik power grab that followed. As Historian Kujala summarizes, “Finland’s central political problems were tied to the happenings of St. Petersburg and the wider empire” (Kujala 2016, 217).

*We are not opposed to Russia, that is, to a union of Finland with Russia, but we do not want to intrust our fate to anyone but ourselves. (Yrjö Sirola, leading Finnish Social Democrat, quoted in the New York Times 14.7.1917).*

Sirola summarized the field logic in the above quote. Together the bourgeois and socialist positions, the latter centering on civil society and the former other on the state, speak of the hesitance and reluctance of joining together the concepts of autonomy or democracy with claims of sovereignty or independence. The Finnish parties shared a common *illusio*: “An autonomous field is one that is dominated by a specific form of symbolic capital that is recognized by all actors in the field as legitimate, and one in which changes are driven mainly by internal struggles. Such a field is characterized by shared commitment to everything that is linked to the very existence of the field, a shared interest and believe in the value of the stakes, by an *illusio*, or investment in the game” (Steinmetz 2008, 595). This was the belief in the existence of Finnish autonomy on the basis of Russian Empire’s sovereignty. It was invented in the latter half of the 19<sup>th</sup> century as an explanation for the existence of the Finnish state and was defined against the rest of the empire, especially the metropolitan state. A field has a “constitutive outside against which it defines itself” and is “governed by a specific form of symbolic capital” (Steinmetz 2016).

This idea of subordinated autonomy with its symbolic capital is perhaps best seen in the symbol of the Finnish maiden, used by all political parties in a similar fashion to signal Finland's non-sovereign statehood. Below is a selection of portrayals of the Finnish maiden from all of the magazines across political parties and positions. In the first one *Tuulispää*, one that endorsed importing a German king for Finland, portrays aunt-France scolding little Finland for trying to get a herself a king. In the next picture from *Kurikka*, the Finnish maiden carries the flag of socialism and scares away conservative bourgeois politicians, and even a former socialist who had been kicked out of the party. In the third picture *Fyren* portrays the maiden maltreated by Russia in the beginning of the second russification titled "Finland and Europe". The Great Powers simply sleep or ignore this, despite declarations of sympathy. And lastly, in *Velikulta* there's for example a portrayal of the imperial administrator V.F. Deutrich, who was part of the committee preparing the application of imperial law in Finland and had declared his love of Finland. *Velikulta*, with this racist depiction, suggests that this was a cannibal's love towards the Finnish maiden (figures 33-36).





From top left: Figure 33. Tuulispää 15.11.1918; Figure 34. Kurikka 01.05.1906; Figure 35. Fyren 09.04.1910; Figure 36. Velikulta 16.05.1914.

Initially this unquestioned connection to the Russian state continued even while the Finnish government set forth to figure out, to whom or to which institution the highest power and authority would be transferred after the Czar's abdication. In this process, lawmakers and politicians aimed to transfer as much as possible of the former Grand Duke's powers to the Finnish state. This, initially, did not entail separation from Russia. But the Russian Provisional Government, did not approve of any such measures before a new constitution would be in place in Russia itself. The matter was eventually handed over to a legal counsel to be solved.

As a reaction to this, Oskari Tokoi, the socialist chairman of the Finnish government, gave a speech in which he stated that "it is impossible to know what the statehood of Finland will look like in the future ... but that this will entail nothing else than full self-determination to those peoples who are ready for it ... So, I dare trust that the Finnish peoples' right to self-determination, the beginning of their independence, is now on solid ground ... and the independence of the Finnish people will be secured in the near future." (Uusi Suometar, 21.4.1917)

Historian Taimi Torvinen suspects that the strong wordings of Tokoi were influenced by his recent meeting with Alexandra Kollontai who had made him aware of the Bolsheviks' approving position towards national self-determination (1977, 139). This was the beginning of a realignment of the Finnish colonial state illusion. The Social Democrats would have the upper hand if Russian society and democratic politics would become the guarantor of Finnish autonomy. This Midsummer's eve would see the old order burn in its bonfire's, as Kurikka depicted it (figure 37).

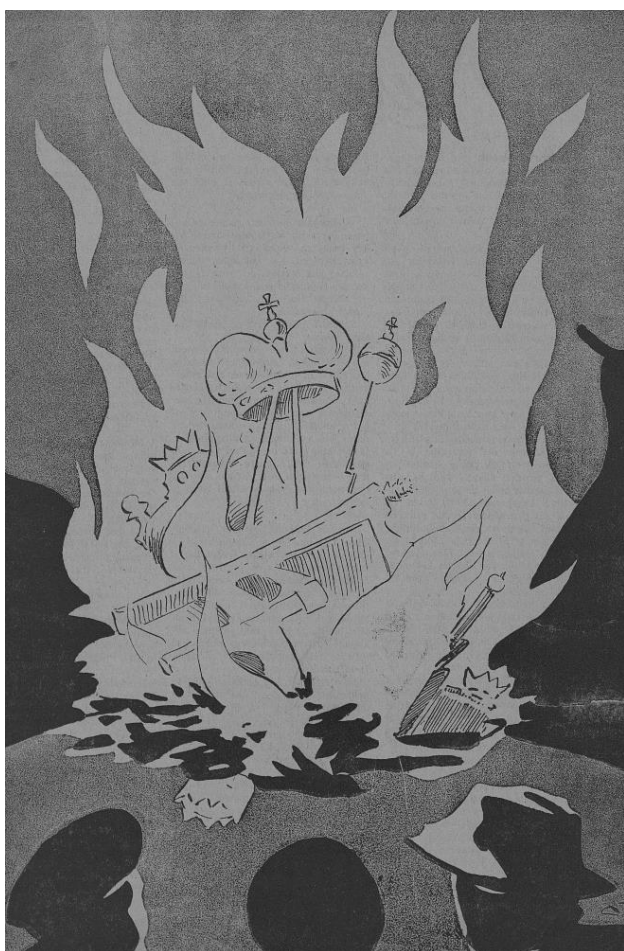


Figure 37. Kurikka 01.06.1917

However, this was still an argument about rights within the Russian state. The only difference was the loss of the Czar's sovereignty. Russians and Finns differed over where the stable allocation of rights in the old empire would migrate. Russians saw separate Finnish claims as encroaching not only upon the rights of the Grand Duke of Finland but also upon some of those rights that had belonged to

the Czar as the ruler of Russia. Thereby they would also encroach upon rights belonging to the forthcoming constitutional assembly of Russia.

Just as the scales had tilted in favor of the civil society in Russia, so too the Finnish Social Democratic Party had momentarily the upper hand. This was an opportunity to dismantle the state structure tied to the high echelons of the imperial state. But, before the matter was settled, the Provisional Government in Russia changed composition and the SRs and Mensheviks joined it. Thereafter, the socialist chairman of the Finnish government, Tokoi, left for St. Petersburg to negotiate, where he proposed a solution in which military and foreign policy matters would remain with the Provisional Government while all other issues domestic to Finland would be under the power of the Finnish parliament.

There were two parallel processes of democratic takeover happening then, one in Finland and one in Russia. Yet, even still, full separation of these polities was not even a consideration. A compromise solution had been reached and submitted to the Finnish parliament on June 11th, in which the dissolution and calling together of the Finnish parliament remained in the hands of the Provisional Government. Despite the chairman of the government Tokoi being a member of their party, the Social Democratic party of Finland was against this compromise solution. It considered state power as bourgeois power, as anti-democratic in its core.

In the statement of its general meeting in June 15-18th, it declared that “during regular times the social democratic party cannot allow its members to partake in the government of a capitalist state, the way governments these days are, that is wholly different than for example parliamentary committees”. They continued: “It was to a certain extent a different matter now in exceptional circumstances of the state, though even now too for good reasons there might have been differing views amongst the party members about this matter. ... It is clear that not even this government, despite its social democratic members, can be, as the power of a bourgeois society, any kind of a social democratic government” (General Meeting of the SDP, 1917, Workers’ Archive). The following events proved them partially right. As long as the bourgeois would share the state, they would hold back the Finns journey to progress, Kurikka suggested. Despite the wind of progress now

blowing benevolently, the bourgeoisie, who were then in a coalition government with the Social Democrats, would fight it (figure 38).

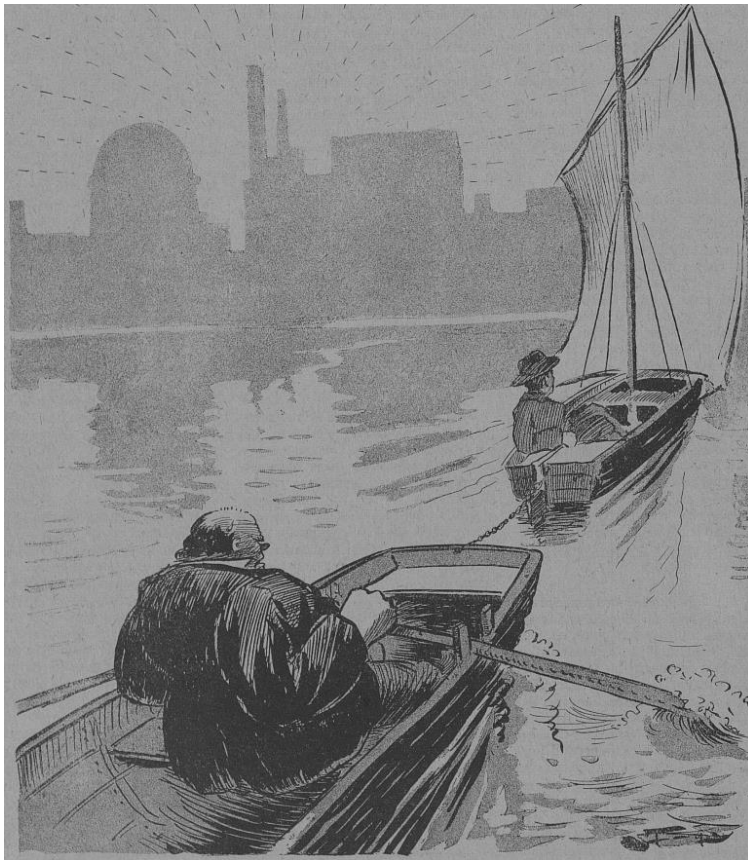


Figure 38. Kurikka 01.07.1917

The Social Democrat majority in the parliament then forced through a law that declared the parliament the holder of highest power in Finland, without consulting the Provisional Government. This would directly shift the Czar's sovereignty to the parliament. This so-called Power Law was voted in on 18<sup>th</sup> of July. The next day Tokoi's government resigned for a new government to be formed. But, those high echelons of the imperial state disagreed, and the Finnish bourgeoisie would not have the Social Democrats become the dominant holders of symbolic capital, with freedom to define Finnish sovereignty. The last Finnish minister-state secretary in St. Petersburg, the connection between the Finnish state and imperial sovereign power, Carl Enckell was a conservative politician who in this situation persuaded Kerensky to dismantle the Finnish parliament and call for new

elections in early October. Kurikka portrayed clearly how the Social Democrats interpreted this move, “Gladiator of the capitalist Kerenski” (figure 39).

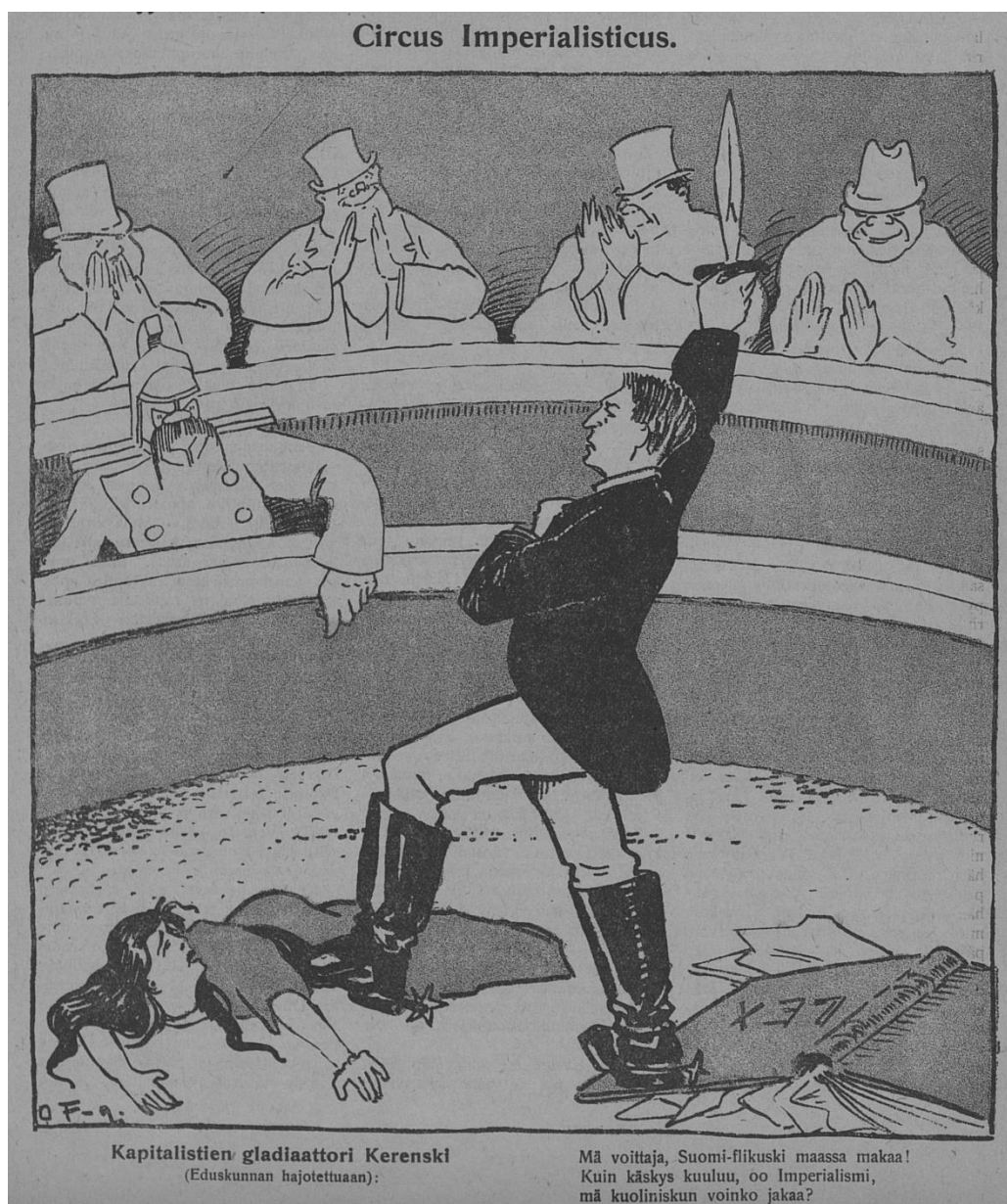


Figure 39. Kurikka. 15.09.1917.

Tuulispää rather thought that the Finnish socialists were being led and fooled by Kerenskii and blamed them for having negotiated with the Provincial Government. Political contestation remained focused on how to deal with the imperial metropole. And Tokoi was seen bound by his engagement with the Provincial Government (figure 40).



Figure 40. 17.08.1917

With votes from the governor-general, equally representing the imperial power, and the bourgeoisie members of the government the Finnish government voted in favor of Kerenski's order and began to prepare for new elections. This obedience shows the continued relevance of the imperial framework on the one hand and its relation to domestic power relations, rather than national self-determination, on the other. The bourgeois politicians at this stage had the possibility to guarantee Finnish autonomy and invest sovereignty on the Finnish parliament. Their decision not to do so can be understood from the composition of the Finnish colonial state and the role of democracy in it. Accordingly, when the bourgeois parties got their turn, they specifically transferred sovereignty to a strong executive as a check and balance against the democratic parliament. Cracks in the colonial

field were becoming visible. With the uncertainty and shifts in sovereignty that had been the founding illuso of the state, the role of democracy within it and its relation to this illuso became contestable. The Finnish colonial field began to break down when this dynamic unraveled and questions of statehood and sovereignty became combined. The shared rules and the shared perception of the future of the state field shattered. Fyren captured this moment presciently. In its depiction of the various colonial states of the Russian Empire falling uncontrollably from the Phrygian cap of freedom pierced by a bayonet (figure 41).



Figure 41. Fyren. 05.1917

The Social Democrats then refused to participate in an interim government stating that they still held on to the Power Law that the parliament had lawfully voted for and would not join government as long as the Provisional Government held on to its decision. It should be noted that this

was now Kerenski's Social Revolutionary and Menshevik government with whom the bourgeois parties collaborated, and Social Democrats did not. Political alignments, like before, did not cut across the metropole-periphery divide. The plan was still to remain a part of Russia, but the illusion and thereby power relations were becoming contestable.

The Finnish bourgeoisie parties now formed an understaffed interim government to prepare for the new elections. In September, they were able to widen their powers as Kerenski accepted to move such matters that did not require constitutional changes or parliamentary approval to the government. This decreased the power of the Russian Provisional Government in Finland but affirmed its position as the ultimate authority, thus allowing it to withdraw those powers back to Petrograd if necessary. This decree of Kerenski's, who by now had near dictatorial powers, tilted the scales in Finnish power politics in favor of the governor-general and the government up until a new form of statehood, i.e. a new constitution, would come to power. As the revolution proceeded in Russia, it continued to increase the powers of the Finnish bourgeois government, as for example, after November there was no new governor-general appointed anymore to share the executive power.

The new elections held in October then further tilted the domestic power balance as the Social Democrats lost their absolute majority in the parliament. The newly empowered bourgeoisie government set forth to have their go at establishing Russian-Finnish relations. Their proposal in mid-October stated that Finland would continue as part of Russia and highest power in Finland would be held by a Regent elected by the Finnish people. Foreign policy and military affairs would still be handled by Petrograd. This executive Regent above the parliament would guarantee domestic state sovereignty; a homegrown Czar guaranteed to support the Finnish state within the Empire, or at least that is how Fyren depicted the development of the "father of Finnish independence" Svinhufvud who moved from a man of the people, to prime minister, to declaring independence to improve his own position to finally gaining what the New York Times called dictatorial powers and becoming kingmaker after the civil war (figure 42).

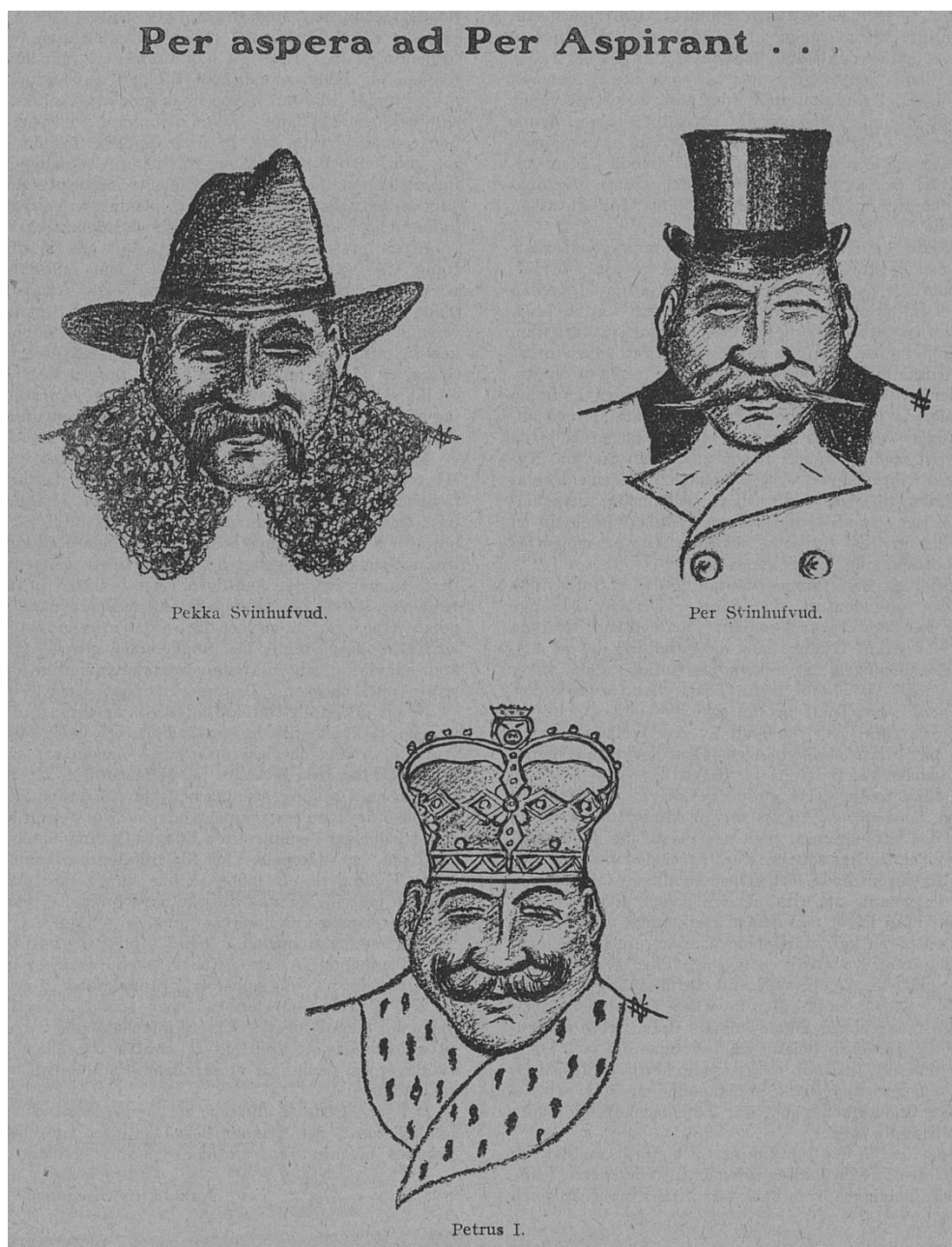


Figure 42. (Nya) Fyren. 01.06.1918.

When the new parliament convened, the Social Democrats published a manifesto demanding immediate publication and enforcement of their July Power Law. The manifesto also outlined, that while the question of Finnish independence cannot be solved at present, Finnish domestic freedom should for now be guaranteed with a formal treaty between Finland and Russia. The Social Democrats' stance towards Russia was thereby similar to the bourgeois government's proposal, whereas the disagreement was over the highest domestic authority, parliament or regent.

By early November it became clear that the Provisional Government, now on shaky grounds itself, was willing to transfer highest power to a Finnish institution. An agreement was struck, all power except foreign and military policies would be transferred to Finland. It was agreed that then, delivering the treaty to the Finnish parliament, it would be determined that all that power would be held by the government per the wishes of the bourgeois government.

In terms of the Russo-Finnish relationship, Finnish political actors were about to get everything they wanted. The proposal was finalized on November 5th and the new governor-general Nekrasov was dispatched to St. Petersburg to deliver it to the Provisional Government. On November 7th, the Bolsheviks began their revolution and there was no longer a Provisional Government to whom the proposal could have been presented.

Everything was up in the air again. And the opinions shifted again. The bourgeoisie, previously cautious and obedient toward Petrograd, now took a firmer more independence-oriented stance and suggested that all power be transferred temporarily to a triumvirate of regents. The Social Democrats opposed this suggestion and continued to demand the enforcement of their Power Law. The bourgeoisie proposition was accepted in the parliament, but, with the help of moderates, the social democrats were able to postpone the election of the triumvirate. The social democrats then organized a country wide strike in opposition that began on November 14th. In response, the parliament voted on November 15th in favor of a new compromise solution transferring highest power to the parliament itself.

On November 15<sup>th</sup> 1917, amidst a nation-wide strike, the parliament declared itself with Social Democratic and agrarian party votes as the holder of supreme authority in Finland. On November 16th, the revolutionary council of the SDP and the workers' organizations decided to begin a revolution and transfer power to the workers. However, the next morning some of the council members had changed their minds and the revolution was cancelled. And thereafter the general strike was ended too.

The bourgeois majority in the parliament formed a new government on November 27th. This government set out to establish Finnish independence, which was also what the Bolsheviks in Petrograd as well as the German empire were urging Finland to do. The negotiations over independence were now being held amongst all parties except the Social Democrats.

On December 4<sup>th</sup>, 1917 the government then gave its declaration of independence to the parliament. In the declaration, the chairman of the government, Svinhufvud, stated that it is time for the Finnish People to take its place amongst other civilized independent nations of the world. Telegrams were sent to Sweden, Norway, Denmark, France, England and the United States requesting recognition of Finnish independence. Germany had already expressed its support. The Bolsheviks were not contacted. Through informal channels and through Germany the government was however informed several times of the willingness of Bolsheviks to recognize Finnish independence, would the government request it. The Council of Peoples Commissars in fact declared this in an open press release on December 17th (Torvinen 1977, 181). Germany rushed the government to act and other countries informed Finnish delegates that Russian recognition would be required first.

Following the declaration of independence even Finnish nationalists exhibited some doubts as to Finland's readiness. Velikulta depicts the Great Powers judgmentally observing the not very attractive and mature young Finnish republic (figure 43).

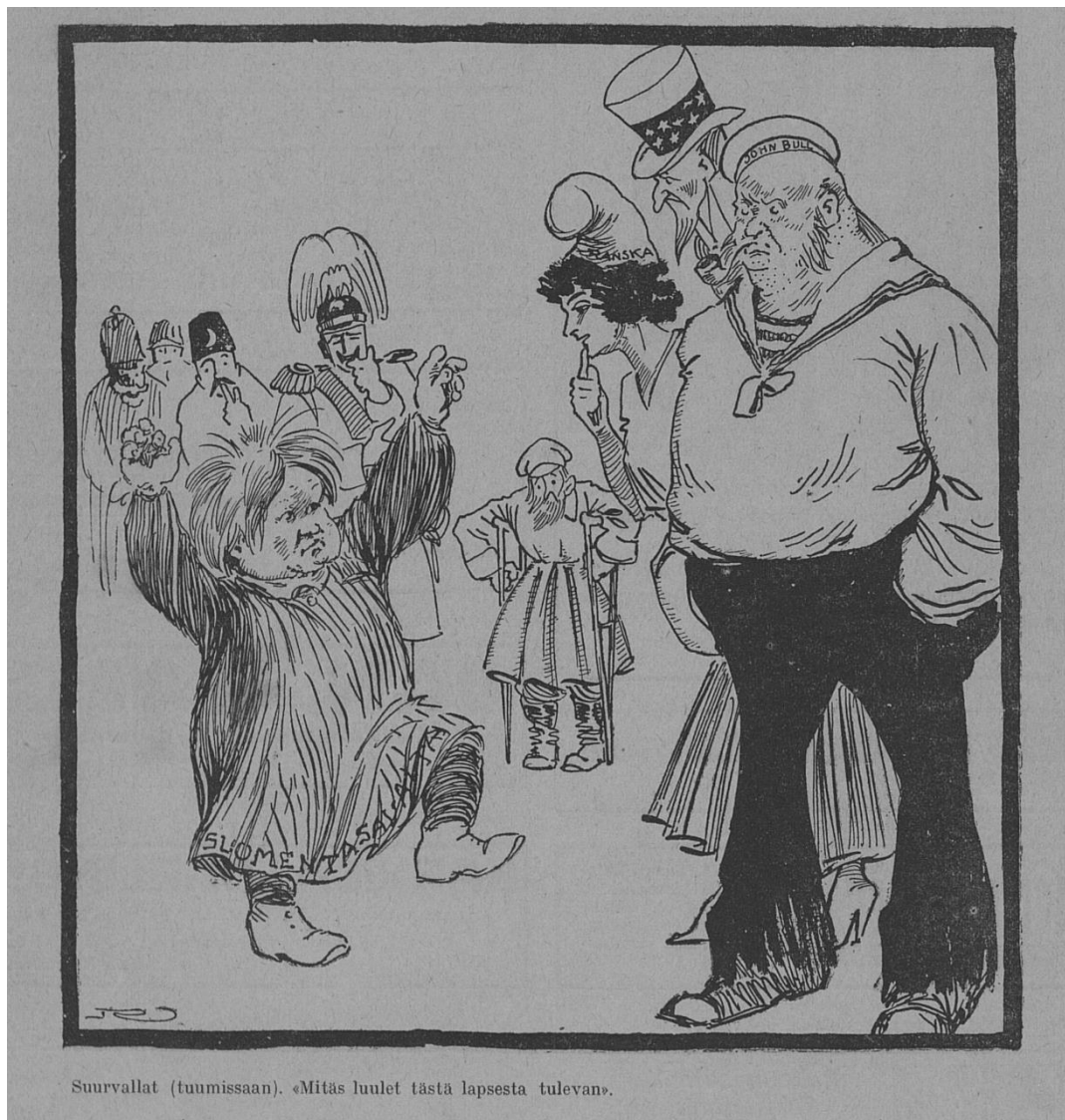


Figure 43. Velikulta 28.12.1917

This perspective was shared across the political spectrum. It was clear that to Finns that they would not survive as an independent nation. Kurikka portrayed Finland as a Lilliput, held by “a great power” who skeptically observed why he should consider Finland as full grown and equal (figure 44).



Figure 44. Kurikka. 15.01.1918.

The Finnish socialists in late December urged Lenin to recognize Finnish independence at this point. Though a bourgeois parliament was in power, the parliament had ultimately been made the highest authority in the country.

Indeed, J.K. Paasikivi, one of the leading figures of the right wing and future president, stated later on that the question of independence was not in reality being addressed in 1917 before the Finns had to figure whether they would recognize Lenin as a legitimate ruler. Fyren saw the irony in independence coming this way. Following Lenin's recognition of independence, it portrayed the Finnish bourgeois as revealing a new statue, where the Finnish maiden graciously accepts the Phrygian cap of freedom, from which Fyren had previously depicted the state to have fallen, from a kingly clad Lenin (figure 45).

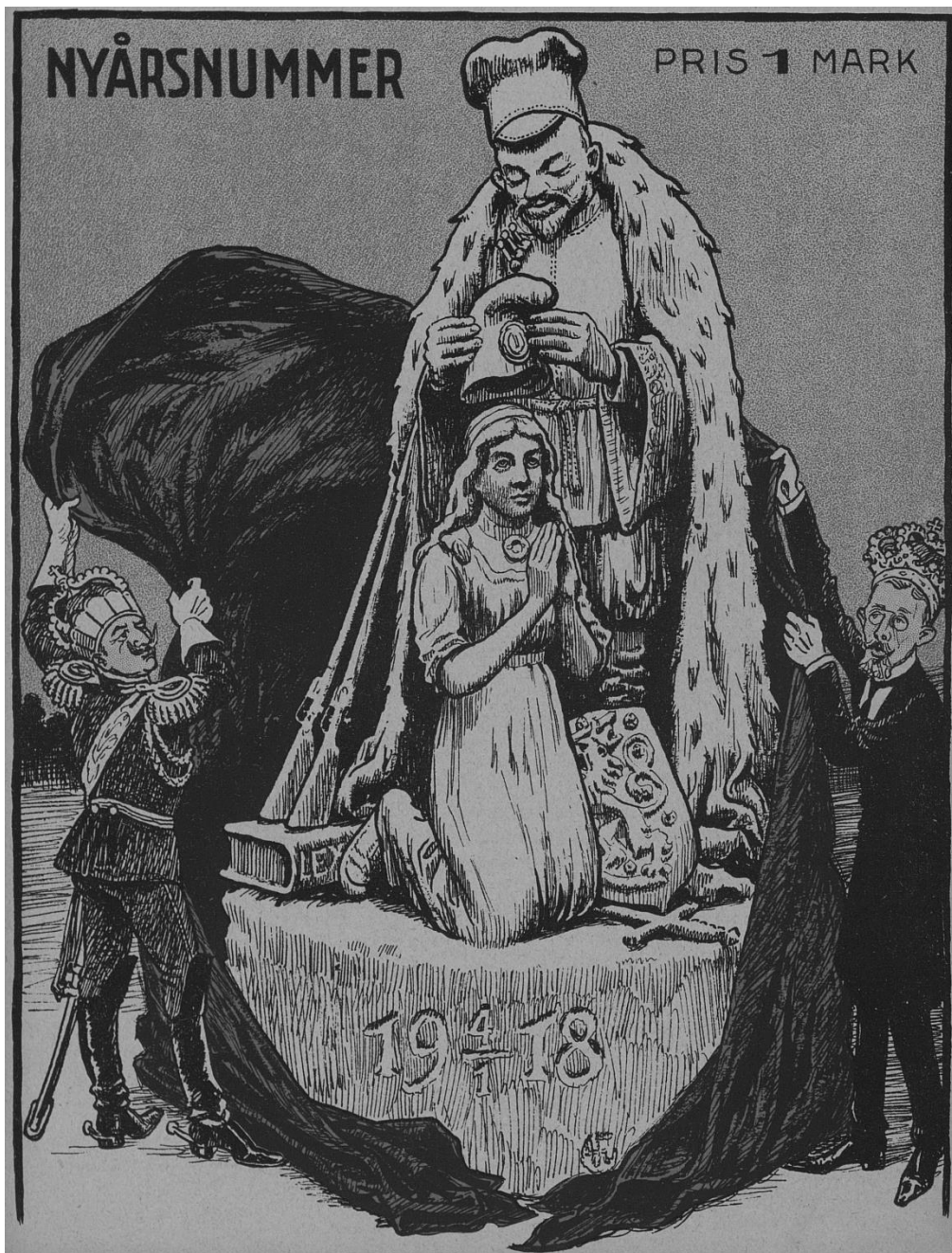


Figure 45. Fyren. 01.01.1918.

Following bourgeois victory in the civil war a throne, a crown, and a German prince was obtained for the purpose. A well-known nationalist periodical pictured the future king on its cover on October 1<sup>st</sup> 1918 and wrote that “He shall hear the responses resonating in our hearts to the pleas for help of our tribal brothers across the border [referring to the eastern border]. He will create Greater

Finland”<sup>68</sup>. In other words, a German king represented the perfect union of ethno-national romantic and imperial imagination. The US characterized this as a coup d’etat: “Almost certain a majority vote of this 54 per cent [of the Finnish parliament] will, in a short time, by declaring monarchy, accomplish *coup d’etat*, since Constitution requires two-thirds the Diet of five-sixths popular vote to determine character sovereignty”<sup>69</sup>. Similarly, in early June the French Legation in Stockholm warned the Finnish government that their efforts to pursue a monarch “does not seem to be supported by the majority required by constitutional laws ... [and] the French Republic will not recognize in Finland any regime which may be established in an illegal way” (State Department 1932, 791). *Fyren* magazine portrayed the situation with some irony regarding the contrast of a tradition of Finnish self-portrayed progressivist claims and the monarchical desires. The “New Germany” is depicted as a worker hauling royals and monarchs to the trash pile with the little Finnish maiden next to it. The text says: “Mr. New Germany to little queen-to-be Finland. – you suffer from chronic Hohen-Koller [referring to the Kaiser’s lineage], little progressive lady, but here you have a selection – pick what you want” (Figure 46).

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<sup>68</sup> *Nuori Voima*, 10.1.1918. National Archives of Finland.

<sup>69</sup> The US Consul at Helsinki, Haynes, to Secretary of State, Lansing, June 15, 1918. (State Department 1932, 1794).



Figure 46. Fyren. Late 1918.

The bourgeoisie in power would not listen. They had gained a monopoly on defining the state field. However, German defeat and Allied victory forced the bourgeois politicians to abandon German alignment. Plans for a constitutional monarchy continued with speculation of a Danish prince as the new king of Finland reported by the New York Times as late as March 3<sup>rd</sup> 1919. The constitution for a Kingdom of Finland, abandoned in late spring 1919, would have given the king full executive power as well as legislative power shared with the parliament and put him in charge of foreign affairs.

However, Allied pressure forced the king-makers to compromise and instead create a strong presidential institution as a counter-balance to democratic decision-making. This minute difference

between Finnish-style constitutional monarchy and the strong presidential system eventually created gives us a good understanding of the actual degrees of democracy promoted by Western Empires vis-à-vis other imperial alternatives deployed by Wilsonian propaganda. The president was endowed the same far-ranging executive powers, and powers over the legislative and judicial institutions, that king was originally intended to receive, as what appeared in actuality a replacement Czar. Indeed, the British and the US promise for peace was not considered to be very genuine in Finland. Here we see the angel of peace chained to a US-British tank. The picture is titled “tank-guarantee for peace” (figure 47).

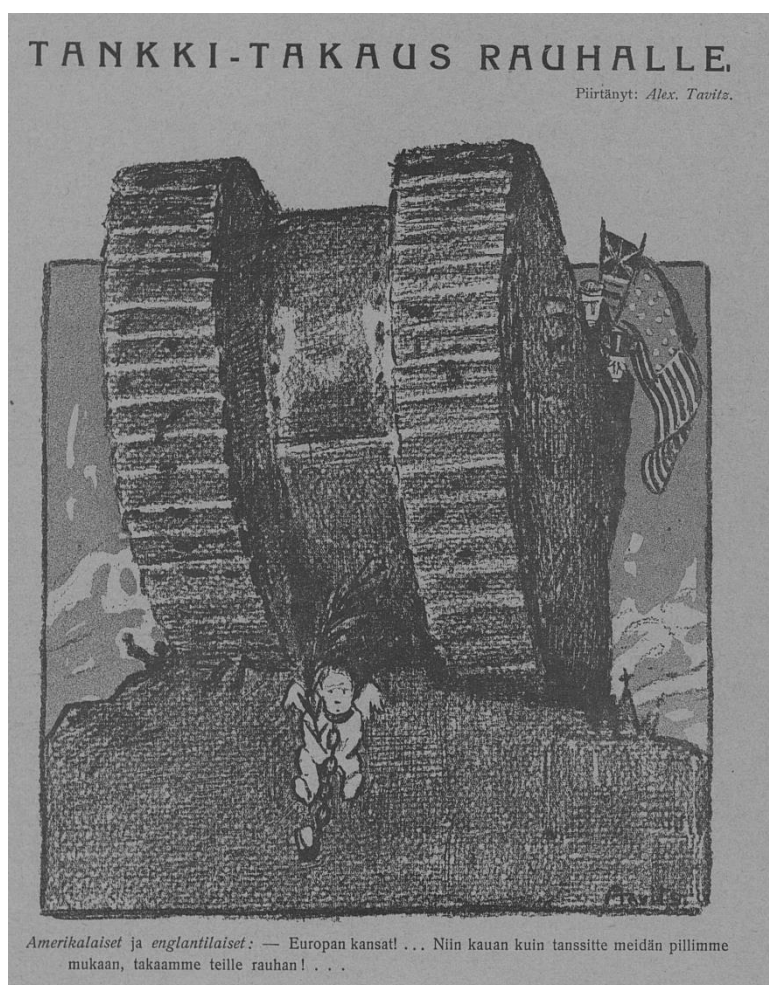


Figure 47. Tuulispää. 25.10.1918

Before moving ahead, let us move slightly backwards in time. A Finnish diplomat, Edvard Hjelt, who had previously organized the training of Finnish volunteer troops under the German army in 1914, had already on 26th of November, before Svinhufvud had declared independence, been in

contact with Ludendorff at the German General Headquarters. Some of the points he had conveyed to the Germans were the following: Finland is pro-German, Finland must break away from Russia and create an independent state in close association with Germany, and thus an invasion by German troops in Finland would be most desirable (Hjelt, 1920).

What about the social democrats? They were losing the domestic struggle for power. They had almost begun a revolution in November but had backed down. Nevertheless, before the bourgeois government had requested independence from Petrograd, the Social Democrats, who were in contact with the Bolsheviks had sent their own envoy that requested the Bolsheviks to go ahead and recognize Finnish independence for the bourgeoisie government. Trotsky had asked them why they don't make a revolution but agreed that if that is not going to happen, then the Bolsheviks will agree with independence. "If independence is the only possibility Finnish social democrats see, then we will prepare a proclamation" Trotsky had replied (Karl H. Wiik's diary. Finnish National Archives).

But, soon after the Bolshevik recognition of independence the strain of the war started to show as increased social unrest and the bourgeois government sought authority from the parliament to organize the police and military in the country. It was granted on January 12th with full knowledge on all sides that this would escalate tensions with the government and the self-organized red guards. The government began preparations for war. It summoned home the Finnish volunteer Jäger battalion from Germany. On January 27th, the red guards began disarming opponents in southern Finland. The civil war had started. At the same time the general of the government's troops and the white guards, C.G.E. Mannerheim, a former General in the Czar's army, began disarming Russian troops in the west. The bourgeois government evacuated itself to the west coast.

In early 1918 there were two governments in Finland, both with their own declarations of independence and both working to establishing new imperial relations. Both sent their representatives to Washington too, to make the case for their side, though, from US internal communications we can read that only the bourgeois side had a chance to gain recognition from the US (State Department 1932, 755-756). This was recognized by the Social Democratic side whose representative Santeri

Nuorteva did not seek recognition but concentrated on making their claim of legitimacy and asking for food aid.

The bourgeois side emphasized the interpretation in Washington that the Provisional Government in Petrograd had indeed taken over the functions of the Grand Duke of Finland. “When the Tsar abdicated, the powers formerly under the Finnish Constitution belonging to the Emperor-Grand Duke, were vested in the Russian Temporary Government”, The Finnish Commissioner Dr. Reuter explained (Ibid., 760). Therefore, the July declaration of independence by the socialists was not legal as it was not accepted by the Provisional Government. However, by the time that the bourgeois side declared independence, according to the Finnish Commissioner, no government existed in Russia, which made their declaration valid. The Bolsheviks had not similarly inherited the Czar’s sovereign authority. This, of course, was somewhat contradictory since a month later recognition for independence was sought from the Soviet government. The Commissioner explained that this was simply because there was uncertainty as to when a Russian National Assembly might be convened, a point that also contradicts the previous point concerning the declaration of independence.

Whereas, naturally, the representative of the Social Democratic government highlighted as a declaration of independence the July Power Law, accepted and confirmed by a majority of the Finnish parliament. In his argumentation Nuorteva instead used the traditional narrative of invented statehood and went as far as 1809 and the Swedish Constitution to argue that the sovereignty of the Czar would have passed supreme power to the Finnish parliament, thereby making the July declaration the lawful one. Interestingly, this of course, was the interpretation that was in line with the long-standing view of the bourgeois legalists (Ibid., 765).

Importantly, Nuorteva then highlighted another reason for the illegality of the Bourgeois parliament, that it had entered into such relations with Germany that jeopardized Finnish independence and would lead to German autocracy destroying “all hopes of democratic evolution in the country” (ibid.)

*The struggle of the working people of Finland, a struggle which has lasted for a century, against internal and external tyranny, is in its present aspects a struggle for real democracy, for industrial as well as political freedom, and for modern civilization against medieval autocracy. I sincerely believe it has a just claim upon the full sympathy on the part of the democracy of the world. Santeri Nuorteva to State Department. (State Department 1932, 767)*

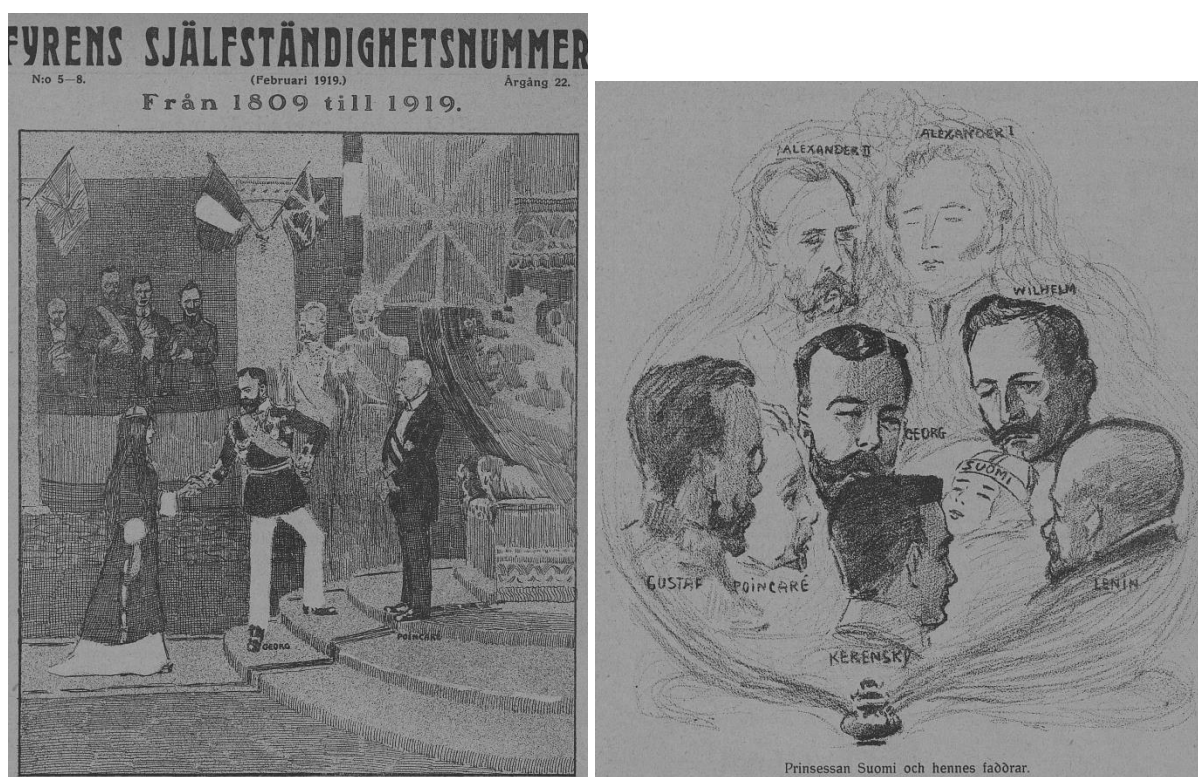
Indeed, in early February 1918 the chairman of the government requested German intervention. According to historian Tuomo Polvinen, the Germans had themselves suggested that Finland request an intervention. On March 1<sup>st</sup> the Social Democrats on their behalf signed a state treaty with the Soviets, as discussed in chapter two. And on 7<sup>th</sup> of March a peace and trade treaty was signed by the bourgeois government with Germany. The treaty gave Germany maximal control of Finnish trade while the peace treaty declared Finland to be under German protection and Germany would guarantee the recognition of Finnish independence by other states and send an expeditionary force to liberate southern Finland from socialist control. This treaty was ratified by the parliament as well in July 1918. At this point even the former hero of the civil war, Mannerheim, reported to Western countries “that Finland was entirely under German domination”<sup>70</sup>.

It is clear then that not only Wilson and Lenin, but also the Germans knew how to use national self-determination instrumentally as a political tool. This then did not mean de facto independence but an indirect colonization by Germany. Similarly, already in early January with less than a month of independence, Finnish diplomats had expressed their desire to the German chancellor of the annexation of large regions of the Soviet Union unto Finland. In March, the white troops were already advancing into Soviet Russia, but these expeditions failed. The goal to attach Finland to Germany saw its finale as late as in early October 1918 when the parliament ratified Karl Friedrich, the Prince of Hessen as the new king of Finland. In return Germany had agreed to help in annexing large parts of the Soviet Union into Finland to create a Greater Finland. But, by late October Finns were already delaying the arrival of the newly elected King to his country, and by early December the King himself refused to take up his crown.

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<sup>70</sup> The Minister in Sweden, Morris, to the Secretary of State, Lansing, July 11, 1918.

Indeed, the anti-Fennoman *Fyren* did not celebrate independence until early 1919 when the idea of a German king was buried, and a republican form of government accepted. At this point *Fyren* recognized the pressure from France and England, Poincaré and George, towards republican government as the final coronation to independence. Instead of a king, it is the Finnish maiden herself who is ceremoniously put on the throne. The ghosts of Alexander I and the Swedish king Gustaf observe, in line with the invented tradition of Finnish statehood. Subsequently *Fyren* named foreign heads of state, not the Finnish politicians, as godfathers of the Finnish maiden's independence (figure 48-9).



Figures 48 and 49. *Fyren*. 01.02.1919.

The Finns attempted to re-align themselves with other movements in the imperial space. They sought to align with the international socialist movement, with the German Empire, and finally went to lengths to align themselves with Western victors of WWI after initial failure to do so. But, the latter was more of a compromise than a desired solution and afterwards the Finns continued their search for new transnational alignments in the form of Scandinavian co-operation, so-called border state politics, Finno-Ugric activism (see for example Hautala 1979; Hovi 1983, 1981; Lehti 1999; Roiko-Jokela

1995; Zetterberg 1977) and finally by aligning themselves with renewed German imperialism during WWII.

### *Conclusions*

This chapter has explored the contestation over statehood in the Grand Duchy of Finland. Rather than class alignments or ideals of social order – conservatism, liberalism and socialism – Finnish parties argued over autonomy in the empire. As such arguments were intra-imperial, concerning the Finnish state's position within the empire. In this equation democratic reforms and thereafter the Finnish parliament took center stage as a form of excluding and distinguishing the Grand Duchy from metropolitan politics.

Representative institutions become platforms for imagining what the empire meant, but this vision was qualitatively different from the periphery and thereby shaped the meaning of representation itself. In stark terms, the mode of operation was not one of incrementally widening mutual recognition, rather representation itself was the mode of levelling differences. In this sense, annexation to a metropolitan parliament was one of the periphery's greatest fears. The Czar's sovereignty provided Finns immediate recognition without the need to recognize the dominant others, without being the minority in terms of representation, as would have been the case in the imperial parliament. Finnish democratic politics then equally did not develop into a stage for seeking recognition and political rights, but for securing them. Recognition in the form of the empire's sovereignty could be assumed by parties as given, thus universality of suffrage was not an issue. Indeed, leaving groups outside of the parliament, would elevate their voices vis-à-vis parliamentary ones in relation to the metropole and fragment the distinction between the Finnish colonial field and the empire.

Subordinated autonomy as the symbolic capital of the field was exemplified in the shared imagery of the Finnish maiden, either troubled or championed by familial Finnish actors and political struggles or the foreign gathering of imperial actors of whom Russia was a part. Nationalism as such, was equally uncontested, only its form in advancing the Finnish position and non-sovereign statehood

in the empire was contested. Here, at the moment of the breakdown of the grand ducal Field in late 1917, Fyren portrays the ideal belief, the illusio, and then its undermining from the bourgeois perspective, titled “Finland’s independence: great power costume drama in two acts”. In the first picture, titled “hoped for independence”, the Finnish maiden wears the grand ducal crown of sovereignty, has laws (constitution) as her shield, “international guarantees” supporting her back and “valued neighborly relations (Russia)” her feet with national-romantic people living at her feet. In the next picture, laws have broken, the Russian bear crawls out of “the neighborly relations”, international guarantees explode into the various military hats of the Great Powers. As to the inhabitants, the man has changed and is shooting at the maiden while the woman is swept away by what appears to be a Russian sailor. The second picture is titled “independence in reality” (figures 50-51).



Figures 50-51. Fyren undated, late 1917.

Recall how in figure 24 above, the mythology of Kalevala was harnessed by the socialists to portray an attack against the Finnish maiden and the Finnish people by the Russian Prime Minister Stolypin and Finnish bourgeois politicians. In that picture from 1909 the socialists specifically did not portray themselves as the hero Väinämöinen under attack as in the original myth, but rather put in his

place the Finnish maiden. It was the relation between the Finnish maiden and the imperial metropole that set the tension and logic of that earlier allegory. It was that relation, which the socialists claimed to have disrupted in support of the Finnish maiden in their election struggle. Nine years later, however, after the civil war, Tuulispää took to the same mythological symbolism, but now the metropole was gone and the evil winged Louhi and her henchmen are simply Finnish socialists. There is no evil from above or elsewhere, the socialists are not even working for the International. Furthermore, the symbolic and neutral Finnish maiden is also gone and has been replaced by the Fennoman bourgeois monarchist Svinhufvud (figure 52).

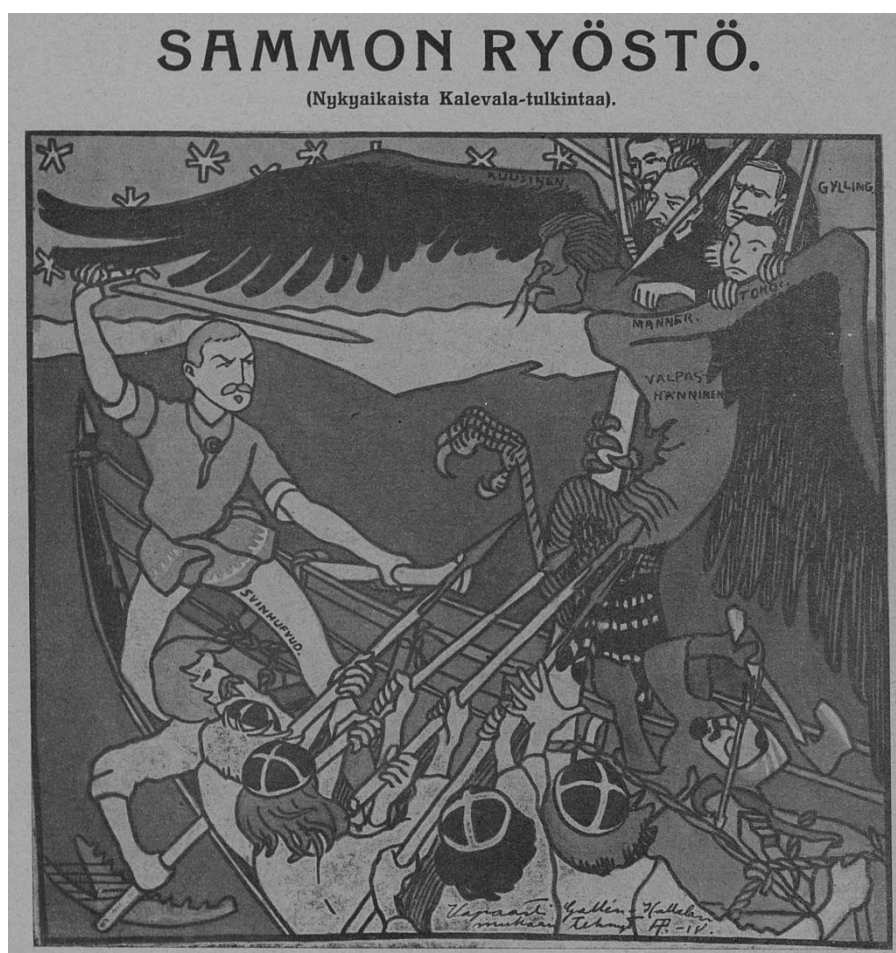


Figure 52. Tuulispää. 24.05.1918.

The Finnish state field was structured around the metropole colony relations and the Finnish political parties challenged each other only indirectly via arguments borrowed from or built around the inter-imperial field. In their struggle for autonomy. For example, the idea of a dual chamber

parliament – seen to guarantee stability against hasty and extreme decision-making when operating from the perspective of sovereign power projected downwards to a governed population – when set on the continuum of periphery-to-metropole of the colonial state field, instead appears to refract and disintegrate the field of politics by refracting actors and opinions between the periphery and the metropole<sup>71</sup>, instead of focusing them in order to create a clear delineation, distinction and exclusion that secures non-sovereign statehood and power.

Similarly, non-sovereign democratization in Finland did not pit democracy and estates-based rule against each other. There was no internal progression from feudal to bourgeois governance. Rather, since from an imperial perspective Finland's privileges referred to those of the Finnish estates, not statehood or administration, democratic reform followed as continuity of the Grand Duchy's position, especially its founding *illutio*, within the empire. The estates willingly put their heads on the chopping block, as one picture above portrayed. The inter-imperial idea of democracy's connection with sovereignty and civilizational rule, and the socialist concept of bourgeois democracy as a phase in the overthrowing of imperial capitalism, were translated in the intra-imperial context as strengthening of autonomy of the colonial field vis-à-vis empire, the opposite of secession.

Next, I move to metropolitan calls for democratization and explore their relation to the inter-imperial field. My case of the German Social Democrats moves non-sovereign to sovereign linkages of the inter- and intra-imperial in democratic politics of the imperial state and the Social Democrats' calls and arguments for increased democratization.

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<sup>71</sup> See Nicholas Hoover Wilson (2015) for this type of refractive colonial governance: "From Reflection to Refraction: Extractive Administration in British India, circa 1770-1855" in *The American Journal of Sociology* 116(5), 1437-1477.

## Chapter 4. Metropolitan Democratization – The German SPD's Mobilization of Democracy and Colonialism.

*A general attempt to divide all existing states into national units and to re-tailor them on the model of national states and statelets is a completely hopeless, and historically speaking, reactionary undertaking (Rosa Luxemburg 1909a in Dahbour and Ishay 1995, 203).*

Following WWI and the emergence of by-default-national politics of democracy and socialism, sociologies and histories have not always recognized how deeply implicated socialism and democratization was in empire as the German case illuminates most clearly, but not exclusively. Differences and contests among participants create a coherence now invisible given the dominance of nation-state frameworks in our imagination. In what follows I highlight the German empire and wider inter-imperial relations as the background of debates concerning democratization and colonialism by analyzing three key thinkers of the German Social Democratic Party (SPD). Their visions and alternatives, not so well known now, defined the strongest calls for democratization and against colonialism in metropolitan Europe before 1917-1919 and help us recognize empire's transformation following the First World War (WWI).

Sociology defines democracy in connection to sovereign statehood and assumes a continuity between particular metropolitan parliaments and later nation-state based democratic systems. As we have seen in chapters two and three, the metropolitan forms and ideas of democracy in existence before WWI had little to nothing to do with non-sovereign democratization; they mostly defined their own democracies as exclusive modes of politics, reserved for those civilized and racially developed enough, or, as we shall see in this chapter, capitalistically developed enough. Such a function was almost opposite to that of non-sovereign democratization. But the real argument is not that the continuity of democratization is false or that it only portrays a very limited idea of democracy in the image of intra-imperial relations of Western empires; the real argument is about how this continuity was constructed. By addressing this we can begin to see what is occluded from sociological analysis by this particular historical narrative and definition. This chapter takes another step in that direction

by exploring contestations and understandings by metropolitan actors arguing for democratization and mobilizing democratic platforms against those dominant in the sovereign polity.

These actors of the German SPD made democratization their central argument in advancing socialist politics, though why that was the case, and what work democratization would do was highly debated. Those debates were started by and centered on analyses of colonial and national politics and the imperial state. The German SPD was not alone in considering democracy its central instrument. The imperial state itself saw great danger in the combination of socialism and democracy<sup>72</sup>. Not only was the electoral system designed so that the socialists gained less representatives than what their relative vote share was<sup>73</sup>, they were also directly banned from the democratic platform of the empire by the ‘Law against the Public Danger of the Endeavors of Social Democracy’ from 1878 to 1890. And this takes place at a time when the Reichstag did not even hold much legislative and no executive power. It is interesting to note the contrast here to the non-sovereign democracy of the Grand Duchy of Finland where socialists gained much higher vote shares, were never banned from participation, and on the contrary were central to the Finnish democracy, and ultimately joining its executive through their electoral success.

How was democracy contested and argued for by the socialists in sovereign metropolises before WWI? Why was it important despite the socialists’ relatively small successes? We shall see that the debates over democratization were intrinsically connected to global statehood and its colonial dimension. After establishing this we can begin to sketch how this relation was occluded after WWI in Wilsonian and Leninist models of thought. The focus in this chapter is on the Leninist model, since it builds on socialists’ conceptions of democratization in the German Empire. Moreover, these socialists, especially Kautsky and Luxemburg were also Lenin’s chief antagonists in debating and defining the national question, the colonial question, and democracy’s relation to socialism.

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<sup>72</sup> Here the German state was not alone. As discussed in chapter two, Woodrow Wilson began to revise his understanding of self-determination when he learned that it was used and mobilized by socialists.

<sup>73</sup> For example, in the first elections after the anti-socialist laws, the SPD gained the most votes of all parties (19.7 per cent), but only the fifth most seats. The SPD’s seat count of 35 was more than double less than the 73 seats of the German Conservative Party for example, that had received only 12.4 per cent of the votes.

### *Parliamentarism and Empire*

Much like with democracy and parliaments in other imperial metropolises, the German Reichstag was founded to signal the legitimacy and unity of the empire. It was connected to the expansion of the empire and brought together, in and under the imperial metropole and the imperial executive, 26 different kingdoms, grand duchies, duchies, principalities, republican free cities, and the imperial territory of Alsace-Lorraine. Within this constellation, some had also alliances with each other, and each broke down into various kinds of administrative levels both imperially and domestically, totaling over a thousand different administrative units.

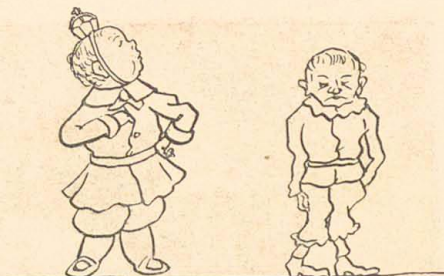
The imperial Reichstag was the only organ to bring all of these together through universal male suffrage of those over 25 years of age and through close to 400 electoral districts cutting across the aforementioned political fragments. It played a part in the legislative procedure but was not necessary for legislation. The different state governments, especially through the Bundesrat, the Emperor, the Imperial Chancellor and the Imperial Government played equal or more important roles. The Reichstag had no executive power beyond the right to pose questions and petitions to the executive. Kautsky described the situation in 1909 like this: “The Reichstag is weakened, not alone because the imperial government is independent of it, but no less from the fact that the empire is by no means a complete united state. Its power is further restricted by the sovereignty of the separate states, by their governments and Landtags, and their narrow particularism.” (1909, 98). The German satirical magazine *Simplicissimus* portrayed the relation between the empire and the imperium, or the empire as indivisible and the empire as divisible, as founded on the Kaisertum and the Reichstag, as two siblings born to Bismarck in 1871. One grew strong, gained respect and fine clothes, the other grew weak and became bullied and dependent on the other, ultimately dying of emaciation (Figure 53).

## Die Zwillinge Kaisertum und Reichstag

(Zeichnungen von Th. Th. Heine)



Im Jahre 1871 wurden die beiden Zwillinge Kaisertum und Reichstag geboren.



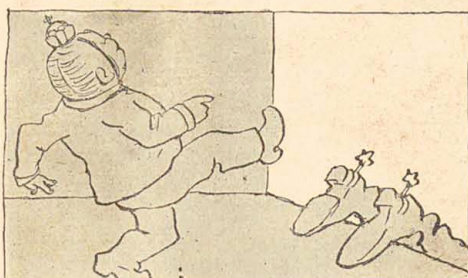
Das Gedeihen der Kinderchen zeigte aber merkwürdige Unterschiede. Während das Kaisertumskind mit jedem Monat stärker und voller wurde, war der kleine Reichstag schon bald nach der Geburt kränklich und schwach.



Nach die Behandlung im Elternhause und in der Schule war eine ganz verschiedene. Dem Kaisertumchen kamen die Lehrer mit großer Ehrfurcht entgegen, während der kleine Reichstag als widerspenstig und unfolgsam häufig geprügelt werden mußte.



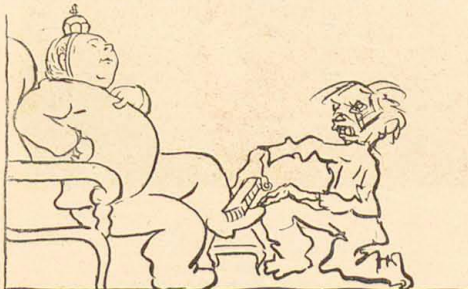
Darum schmückte man auch das Kaisertumchen mit den schönsten Kleidern, gab ihm viel Taschengeld und ließ es prächtig einherholstern. Das Reichstagschen dagegen erhielt keinen Pfennig. Während es um Diäten bat, wurde es zur Ruhe verwiesen, und so mußte es fleißig im Gewande der Armut einhergehen.



Als das Kaisertumchen 19 Jahr alt war und sich für männlich hielt, schmiß es seinen Papa, den alten Fürsten Bismarck, hinaus.



Und von dieser Zeit an wurde es auch gegen den Zwillingenbruder, den Reichstag, sehr streng und zeigte ihm, wer eigentlich der Herr sei.



Das Reichstagschen fügte sich und war zuletzt durch die Belehrung des Herrn von Bismarck so weit gebracht, daß es zufrieden war, wenn es seinem Zwillingenbruder die Schuhe putzen durfte.



Auch dafür erhielt es kein Taschengeld, und so wird es sein kümmerliches Dasein bald beschließen und an der Auszehrung sterben.

Figure 53. Simplicissimus 20.02.1906. Simplicissimus digital archive

(<http://www.simplicissimus.info>).

### *The Colonial Dimension*

With the founding of German overseas colonies starting in the mid-1880s the Reichstag found a politically powerful object of imperial imagination that it could more directly and openly discuss than issues of the continental empire. The colonies sent no representation to the Reichstag and were governed directly by the imperial government, first the foreign office and since 1907 the colonial office. This made the Reichstag the only counter-balance to the imperial executive when it came to matters of overseas colonies. In these colonial matters on the imperial forum, the limited democratic legitimization of the empire directly met the imperial sovereign legitimization on a matter that could be portrayed as an empire-wide issue. The fragmentations and special interest politics of the continental imperial state did not refract debates over colonial policy and politics.

The colonial question became marked on the socialist agenda with The Second International (1889-1916), a period that coalesced with parliamentary politics of the SPD and during which the SPD was hegemonic within the European socialist movement. It influenced their analysis of a variety of political questions and the consequent formulation of political strategies. The relation of colonialism to other key issues such as democracy and nationalism produced several productive avenues for political claim-making; before WWI “the possibility of the fusing of the national and colonial questions within Marxism – of colonial nationalism being considered – was foreclosed” (Seth 1989, 45).<sup>74</sup> In contrast, the fusion of the national and colonial dimensions of politics in a particular combination, and thus the restriction of that space of political debate, became a defining feature of post-WWI Marxism.

Understanding non-sovereign democracy and its suspension in the inter- and intra-imperial dimension, as explored in chapters two and three, can now help us analyze distinction and organizing cleavages in calls for and debates about metropolitan state democratization by Social Democrats in imperial Germany. From the reference point of this inter- and intra-imperial tension of sovereignty and

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<sup>74</sup> As discussed in chapters two and three, this was not necessarily the case in non-sovereign states, such as the Grand Duchy of Finland. Yet even there the relation between nationalism and socialism remained a contested idea among both socialists and their opponents.

democracy we can analyze the calls for democratization in the imperial field outside of the retrospective Leninist and Wilsonian debates on the one hand, or a domestic and foreign policy divide on the other. Instead of confusion, fragmentation, and indecisiveness regarding the connections of statehood, democracy, colonialism and nationalism, the debates within the metropolitan German SPD show attentiveness to the complexity of the matter and its mobilization within metropolitan politics. Together they present a complex network of argumentation that before 1917-1919 successfully began to undermine dominant metropolitan conceptions of sovereignty and its intra-imperial politics in an effort to take control of the imperial state, whereas non-sovereign mobilizations of democratization and colonialism discussed earlier were dependent on imperial sovereignty and did not attempt to undermine it or confront the imperial state.

### *The Social Democrats and Empire*

This chapter analyzes the structuring of socialist politics in the German Empire with reference to empire through three paradigmatic figures and writers across the spectrum of the German Social Democratic party (SPD), Rosa Luxemburg, Karl Kautsky, and Eduard Bernstein. It describes how their differences were founded upon imperial references, while they remained united in their motivation and goal to challenge domination in the field of imperial power. As Jamie Melrose has argued, these disagreements were not fragmentations within socialist thought, but foundational to it and at the core of socialist political identity in the imperial state (Melrose 2016). Indeed, it was disagreement over colonial politics that instigated these differences between the three in the first place (Bernstein 1898); in considering the possible collapse of capitalism, it was the imperial state, and the possibility for democratic politics within it as the conclusion of the Communist Manifesto had outlined, that each of them confronted but in different ways.

What makes the case of German Social Democrats (SPD) especially interesting for understanding empire and democratization, and the connected issues of colonialism and statehood, is their role in imperial politics as “the only self-consciously international party in the German Empire that reached across Germany’s borders to connect with like-minded men and women all over the world” (Guettel 2012, 454). Moreover, the SPD has been mostly missing from recent historiographies

on German colonialism, especially in comparison to its relative importance for and in the empire as the strongest metropolitan socialist party in the world. This occlusion may be explainable by the perspectives on the SPD that have not adequately considered the imperial state as a political entity built around inter- and intra-imperial tensions. It rather depended on breaking those socialist politics into different domains; bifurcated into a national continental state with simply imperial ambitions, separate colonial states, and lastly global socialist politics. Imperialism, and the SPD's wide-ranging debates about it, as explored below, has been considered an internal characteristic, a policy dimension of state politics. In this regard we ought to move beyond an understanding of the SPD as central to continental German politics and its relegation to the sidelines when considered from the perspective of a transnational and global German colonial empire (Guettel 453); we should not simply consider the SPD to have aligned its position on colonialism with other German imperial parties following the so-called Hottentot elections in 1907, that consolidated the overseas colonies as part of the imperial democratic imaginary. In contrast, the SPD's position should be analyzed in the intersection of inter-imperial debates concerning socialism, colonialism, democracy, and nationalism and the SPD's intra-imperial positions and political strategies; rather than aligning with the separation of domestic and foreign policies of the continental empire, the colonial dimension became instead a key proponent of SPD's different stances on democratic politics within the empire, as well as regarding considerations of the national question. For example, for Luxemburg parliamentary politics revealed the clash of class development and global politics of militarism and colonial politics (Luxemburg 1904).

All of this happened under the umbrella of the imperial state, not as for or against the colonial dimension itself as a separate domain; it was a prevailing analytical problem with the imperial structure. Even Kautsky's strong rejection of colonial policy was based on the consideration of what could be the most effective position "for the improvement of the lot of the natives" (Kautsky 1907, *Socialism and Colonial Policy* [Marxist.org]). Colonial policy was the issue that could be debated as an aspect of the empire by the parliament in direct opposition to the imperial government. Regional politics or national politics of the continental empire could be set aside. As Jens-Uwe Guettel observes based on contemporary commentaries, instead of becoming pro-colonial or accepting that

aspect of the imperial state, the SPD become “increasingly radical rather than more supportive of the German Empire’s political structure” (Guettel 466). An effective rejection of colonialism within the imperial state and its metropole meant a deeper engagement with and critique of the form of the colonial dimension, which the SPD as a whole developed, while debating its particular logics internally<sup>75</sup>. The following picture is descriptive of the SPD’s success. It is an anti-Social Democratic election postcard by Centre party from 1912. It states “Social Democracy against world policy, against colonies, against army and navy. Down with the red traitors of the fatherland”. The card depicts the other imperial power carving the ‘cake of the world’, while the social democrats are holding back Germany (figure 54).



Figure 54. Centre Party Election Postcard from 1912. German Historical Museum.

In those debates Rosa Luxemburg suggested that colonialism revealed a cleavage between the bourgeois controlled state and wider capitalist expansion that could and should be exploited for

<sup>75</sup> As Guettel points out, at the Stuttgart conference in 1907, following the Hottentot elections that supposedly would have made the SPD accept colonialism, the party in fact reconfirmed the rejection of western colonialism, but did so “in greater detail than seven years earlier, during the first conference of the Second International in Paris”, with “clear guidelines for socialist parliamentarians on how to approach colonialist questions” (Guettel 466).

wresting over the power of that state. Eduard Bernstein, with an almost reverse conclusion despite a similar analysis to that of Luxemburg's, describes the colonial dimension as an economic dimension, not political, of the imperial state against the rise of increasingly contradictory capitalist relations in the metropole; he thus suggests bringing colonial policies into direct and close contact with the advancing socialist politics of that metropole; thus revealing colonialism's role in undermining metropolitan economic relations. Whereas Karl Kautsky saw the imperial state as the opponent, the framework of capitalism within which resistance to capitalism in the form of socialist and international – i.e. metropolitan inter-imperial cooperation – organization meant also resistance towards colonial extensions, resistance towards those spaces that were not occupied by socialist organization such as the colonies. Thus, coming to 1907, which marked both heated debate over colonialism at the Stuttgart conference of the International as well as elections in Germany with a central colonial theme, the party had developed a clear understanding of colonialism as a parliamentary issue of the modern capitalist state, in contrast to the more vague previous definition of "bourgeois colonialism" (Guettel 467) understood previously, and simply as a part of wider and generic development of bourgeois exploitation.

All in all, the SPD's motivation was to attack the existing legitimization of the sovereignty of capitalist and racialized imperial rule. Under this main thrust Bernstein's calls for socialist colonial policies, Kautsky's rejection of any colonial politics (*kolonialpolitik*), and especially Luxemburg's distinction between dismantling imperial relations elsewhere but democratizing the entire imperial state in modern capitalist states, all served the same purpose of undermining the imperial field of power's prevailing definitions and of gaining recognition across the imperial state (not simply in the parliament or the metropole). They all sought, in different ways, to position the SPD's wholly vis-à-vis the dominant pole of the field. Historian Geoff Eley has succinctly described this position, in relation to later nation-state politics:

*During the course of the later 20th century, the whole raison d'être of the party became reduced downwards into fighting an election, winning an election, keeping itself in office, or getting back there. But the classic slogan of the SPD left before the First World War had been *Durch das Fenster reden* ("Speak through*

*the Window!”), i.e. use the parliamentary chamber as an opportunity to challenge the given rules and boundaries of the politically possible by addressing the people outside, and thereby overcome the gap between the committee room and the street. (Eley, 2014)*

It was a matter of acquiring a voice of significance, “so that you are actually inside the conversations that determine how policy gets made” and “using the opportunities for political voice in order to build solidarities, create continuities over time” not subsumed under electoral strategies and a national level, Eley further elaborates about the German SPD’s objective (ibid.) The colonial dimension of the empire became crucial for SPD in this regard defining statehood and democratization and challenging imperial sovereignty and legitimization. The reply of an SPD deputy at the Reichstag to the colonial secretary’s boasting about modernizing and liberalizing the German colonial enterprise is revealing.

He considered these improvements a result of the socialists’ critique even while rejecting the whole idea of colonialism: “In fact, we believe that our relentless criticism has substantially contributed to this improvement. Yet we also know that [. . .] the root of all the evil of the current colonial regime, namely its capitalist, exploitative character, cannot be changed. As a result, we completely reject it” (Reichstag’s debate 07.03.1914 quoted in Guettel 2012, 475).

Internal debates in the SPD have been the topic of much discussion. The divisions have often been described as leftist-centrist, revisionist-orthodox, or revolutionary-opportunist. Or in a tripartite way fashion, Bernstein represents the Revisionist-Reformist, Kautsky the Marxist-Centrist, and Luxemburg the Marxist Radical, where Bernstein represents the reformists, Kautsky the centrists, and Luxemburg the radicals (Melrose 2016, 1074). Most of these definitions however tend to define the particular positions as self-contained vis-à-vis each other and within the German Marxism in general. Fragmentation and difference then become the leading lines of analysis within the SPD on the one hand, and discontinuity between them and with what followed on the other. But that prevents is from seeing the whole picture

In historical analyses, Bernstein, his “long-time colleague and sparring partner Karl Kautsky”, and “his most acerbic critic Rosa Luxemburg” (Ostrowski 2018, 2) were initially forgotten in the

wake of the rising stars of post-WWI Marxist theorists like Gramsci, Lenin, and Lukacs, and afterwards only individually recovered depending on their functionality in and for later historical contexts and discussions. In this regard, Kautsky became portrayed as the grand old man of non-national, static and economistic Marxism, important perhaps for background context and Luxemburg as the forgotten radical, too idealistic, who failed to address the rise of nationalism. In reality their positions were deeply critical and analytical of the transformation witnessed in social and political relations, especially regarding empires' position vis-à-vis nations and colonies. Bernstein, who most adamantly rejected differentiating socialism between political divisions across both historically existing ones as well as imagined future ones, in favor of a universal ethic of humane socialism has especially in this role been "confined [to the] context debates over the core tenets of Marxian theory, typically with overtones of either disparaging hostility or the superficial interest generally reserved for historical curios" (Ibid., 4)

By contrast, I focus on their shared reference points rather than their differences, in order to assess their perspectives vis-à-vis what followed. I do not seek to examine debates among these Marxists as transhistorical theory as many do in moving linearly from early debates under empire to the maturity of national social democrats and communists after WWI. I rather wish to work through these political transformations in the historical context in order to demonstrate how all three, in the end, occupied the same relational place within the imperial field of power before WWI. Once the empire broke down, they suddenly converged on most issues<sup>76</sup>. But none of their positions were eventually mobilizable in the national fields after WWII, by neither the Social Democrats nor the Communists.<sup>77</sup>

Once the transformation is understood in this sense, we can compare it to the general transformation of empires to nation-states on the one hand, and to the transformation of democracy and self-determination in the same historical context, on the other.

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<sup>76</sup> Bernstein and Kautsky together founded the Independent SPD under which Luxemburg also initially joined them.

<sup>77</sup> Interestingly this also means that we cannot draw any conclusions of continuity between the reformist and revolutionary wings of the pre-WWI SPD to the postwar Social Democrats and Communists.

*Fielded Politics of Kautsky, Luxemburg, and Bernstein*

In understanding the SPD's analysis of intra-imperial relations from their position within the metropolitan political field, it is important to note two things. First, their legitimacy and political opportunities relied on democratic politics of the empire. It was therefore crucial for them to advocate a politics of democratization in relation to the empire's sovereign authority. That relation in general is similarly important for SPD's metropolitan politics as it was for Finnish peripheral politics, but the fielded positions defining their engagement with it were different. Second, the SPD relied on international, i.e. in this context inter-imperial political imagination and organization for its legitimacy and, more importantly, its recognition by other actor-positions also arguing for or against prevailing understandings of imperial relations and their legitimacy. This is again parallel to the Finnish actors need for recognition of their subjective meanings within the empire. The SPD in the German metropolitan field was a mirror image of the Finnish political actors in the sense that the SPD derived their actor-position instead of subjective meanings from inter-imperial connections, and their subjective meanings from intra-imperial relations. In contrast intra-imperial relations defined the Finns' actor-positions in their colonial field (See Go and Krause 2016 and discussion in chapter one).

The three political actors analyzed here in order to reconstruct that position are Karl Kautsky, Eduard Bernstein, and Rosa Luxemburg. They were the SPD's foremost thinkers and authorities specifically in mobilizing and rethinking intra-imperial politics from the perspective of their political actor-position in the metropole. In other words, they focused on that crucial overlap between the democratic space and promise of the Reichstag and the authority of the imperial executive. This is highlighted by the importance of their ideas in shaping the debates of the Socialist International and thereby the debates in socialist parties of other countries. As the ultimate comparison with Lenin shows, these three thinkers outlined a new reach for democratic politics through the political debates they created within, or more precisely, from within the SPD's position in the empire. As metropolitan actors their political strategies for wholesale democratization complemented each other much like the Finnish political parties' strategies complemented each other vis-à-vis delineated peripheral democratization. As discussed in chapter three, this complementarity in the grand ducal field shifts the

focus from domestic democracy and its form to democracy's role in the intra-imperial relation and as such the form that democratization gave to Finnish non-sovereignty in general. Kautsky, Luxemburg and Bernstein similarly shift the discussion from whether or not the extra-parliamentary dimensions of the German empire mattered for metropolitan politics and democracy to *how* they mattered.

The possibility of reading these three people as united rather than separated and the consequential comparison to Lenin is one of the major takeaways of a fielded reading of their debates. The problem has been that Kautsky, Luxemburg and Bernstein have retrospectively been read as theorists of some kind rather than as political strategist operating from the SPD's position in the metropolitan field; they were, rather, politicians who shared the same position within the political field of the empire and formulated policies based on their best understanding of how to achieve democratic change of imperial structures. Retrospective readings of them as socialist theorists engaging an objective ahistorical debate do not do justice especially to a comparison of them. Indeed, they have been labelled as theorists in the very process of othering and excluding their perspective on democracy and empire as unfit for passing through the historical keyhole of 1917-1919. An example of this is the labelling of Luxemburg as an anti-nationalist. Another good example is the prevailing understanding that the SPD following the 1907 elections moved to a more neutral stand vis-a-vis German colonialism. This is wrong. In reality this was the time of their breakthrough.

After 1907, they began to engage colonialism more analytically and developed complex arguments about colonial policy that had to be taken into consideration in metropolitan politics. In other words, others could no longer simply define their actor-position as anti-colonial vis-à-vis their own colonial politics. In reconstructing their position as a shared fielded position in the imperial metropole I also show why they could not pass through that historical keyhole, especially in relation to later Soviet politics in relation to them, and especially in relation to them as sharing a joint political space of debate instead of compartmentalizing their political ideas.

To give a further example of the importance of my orientation, consider Woodrow Wilson. In contrast to Kautsky, Luxemburg and Bernstein, Wilson is not read as a theorist, even though he as a university professor of political science was, until his electoral engagements, indeed first and foremost

a theorist. Wilson is simply sometimes read as an idealist, which is a mantle (that of an idealist) that would already cast Luxemburg, Bernstein, and Kautsky in a different light; a light in which their ideas are feasible if unlikely political ideas, instead of theoretical ideas that could and likely should be revised or updated.

These three political actors were dominant voices in connecting the SPD's position within the German metropole to inter-imperial debates over intra-imperial relations. Thus, they were making the politically transformative and powerful move of connecting their fielded actor-position with subjective meanings over the legitimacy of that same field. As makers and movers of political strategy they far exceeded their contemporaries Wilson and Lenin, whose theoretical positions were at the time not connected to existing politics and were mobilized and immortalized only retrospectively through politics and polities that were not the subject of their theories before WWI. Indeed, it was specifically the contemporary role of the German SPD as a political force that gave Kautsky, Luxemburg and Bernstein's polemics over the prevailing situation their importance.

For perhaps same reason, their voices have been lost much like Finland's experience of non-sovereign democracy. This occlusion owes to the transformation of empires and imperial relations following WWI, a transformation in which Western conceptions of democracy overshadowed Finnish history and Soviet conceptions overshadowed the German SPD's historical standpoint over democratization's role vis-à-vis sovereignty. My empirical focus here is then on recreating the SPD's historical standpoint on intra-imperial relations and the role of democratization in that understanding. This should also reveal how the contest among nations, as defined by Lenin's national self-determination, did not and does not need to take analytical privilege over democracy and socialism.

The best way to imagine that alternative analytical lens is to examine how these leading socialist politicians were making the case for a democratic socialist politics foregrounded in the reality of empire just as empire foregrounded their political position in the German metropole. The implications of this perspective are radically different for democracy. It means that they could not, and subsequent analysts should not, simply transcend or refuse empire, but to establish relationalities that allow the political actors to engage imperialism as much on their own terms as possible. It is

especially in that fielded aspect of political strategies that those other than Lenin were attentive to the undemocratic qualities of internationalism and sought different ways to make inter- and intra-imperial relations, their configurations, and the different politics constituted by those relations more democratic.

For the SPD's position it was crucial to move the debate away from their opposition to the imperial state and towards a discussion of the forms of its imperialism. The other choice would have been to confine themselves to parliamentary politics defined by the limits of metropolitan politics. Crucially though, Kautsky, Luxemburg and Bernstein all attempted to transcend that limitation through a definition of democratic relations rather than national relations as the Leninist framework did. This relation between Soviet politics of self-determination vis-à-vis Kautsky, Luxemburg, and Bernstein's politics of democratization is similar to Finnish actors' understanding of democratic politics vis-à-vis nation-state independence. The Finns feared that occluding the external imperialism of their relations would subject their democracy to threats outside the reach of the Finnish democratic polity itself. Similarly, Kautsky, Luxemburg and Bernstein did not want to occlude the imperialism of international relations by promoting national democratization within capitalist relations.

#### *Karl Kautsky – Socialist Organization against The Imperial State*

*The victorious proletariat will not be the ruling class in the countries now possessed as colonies, but will forego all foreign domination (Kautsky 1907, Socialism and Colonial Policy [Marxist.org]).*

For Kautsky "socialist colonialism" was a "complete logical contradiction" (quoted in Guettel 2012, 467). He drew perhaps the most straightforward connection between colonialism and the state. Jens-Uwe Guettel describes that Kautsky "attacked "the right of peoples of higher culture to 'exercise tutelage' over peoples of lower culture," because, in Kautsky's view, "the defense of the prerogative of the higher culture is capitalism's ethical grand delusion" (Guettel 2012, 484). For Kautsky this intra-imperial rule becomes simply transposed through the bourgeois-controlled nation to colonial dimensions, to a universal right.

Guettel concludes that “socialist anticolonialism was thus completely aware of its transnational (“internationalist”) nature” (ibid.), unlike later reflections advocated by post-WWI socialists have claimed. He continues, that for Kautsky, “national borders could not divorce the struggle of European workers from the struggle of the colonized in Africa, Asia, and elsewhere, as it was the same struggle against the same oppressors” (ibid.). This was not an anti-national position but should be complemented with an understanding of the goal and motivation of such an argument within the imperial field of power, posited from the SPD’s role as between the committee room and the street. It is based on the logic that the imperial state could not be challenged from a purely metropolitan perspective nor from a purely inter-imperial global perspective; it required the argumentation of and logic of a connection between the inter-imperial and the intra-imperial. The colonial dimension thus intervened to amplify the socialists’ intra-imperial critique.

Kautsky nevertheless drew a distinction between colonial policy itself as socialist, working within capitalism, and the efforts to overcome capitalism and possibly have colonial policy under a socialist regime: “despite “all these grounds” we are concerned not with framing colonial policy under a distant socialist regime, but with framing the colonial policy of socialists within capitalist society” (Kautsky 1907, *Socialism and Colonial Policy* [Marxist.org]). For Kautsky, because European nations were joined with colonial natives in a shared struggle, it was not the place of European socialists to lodge themselves between the colonial and the imperial.

The opposite point of defending an active socialist colonial policy was not missed or disputed by Kautsky. They asked, “where is your colonial programme?”, i.e. if one protests the injustice of imperialism, especially in its colonial dimension, then action would be required (ibid.). The importance of the question of colonialism was universally accepted; the problem was how socialism could and should address it. Kautsky agreed that “clarity is demanded by such an important and complicated question” for colonial policy “becomes the pivot of all international policy” (Ibid.). This is important, because in this regard the German Social Democrats self-consciously distinguished themselves from their French, British and American counterparts. Luxemburg noted, for example, that “the United States is today in the vanguard of those nations practicing imperial conquest”; Kautsky’s

comparisons to British and French socialists' stances towards their colonial policies are quite critical, portraying them as being fooled by their empires. Bernstein acknowledged these differences but sought to reconcile and transcend them through his socialist colonial policy.

Importantly, as we find with Luxemburg and Bernstein as well, Kautsky's stance on colonial policy is not determined by his interpretation of Marxist theory, but by his historical analysis of the German Imperial State vis-à-vis the socialist movement within it. This being the fundamental argument of this chapter, it is worthwhile to quote at length Kautsky's clear statement, in this case argued in relation to the Dutch situation:

*For this reason [of the particular situation of the German Empire] it is vital to direct all efforts against this side of colonial policy, the most dangerous one for Germany, and thus it appears a natural necessity that the struggle against every extension of colonies, the fundamental rejection of colonial policy, remains the priority in the political activity of German social democracy, and that the struggle for reforming the colonies has a lower priority, whilst the reverse is true in Holland. This difference springs from the fundamental difference in the situation in these two countries: it has absolutely nothing to do with the question whether one rejects colonial policy decisively or not. (Kautsky 1907, *Socialism and Colonial Policy* [Marxist.org])*

While Kautsky does not fully reject socialist involvement in colonial policies, he simply sees that the primacy of their rejection is needed in order to have the most effect on further improvements in the position of the colonies. He proceeds to compare the cultural domination of the bourgeoisie over the proletariat to the colonial relations of exerting "tutelage over", and as such being fundamentally against proletarian ethics. (ibid.): "Within one's own nation, this ethic appears as the vindication of the higher right of the 'haves' over the 'have-nots'. With regard to other nations, who are to be exploited, this ethic proclaims itself as nothing else than the right of capitalist nations to dominion over the whole of mankind." (ibid.)

Moreover, while Kautsky agrees that colonized nations must equally proceed through capitalism to socialism, he argues that the process can be much expedited, and takes a different form and shape depending on the context in endless variations. "This variation has become so great that many historians deny there are any historical laws" (Ibid.). Kautsky argues against basing this

development on anything else, on anything universalistic in terms of the process of development, just as he argues against universalistic cultural or racial hierarchies:

*But is this not to apply to the colonies, are we to accept the ethic of capitalism for them? Are we to proclaim the abolition of all class rule in our own country only and at the same time erect a new class dominion in the lands outside European civilisation: the domination of the white race over the dark-skinned races (including the Hindus)? The ethical awareness of the class-conscious proletariat rebels strongly against this idea. And if the attempt made to rob the proletariat of the conviction that it was not merely fighting for itself but for the whole of mankind, this would grievously weaken the ethical force of its class struggle (Kautsky 1907, Socialism and Colonial Policy [Marxist.org]).*

This insistence on historical variation already set Kautsky on a collision course with the Leninist theory of colonialism discussed in the end of the chapter. Whereas, Kautsky's line of argumentation differs from that of Luxemburg and Bernstein's in its future vision. Kautsky does not believe that colonialism needs to be overcome in order to overcome the capitalist state; therefore colonialism's transformation can and should wait. Then once, the capitalist class, which for Kautsky does not exist outside the European states, is overcome, "socialism can and will rapidly overflow", which is why "spreading capitalism to backward countries is definitely not a requirement for the spread and victory of socialism" (Ibid.).

Another reason for Karl Kautsky to focus on European capitalism, instead of the emancipation of colonized nations in many cases, is that despotism outside of Europe "draws its strength from the support given by European "civilisation" and "becomes untenable and collapses the moment this support is withdrawn". Though he does not argue against the release of the colonies, since European despotism under capitalism is ultimately far worse than other options. In this case Kautsky believes the colonial states would collapse and disintegrate into smaller communities, where even democratic systems could arise.

However, Kautsky also sets true democratic administration against the state in which it takes place. "the democratic administration of a great state requires a series of preconditions – high level of popular culture, a strong press, lively trade in the whole of the area of the state – which exist only in a very few colonies. If they are given up by the Europeans they are threatened with disintegration into

innumerable small communities, independent of each others. But this misfortune may not be all that bad. A small democratic community can, and usually will, be better administered than an undemocratic gigantic state, and may accomplish far more, relatively. No one would wish to set Russia above Switzerland.” (Ibid.).

But the important distinction is that this type of democratization is separate from emancipatory democratization under capitalist states. From this perspective Kautsky drew his logic of democratization. In the imperial capitalist state, democratization and socialist development go hand in hand. In this regard Kautsky defined democratization, of the working-class kind, as increasing possible freedoms and political rights and transformation of the state and local administrations into instruments of the masses. Only democratization guarantees the stability of the development of the proletariat, but because this logic must follow the fault line of socialist organization vis-à-vis capitalism, it must take place within the metropole (Kautsky 1917).

Kautsky’s logical connection between colonial policy and democracy is perceivable in two aspects. He understands the nature of democratization as the necessary means for the development of the socialist movement and its takeover of large modern imperial capitalist states, unlike local and communitarian democracy in non-capitalist (non-developed) places. Secondly, he analyzes the German Empire as different from the other European empires where the socialist movements are uncritically pro-colonial, or more precisely uncritical of the particularities of imperial states’ entanglements with capitalism, and as such equally undemocratic. There is almost an equation in Kautsky’s terms between non-developed communitarian democratic societies, and bourgeois democracy as a means of exclusive control of modern capitalist state; the key difference for socialist politics is that bourgeois democracy, due to its embeddedness in the capitalist state and its class relations may be instrumentalized by the proletariat.

“The only form of the state in which Socialism can be realized is that of a republic, and a thoroughly democratic republic at that.” (Kautsky 1909, 49-50). For Kautsky democratization was the guarantee that progress and the development of socialism would not regress. For him democratization does not abolish antagonisms, but it prevents premature and futile conflict from the side of the

socialists and keeps “the governing class from refusing concessions that it no longer possesses the strength to maintain.” (ibid., 52). One should keep in mind though, that for Kautsky, like Luxemburg and Bernstein too, democratization meant also the democratization of economic relations. And this connects the specifics of the German imperial state to the wider system of inter-imperial relations.

Kautsky brings up, for example, the case of Switzerland, where democratization has advanced far, and no colonial policies exist. However, he suggests that Switzerland does not escape the consequences of imperial policies surrounding it. As such, Kautsky limits the connection between socialism and democratization to sovereign imperial power. He asserts “no one would be so naive as to assert that we can pass imperceptibly and without a battle from the military state and absolutism into democracy, and out of the conquering imperialism into the union of free peoples by a gradual “growing into.””, therefore “the acquisition of democracy and the abolition of militarism in a modern great nation have wholly different results, than rise at the present time from the old inherited militia system and the republican institutions of the Swiss.”. Democratization means the occupation of space within and from modern great nations whose characteristic is exploitative economic relations and colonial power. Therefore, for Kautsky, democratic advances must go hand in hand with the abolition of colonialism. In Switzerland democratic advances do nothing to counter colonialism and therefore imperial power, in Britain democratic politics also fail, but for different reasons. They are not critical of nor do they reject colonialism and therefore fail to oppose the imperial state. They do not in this sense advance socialism nor do they democratize society because they do not transform bourgeois economic relations.

*Democracy is to the proletariat what light and air are to the organism; without them it cannot develop its powers. But we must not be so occupied with observing the growth of one class that we cannot see the simultaneous growth of its opponent. Democracy does not hinder the development of capital, whose organization and political and economic powers increase at the same time as does the power of the proletariat. (Kautsky 1902, 82).*

*Rosa Luxemburg – Socialist Organization to appropriate the Imperial State*

*If only the European peoples are regarded as nations proper, while colonial peoples are looked on as “supply depots,” then we may use the term “nation-*

*state" in Europe for countries like France, Denmark, or Italy, and the problem of nationality can be limited to intra-European dimensions. But in this case, "the right of nations to self-determination" becomes a theory of the ruling races and betrays clearly its origin in the ideologies of bourgeois liberalism together with its "European" cretinism. In the approach of socialists, such a right must, by the nature of things, have a universal character. The awareness of this necessity is enough to indicate that the hope of realizing this "right" on the basis of the existing setup is a utopia (Luxemburg 1909a in Dahbour and Ishay 1995, 202-4).*

Many have praised Luxemburg as an analyst of imperialism and an opponent of nationalism.

Joan Cocks' account is one of the newer and fresher ones, and directly discusses Luxemburg in terms of sovereignty and self-determination. Nevertheless, Cocks writes that "Luxemburg is a vociferous enemy of nationalism, in part because it waylays the European working class from its revolutionary mission by identifying each national segment of it with its "own" bourgeoisie" (Cocks 2002, 46). However, if we read Luxemburg in connection with her own interpretation of imperial states in general, and especially in the historical context of the European imperial states, her take on nationalism becomes much more nuanced and embedded in issues of imperial state's power structures' connection to capitalism.

To begin with, we notice that Luxemburg is not exactly an enemy of nationalism, of her own Polish nationalism the very least. She does polemicize against contemporary nationalists, but only in favor of her own logic of defending national interests. Luxemburg understands national worker's organizations as powerful tools for advancing socialism and fighting oppression under imperial states. But she understands national interests as a united cause and sees a threat in the fragmentation of nationalist organizations under imperial relations. By contrast, under non-capitalist imperial relations she is actually a vociferous advocate of nationally based liberation and independence. Luxemburg's internationalism was not that of inter-imperialism, but rather, as is appropriate to the historical context, that of the cooperation of nations within capitalist imperial states that had developed from "old multinational dynastic states" (Ibid., 52).

In a fashion distinguishing her logic from that of the non-sovereign democracy of Finland, Luxemburg rightfully asks of the metropole, with its monopoly on sovereign authority, "who is the self that national self-determination is to make self-determining?" (Ibid.). This was the question that

Finnish politicians did not need to answer, which at crucial points brought them together until the breakdown of the Finnish colonial field when they had to answer the question, as we learned in chapter three. Before that their self was already defined by the Russian Empire.

Luxemburg defines the problems of nationalism “in the old multinational European empires”, as almost opposite to the non-sovereign strivings for autonomy and democracy. Nationalists appear to be fighting for their people’s freedom, but their obsession with political independence and lack of interest in democratizing the existing society show that they are really fighting to become the people’s new leaders” (Ibid.). For the Finns, independence was not an option, but democratizing served to bolster autonomy. Indeed, Luxemburg was not blind to this distinction between sovereign and non-sovereign democracy. Talking of Bolsheviks specifically she criticized their portrayal of national self-determination as supposedly democratic, even while it was detached from “whole apparatus of the basic democratic liberties of the people” on which true self-determination depends, i.e. sovereignty of modern capitalistic states (Ibid.). But she was debating metropolitan politics, not non-sovereign democratization which for her would have been ultimately meaningless for overthrowing capitalism.

Sovereignty is that of the modern capitalistic state, and as such “set the parameters for the substance of the national self” (Ibid.). It is in this regard that Luxemburg also criticizes nationalist self-determination and bourgeois democracy of those nations that are at the core of imperial states, as well as their supposed universalism: “the European nation-states can engage in imperial adventures to satisfy that [bourgeois economic] appetite while claiming the right to self-determination for themselves only if “the European peoples are regarded as nations proper, while colonial peoples are looked on as ‘supply depots’”” (Ibid., 53, quoting Luxemburg).

Luxemburg recognizes thus the non-sovereign position also in terms of independence, which becomes crucial if democracy is delineated, in the Tillyan sense, to independent states only. She recognizes that colonial expansion prompts the struggle for independence in the colonial states, and rightfully “protests that “the winning of independence” only transfers “national dependence” to “another nationality”. Luxemburg thus describes the tightrope that Finns also acknowledged and tried to balance. Winning independence meant for the Finns a search for another nationality to bear the

burden of sovereignty, but ideally not their own. As such Luxemburg's prescription for nationalism contra metropolitan sovereignty is that of "the political unity of a plurality of peoples" as "the only democratic path" (Cocks 55). This is the opposite of the principles of national self-determination of Wilson and Lenin, even while it overlooks non-sovereign democratization. It expands Kautsky's analysis to encompass the relation of colonies and nationalism beyond the existing divisions created by the capitalist imperial states. In a sense it reverses Kautsky's perspective in that Luxemburg begins from the organization of socialist opposition, rather than the organization of the capitalist states.

From where does the common understanding of Luxemburg as anti-nationalist then stem from? It appears for one to be such from the perspective of national liberation in the model of bourgeois metropolitan democracy. For Luxemburg the imperial state had an internal contradiction in promoting bourgeois interests even over and against the continued development and expansion of the capitalist system. Thus, dismantling the imperial state on the basis of national bourgeois democracies – democracies in form only – would diminish the proletariat's possibility to capture the imperial state as those contradictions deepened.

The question of Poland, Luxemburg's home country is illuminating. In 1896 at the International Congress in London, socialists put forth a proposal supporting Polish independence from the Russian Czardom. Rosa Luxemburg disagreed. She believed that continued Polish role in the empire would rather be beneficial for the downfall of Russian absolutism: "Only the political struggle of the proletariat throughout the entire Russian empire can accelerate this process. The independence of Poland has comparatively little to do with the fall of the tsardom, just as the partition of Poland had little to do with its continued existence" (1896a, *The Polish Question at the International Congress in London* [Marxist.org])

Luxemburg outlined the foundation of her thinking in relation to imperial states and nationalism in her consideration of the Polish question: "If, from the assertion that the subjugation of one nation by another is in the interests of capitalists and despots, it is therefore concluded that all annexations are unjust or can be eliminated within the capitalist system, then this we hold to be absurd, for it makes no allowance for the basic principles of the existing order" (ibid.). This, at its

worst, Luxemburg argues would lead to the social-patriotism and “instead of a coherent political struggle of the proletariat in every country, its disintegration through a series of fruitless national struggles would be virtually assured” (ibid.). Luxemburg does not see the struggle of the proletariat as exclusive from national struggle, but rather thinks that national struggles are proletarian struggles, and one should not take place without the other.

But in the same year Luxemburg drew an important distinction in this regard. Writing about the Ottoman Empire, she argued that due to the absence of a bourgeois order in the empire and the prevailing “semi-feudal” property relations no internal unity exists, and thus the conflict of material interests could and often would coincide with national frontiers of the empire. The Ottomans, Luxemburg thinks, lacked the foundation to develop a capitalist economy and thereby a modern state. Therefore, “it must perish, not as a form of government, but as a state; not through the class struggle, but through the struggle of nationalities.” (1896b, *Social Democracy and the National Struggles in Turkey* [Marxist.org]). This delineates Luxemburg’s view on the imperial states: “The national struggle is not always the appropriate form for the struggle for freedom. For example, the national question takes a different form in Poland, Alsace-Lorraine or Bohemia. In all these cases, we are faced with a directly opposing process of capitalist assimilation of the annexed lands to the dominant ones, which condemns the separatist efforts to impotence, and it is in the interests of the working-class movement to advocate the unity of forces, and not their fragmentation in national struggles.” (ibid.)

Under a capitalist state then, instead of national struggles, Luxemburg recognizes three main practical struggles: unionization, social reforms, and democratization. Next, I will approach the question of democratization. Democratization itself, Luxemburg, argues, “is specifically bourgeois”, but the goal of democratization for the socialists is to seize political power (ibid.).

Colonialism, for Luxemburg is an extension of the bourgeois elements of the state, not a result of capitalist developments per say. Here Luxemburg takes a slightly more nuanced view compared to Kautsky’s, who was more ready to equate the two. As such, for Luxemburg colonialism conflicts much more with social development. “For on one hand, we have the growth of the functions

of a general interest on the part of the State, its intervention in social life, its “control” over society. But on the other hand, its class character obliges the State to move the pivot of its activity and its means of coercion more and more into domains which are useful only to the class character of the bourgeoisie and have for society as a whole only a negative importance, as in the case of militarism and tariff and colonial policies” (1900, *Reform or Revolution* [Marxist.org]). Extension of democracy, Luxemburg argues serve the capitalist interests of the whole society, but in a one-sided way. Preoccupied only with the formal side of democracy, “but does not take into account the other side, its real content” (ibid.). What Luxemburg means is partially clarified in this negative example: “as soon as democracy shows the tendency to negate its class character and become transformed into an instrument of the real interests of the population, the democratic forms are sacrificed by the bourgeoisie, and by its State representatives” (ibid.). For Luxemburg democratization has served to consolidate the difference between capitalist and socialist society, instead of overthrowing that difference.

She criticizes Bernstein strongly of an incrementalistic view on democratization (ibid.), for moving socialist organization along the veins of power of imperialism, of slowly suffocating its economic bases like cholesterol that blocks the veins and prevents flows in them. Luxemburg would rather spread virally across that network to cause an outbreak that could capture the whole organism. Kautsky on the other hand would focus on the growth of a socialist ‘tumor’ in the heart of the body, not wasting resources elsewhere.

Establishing democracy should not be viewed as “a general law of historical development” Luxemburg argues (ibid.). Luxemburg sees true democratization, not the incremental and instrumental bourgeois type, as bound up with the socialist movement, “We must conclude that the socialist movement is not bound to bourgeois democracy but that, on the contrary, the fate of democracy is bound up with the socialist movement” (ibid.). Again, Luxemburg offers here increased nuance on top of the general relationality and interconnectedness argued by Kautsky. Democratization is only achievable, in Luxemburg’s vision through a stronger socialist movement. Otherwise it will function in the interests of bourgeois democracy, which itself is suppressed and subsumed by the development

of the modern capitalist state. Luxemburg identifies a dynamic of conflict, whereas Kautsky saw democracy as a slightly more static backstop confirming the advancement of socialist organization.

And, since socialist movements are the only opposition to the sovereignty of capitalist imperial states, only democratization stemming from those movements can be “truly democratic” for Luxemburg. With truly democratic she refers to autonomy from other institutions. She argues that bourgeois “democratic “ingredients” of society, such as universal suffrage and the republican State form, may be suppressed without having the administration, the State finances, or the military organisation find it necessary to return to the forms they had before” (ibid.). For Luxemburg, it is socialism’s struggle against capitalism that gives democracy its emancipatory nature, not democracy that would emancipate from capitalist oppression and bring about socialism. Rather, earlier democratization may be suppressed, without transforming it.

Luxemburg’s take on democracy’s meaning for socialism is curiously similar to that of democracy meaning for nationalism for the Finns as non-sovereign actors under the Russian Empire, as discussed in chapter three. For Luxemburg democracy is indispensable “because only through the exercise of its democratic rights, in the struggle for democracy, can the proletariat become aware of its class interests and its historic task.” (ibid.). For the Finns democracy was the means for the citizen to become aware of their national interests and its historic origin in autonomous statehood, i.e. in terms of the historical idea and development of the state rather than that of class<sup>78</sup>. Democratization does not do away with the need to conquer political power. For Luxemburg, democracy does not in itself do away with oppressive relations. Rather, Luxemburg argues, that democracy makes it possible for the oppressed, for the proletariat, to conquer power, and thereafter makes it necessary to do so, to carry democratic responsibility.

In other words, Luxemburg sketches democracy of the oppressed, or rather less-dominated (as they democratize) against democracy of dominant, much like Finns conceived of their statehood

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<sup>78</sup> In a fielded comparison, it could be argued that the role of the state as an *idées-force* in non-sovereign colonial fields is similar to that of the class in metropolitan imperial fields. An *idées-force* directly addresses or intervenes in the political field’s definitional struggles (Steinmetz 2008, drawing from Bourdieu’s *Propos sur le champ politique*).

parallel to that of the imperial state. The latter can take advantage of the political ignorance and economic subjection of the masses, while the former aims to do away with ignorance and subjection. This distinction can be better understood in relation to Luxemburg's qualified rejection of national independence: "Actually, even if as socialists we recognized the immediate right of all nations to independence, the fates of nations would not change an iota because of this. The "right" of a nation to freedom as well as the "right" of the worker to economic independence are, under existing social conditions, only worth as much as the "right" of each man to eat off gold plates, which, as Nicolaus Chernyshevski wrote, he would be ready to sell at any moment for a ruble" (Luxemburg 1909a in Dahbour and Ishay 1995, 198-201)

National independence on its own, just like democracy on its own, for Luxemburg, is worthless if it is not accompanied by sovereign capacity. Democracy and sovereignty themselves are not automatically or directly connected. For Luxemburg the most dangerous idea is that democratization leads to sovereignty. She is "not put off for a moment by the majesty or the omnipotence of the people, which, for the metaphysicians of bourgeois democracy, is something like a sacrosanct idol." (Ibid.) Talking at length over "national rights" as independence movements in the United States, South America, India etc. Luxemburg concludes that "apparent exceptions only confirm on closer analysis the conclusion that the modern development of capitalism cannot be reconciled with the true independence of all nationalities" (ibid.).

Democratization for Luxemburg is a movement against exploitation, which is her argument also for female suffrage. "Millions of proletarian women create capitalist profit like men – in factories, workshops, on farms, in home industry, offices stores" (1912, *Women's Suffrage and Class Struggle*, [Marxist.org]), their claim, unlike that of bourgeois women, to political rights is therefore equal. A comparison to the women's vote in Finland could be made in the regard that they sought democratization against the exploitation by the metropole of the colony, whereas Luxemburg seeks democratization against exploitation from others within metropole. The similarity is that in both cases democratization is the means for and not the result of development and awakening, the movement against domination rather than (another) domination's legitimization or transformation (as Luxemburg

thinks of national independence movements). The difference with Finland is that Luxemburg's domination is inter-imperial, that of the source of the sovereignty of the imperial state, the Finns' intra-imperial, that of the holder of the sovereignty of the imperial state.

*Eduard Bernstein – Socialist Organization across the Imperial States*

*...the position of Socialists on colonial policy will necessarily be very different in different countries. For very much depends on the institutions and circumstances of the country intending to pursue such a policy, on the nature of the colonies planned, and on the manner in which the country in question colonises and administers its colonies (Bernstein 1898 quoted in Tudor and Tudor 1988, 169).*

Eduard Bernstein became known as an advocate of socialist colonial policy, and as such his position has been described as opposite to that of Karl Kautsky's. However, both aimed to improve the position of natives in the colonies and to democratize the imperial state. In this regard their positions were actually unanimous rather than opposite. What was different was their analysis of the historical context and the best strategy to achieve these goals within that context.

Another difference was that Bernstein would incorporate colonial relations into social policy in a move toward a "general socialization of capitalist society" (Luxemburg 1899, *Speech to Hanover Congress* [Marxist.org]), whereas Luxemburg would only do so in an effort to seize power from the modern capitalist imperial states of Europe. Luxemburg agreed theoretically with Bernstein that Social Democracy can adopt its own position in foreign policy (Luxemburg 1896b). The distinction between the two arises from the instrumentality of a socialist foreign policy. Unlike Bernstein, Luxemburg believes that this can serve to seize political power in order to "do away with capitalism" (1898, *Speeches to Stuttgart Congress* [Marxist.org]), whereas Bernstein wanted socialist colonial policy to disrupt and humanize (to the extent possible) the imperial state's economic power in the tune of a general socialization (Luxemburg 1899).

Despite his overarching call for socialist organization, Bernstein does construct distinct relations between democratization, colonialism and the imperial state, as Luxemburg and Kautsky do. But he is not as quick to diminish the value of democratic developments in non-imperial capitalist states and sees these as beginnings rather than as dead-ends of federalism (Luxemburg) or inter-

imperial influence (Kautsky). Thus, unlike Kautsky, he sees Swiss democracy, or the French republic, though undoubtedly bourgeois, still in a positive liberal light: “There is actually no really liberal thought which does not also belong to the elements of the ideas of socialism.” (1899a, 151).

For Bernstein democratization should be the first objective of the socialist movement, and in a somewhat self-fulfilling manner, Bernstein defined democracy as the absence of class government (1899b). If, in Kautsky’s historical analysis, the developing class relations were a barrier (if not quite a battlefield) where democratization was the fortification behind that barrier guaranteeing, they were for Luxemburg more of a strategic entrenchment where democratization was the supply lines, then for Bernstein class relations are more the diffuse lines between the known and the unknown on the map, rather than on the ground, and democratization is the increase in organizational freedom and capacity, evolutionary capacity of socialism, to adapt to new circumstances and keep exploring and expanding; or, as he expresses it in negative terms, the absence of class government (1899a) that would stop and stagnate the constant spread and organization of socialism.

*To-day it [socialism] needs, in addition to the fighting spirit, the co-ordinating and constructive thinkers who are intellectually enough advanced to be able to separate the chaff from the wheat, who are great enough in their mode of thinking to recognise also the little plant that has grown on another soil than theirs, and who, perhaps, though not kings, are warmhearted republicans in the domain of socialist thought. (1899a, 224)*

Jamie Melrose summarizes the focus Bernstein laid on organization at present: “While orthodox Marxists saw the present class struggle merely as the training ground for the revolutionary phase of social development, those who recognised the importance of Bernstein’s ideas spoke more glowingly of the ‘democratisation and socialisation of the state as it is today’. No Revisionist would disagree with ‘a step-by-step realisation of socialism’” (Melrose 2016, 1080).

Kautsky and Luxemburg equally saw democratization as connected to the development of the socialist movement and indirectly to the overthrow of capitalist states, whereas for Bernstein the state was not necessarily an instrument of class rule. Almost on the contrary, for Bernstein the state was a

possible means of eliminating inhumanity and advancing civilization and public life (*ibid.*). We need to clarify though, what this statehood meant for Bernstein, as he also put forth the idea of incrementalism and social reform as the end, not simply as the means to an end (i.e. socialist revolution or coup d'état). "There can be more socialism in a good factory act than in the nationalization of a whole group of factories", he wrote already in 1898. State power, or the overcoming of capitalist state power, was not a goal or an end for Bernstein, but a historical context subject to transformation. It is this perspective that he formulated his ideas of colonial policy.

Bernstein believed in developmentalist notions of civilization. For him "the advance of civilization was not only irresistible but also, in the end, beneficial, and the task of the socialist movement was not to resist it but to ensure that it occurred with as little brutality as possible" (Tudor and Tudor 1988, 13). The crucial difference is that Bernstein did not equate civilization with Western states. He thought of "modern civilization as including both capitalism and socialism without being identical to either" (*ibid.*, 14). The contradiction between capitalism and socialism, for Bernstein, ran across states and across imperial relations. Even a world revolution, in the sense of overcoming such relations, was not their overthrow because Bernstein saw that socialism encompassed and transcended liberal thought (1899b [1993]). Moreover, he did not believe in the collapse of capitalism, or a great economic collapse as bringing about a socialist revolution. Rather, he made notice of uneven development, but unlike Lenin after him, his conclusion was to spread and diffuse socialism as thoroughly and extensively as possible, even with the help of the most capitalist and imperialist political relations, instead of basing the politics of socialist development on historical or political divisions, on capitalism as it existed, which was exactly what Kautsky and Luxemburg in different ways did in their argumentation concerning colonial policy. Bernstein surely would have had no opposition to the collapse of capitalism or a world revolution but had at least two misgivings about basing policy analysis on them. First, he believed that at least in the prevailing context a collapse or a revolution would cause great misery and calamity. Second, he held the prospect of such an event too difficult to analyze, as to base present-day decisions on it.

Bernstein formulated this position in a response to attacks against his incrementalism that actually tried to show that socialist revolution was possible in continental Germany<sup>79</sup>. In the debates Bernstein's call for reformist efforts toward socialism became entangled with colonial policy and the division between countries developed enough for socialism, and those not. As such Bernstein attempted to argue against such a division and argue in favor socialist colonial policy as means of also arguing in favor of reformism within the imperial metropole. In doing so Bernstein connected colonialism to a racialized civilizational logic of development. For him, the need to support colonial emancipation was justified and evaluated based on civilizational levels. This stance stemmed from his analysis of the imperial states and the societies they represented as capable of advancing civilization, but also of oppressing such advances. As such his logic did not connect development in the fashion of Kautsky and Luxemburg to capitalist Europe vis-à-vis its colonial extension or to developed capitalist imperial states vis-à-vis other empires. "Social Democracy must oppose the violation and fraudulent exploitation of savage and barbaric peoples, but it must not oppose their absorption into the sphere of influence of civilized institutions", Bernstein elaborated (Bernstein 1898 quoted in Tudor and Tudor 1988, 169). We could describe Bernstein as an early proponent of international development in the sense that he believed in "good" intervention but was uncritical of the original inequality.

From Luxemburg's and Kautsky's delimitations of nationalism, democratization, and centralization as key components of socialism under imperial states, Bernstein's position follows to a large extent logically. Bernstein writes that "To-day, on the contrary, the Social-Democracy is, and that unanimously, the most decided Imperial party that Germany knows. No other party is so keen to make over more and more legislative authority to the Empire, and to widen its competence, as the Social-Democracy. Compared with it, even that once most energetic representative of the Imperial idea, the National-Liberal party, is particularistic." (1907 *Patriotism, Militarism and Social-Democracy* [Marxist.org]). To an extent Bernstein takes the logical conclusion of working against the capitalist imperial state within the capitalist imperial state as recognition of that empire and connects the socialists' pursuits with the development of the structures of that imperial state. "In Germany the

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<sup>79</sup> See for example Tudor and Tudor 1988, 20-22.

enmity towards the empire was for the most part only enmity towards the Government and some of the State imperial institutions.” (ibid.).

But, inter-imperially Bernstein envisioned the place of imperial states in the global system differently. “The fact of the modern national States or empires not having originated organically does not prevent their being organs of that great entity which we call civilised humanity, and which is much too extensive to be included in any single State. And, indeed, these organs are at present necessary and of great importance for human development” (ibid.). He indeed believed in a version of developmentalism, where ethics and liberalism could develop within the existing power structures. He assessed the role of imperial states vis-à-vis the rest instead of vis-à-vis each other. Bernstein did not distinguish historically between bourgeois and socialist institutions and trajectories, like Luxemburg and Kautsky, but considered those to be the two sides of an otherwise universal development under capitalism. He extended this theorization to nationalism and race as well, coming in this regard, at least in terms of the consequences of his analysis, closer to Luxemburg: “The purely ethnological national principle is reactionary in its results. Whatever else one may think about the race-problem, it is certain that the thought of a national division of mankind according to race is anything rather than a human ideal. The national quality is developing on the contrary more and more into a sociological function. But understood as such it is a *progressive* principle, and in this sense Socialism *can* and *must* be national. This is no contradiction of the cosmopolitan consciousness, but only its necessary completion.” (Ibid.)

One could speculate, that Bernstein’s long engagement with British socialists and his time spent in Britain instigated in him an attitude to make socialist development a possibility under British and liberal imperial relations as well (see for example Otrowski 2018, 29), and across the inter-imperial divide instead of mobilizing that divide for intra-imperial argumentation and condemning them as Kautsky and Luxemburg did. Bernstein’s logic begun from the democratization of colonial governance within empires to the general state of the global colonialism; by contrast Bernstein and Kautsky approached the matter in reverse, analyzing global colonialism to derive from their stance on intra-imperial policies. In any case, ultimately for Bernstein, the evaluation of colonial policy was

based on the extent to which they were based under democratic control within the particular imperial relations (Hyrkkänen 1986), an aspect that is occluded in terms of colonial relations under independent nation states, where the parallel democracies of the colonial nation and the imperial nation cancel out even the possibility of the democratization of their relation. Moreover, that relation is placed outside and beyond any democratic politics as it is then consigned to the realm of international politics under the control of, for example, the United Nations or the Central Committee of the Soviet Union, or simply determined by bilateral or multilateral treaties between democratic politics, not by democratic politics.

Indeed, Bernstein's thinking on inter-imperial politics culminated in his 1918 book *League of Peoples or League of States* that critiqued the feasibility of Wilson's League of Nations as based on "inviolable state sovereignty and imperialist capitalism" (Ostrowski 2018, 14). Not unlike the fears of Finnish political actors at the same time, Bernstein thought that the mainly US and British proposal for the postwar international order would "disempower peoples as active democratic subjects by continuing to treat state institutions as "bearers" of national identities and interests" (Ibid., 14). At this crucial conjuncture in 1918 Bernstein's thinking captured the transformational moment where non-sovereign people were displaced by sovereign nation-states and the instrumental form of democratization that would bring about statehood was displaced by statehood appropriating a form of democracy. Bernstein's visions was close to that of the Finno-Soviet treaty, where third party Social Democratic representatives were the ultimate adjudicators of international treaty disputes and worker's movement and economic needs formed the ideological basis of countries co-operation.

### *Summarizing Bernstein, Kautsky, and Luxemburg*

Marius Ostrowski summarises, the Bernstein's central concern was to restore "the people" (Volk) as the proper unit of analysis in international politics, as opposed to the "the nation" (Nation) or "the state" (Staat)" (2018, 17). For Bernstein the people distinguished itself as working, and economic unity in contrast to a political (nation) unity. He "rejects out of hand appeals to "historical right"" both as claims to territory and as "grounds for discrimination among the members of a given population" against the right of person to claim membership (ibid., 20). The people can only remain

united as a democratic construct while the nation lends itself to rule by sovereignty placed elsewhere than within itself. And equally importantly, Bernstein argued that the people's existence and solidarity is not wedded to a particular state form, whereas the nation expresses its solidarity via a state wedded to it. Bernstein "is skeptical of the extent to which the divide between state and people can be bridged via a mere extension of the democratic franchise" (Ibid., 18). This was the relation that also Kautsky and Luxemburg tried to highlight, address, and foremost avoid occluding, the relationship between the democratic construction of people's polities and 'inviolable state sovereignty in imperialist capitalism'. They all began their analysis from the perspective that the former was only possible through socialist organization that would prevent hierarchies and the construction of polities based economic oppression, and the latter could only be overcome, transformed, or captured as a whole. This led them to consider the relations between nationalities, imperial states, and colonial policy in relation to each in this encounter, rather than allowing any one to be separated from each other or become internally fragmented. They drew different conclusions as to what relations mattered the most, and in what direction in the prevailing historical context of both socialist organization and the state based imperial capitalism.

But what instead took central stage in socialist imagination was a process of "the 'nationalization of Marxism'" that blurred these distinct relations between nationalism, socialism, and colonialism. "The nation was not even seen simply as an 'environment' which the proletariat inherited, instead the proletariat came to be identified as the bearer of socialism, as well as of nationhood"; the nation-state became, in Sanjay Seth's phrasing, the necessary form for socialism's substance, essential to and corresponding with the achievement of socialism (Seth, 1995, 230), much like Tilly's and the Western Empires prescription of nation-state independence as necessary and corresponding with the achievement of democracy.

Table 9 provides finally a modal sketch of the differences in the perspectives of Kautsky, Luxemburg, Bernstein, and Lenin, and thus some of the relations (not categorical considerations of, say, peoples sovereignty within a polity) occluded by Lenin's national self-determination. The axes are not meant as categorical but rather as sliding scales and as such the positions reflect more the

direction each theory points to, rather than inherent assumptions. What should further be noted is that while Kautsky and Lenin for example are both shown to equate the colonial with the national question, their historical analysis and grounding for this connection was different. Lenin, or the Leninist model, equated the nation as the default unit of oppression under ‘imperialism as the highest stage of capitalism’, while Kautsky argued that colonial struggles and oppression is the same as national struggles and oppression but simply transposed via the modern capitalist state from intra- to inter-imperial relations. Rosa Luxemburg then again agrees with Lenin that “in the approach of socialists” the right to sovereign nation-statehood “must, by the nature of things, have a universal character”, but she disagrees on how and when it can be brought about: “the hope of realizing this “right” on the basis of the existing setup is a utopia” (Luxemburg 1909a in Dahbour and Ishay 1995, 202-3). In other words, for Luxemburg the distinction and inequality between the colonial and the national should first be addressed, before such a right (of state sovereignty) could be universalized. This means to first oppose capitalist states and imperialism, instead of using this right as way to do so as Lenin suggests. This discrepancy is another source of the retrospective reading of Luxemburg as supposedly inherently anti-nationalist.

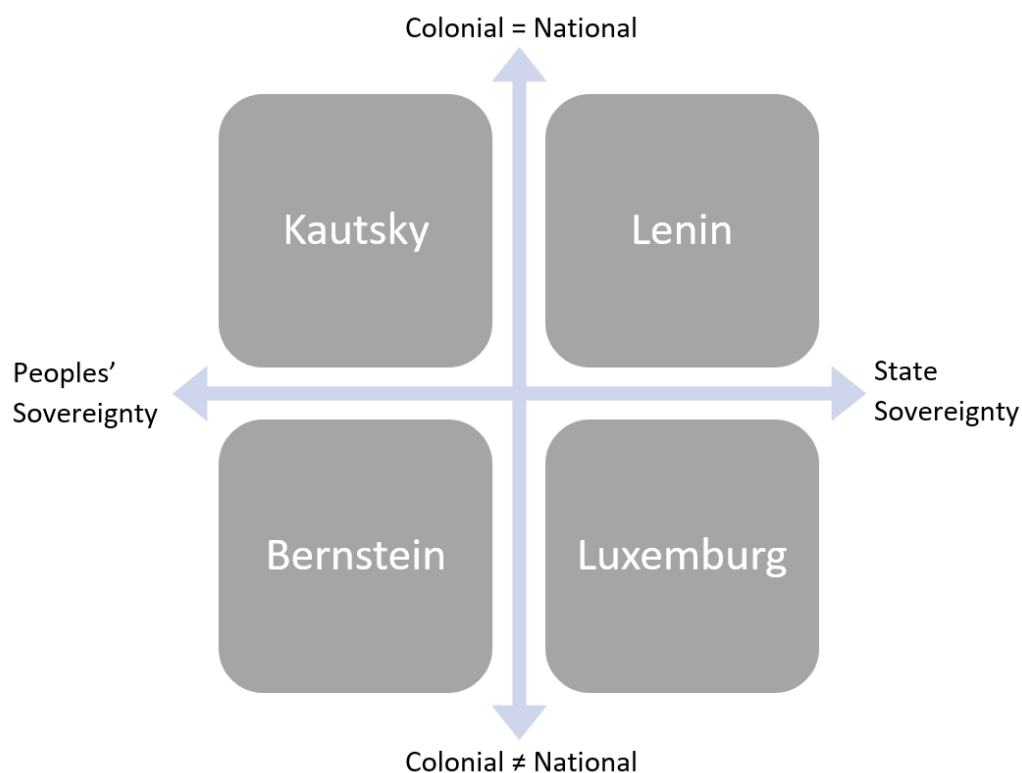


Table 9. Kautsky, Lenin, Bernstein, and Luxemburg.

Finnish colonial state actors relied on extensions of imperial sovereignty as the founding arguments for their own non-sovereign autonomy and democratization. The German Social Democrats relied equally on those extensions of sovereignty in carving out a space and symbolic power for themselves within the imperial field; they actively sought topics that could directly challenge imperial authority and present their position as cutting across the imperial state, as inter-imperial. In this sense, for the German Social Democrats “centralism goes hand in hand with democracy and progress, while federalism and particularism are linked with reaction and backwardness” (Luxemburg 1909, *The National Question* [Marxist.org]).

Contrary to the subsumption of socialist and Marxist thought by national frameworks in both colonies and metropolises following 1917-1919, the field of socialist politics, from left to right, in the German imperial state was defined and ordained through the different responses to imperialism and its colonial dimension. *German imperialism was seen as one competing form within a wider colonial system of world governance. The deeper and more scathing critiques of socialists in Germany against their own empire exemplify their success in challenging domination in the imperial field of power through inter-imperial comparisons more so than actually speak to German colonialism vis-à-vis others.*

What the different German socialist positions on the colonial dimension and democratization share is an attempt to challenge the imperial states and their legitimization, to capture or overthrow their sovereignty. Where they differ are the ways in which they try to draw the required connection between the inter-imperial and the intra-imperial. But, only such argumentation could cut across the empire’s own logic and sovereignty stretching from the metropole to the periphery and sever it. Any other arguments, not making that connection, could and would be absorbed by the wider imperial state, isolated as metropolitan, or peripheral, or global, and as such not challenging the imperial state and rather strengthening it by adding to the conflicts and contradictions that it could claim to universally encompass. This happened with socialist politics in the British Empire with their failure to transcend the metropole, for which the German socialists criticized them. For example, Engels’s letter

to Kautsky from 12.09.1882, which Kautsky brings up again later, describes a situation opposite to the argumentative and logical cleavages that Luxemburg, Bernstein and Kautsky were trying to construct, highlight and mobilize regarding the imperial capitalist state:

*Engels replied to me on 12th September 1882 as follows: You ask me what the English workers think about colonial policy. Well, exactly the same as they think about politics in general. There is no workers' party here, you see, there are only Conservatives and Liberal-Radicals, and the workers' consumption is based on the boom of England's monopoly of the world market and the colonies. (Kautsky 1907, Socialism and Colonial Policy [Marxist.org]).*

Luxemburg describes the importance of the imperial state and especially its importance as the ultimate background reference: “Consequently, the proper political framework in which the modern class struggle of the proletariat operates and can conquer is the big capitalistic state. Usually, in the socialist ranks, especially of the utopian trend, attention is paid only to the economic aspect of capitalistic development, and its categories – industry, exploitation, the proletariat, depressions – are regarded as indispensable prerequisites for socialism. In the political sphere, usually only democratic state institutions, parliamentarianism, and various “freedoms” are regarded as indispensable conditions of this movement. However, it is often overlooked that the modern big state is also an indispensable prerequisite for the development of the modern class struggle and a guarantee of the victory of socialism. The historical mission of the proletariat is not “socialism” applicable on every inch of ground separately, not dictatorship, but world revolution, whose point of departure is big-state development.” (Luxemburg 1909, *The National Question* [Marxist.org]).

### *Conclusions: Nationalism and Lenin*

Bernstein and Kautsky were Engels' handpicked apprentices to continue his work with Marx, editors of their works and later the authors of the programs and programmatic theories of the strongest socialist party in the Europe. Rosa Luxemburg quickly became a prominent opponent of Bernstein, and an ally and friend to Kautsky, who developed his work further and deeper, especially in relation to questions of nationalities and democratization. It is no wonder, that in this role, building her theory and Marxism from the heart of the debates and origins of German Social Democracy she became a

chief antagonist to Lenin's formulations of the right of national self-determination, and a chief proponent of non-nationalistic Marxism following the fall of the prevailing imperial order that up until then had set the context for Marxist theorizing. Lenin elaborated and developed his view in a debate with other socialists, "most prominent among them Rosa Luxemburg" (Sanjay 1992, 117). From this perspective, I disagree with discussions in social sciences that state that "there is no Marxist theory of the nation" (Nicos Poulantzas quoted in Sanjay 1992, 99).

At the same time, it is true that theories of nations, both in their Western and Soviet versions, developed after 1919 were almost antithetical to Bernstein, Kautsky, and Luxemburg's frameworks. The paradox that arises is why did Marxism, after 1919, prove influential in the national struggles of the former colonies (Sanjay 1992, 99) despite it shedding the imperial framework of its national and democratic analyses?

The case of Finland provides a good context for beginning this analysis. There the socialists supported neither sovereign independence from the West, nor the later Soviet model, but sought instead best sovereign guarantees for democratization and autonomy. Only after the socialists had lost the civil war, and split into two factions – one recognizing the Western bourgeois model of independence and democracy under it, the other adopting the Bolshevik line – did the socialists support nationalism as the founding principle of sovereign rule. There was no space for compromise left.

Lenin had universalized imperialism by detaching it from the European imperial states. "In the era of monopoly finance capital, colonies were necessary not for particular capitalist powers (e.g. Britain), but for (monopoly) capitalism *in general*" (Sanjay *ibid.*, 115). This for Lenin, happened through national units competing against each other, which became "the yoke of national oppression and the striving for annexations" (Lenin's *Imperialism*, 112, quoted in Sanjay 1992, 115). National relations of oppression replaced colonial relations under an inter-imperial system and occluded intra-imperial class and race-based hierarchies. "This was the nub of Lenin's difference with Kautsky" (*ibid.*). The sovereign empires no longer seen to directly exert their power on non-sovereign nationalities and states, but in Lenin's theory the sovereignty of the western imperialism rather

became dependent on the non-sovereignty of the colonies. Sovereignty was no longer synonymous with (European) imperial states; “it was, for Lenin, a global structure, and a complex one, which included non-capitalist regions of the globe” (Sanjay *ibid.*, 117). The distinction between inter-imperial sovereign relations and intra-imperial relations became diffused into the multiplicity of national relations.

Where interpretations of particularly Luxemburg then so far have been incorrect, to my knowledge across the spectrum, is in the (one could say Leninist) misinterpretation and oversimplification that Luxemburg considered national self-determination to undermine the international unity of the working class (see for example Sanjay 1992, Cocks 2002). Rather, Luxemburg argued that national self-determination in this specific Leninist, and retrospectively, also in the later nation-state model undermined self-determination and democratization. Especially in their applicability as instruments revealing and resisting power relations of sovereign inter-imperial power instrumentalized by bourgeois states. But this distinction is not visible, it is occluded, from the transformation from Luxemburg’s historical context to the nation-state context.

What is revealing of this juxtaposition is Lenin’s almost reversed analyses of the differences between Western and non-Western states. Lenin argues that in “most Western countries it [the national question] was settled long ago”, but that elsewhere the same development of founding “nationally uniform states” was now taking place (Lenin, 1976, 17-18, quoted in Sanjay 1992, 117-118). Luxemburg held the position that under Western states the national question could not be settled, universal rights to statehood could not be granted; however, elsewhere it had not yet become a question, and therefore political development (or non-socialist democratization as Kautsky would see it) against non-capitalistic empires could take place on a national basis.

Lenin turned the model of uneven development, of stages of capitalist development, into a measure of nationalism, a sliding scale between sovereign metropolises and non-sovereign colonies. Whereas for Luxemburg, Kautsky, and even Bernstein, it had been the source of national and colonial oppression, and the distinguishing factor between national and colonial forms of democratization. But

for Lenin, “the uneven nature of capitalist development meant that what in most of Europe ‘was settled long ago’ was only now on the agenda” elsewhere (Sanjay 1992, 118).

In the Leninist view the world was then divided into oppressor and oppressed nations, which transformed the struggle for nationhood in oppressed countries as one created by and aimed against the oppressor *nations* (ibid.). In a nutshell, self-determination became determined as independence from other nations, rather than as autonomy and democratization of a nation.<sup>80</sup> Similarly for Wilson, democracy was determined as independence from other nations, a mark of a higher stage of development, rather than as autonomy and self-determination. For Luxemburg, Kautsky and Bernstein the connection of democratization and socialism was a means to resist sovereignty and develop national rights under non-sovereign capitalist relations. But the Leninist and Wilsonian turn confined the development of socialism or democracy in newly independent colonial nations into gestures and symbols for justifying independence, for signaling and symbolizing a developmental stage instead of bringing about the means and reality of development, of measuring development against sovereign oppression<sup>81</sup>. In this regard fusing the national and colonial questions “not only renders the colonial question unproblematic, it also makes the national question seemingly unproblematic”, Seth observes (1989). Similar to my findings, he points out that by making the distinction between nationalisms a central issue, this perspective overrides questions of relational interactions and their outcomes, most importantly for Kautsky, Luxemburg and Bernstein, questions of “whether [or at least how] the nation as a unit of social organization is compatible with socialism” (1989, 61).

Just as with democracy’s connection to statehood, earlier efforts to consider cultural, political, and historical dimensions of nationhood against statehood and sovereign and non-sovereign relations

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<sup>80</sup> “Once the ‘focal point’ from which the question of national self-determination was viewed became the ‘division of nations into oppressor and oppressed which forms the essence of imperialism’, the slogan ‘the right of nations to self-determination’ underwent a significant change of meaning. The self-activity of the East [the colonial states], part of capitalism in the imperialist era, but thereby also a subjugated part, came to be seen as necessarily taking the form of national struggle” (Sanjay 1992, 119). In reverse, Luxemburg, Kautsky and Bernstein, supported national struggles and development insofar as they were *not* connected to imperialism as capitalist relations.

<sup>81</sup> It is in this tension, that we should briefly remember the case of the Country of the White Lilies presented in chapter one. For Turkish republic it offered a national developmental model that escaped the need to democratize or socialize a former empire, problematic both in terms of basing democratization on the development of the Turkish race, or the socialism of that of national development.

were from now on overridden in the communist imagination by a “dull exercise in definition-mongering ... as the first and last word on the more [supposedly] ‘abstract’ aspects of the national question”. The supposedly abstract relations that Kautsky, Luxemburg, Bernstein and other socialists had struggled with were now set aside in favor of a focus on “distinguishing between oppressor and oppressed nations” (Seth 1989, 62). The essence of self-determination boiled down to a distinction between progressive (read socialist) and reactionary (read bourgeois) national movements. The former type was “found to be especially prevalent in the non-Western” countries (1989, 283). Much like democracy was found to be prevalent in the West and national movements striving for it could be supported and thus could ultimately become like the West.

The nation-state became the axis upon which intra- and inter-imperial differences, previously leveraged for and against democracy and sovereignty, now rested. Socialism becoming nationalist was a fate it shared “with many other philosophies which couched their message, and their mission, in universal terms. It is characteristic of our age that many of the values and features of ‘modernity’ – democracy, liberty, industrialization and so on- have come to be things possessed by, sought by and embodied in nations ... socialism has joined democracy in being seen as a universal ideal which nonetheless is achieved through and embodied in nations” (Seth 1995, 234). Sanjay Seth notes that while this national framework bought political efficiency it also sacrificed intellectual power and emancipatory possibilities of socialist thought. And the same maybe said of democracy and the sociology of democracy regarding the historical narrative upon which traditional sociology builds its definition and upon which its definition is equally built on. This self-perpetuating relation gives added analytical power to analyses of nation-state democracy, but with the cost of occluding other possibilities, histories and definitions. And perhaps most importantly, the fact that is the very occlusion of those relations that keeps this structure in place, as is evident in the Leninist move. Much like socialism’s embedding in a nation-state frame, it “at the same time obstructs, compromises or defers other aspects of the socialist [and democratic] project”, which should be acknowledged (Seth *ibid.*, 235).

I conclude by paraphrasing Sanjay Seth in that even if the nation-state form has become hegemonic in our analyses, a “historical necessity” of the canon, “it should not function as an excuse for not studying these failures [of other types of democratization] and the judgement and choices which led to” them. Rather, this embedding into the nation-state “consisted of so many analyses and theoretical and political judgments. To treat the colonial question as a national question was not inevitable” (Seth *ibid.*).

The reproduction of the nation focused analytic lens made possible the assumption of nation-states an uncontested default category. Lenin’s reformulation “neither undertook, nor allowed for, a theorization of the phenomena (nationhood and nationalism) which it elevated to such importance”, which “led, on the whole, to a certain valorization of the nation and of nationalism, even where this only took the form of seeking to reconcile Marxist theory [socialism] and practice with it, thereby overlooking the incompatibilities between the two” (Sanjay 1992, 128). From the perspective of Luxemburg et al., Sanjay’s final criticism of Lenin’s formulation of “the colonial question as the national question”, though correct, would appear to be a huge understatement and at the core of the issue, rather than an oversight. Especially since, Seth elsewhere acknowledges that “this eventually resulted in Marxism itself becoming a form of nationalism” (Seth 1989, 286), which was the problem and consequence that especially these German Social Democrats wanted to avoid. In the next and final chapter, I shall then delve deeper into the role and transformation of nationalism under and after the German Empire.

## Chapter 5. Nation and Empire – The German Imperial Field

In this final substantive chapter, I return to fields across empires to establish how it was that national metacapital became the hegemonic field organizing power. In contrast to the stories typically told of nations rising up, it was the particular loss of imperial practices that enabled this rising hegemony. Germany, after all, showed a different way of managing empire, one in critical distinction to the dominant vision of empire in post-colonial sociology. Rather than separate fields, German empire enabled socialists to develop empire-wide politics, which, although not equal, could speak of

the Herero and the socialists, as similar victims of capitalist oppression, i.e. problematize them together. Recalling this alternative framework, we see that it's not the story of nations by themselves, but the various forms of empire, and their contingent transformations, that made nation-states into the master narrative that it became under a new form of Western imperial orders, with the assistance of the Soviet Union, on the way. While this transformation occluded some relations (the possibility of non-sovereign claims to statehood, for example), such relations did not cease to exist. Their disappearance is purely a function of nation-statehood as dominant political and historical lens and organization. That, however, may not last, as I will establish in the conclusion. In this sense, in this final chapter I begin to return to the union of nation, state and democracy as a master narrative and default analytic, that I had to depart from in the beginning.

### *The Transformation in History and Sociology*

The emergence of the new sociology of empires is related to a resurgence of interest in the idea of empire as an opposite, separate, or complementary element to nationalism and the nation-state. It owes much to the original separation of empire as a political form from national self-determination and thereafter the nation-state. We often approach empire and nationalism as somehow antithetical to each other. This, of course, is not the case. The relation between empire and nationalism is complex and has changed over time. Perhaps the most drastic transformation in their relationship – a transformation that served as the foundation for the present state of affairs – took place before and right after the First World War (WWI). Its apex, the internationalization of nationalism from a previously imperial context, has also been called the Wilsonian moment (Manela 2007). The previous chapters have focused on the constitution and logic of a colonial state and the positional struggle of actors in an imperial state field. In this chapter, I explore the transformation of imperial politics into national politics in the context of the German Empire with a relational perspective informed by Bourdieusian field theory (BFT).

As discussed in chapters two and three, Finnish colonial actors did not want to give up on their imperial nationalism and redefine it in terms of sovereign statehood, but they eventually had. Similarly, the Soviets tried a different route with Finland, but ultimately opted to embed claims to

sovereignty into their international framework of self-determination. And the German Social Democrats, against their best critiques of the existing order, had to come to terms with a national Weimar on the one hand, and an “international” Comintern on the other. This combination left no place for their thinking that was premised on the relationality of these two spheres of socialist politics. However, the ways in which we determine political units and their relations do not simply disappear into thin air. The abdication of the Kaiser did not destroy the German Empire. Rather, historical narratives and political ideologies become dominant only in relation to the constitution of the fields in which they can become useful dispositions.

This chapter then tries to outline what nationalism was under imperial sovereignty and what is the contrast to it becoming a dominant organizational logic of sovereign fields. One of the key issues in this regard is the aligning of the state, political, and fields of power under and through nationalism. As discussed in the previous chapters, the separation of these relations was a critical component of the forms that empire, democracy, statehood, and nation took before WWI, not to mention the ways in which colonial and socialist metropolitan actors sought to consolidate their positions vis-à-vis imperial sovereignty. The elevation of nationalism into metacapital then occluded some of these relational configurations by prioritizing others.

Part of this prioritization was the making of national historiographies and methodological nationalism. However, recent historical and sociological research on empires and specifically the German Empire has focused on reassessments based on transnational and global perspectives, including new interest in German colonialism. This has placed a great deal of empirical evidence under a new light (Tonnesson et al. 1997; Conrad and Osterhammel 2006; Conrad and Sachsenmaier 2007; Steinmetz 2008; Conrad 2010, 2012, 2013a; Naranch and Eley 2014). If the imperial context that gave rise to nationalism’s transformation in the twentieth century has been reassessed, then nationalism’s relation to empire should also be reconsidered. This has been done by theorizing nationalism from a global or international rather than a nation-centred perspective (Manela 2007; Li and Hicks 2016), or by theorizing it transnationally from the outset (Wimmer and Feinstein 2010, 2016; Gorski 2013b).

In this chapter I rely on established historiography in locating the transformation of nationalism in the late imperial context (Hobsbawm 1990; Breuilly 1994; Schultze 1996; Reinhard 1999). Also, I take a relational approach that does not centre on nationalism, but approaches this process as a performative concept in the transforming environment of power, politics, and the state. I compare the before and after of this transformation specifically in terms of the joint effects of empire and nationalism on the political field, which under empire connected multiple state fields and fields of power, but was then confined by the national framework of nation-states.

Before and during WWI liberal, conservative and socialist leaders adopted a rhetoric of nationalism and finally national self-determination, most notably Vladimir Lenin and Woodrow Wilson (see for example Mayer 1964). At first, however, national self-determination did not mean the separation of empire from various nations. It did not mean universal sovereign nation-statehood. After WWI national self-determination contingently emerged as the idea of independent nation-states separated from empire. By exploring the contingencies of that transformation, we may better understand the relationship between empire and nationalism today.

In this regard the German Empire is an understudied case, even though it encompasses in a condensed timeframe many of the crucial events defining late imperialism. These are the establishment of an official empire in 1871 following the Franco-Prussian war, colonial expansion and consolidation beginning in the 1880s, followed by the loss of colonial possessions, critique of empire, and finally the turn towards the nation-state. All of this occurred at a time when the French and British empires reached their apogee, while the idea of national self-determination began to spread, and socialism achieved state power. Due to this rapid sequence of events, both the mediation and flow of power as well as competition for forms of capital and domination of the fields of politics, power, and the state are apparent in the German case and reflected in the arguments and thoughts of contemporaries.

For example, the German social democrats were demanding new forms of politics in response to the rapid developments of the empire. ‘Colonial policy in the metropole was forged in a turbulent process in which the same elite class fractions that competed with one another in overseas colonial

state fields struggled not just with one another but also with representatives of the working class and the German Catholics' (Steinmetz 2017, 386). The social democrats were ready to take advantage of these connections, i.e. metropole-periphery power pipelines, and the distortions and glitches in them. Among other actors, they fashioned imperial policies by connecting colonial affairs with metropolitan politics, thereby drawing a connection between subaltern voices in the metropole and subaltern voices in the periphery. The British and French empires were different; they not only continued their imperial projects after WWI, but had also had a longer period of adjustment to both imperial expansion and the rise of nationalist sentiment, to which they reacted by formalizing their empire in line with the expansion of the imperial fields (Go 2008; Osterhammel 2014).

For exploring nationalism's changing relation to empire under these circumstances, BFT's relational focus is expertly suited, while at the same time this empirical case helps refine BFT in relation to the distinction between state and empire, especially in explaining the emergence of the nation-state as a 'metafield'. I do this through the three main fields in Pierre Bourdieu's political sociology: the field of power, the state field, and the political field (Swartz 2013a). I argue that in the German Empire, nationalism was one of the *idées-forces*<sup>82</sup> – the performative ideas used to compete for symbolic power in the political field with varying connections to the different state fields and fields of power – until it was associated with the national metacapital of the nation-state. I apply constructs of Bourdieu's sociology here as tools for research with specific dispositions rather than as theoretical constructs (Swartz, 2013b), the most important disposition being the relationality of nationalism to politics, state, and power.

### *The Field Theoretical Perspective on Nationalism and Empire*

Besides relational analysis, BFT also focuses on multiple forms of power and domination, cultural and symbolic capital, and challenges to received views of the world (Swartz 2013b, 19). Julian Go and Monika Krause highlight the usefulness of BFT when examining mechanisms of

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<sup>82</sup> Steinmetz (2008:607) introduces the concept of *idées-forces* from Bourdieu's (2000) *Propos sur le champ politique*. It is important for a fielded understanding of political ideas in highlighting the concept's field-specific performativity. An *idée-force* directly addresses or intervenes in the political field's definitional struggles; it sets the stakes.

reproduction, the mobilization of actors, and forms of resistance related to transnational and relational phenomena or entities (2016). This provides an interesting toolkit for the study of nationalism and empire, since these dispositions are also inherently important for their relation.

In what light does the defining moment for the relationship between empire and nationalism during the twentieth century appear from the perspective of these dispositions? In answering this question I focus on the political field, which could overlap with multiple fields of power and the states that existed under empire (Steinmetz 2016, 105–110; 2017, 374–387), but which in nation-states became defined by statist capital of a specific national metacapital type.

Compared to other approaches such as governmentality, or what Go and Krause term new imperialism, BFT shifts the focus to the mediation of power through varying forms of capital (economic, cultural, symbolic, etc.), logics of practice, and the reproduction of those forms of capital together with historical transformations (Gorski 2013; Steinmetz 2016, 100). Philip S. Gorski underlines Bourdieu's usefulness in analyzing historical transformation as continuity and rupture at the same time, which I believe is key to understanding the changing relations between nationalism, empire, and the state. This is achieved by focusing on the relational transformation of fields, specifically the three fields related to symbolic power mentioned above, namely: the state field, the political field, and the field of power (see for example Swartz 2013a).

George Steinmetz has shown the separation of the state field and the field of power between the colonies and the metropole in the German Empire (Steinmetz 2008). However, this separation took place in a shared social space with significant replication of metropolitan field dynamics in the colonies (Steinmetz 2008, 601–602). I argue that through imperial symbolic capital and field homology, the political field of the empire could reach across these separated fields. In other words, even if the institutional framework and the distribution and relations of power varied in different parts of the empire, the contest for power was defined similarly across the empire, which ultimately gave dominated actors in the metropolitan field of power, such as the social democrats and the

*Bildungsbürgertum*<sup>83</sup>, a new way of legitimizing their *idées-forces* of the political field, their ‘performative ideas that both represent and divide the social world’ (Steinmetz 2008, 607).

The dominated actors mobilized various forms of nationalist thought to devise imperial policies as *idées-forces* (as the examples discussed below show) that aimed to connect political claims across the other disparate fields of the empire; policies that subverted dominant positions. The dominant political elites had trouble addressing such challenges because of their entrenchment in the separate metropolitan or colonial fields, on the one hand, and internal divisions emphasized by metropole-periphery relations, on the other. For example, the *Bildungsbürgertum* was the dominated dominant class in the metropole, but dominant in certain colonies (Steinmetz 2008, 601). This created what I call distorted power pipelines. However, nationalism, redefined strictly as the national metacapital of the nation-state, clipped the wings of such *idées-forces*, and formalized and regulated metropole-periphery power pipelines to prevent simultaneous challenges to metropolitan elites and to colonial domination

I compare specifically the change to the relation between nationalism and empire, where the focus is on the relational and performative power that nationalist practice or discourse has. Nationalism, though mobile, always has an historically located articulation, dependent on the fields’ relations with one another. Nationalist arguments in the form made under the German Empire lost their effectiveness under the nation-state. By anchoring my approach in the transformation of the relations of empire and nationalism through fielded comparisons of the organizing role of empire and nationalism, I show what BFT can bring to studies of nationalism. It helps us approach imperial actors as competing meaning-makers in defining nationalism, rather than as parts of a larger overarching and determining imperial system (Steinmetz 2016, 99) based on economy (e.g. Pokrowski 1929; Koponen 1994), ideology/culture (e.g. Gramsci 1971; Said 1993), or power (e.g. Wortman 2000). It also better

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<sup>83</sup> See Steinmetz 2008 on the position of the *Bildungsbürgertum* in the empire and their engagement with colonial fields.

explains the subsequent twentieth-century contingency of nationalism – what Bourdieu called the field of national metacapital<sup>84</sup>.

The German case also addresses what Steinmetz (2008, 607–608) sees as shortcomings with Bourdieu’s definition of the state as a ‘central bank of symbolic credit’ that dominates all other fields and is constituted as the holder of a sort of metacapital that underwrites the values of all other species of capital. Steinmetz’ critique, based on his description of fields formed under pre-WWI colony-metropole relations set against Bourdieu’s late twentieth-century theorization of the nation-state, can be overcome by historically exploring the transformation in the relation between empire and nationalism. I suggest that Bourdieu’s national metacapital emerged from a situation described by Steinmetz, in which there was no centrally defined hierarchy amongst a plurality of fields of capital. Imperial symbolic capital and the political field connected but did not underwrite various other fields. If, as Steinmetz argues, semi-autonomous fields constituted metropole-colony relations (2008), and fields themselves are historical and subject to historical change, as Steinmetz proposes elsewhere (2011), then a clear question arises: why did metropole-colony fields disappear as national self-determination proliferated?

Three propositions surface in answering this question by applying Bourdieusian field theory to the transformation of the relationship between empire and nationalism in the German Empire. First, under empire power was based on the ability to mediate interests, transfer information, exchange one resource for another, and connect different types of capital, including human capital, across the empire. This was performed with symbolic capital defined and distributed by the imperial fields of power, underwritten and produced by the state fields, and competed for in the political field. Fields of power distributed symbolic power and its relations with other forms of power, for which there was competition in the political field in the form of ‘the legitimate imposition of principles of visions and division of the social world’ (Swartz 2013a, 61–69). For Bourdieu, in terms of nation-states, ‘the state is the end result for struggle in the political field’ (Swartz 2013a, 137). However, under empire the

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<sup>84</sup> See Steinmetz’ 2008 article. He points to Bourdieu’s *The State Nobility* (1996) and *Rethinking the State: Genesis and Structure of the Bureaucratic Field* (1999).

state is not the only framework and reference point for imposing principles on the political field. Under empire various connections across imperial fields can be mobilized for legitimizing political visions and divisions, or *idées-forces*.

Second, at the heart of the transformation of empire to nation-state and the change in the relationship between empire and nationalism were emergent political strategies that attempted to take over domination of the imperial fields of power by formulating ‘imperial policies’ which mobilized national and colonial dimensions for leverage. This is a modification of the argument made by Julian Go (2008) that imperial fields transformed when anti-colonial nationalism challenged the ‘rules of the game’. Instead, I argue that imperial fields were challenged to transform before the rise of national self-determination and especially before anti-colonial nationalism. The case of the German Empire suggests that national self-determination and its anti-colonial variant were the consequence of reactions to challenges against imperial fields. These challenges were facilitated by unregulated metropole-periphery power pipelines that provided the opportunity to use colonial issues in metropolitan contestations, with no principled vision of the state intervening and defining the issue as separate, that is, as foreign policy or international politics not pertinent to the metropole.

Lastly, this resulted in the rise of national self-determination and the creation of the nation-state, which transformed the relation between nationalism and empire from an interactive relationship – in which nationalism functioned under empire – into a dichotomous one that allowed the continued existence of both via an informal separation. This shifted the focus of symbolic capital from a multiplicity of comparisons of and under empire to a comparison between empire and nation-state. The nation-state became portrayed as inherently equal, democratic, and sovereign, by replacing the mediating imperial symbolic capital with a regulating and universalizing national metacapital. Following WWI this new relationship between empire and nationalism allowed for the continuity of Western empires with an increasingly informal character: with a nation-state core and economic peripheries. Further, it allowed the continuity of the Soviet Union in place of the Russian Empire, here with an economic core and nation-state peripheries.

### *Empire, Nation, and Colonialism in the Early Twentieth Century*

Nation-states are sometimes seen as a natural result of a selection of political, social, and economic developments taking place over centuries. Such a perspective is counter-intuitive when one considers how at the dawn of the age of empires, following the Franco-Prussian War, the idea of nation-states was a utopian vision, a novelty amongst socialist, liberal, conservative, dynastic, religious, etc. ideologies, which constituted the *idées-forces*, legitimized symbolic capital, and completely rejected nationalism under empire (Hobsbawm 1990; Osterhammel 2014). Moving into the twentieth century, this began to change: ‘The first wave [of literature on nationalism], which goes back at least to the early twentieth century, defined nationalism as an idea, ideology, principle, or creed on a par with liberalism, socialism, or fascism’ and only ‘the second wave, which began shortly after the Second World War, conceived of nationalism as a form of political community or identity, a competitor and successor to local identity ... as well as to universal identity’ (Gorski 2013b, 243).

Multiple competing definitions of the nation-state abounded at first. Professor Franz Oppenheimer, who held the first ever Chair in Sociology in Germany (at the University of Frankfurt am Main, now Goethe Universität Frankfurt), argued in his 1907 book *Der Staat* (The State) that all states are defined by economic domination of one class over another. His was still a state that had no national definitions and was not tied to any specific historical context beyond capitalism. In 1909 the legal scholar Baron von der Osten-Sacken (1912) came to the conclusion that from the perspective of international law a small political entity such as the Grand Duchy of Finland could not be considered a fully independent state (which it became in 1918) despite it having enacted full universal suffrage as the first state in Europe to do so in 1906. By 1921 anthropologist Richard Thurnwald already recognized the specificity of the modern state, but still contended that it is no more than one of many abstract possibilities, and its form has varied over time<sup>85</sup>.

The beginnings of a consolidation of the universal appropriation of the state by the nation were visible. By the end of this process, states founded on national ideas and citizenries were not only

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<sup>85</sup> Quoted in R. Lowie’s *The Origin of the State* (1927).

emerging – as had been the case with national movements with an enlightenment agenda during the nineteenth century, which were not linked to ideas of the state or of political self-determination in the same way – they were being politically produced by the Soviet Union and by Western foreign policy alike. As Eric Hobsbawm put it, this era represented the ‘transformation of nationalism’, during which it began to aspire ‘to form or capture states rather than the “nations” of already existing states’ (1990, 101). The nation-state became the instrument of political organization and control *sine qua non* in just four decades following the establishment of the German Empire. By the end of WWI leaders from Lenin to Friedrich Ebert and Woodrow Wilson, from the USA to Germany and Soviet Russia, from liberal capitalists to social democrats and communists were asserting their claims to appropriate the idea of the nation-state<sup>86</sup>, albeit from different angles.

Lenin had already written his ‘Theses on the National Question’ in 1913, in which he sided with the idea of political organization on a national basis. However, only after WWI did he side with the idea of national self-determination as the form it should take. Similarly, Woodrow Wilson eventually arrived at national self-determination, but from a different perspective. His earlier writings included the idea of the self-determination of peoples, but only during WWI was it joined together with the idea of an independent state in its manifestation, as *national* self-determination (see for example Lynch 2002). In both cases, the result differed from the original motivation. Lenin and Wilson both sought to mobilize peoples, especially within Europe. Lenin saw national self-determination as an instrument for destroying imperial relations and Wilson for maintaining them through reform. Both accepted a compromise. Lenin was able to tap into the old imperial relations in setting up people’s republics, but failed to connect the peoples. Wilson mobilized peoples around the world, but could not completely hold on to the old imperial relations that were supposed to foster and regulate national self-determination under benign rule.

Wilson and Lenin represent opposite dominant sides in the transformation of the relation between nationalism and empire. The German Social Democratic Party (SPD) stood somewhere in the

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<sup>86</sup> Since its beginning, the Soviet Union and Soviet Russia had supported national self-determination in its foreign policy and proceeded to organize the empire by forming national republics.

middle. On the eve of WWI it was the largest party in the *Reichstag* and the most successful European socialist party. Headed by Friedrich Ebert, in August 1914 it famously voted in favour of war credits to the German Empire, a move that has ever since been described as the party ultimately siding with the nation and betraying the socialist international. But, as with the starting points of Lenin and Wilson, at the time, the decision was instead motivated by competition within the party (the SPD still officially represented many socialist factions), by mindsets affected by ‘socialist colonial policies’, and by attempts to transform their support into more political power *within* the empire rather than against the empire, in favour of the nation (see for example Hyrkkänen 1986; Wegner 2014). Seen this way, the idea of the SPD siding with the nation and turning nationalist on the eve of WWI only makes sense in retrospect.

At the same time, within the German Empire colonialism was intertwined with the full range of political issues and struggles under the empire. Bradley Naranch elaborates this when he illustrates a caricature from 1904 that depicts Herero fighters ‘liberating factory workers from the bondage of wage slavery’ (Naranch 2014, 7). The *Reichstag*, though limited in power, was a common stage for colonial debates. The colonial could easily be harnessed for symbolic struggles. One social democratic representative noted at the 128<sup>th</sup> meeting of the *Reichstag* that social democratic thinking needed to form the basis of any colonial reforms<sup>87</sup>, which exemplifies how the whole discussion revolved more around the issue of who held the most legitimacy to comment on colonial – i.e. imperial – matters. Debates were one step removed from matters at hand, focusing more on symbolic competition, on defining the political stakes.

Interestingly, this echoes the accelerating race by political actors to compete over legitimacy to define nationalism. Jörn Wegner makes a convincing argument that, as mentioned above, the SPD’s decision to vote for the war credits was not due to pressure from supporters taken over by some nationalistic euphoria (2014). In fact, the large masses did not really care. A similar point regarding

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<sup>87</sup> Minutes of the 128<sup>th</sup> meeting of the *Reichstag* 7 March 1913. Sent to Dar es Salaam by the *Reichs-Kolonialamt* 31 July, arrived 1 September (G9/60, National Archives of Tanzania). These minutes were specifically sent to the colonial administration in German East Africa, exemplifying the connections of the political field.

colonialism is made by Juhani Koponen: '[T]he colonial cause never captured the wide masses in the German society; yet ... in the immediate pre-war years a near consensus was achieved within the political establishment on the continued need for colonies' (1994, 545).

### *Colonialism in the German Empire*

The overarching political entity of empire provided its subjects' symbolic capital. It was a 'recognized authority' of symbolic power, referring to 'esteem, recognition, belief, credit, confidence of others' as publicly recognized social authority (Swartz 2013a, 84). Symbolic capital can be accumulated through various fields organized around various forms of capital. Steinmetz for example has argued that ethnographic capital was a highly recognized form of symbolic authority in some colonial state fields, but that in the metropole, even in the Imperial Colonial Office there, this type of localized knowledge was quite useless or even harmful (2008).

However, when portrayed as service for the empire in the colony, in other words recycled through imperial symbolic capital rather than directly from one field to another, even localized knowledge could be translated into metropolitan political claims. Such for example were the claims raised by settlers in German East Africa over the need for self-determination. To influence the decision-making of the metropolitan colonial bureaucracy over the issue of colonial governance, the settlers argued that positive economic development and better treatment of native labourers, both hotly debated topics in the metropole, could be best secured through their locally accumulated experience and knowledge rather than the personal opinions of those in leading positions<sup>88</sup>. And similarly, when the governors of German colonies were given the rank of Privy Councillor (bringing them closer to the Kaiser in the official hierarchy) it was to bolster their symbolic power against other claims in the colonial field of power. Symbolic capital was sought and exchanged across the empire effortlessly.

The symbolic capital of the empire worked to mediate and link multiple fields together as a universally exchangeable capital that facilitated transfers of other forms of capital under the empire.

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<sup>88</sup> See especially *Usambara-Post* (25 April 1908) and *Deutsch-Ostafrikanische Zeitung* (22 April 1905).

Imperial symbolic capital filled the gaps between the otherwise fragmented parts of the empire (see for example Osterhammel 2014, 461–466). Consequently, it was unlike what Bourdieu termed national metacapital, which provides the capacity to regulate and define other forms of capital in the ideal-typical nation-state as ‘a form of power which, by regulating and defining what counts as capital also carries the ability to regulate relations between fields’ (Go and Krause 2016, 17).

By the turn of the century colonialism had become an enduring, if not the ultimate, expression of the German Empire (Steinmetz 2007; Naranch 2014). But more importantly, in terms of the relation between empire and nationalism, ‘it [colonialism] was ubiquitous without becoming all-encompassing or uniformly powerful’ (Naranch 2014:5). In terms of the political imagination, the overseas colonies provided, as Sebastian Conrad eloquently puts it (2010), forums on which the German nation could be imagined. In effect they provided capacity to exchange and accumulate symbolic capital by groups other than those dominating the metropolitan field of power. The political and the geographical distance of the colonies provided flexibility and autonomy to the agency of such actors. Imperial administrators responded in the only way they could. They incrementally mobilized their authority to control the colonies. In effect this meant the introduction of new legislation, an increase of administration, and a process of administrative reforms aiming to better connect the colony with the metropole: to narrow the political and imaginative distance between them. While improving their position *vis-à-vis* metropole-periphery divisions and the challenges raised through them, this move also legitimized the challenges posed by alternative imperial policies.

Julian Go argues that the colonial system was a field for Bourdieu because it was ‘replete with struggle and conflict’ (2013, 64). But crucially, neither the colonial administrators in the colonies or in Berlin nor the colonists in the periphery or within civil society in the metropole saw the German colonial effort in terms of a separate struggle and conflict, but rather as the continuity and expansion of empire. More than a new conflict, it was an expansion of opportunities to harness power and privilege distributed by the empire. The colonial social space was an extension of the metropolitan space; from German sausages and beer houses to celebrations of the Kaiser’s birthday, even to the

replication of political scandals, such as the Eulenburg affair that led to a series of accusations in German East Africa<sup>89</sup>.

*Germany under the Second Empire ... [was] a country marked by the widespread competencies of officials and the generous rewards given to them. Those who deplored the high status of officials in Germany also regretted the transferal of their bureaucratic system to the colonies ... Parliamentarians developed an inordinate interest in colonial affairs, going far beyond the interest shown by comparable individuals in Britain and France. (Knoll and Hiery 2010, 93)*

Theoretically, then, the story of German colonialism contradicts how ‘Bourdieu isolates colonialism as an autonomous arena of its own’ (Go 2013b, 64). At least as far as the German case before WWI is concerned, the picture was more complicated. No nationally defined unified field existed, compared to which the colonies could have been seen as politically autonomous fields, or even as semi-autonomous, like the state fields described by Steinmetz (2008). Not only the metropolitan but also the colonial states under empire, then, speak to a very different association between nationalism and the state. Distortions and disconnects in the colonies’ connections with the metropolitan political field did exist – but as far as the actors themselves were concerned, they were still in the process of adjusting their dispositions in a novel situation that was moving towards more integration under empire, a nationalism therefore defined in reference to imperial politics and symbolic power, rather than statist politics and national metacapital.

I will now explore the transformations created by the victors of WWI as compromises to mediate and fix these imperial pipelines of power between metropole and colony so that they could still be kept in place in one manner or another. ‘After WWI, which irrevocably destroyed three empires, (Ottoman, Hohenzollern and Habsburg), the imperial era lingered on’ (Osterhammel 2014, 405).

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<sup>89</sup> See for example the Imperial District Court of Dar es Salaam’s case against G. A. Eberhardt on 18 February 1912 (G11/3, National Archives of Tanzania).

*Competition for the Empire Confined to Competition for the State*

A revised edition of Woodrow Wilson's book *The State* (1918, 40; 551) already proclaims the self-determinist and exceptionalist characteristics of the modern nation-state: 'It is the Whole which has emerged from the disintegration of feudalism and the specialization of absolute monarchy. The Whole, too, has become self-conscious, and by becoming self-directive has set out upon a new course of development.' This approach was consolidated in the doctrine of national self-determination, the Wilsonian moment, which linked sovereign self-determination specifically with 'governments organized on the common basis of popular representation and control' that will spread throughout the world as 'universal control of governments by their people'.

Naturally, the United States in 1919 was not built on 'popular representation and control' in the way in which we understand it today; nor would popular representation and control come to take the same form in all states, even if all states would take the national form. This was just one attempt at controlling and defining the process of imperial (de)formation by one group of political actors. Wilson of course used his definition to achieve foreign policy goals. He had not intended national self-determination to be used and applied beyond South-Eastern Europe, for example, to the disappointment of Asian and African political actors<sup>90</sup>. The self-directive and self-conscious Whole was a concept reserved for the peoples of metropolises, a form of erecting a barrier between the political fields of the metropole and periphery so that their relation could not be mobilized against the dominant in either.

Similarly, by the time in 1919 when Lenin in his lecture asked 'what is the state?' and also proceeded to appropriate it, the nation-state had already claimed its position in very contingent ways, and the conditions and field configurations that led to its separation from empire were in place. Lenin had chosen his side, as I discussed above, at the latest by 1913, and now he proceeded to gain control and eliminate competition by distinguishing the ways in which socialists should use the state: "So far we have deprived the capitalists of this machine and have taken it over. We shall use this machine [the

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<sup>90</sup> See for example Conrad and Sachsenmaier 2007.

state], or bludgeon, to destroy all exploitation.”<sup>91</sup> In the Bolsheviks’ first negotiations with another socialist state in early 1918, as discussed in chapter two, Lenin attempted to craft into that treaty prescriptions for national self-determination based on international socialist cooperation and the free movement of workers. However, this backfired both domestically and internationally, which led the Bolsheviks to follow thereafter a policy of much stricter separation between the political fields of the metropole and the incorporated republics<sup>92</sup>.

These revised perspectives did not simply actualize in Lenin and Wilson’s heads, but were their responses to the changing political context. By 1912 the social democrats in Germany had established a successful line of argument to mobilize the national and colonial imagination in a bid for imperial power. It consisted of three parts bridging the metropole-periphery distinction. The line of their argument was that, first, native-born workers in the colonies suffer violence and oppression, they are underpaid and mistreated. Second, this cheap native labour that is kept like this through inhumane means is used to undercut the German worker throughout the empire. Third, as German workers organize, the German capitalists use labour in the colonies to counteract it. The social democrats were creating a political connection between German workers and colonial policy, i.e. they were aiming to take over the symbolic power of the empire as a whole. A distorted power pipeline between metropole and periphery helped them pull off these ideological acrobatics. The social democrats were mobilizing various subaltern voices to make the claim that under the empire they were indivisible, though of course, not equal. The position and voice of the colonized and the worker could be connected, because they did not need to first come together in a centralized, unified metafield.

The German Empire had specific characteristics in terms of its colonial policy, such as late entry to the imperial game, along with the most sophisticated and developed socialist critique of the empire (see for example Hyrkkänen 1986). Critique not against empire but for a better empire. This means that in the German Empire the socialists were able to hijack the metropole-periphery relations,

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<sup>91</sup> Lenin’s Collected Works, 4<sup>th</sup> English Edition, Progress Publishers, Moscow, 1972; Volume 29, pages 470–488. Available at: [www.marxists.org](http://www.marxists.org)

<sup>92</sup> This was connected to the civil war in the Grand Duchy of Finland, which the social democrats eventually lost.

which provided access to the forums on which the German nation was imagined (Conrad 2010), then turn them in their favour, and downplay the divisions between subalterns. The social democrats could make the argument that failures in colonial affairs were a result of the execution and form of imperial policy in general, instead of an internal affair of the colonies, disconnected from the metropole.

Thereby the German social democrats drew a connection between subaltern voices in the metropole and subaltern voices in the periphery. One Social Democratic equated the treatment of social democrats and with mixed-race population as similar under the empire; “it is unbelievable that recently people of mixed race in, for example, South-West Africa have been treated the same way Social Democrats are treated in Germany”, he “did not shy away from equating the harassment Social Democrats had to suffer in the German Empire with the problems natives faced in the German colonies, Jens-Uwe Guettel points out. He continues that the same logic was also extended to the existence of antisemitic views in the empire; we “believe in the equality of all human beings, regardless of their skin color. This is why we are unequivocally committed to giving blacks and the mixed-race population the rights that are their due”, the Social Democrats argued<sup>93</sup> (2012, 471-2). The following picture (figure 55) of an election flyer from the Hottentot elections of 1907 by the Imperial Association against Social Democracy captures the politicization of colonialism, nationalism and socialism as co-constitutive imperial dimensions. Front and center we have the symbol of the empire on a pedestal where it’s written “German protection of your fatherland” This imperial protection and safety is being torn down by the Social Democrats, by Bebel’s hordes at work, which is written underneath the flyer, though not visible in this picture, and refers to the SPD chairman August Bebel. What the poster means by this, as the pictures’ on both sides of the statue clarify us, is not the dismantling of the empire, but politics that would change the relation of the nation and colonialism: on the left side it says, “so it will be if the social democrats are elected” and we see here colonial natives attacking the German settlers. and on the right side it says “so it will be if honest German men are elected” displaying productive settlers with no natives in sight. The socialist are specifically

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<sup>93</sup> Many Social Democrats nevertheless considered Europeans more developed and believed in racial hierarchies, they simply thought that in colonial rule was based on “a thinly veiled disguise of race-based” order of what was in reality a “cruel system of economic exploitation” (Guettel 2012, 474).

shown as targeting the imperial symbols of the statue depicting the nation, the monarchy and the military.



Figure 55. League against Social Democracy election postcard from 1907. Iz3w-archive, accessed at Freiburg-postkolonial.de.

They made a connection that could not be sold to the public in France or Britain, partly due to the weakness of the socialist movements there. Seen the other way around, the public in Germany did not, to the same extent as in France or Britain, feel that their symbolic order and authority were offended through imperial inclusion of the peripheries, perhaps because the German metropole itself was highly fragmented. This allowed the expansion of empire to become a contested political project. And different groups began to outline their ‘imperial policies’ instead of simply economic, social, or national ones. An imperial policy aimed to redefine the entire neutral and mediating symbolic imperial power. This is where nationalism begins to play a new role and eventually ends up separated from empire.

The expansion of empire and symbolic capital and the new politics it offered for different parties, previously isolated or encapsulated by the imperial system itself, created pressure to re-

hierarchize the system somehow. The social democrats, isolated by the system from executive power, focused on redefining the political field by, for example, creating a ‘socialist colonial policy’. In contrast, the Pan-German League – a powerful nationalist pressure group in imperial Germany founded by Carl Peters, one of the most successful advocates of acquiring colonial possessions – also developed radical policies as a response to growing imperial ambitions, where the national mission was always defined ‘in much broader imperial terms’ (Sweeney 2014, 269).

Chairman of the Pan-German League, Ernst Hasse, who had first founded the ‘Society for Trading Geography and the Advancement of German Interests Abroad’ (Verein für Handelsgeographie und Förderung deutscher Interessen im Auslande), developed a layered system for hierarchizing the empire in his 1908 treatise *World Policy, Imperialism, and Colonial Policy*. This was based on the assumption of continued imperial expansion; i.e. nationalism as a symbolic political structure within the empire rather than within a nation-state, and not as an exclusive ideology, but as hierarchically inclusive: ‘not a spatially fixed and racially enclosed nation-state’ but rather a complex ‘imperial formation’ (Sweeney 2014, 267). This vision for a German world empire would be ‘an uneven federated structure’ characterized by the ‘most varied gradations and forms’ of imperial dependency and control, rather than appear in the form of a ‘rigid centralized state’ (Sweeney 2014, 273). Such a structure would naturally control power pipelines and redefine imperial symbolic capital based on the new hierarchy. These policies show that ‘nationalism *within* empires was not always directed against the structures of imperial rule’ (Osterhammel 2014, 467, emphasis in original).

Much like the Pan-German League’s visions, socialist colonial policy grew from the reformist/revisionist strategy of the SPD. Instead of a worker’s revolution, the SPD aimed to work within the empire and incrementally transform and democratize it, thereby also increasing the power of the party itself, through and under the empire, not against it. And much like the Pan-German League’s thinking, this eventually expanded into a socialist world policy and social imperialism (*Sozialimperialismus*) developed largely on the pages of the *Sozialistische Monatshefte* with Eduard Bernstein as one of the main ideologues. Socialist imperialism was bound to and dependent on the German Empire; it was a logical extension of the empire: ‘During 1910–1914 the inner circle of the

*Sozialistische Monatshefte* reached the understanding that the democratization of the German system of governance was the condition *sine qua non* for a meaningful assertion of German world policy' (Hyrkkänen 1986, 289). The socialists directly challenged those currently dominating the field of power for legitimate imperial rule. The social democrat and parliamentarian Ludwig Quessel argued that the semi-parliamentarian system of governance was completely inept for successful imperialist policies and that the majority of German imperialists had not yet realized that they should be social imperialists (Hyrkkänen 1986, 289).

The socialists wanted to transform the imperial fields of power and the distribution of symbolic capital, but through democratization and mass politics rather than ethnonationalist divisions and hierarchies. In a sense, the rise of national metacapital was a compromise between these two strategies for transforming the empire from within. Ethnonationalism and democratization came together but were confined to a singular state, instead of cutting across various state fields under empire.

By appropriating the metropole-periphery connections, the socialists were able to call unjust authority in the peripheries the same thing as unjust authority in the metropole. In other words, they could prevent the colonial project from being presented as a project by the grace of the German nation, and on the contrary claim that the colonial project was part and parcel of the democratization of imperial power, thereby rendering the metropole-periphery pipeline less useful for imperial power holders. Importantly, the socialists could then make the claim that political and social transformations had to be a wholesale issue that involved metropole-periphery relations, an idea that was nipped in the bud in Paris in 1919. In effect, what the SPD faced in the summer of 1914 was a decision to either continue the former strategy, or to redouble their efforts in relation to the most important source of power in case some form of re-hierarchizing took place during wartime.

Uffe Ostergaard makes the same argument about the Austro-Hungarian Empire, which has been made into the poster boy of the oppositional forces of empire and nationalism in the early twentieth century, an interpretation coloured by the ensuing relationship between empire and nation afterwards. 'With very few exceptions the various nationalities neither wished to break up the

[Austro-Hungarian] Empire nor believed it was in their power to do so', and to take the disappearance of the Austro-Hungarian Empire 'as proof for the impossibility of multinational empires in Europe is, to say the least, doubtful' (Ostergaard 1997, 111).

In Germany, following WWI, the SPD then had to fight other socialists, previously united under the flag of the SPD, for state power (see for example Broue 2006). After defeat against the SPD, the remaining communists followed suit in accepting a new nationalism, at the latest by 1925 when the Comintern reinforced Lenin's perspective on socialism and national self-determination. By the time of the 6<sup>th</sup> Comintern congress in 1928, this drive to mobilize the idea of the nation-state had turned into a competition between the social democrats and the Bolsheviks as well.

The general picture fits Go's (2008) differentiation of British formal imperialism from American informal imperialism after the world wars. The metropole-periphery pipeline was 'formalized' to make imperialism a project of the British nation (an idea whose decline closely followed that of the British Empire). As described by Hobson at the turn of the century (see for example Hobson 1901; 1902), in Britain jingoistic ideology cemented a hegemonic bloc that united various social classes in favour of empire (Steinmetz 2014). The pan-Germanist Ernst Hasse's treatise drew from the British, Russian and American empires and in debating the nature of the German Empire, the pan-German leaders made comparisons with rival Western empires. However, Go's differentiation does not account for the short-lived German Empire, nor the Russian Empire. In the latter case, a formalization of the imperial project was attempted but failed, while in the former, encompassing imperial policies competed for formalization of the empire. For the same reason, Go's theorization of historical global fields, based heavily on the British and American cases, would seem to need more elaboration.

To browse through an East German selection of socialist songs from 1842–1945 exemplifies the stages of transformation in Germany (in this case, through its East German satellite, from Moscow's perspective). A clear development can be read through the songs' lyrics, from first objecting to empire and imperial power, to then appropriating it, and finally turning towards competition for the nation-state over empire.

A mocking song about Otto von Bismarck from 1891 makes fun of German unity as being ‘patched poorly together with [Prussian] needle-guns’<sup>94</sup>, criticizing both the empire’s legitimacy as well as its unity even in the metropole. Then a socialist song from 1904 describes a poor working man ‘with a German heart in his chest’ who is denied May Day celebrations and unable to understand why ‘only a complete ban can save the *Reich* from great distress’: namely, socialism. Here, the socialist is already working for the good of the *Reich*. The song also brings together the colonized and the socialists under the empire as it ironically notes how supposedly ‘terrible also the Herero is, but even more terrible is the socialist’<sup>95</sup>. However, by the late 1920s the socialist camp would split between the social democrats and the communists, whose perspective this East German songbook appropriates. A song called ‘Our Republic’ from 1926 still focuses on the mode of government in Weimar and pits the socialists’ call for a republic against the nationalists’ unlawfulness<sup>96</sup>. Whereas Bertolt Brecht’s song *O Deutschland, bleiche Mutter!* from 1933 describes Mother Germany as ‘arrayed’ by her lying sons; ‘flaunting [herself] amongst the besmirched’; and whose clothes are ‘bloody with the blood of [her] best sons’<sup>97</sup>. The latter exemplifies how nationalism was not disavowed by communists even as the NSDAP rose to power. Rather, the nation-state had become the defining framework for symbolic power.

Unlike the imperial nationalism discussed above, where national claims could be launched to challenge the dominance of the state field and the field of power, here nationalism takes the form Bourdieu describes and the state becomes the field of ideological production (Swartz 2013a, 130). To vie for symbolic power is to vie for the state; to present *idées-forces* is to talk about the state; the state’s symbolic dimension is an ‘effect of universality’ (Swartz 2013a, 130). This modern state emerges from attempts to deal with ambiguities of governance (Swartz 2013a, 132), ambiguities that the imperial policies attempted to exploit for a more complete reorganization of imperial power. But

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<sup>94</sup> ‘Das Lied vom grossen Otto’, Max Kegel (Lammel and Schütt 1975, 81–82).

<sup>95</sup> ‘Der Erste Mai’, F.M. (Lammel and Schütt 1975, 59–62).

<sup>96</sup> ‘Unsere Republik’, anonymous (Lammel and Schütt 1975, 127–28).

<sup>97</sup> ‘O Deutschland, bleiche Mutter!’, Bertolt Brecht (Lammel and Schütt 1975, 169–170).

instead, as Brecht so vividly lyricized, the struggle for power becomes the same as the struggle for the state. Nationalism itself was not and does not become anti-imperial in any sense, but the conceptual space for political struggle becomes confined and attached to a predetermined national framework. The drawing of connections, such as historian and Pan-German League member Karl Lamprecht's ideas of a tentacle state, with overlapping borders of the nation, the colonies, and various arenas of informal imperialism (discussed in Conrad 2013b, 548), is prevented by the co-constitution of statist and political capital as national. Rather than anti-imperial, nationalism in the nation-state framework becomes almost epiphenomenal when compared to its usage under empire as *idées-forces*, as 'performative ideas that both represent and divide'.

'Thus, Bourdieu thinks of the state as a kind of metafield, with its own relative autonomy, that mediates the struggle for the dominate principle of legitimation among the various power fields, such as the cultural field, the economic field, the scientific field' (Swartz 2013a, 136). The nation-state has replaced the imperial symbolic capital that was produced by the imperial states, distributed by the fields of power, competed for in the political field in various assemblages, and exchanged freely under empire. By contrast, statist national metacapital regulates 'the rate of exchange among the various forms of capital in the field of power' (Swartz 2013a, 136). For example, the possibility to recycle one's ethnographic colonial capital (as discussed above) via reference to the empire no longer exists for any other type of capital. The state defines the possible usage of different forms of capital and the rate of exchange.

What followed WWI was not, at least theoretically, anything new, especially to an academic such as Woodrow Wilson. The idea of national self-determination, in the form in which it was promoted by Wilson, was an old idea of liberal-conservative social scientists such as Friedrich Naumann and Max Weber. At its core was the question of finding a solution that would 'fix' two problems simultaneously: democratization and socialism. This would be achieved by turning empires into nation-states holding indirect power over the rest of the world, i.e. fixing the troubled periphery-metropole pipeline that was in danger of being hijacked by socialism, democratization, and myriad nationalisms. Such a hijacking would also have endangered global capitalism built on imperial

metropole-periphery relations. In this sense, I argue, Bourdieu's mention of national symbolic capital as some sort of metacapital organizing other forms of cultural and symbolic capital truly manifests itself; its *raison d'être* is a coercive reorganization and hierarchization of forms of capital. National self-determination, as an organizational symbolism, was a way to achieve the 'fix'. Echoes of the origins of this 'fix' are present in Wilson's idea to reserve national self-determination for Western countries. This explains why it did not (originally) matter how the rest of the world would organize itself. But communists, in a similar fashion, used national metacapital to detach economic and political capital from the imperial variety of cultural and symbolic capital, thus giving anti-colonial nationalism increased impetus.

Communists, and specifically the Bolsheviks, turned things on their heads. They eventually sought to preserve the political rather than the economic hierarchies of the empire, and they used national self-determination in the peripheries rather than in the metropole to achieve this. The fact that the Russian Socialist Federative Soviet Republic was the only body politic within the union without national self-determination is manifest of this. Its 1925 constitution declares that:

[T]he Russian Socialist Federative Soviet Republic, being a part of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, relinquishes to the

*Union the powers which according to Article 1 of the Constitution of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics are included within the scope of responsibilities of the government bodies of the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics. (Constitution of the RSFSR 1925, author's translation)*

A second fact supporting these origins of the Soviet arrangement is that it was the declaration of sovereignty of this body politic, the metropole, which triggered the dissolution of the Soviet Union.

### *Conclusions*

The imperial fields before WWI were connected but not centrally unified, especially within the German Empire. This opened a door for 'imperial policies' to be set forth by different political groups from conservatives to socialists to liberals and allowed them to compete for symbolic power. By sacrificing formal empire and appropriating to the nation-state the power to reproduce global

hierarchies, imperial actors salvaged informal (economic, political, racialized, etc.) hierarchies and prevented new epistemic criticism, new *idées-forces* about the constitution of symbolic power, from making political gains. This sacrifice prevented the encompassing imperial policies from being mobilized by competing actors in the political field across the empire. This move in a sense depoliticized empire by over-politicizing the national.

Empire and nation in themselves are not antithetical to each other. They may complement each other or their relation may lead to conflict and struggle. The victors of the World Wars had to compromise on the notion of empire in order to preserve it and so created an inward-looking national field reproducing metacapital that could regulate, organize, and define other fields. However, this compromise also sustained certain outward-looking characteristics and relations of empire that connect varieties of capital that are global in their reach. For the time being at least, it has helped the victors of the World Wars to partly isolate global hierarchies from national politics and to sustain some aspects of their former empires.

Describing the relation between nationalism and empire following WWI as parallel lines of development also helps explain why the U.S., once it had reached hegemonic status, was unable to formalize its imperial rule in the same manner as Britain had done before. This complements Go's (2008) argument that national self-determination had created a new form of convertible symbolic capital, because it explains the emergence of this new form as a compromise with respect to the preservation of imperial relations. Jürgen Osterhammel points out that none of the 'national movements in nineteenth-century Europe managed to help its national community to independence outside an empire' and '[even] less did any of the national movements destroy an empire' (2014, 466). I have argued in this chapter that this was because they tried to do neither.

I return to the three propositions presented at the beginning. First, under empire power was based on the ability to mediate interests, transfer information, exchange one resource for another, and connect different types of capital, including human capital, across the empire with symbolic capital. Following WWI such connections and exchanges were taken out of the hands of politicized imperial policies. Culture, science, history, democracy, communism, and nationalism all became national.

Much of what had moved imperial policies in the economy and within politics, such as universal labour rights or colonial trade, became *inter-national* and went beyond formal empire.

Second, at the heart of the transformation of the relationship between empire and nationalism were these emergent strategies that attempted to take over domination of the imperial field of power by formulating imperial policies to mobilize the national and colonial dimensions for leverage. Anti-colonial nationalism emerged only following a compromise by the remaining empires to isolate such struggles separately within the peripheries and the metropolises as a response to challenges that had successfully used the metropole-periphery connections for their advantage.

The trade-off for empires was that this opened up national politics to more competition within the newly isolated entities. The restrictive force of the national framework lends performativity to *idées-forces* squarely in the conjuncture of the state field and the field of power, such as nationally representative parliaments. Through national metacapital, nationalism ‘became the mainstream rhetoric in fully consolidated states’ and people ‘developed an appropriate cosmos of symbols, strove to differentiate themselves from other nations’ (Osterhammel 2014, 467). This transformed the relationship between nationalism and empire from an interactive one – in which nationalism functioned under empire – into a dichotomous one that allowed the continued, separated existence of both.

The focus of symbolic capital then shifted from a multiplicity of comparisons of and under empire to comparisons across nations. This disassociated the state from imperial symbolic power, some of which was captured by the emerging informal empires and international organizations, and allowed the nation-state to form its own national metacapital. It finalized the genesis of the bureaucratic field, as described by Bourdieu (2005), as a process of the diffusion of power from dynastic rule and thereafter separation from it. But it still left a need for the mediation of interests, transfer of information, and exchange of resources between the new national units. The deal was that former imperial actors and networks could control these global fields. In this sense, the new arrangement facilitated the continuity of empire, as the slow transition from the League of Nations’ crude mandates system to more sophisticated global relations post-WWII demonstrates. In the Soviet

case, this meant dismantling the union of state power and metropolitan sovereignty to project it elsewhere. The central state would guarantee a plurality of national self-determinations, except for its own. This provided access to nationalist symbolic capital without the need for local legitimacy. The resignation of the Bolsheviks from the Russian Empire's metropole was fundamental for the Soviet nationalities policy.

Ultimately, then, the transformation of the relation between nationalism and empire began from an epistemic rupture in how imperial actors themselves defined the relations of empire, democracy, nation, and the states. Following this, empire and nationalism were separated in order to salvage what could be salvaged of empires. The trade-off was to grant nationalism the universal status formerly held by empire, but based on a negation of the former neutral and mediating form of field relations. Under the nation-state national metacapital regulates and defines hierarchies and divisions. Global hierarchies become inter-national, rather than intra-empire, lending legitimacy to ideas of nation-state sovereignty and citizenship. If those hierarchies begin to transform rapidly, it may provide enough political pressure for *idées-forces* defined outside the national metafield to challenge even national fields of power. In any case, understanding the historical conjuncture that separated nationalism and empire helps us to think of nationalism's current transformations in relation to empires, states, power, and politics in a relational manner.

## Conclusions

*The neglect of these other histories, which also constitute world history, is an obstacle to a more adequate understanding of the processes that are otherwise seen as central to sociological concerns and that shape its orientations to the future. (Bhambra 2014, 141)*

The sociology of democratization enjoys a familiar context: the sovereign nation state. This enables a series of questions and issues to be debated at length: the relative significance of state capacity and civil society's equality and autonomy, for example. But it also specifies a set of contentious questions that occludes some of the more serious alternatives debated at the beginning of the twentieth century. Two are especially compelling: to what extent might democracy be extended

within particular spaces without full sovereignty and to what extent might an alternative, i.e. socialist, political economy be developed across an empire instead of having it develop in a national form in the context of a capitalist world system? Each of those questions were especially important for my two empirical foci: Finland and its imperial location(s) and Germany with its imperial expression. Moreover, in the pre-1917-1919 context these aspects of inter- and intra-imperial relations were deeply entangled instead of bifurcated into nation-state sovereignty and international relations.

These occlusions are not just matters of particular histories overlooked, even if that is the case as this dissertation demonstrates. Far more than additional cases in a more inclusively historical sociology of democracy, this account demonstrates that particular forms of inter-imperial contests made those two apparently anachronistic questions both critical at the time, and invisible subsequently. Additionally, by recognizing the non-identification of intra-imperial contest and the significance of national independence, we can consider how making empire explicit illuminates democracy's conditions. Restoring those alternative histories, and their conceptions of alternative democracies, to our sociological imagination enables us to reframe what might be identified as critical sociological questions for democracy's extensions, even today, and reflexively sociology's own restrictions in addressing and engaging such questions.

Thus, this reframing in the sociology of democracy stands in a stream of work sometimes called "the new sociology of empire". Above all, this approach considers not only the sociology of empire, but also empire's implication in sociology's historical and contemporary practice. Referencing Steinmetz, Go, Göcek and Bhabra, I consider each of their inflections in my recasting of democracy's development within and across empires.

Steinmetz reconfigures units of analysis and struggles over democratic politics with the help of fielded analysis as a "distinctly historical social epistemology that is open to contingency, and radical discontinuity" with the discipline (2011, 45-46). Go offers tools to scale up from these fields to relational theoretical arguments that aim to sociologize the alternatives to start from the occluded perspectives and to aim for theory beyond the particular imperialism of the discipline. Specifically, in this dissertation it has meant drawing a connection between the intra- and inter-imperial.

If Go in this manner ‘dis-empires’ empirical research, then Göcek returns such considerations to an understanding of empires and imperialism that once again becomes comparable with the Western empires, whose analytical and historical gaze Go avoids, through the formulation of “alternate bases of imperial domination from that of the Western power binarism” (Göcek 2013, 90). Specifically, in this dissertation this has meant considering that democratization efforts in general, but in the Russian and German Empires in particular, were embedded within shared historical relations, much like the various nation-states in the world today. It equally means that the nation-state form and its related epistemology were not exogenous, separate developments that broke down these imperialities or emerge in these regions as something new that displaced earlier political organization. Rather, these empires and the forms of and considerations about democracy in them, were jointly and relationally transformed as the underlying conditions of intra- and inter-imperial relations transformed.

Finally, with a ‘delinked’ theorization grounded on fielded empirical analysis, Bhabra proposes to consider those implications for Western sociology and its imperialism. This means to move beyond a comparison of separate yet connected histories and create connected sociologies that rescue and reconstruct what is deemed historically imperial through the comparison. She proposes to take the sociological tools and analyses that we have acquired and theorized from the alternative history in order to put sociology itself on the dissecting table.

### *Towards Connected Sociologies*

This particular combination of empirical and connected histories, on the one hand, and sociological accounts of democracy and empire, on the other, allows us to appreciate not only different histories and sociologies of democracy, but critical questions that an increasingly global and transnational imagination of the world invites. In particular, might localized democracies become deeper and more inclusive when matters of international relations do not constrain democracy’s limits? And might alternative political economies become more vivid and imaginable if the magic of a free market and capitalist exchange be recognized for its imperial expressions of bifurcation and nation-state centrism? While these two emphases appear opposed, and in my dissertation differently grounded in particular empires, they were in fact part of the same inter-imperial order that made all

kinds of questions appear possible in democracy. It was only the particular form of empire, dependent on national sovereignties, that emerged after World War I that buried them. It could be time to resurrect them.

*The different sociologies in need of connection are themselves located in time and space, including the time and space of colonialism, empire, and (post)colonialism. They will frequently arise as discordant and challenging voices and may even be resisted on that basis ... If some scholars experience their cherished sociological approaches to be under attack by new forms of particularism and localism, it is no response to assert a hegemonic particularism, now represented as 'our tradition' ... engaging with different voices must move us beyond simple pluralism to make a difference to what was initially thought; not so that we come to think the same, but that we think differently from how we had previously thought (Bhambra 2014, 5)*

The empirical findings regarding democratization in the Grand Duchy of Finland and the German Kaiserreich illuminate the sociological point and importance of the theory of the new sociology of empires. Without a critical engagement between a traditional sociology of democratization on the one hand, and the methods and approaches suggested by my theoretical framework on the other, we could simply state that both of my cases and those of which they are a subset of are unimportant.

We could state that they are unimportant because different forms and understandings of democratization in non-sovereign and socialist metropolitan contexts were marginal anyway at the time, and became obsolete after World War I. These parallel historical narratives and pathways are in the end incidental to the mainstream story and definition of democratization because they were extinguished or absorbed by the nation-state and its democracy. However, to reach this conclusion is profoundly wrong on both empirical and theoretical levels.

These cases not only tell us a story of different types of democratization, but a story of the relations and contestations on which they were based, and that they enabled. More, these stories of relations and contestations have been occluded by the traditional nation-state centered story of democratization. And while we may accept sociology's focus on this dominant form of understanding democracy, we should not let a particular historical interpretation, i.e. the politics of democracy's

narrative, be it dominant or not, define our social epistemology. If sovereignty, for example, is today connected with nation-states, both empirically and in the sociological imagination, we should not assume that non-sovereign politics, statehood, or struggles for democratization could not exist or do not matter for social analysis. And this is more than an argument for recognizing a plurality of democratizations before World War I. It is about explaining, within an inclusive theoretical frame, both a plurality and subsequent hegemony of democracy's sovereign container.

This is a story of the political and fielded relations and connections that not only supported different types of democratization before World War I but also subsequently displaced and occluded those earlier democratizations. This relational and connected analysis is one premise of the new sociology of empires. It means "to acknowledge from the outset that addressing particular sets of connections leads to particular understandings which are put in question through choosing other sets of connections". A second premise is that these connections are not accidental or contingent but based on arguments and understandings "for why certain connections were initially chosen and why choosing others could lead to" different and sometimes "more adequate explanations". (Bhambra 2014, 5)

In this sense, the goal is not to explore alternative histories to provide more cannon fodder to sociological theory itself based on a specific alternative history. It is, rather, and as Gurinder K Bhambra argues, to ultimately explore connected sociologies. In acknowledging alternative histories "what is involved is a reformed understanding of the processes represented within dominant histories" and to the extent that dominant histories "reinforce particular sets of concepts as central to the understanding of modernity, this will also involve a displacement and reformulation of those concepts" (Bhambra 2014, 17). The revision of historical narratives that inform sociological concepts and conceptions of the world, especially in the sense of global and relational history, where we are simply not replacing one interpretation with another but opening and transforming the paradigms, frameworks, and causalities of historical processes, is by necessity the revision of sociology itself (Bhambra 2014). But, as Bhambra has argued elsewhere (Bhambra 2016), how this revision happens

is just as important as the theoretical point; it must also be a work of historical and political reconstruction.

In my theoretical framework I outlined four main strategies in the new sociology of empires today, which take sociology's own imperial historical baggage seriously, which means to revise it in an analytically self-conscious and methodological fashion. Such a sociology pays attention especially to how and why certain aspects of sociology should or should not come to be reproduced in this process. There are different and non-exclusive aspects of and answers to addressing 1) sociology's imperial baggage and its effects, 2) its relation to its co-constitutive particular historical narratives, and 3) alternative histories and occluded relations. Thus, occluded relations and histories need to be marked and articulated, but this sociology needs go further. It needs to explain why and how they have been and continue to be occluded. Therefore, we cannot simply apply sociology itself, and appropriate these narratives, because it was the particularities of sociology that initially excluded them. In Bhambra's words: "the past and its sociological forms of misrecognition, I argue, continue to constrain our ability to imagine different futures" (Bhambra 2014, 3). To illustrate this challenge to the imagination, let me recall an image most of those concerned for the realization of democracy will recall.

Remember the iconic image from Tiananmen Square from 1989, where a single man standing stops a tank from rolling forwards. Now bear with me for a moment to imagine that this represents our understanding of sovereign democracy in comparison to its other political forms like dictatorship and authoritarianism in the world today, squarely rooted in the dominant narrative of sociology.

Such a symbolism is not too farfetched, since in a dichotomous comparison with other equal nation-state units, sovereign democracy is perhaps the only form of systematically egalitarian rule. But what if we zoom out and consider democracy under various forms of sovereign and non-sovereign relations, and under capitalist states, under class and gender relations, and the combinations of many of these relations? How does the man opposing tank as the image of democracy suffice for recognizing democracy and the wider historical context of its others? It is the very context from which this particular dominant analytical perspective on democratization in fact emerged and on which as

the representation of a particular logic it still stands. The confrontation of the man and the tank symbolizes and highlights one particular relation, while occluding its emergence, positionality, and future.

Before revealing how the analogy of democracy as the image from Tiananmen contrast with a focus on the historical context of that relation, let us take another example that focuses more on the construction of the sociological lens that zoomed in and took that first picture of the man and the tank, i.e. sociology's relationship to imperial and power relations throughout history and their continued co-constituted development and existence. You could think of this relationship as a kind of mutually reinforcing double helix. Research has the tendency to select upon and to focus on what are perceived as its most crucial aspects both in terms of the object of analysis and the present-day political context within which that research takes place. Democratization research has rightfully done so. It is crucial, for example, to understand how we can make nation-states today democratically more accountable. In the past decade this has become an issue throughout the world, not only in emerging democracies. Thus, using this analytic framework of democracy within an independent nation-state makes sense, since all polities now function based on that assumption. So far so good, especially if we consider the case of 'emerging democracies'. These post-socialist, or before 1989/1991 socialist, societies have each undergone recognizable democratizing and de-democratizing trajectories. But such a recognition also relies on assumptions of specific type of sovereignty and rough equivalence across nation states. The same logic of political comparison, especially regarding democracy, was previously not equally universal and did not transcend the 'Iron Curtain'. Most would recognize the limits of that assumption of sovereignty under Soviet rule or the commensurability of Soviet and Western types of national self-determination. Here, we begin to see the challenge of thinking of sovereignty's norm. Furthermore, for a long time the Third World remained a contested and separate realm outside the consolidated socialist and free market nation-states that we could understand as two separate but coherent analytical realms. But before that things were even murkier, the concept of the Third World was originally a step towards easier and more comprehensible analysis, as it was based on an

understanding of nation-statehood, socialist or capitalist, as at least the trajectory and final goal of the former colonial world, as we learned regarding Lenin's politics in chapter four.

Before WWII and especially WWI the situation was analytically more complicated as many of these areas and places were not even considered to be on the trajectory towards independent nation-statehood. Indeed, in the social sciences there were fundamental debates about the comparability of nation-state units across the three Worlds and, as we have learned in chapter four, across metropole-colony relations. Today such complications are no longer considered fundamental or political, but rather methodological problems. Moreover, not just separate empirical worlds, but also separate social scientific worlds existed previously correlating with the First and the Second World. Soviet social science was a self-contained endeavor. Similarly, in the Third World attempts were made to establish social epistemologies independent of the first two: think of Julius Nyerere's project of non-alignment and the accompanying theorizing for example. Thinking back analytically and methodologically then, we can see that we have been able to zoom in on the nation-state and universalize and focus our analysis on where relations and power are concentrated for more analytical purchase and commensurability, perhaps. But this has also meant that our theory, our camera's zoom, has not been based on the construction of the separations. On the contrary, it has specialized in overcoming them. But we may ask, what happened to the colonial world, the Third World, and the Socialist world? Does that matter? If it does, how does it matter?

Scroll down to the appendix for pictures 1 and 2. Picture 2 illustrates this latter co-constitutive zooming in on what is crucial and the question of whether and how it matters, what existed before and how we saw it back then, how sociology's lens 'follows power' and has forgotten previous divisions. Picture 1 depicts the analogy regarding Tiananmen square and the questions raised by a wider context of democracy. In these analogies what is considered to be the context of sociological relations pertinent to democracy becomes an object of analysis and the historically and theoretically highlighted definition and conceptualization of democracy becomes a variable amongst other variables, while what used to be considered variables within that context and definition, become

descriptive characteristics and historical narratives. This way connected sociologies reconstruct and revise sociology itself.

### *Democratization and Empire*

Here, I return to each of the chapters and their analysis as suggested in table 5 in chapter one in order to build a proper synthesis and conclusion based on their particular historical, and connected, sociologies.

In each chapter Steinmetzian analysis, especially in terms of mobilizing Bourdieusian field theory to expand and pluralize previous units of analyses of historical relations, is used to reconstruct the fielded positions in the cases of Grand Duchy of Finland and its colonial state and the German Empire and its imperial state. This is done with special attention to the relations and mobilization of democratization in these fields.

The two chapters on Finland and the two chapters on Germany inform each other and come together analytically by bypassing existing analytical bifurcations within sociological analysis. Finland is thus not separated from its imperial field, while its position in the imperial state is understood and explored not only via its relation to the metropole, but rather through the construction of that relation in the inter-imperial imagination that was the source for sovereign power. On the other hand, the push for socialist democratization is not understood as internal to the German metropole or external as international socialist debates. In this manner I avoid bifurcating ‘national state and ‘empire’ – ‘internal’ and ‘external’, ‘inside’ and ‘outside’ – that were never really separated in practice” (Go 2014, 127).

But we cannot treat overarching problems such as methodological nationalism, by simply bypassing them analytically. Closing our eyes to the weight of the nation-state offers little more than a parallel alternative story. Alternative histories begin to matter when they become a part of the process of delinking key concepts and narratives from the co-constitutive domination of the double helix co-organized by the sociological field and its traditional historical narrative.

The two relational analyses of the German and Finnish cases then come together in a different connected history of democracy, the beginnings of a DNA of its own, based on the understandings of democratization by Finnish and German actors. This account reveals “how imperial power was negotiated across the center-periphery divide” and thereby formulates “alternate bases of imperial domination” from that of the Western “power binarism” (Gocek 2013, 90). It generates a more open and relational conceptualization of democracy not predicated on the Western European historical experience.

Finally, there is a payoff to this theoretical and historical reconstruction. By developing an autonomous and relational historical understanding of democracy under empire in Finland and Germany, we can contrast this more empirically adequate accounting of democracy’s development alongside the traditional sociology of democracy, not only to add new cases. We can consider what relations are critical for our historiographies, and how they might be occluded in the sociology of democratization; we then can demonstrate which historical transformations led to the approach to democracy that leads to mis-recognition not only in the Finnish and German cases, but also, perhaps, for other cases too. This is when alternative histories can become connected sociology.

## *Chapter Two*

This chapter outlined the inter-imperial imagination and understandings of the Grand Duchy of Finland discussed across the empires. The different arguments reflected the specific intra-imperial logics and politics. The Western idea of civilizational self-determination was one of them. Democracy before WWI was conceived of separately in both intra-imperial non-sovereign and inter-imperial sovereign terms and in no case was it strictly connected to a particular configuration of sovereignty.

But after WWI the narratives of non-sovereign development, autonomy and political rights became occluded by the narrative of nation-state independence, both in terms of sovereignty, and non-sovereignty in the form of a Western civilizational logic and its manifestation in global politics as the mandate system supposedly leading to independence. Before WWI colonial statehood in intra-imperial relations was conditioned and defined by inter-imperial definitions. The post-1917-1919

world was a transformation of these relations. Independence under imperial relations was no longer a possibility and the meaningfulness of inter-imperial debates and considerations in the conflict between sovereign and non-sovereign politics decreased.

### *Chapter Three*

In chapter three I explored how the inter-imperial dimension mobilized and conditioned the peripheral non-sovereign state field. Inter-imperial arguments and perspectives were adopted by Finnish actors in their effort to negotiate their non-sovereign position. They were the lens through which the intra-imperial dimension was understood and politicized. In this configuration full democratization was adopted by all actors as a means to consolidate their state field vis-à-vis the imperial state. The Finnish actors in the colonial state field did not directly confront each other, but rather argued amongst each other as the familial stakeholders in the union of the Finnish maiden and the Russian Empire, as the nosy and noisy relatives on the maiden's side.

The idea of subordinated autonomy gained the position of symbolic capital of the field, presented most clearly in that image of the Finnish Maiden, either troubled or championed by familial Finnish actors and political struggles or by the foreign gathering of imperial actors of whom Russia was a part. This symbol represented the suspension of the field between the inter-imperial and intra-imperial dimensions, as the founding *illud* of the field.

The inter-imperial idea of democracy's connection with sovereignty and civilizational rule, and the socialist concept of bourgeois democracy as a phase in the overthrowing of imperial capitalism, were translated into the intra-imperial context as the strengthening of independence of the colonial field vis-à-vis empire, nestled within the empire and as such promoting a logic opposite to independence as secession. In this relation incremental democratization made little sense. It would have meant the diminishing of the voice of Finnish actors regarding the intra-imperial relation. A wholesome and concerted group of familial defenders of the Finnish maiden was able to assert its opinion and fielded goals much more effectively than a divided group, even if the arguments they used differed from each other. In this sense, class struggle for example was not a particular disposition

within the Finnish state field. It could not directly challenge the non-sovereign state. What of it, if the Finnish socialist triumphed over the Finnish bourgeoisie so long as the doxa of imperial sovereignty remained in place. But class struggle, understood and mobilized as an inter-imperial concept could be used to improve the socialists' position vis-à-vis the bourgeoisie as the better defenders of autonomy. As discussed, once the doxa of imperial sovereignty broke down, domestic class struggle became a reality as a disposition in its own right. This too happened before nation-state independence, and as such we can see that it was not connected to the conquering of a state, to a matter of isolation, to a matter of political development within a delineated unit. It was, rather, connected to the disappearance of the relationality between the inter-imperial and the intra-imperial. It was not connected to understanding the national struggle as the class struggle, as Lenin had argued, and the Soviets later established.

### *Chapters Two and Three*

Drawing from George Steinmetz' work on colonial states, chapters two and three together outlined the Bourdieusian field of the grand ducal Finnish periphery. Per Julian Go's theoretical relationalism this field's constitution is not analyzed against the imperial state or later independent sovereign statehood, but the making of its autonomy and fielded nature was approached through the relation of its historical context as part of the Russian Empire on the one hand, and therefore, not separated from the empire, as part of the inter-imperial relations of that empire.

A variety of conflicting and intersecting imperial sovereignties was the constituting externality of the Finnish colonial state field in contrast to an atomized universal imaginary of nation-states, where the differences in configurations become meaningless. This constitutive external was complemented by the idea of non-sovereign statehood and autonomy as the founding *illusio* of the Finnish statefield. On the way to independence, this *illusio* broke down before being replaced by nation-state independence. Nation-state independence was one many possible configurations for the re-organization of sovereign and non-sovereign relations. In the tradition of Western sovereign metropolitan democracy, it did not matter that the Finnish state eventually adopted a republican democratic stateform that was quite similar to the authoritarian monarchical constitution that had been

written for the German King. The relationship between democracy and sovereignty in this particular logic is rigid in the sense that democracy simply works as outwardly proof of a civilizational right to sovereignty. Whereas, previously it was specifically democracy's qualitative and comparable depth that had been the key in grand ducal politics, however.

From this perspective democratization has two almost oppositional faces. On the one hand it can serve to legitimize sovereign rule and bind the non-sovereign elements under it to it. In this way the British could make colonialisms a project by the grace of the British nation. This type of vertical democracy connects the inter-imperial to the intra-imperial in a rigid relation that can then seek less rigid horizontal connections in the intra-imperial or inter-imperial levels without having to democratize such connections. The opposite is democratization as means to connect, govern or resist horizontal connections, such as those between the Finnish people and the Russian people, or the Finnish state and the Imperial state. In this latter case the vertical connection between the sovereign and the non-sovereign does not originate or draw its legitimization from democracy itself and therefore can remain a question of democratic debate and politics.

#### *Chapter Four*

This chapter reconstructed the Social Democratic debates concerning colonialism, nation and democracy. It argued that they shared the same goal within the imperial political field, just as the Social Democrats themselves historically did, even if their arguments for reaching that goal differed. In doing so the key question for the Social Democrats were the connections between inter- and the intra-imperial relations, i.e. the role of colonialism, nation, and the imperial states within a capitalist system, and the ways in which democratization could transform them in a manner that would improve the socialists' position within the German Empire and use the imperial state, in other words advance along the grain of its encompassing power relations. Only once this key axis of debate was removed, or made into a non-debatable issue, as I showed Lenin to have done, did the unity in the Social Democrat's position disappear.

Unlike in the case of the colonial state field, the German Social Democrats operated within a sovereign imperial field of politics that encompassed a variety of relations. They had come to that field as challengers and were seeking the best means to improve their position without undermining the whole field. Even if revolution was their ultimate goal, this too could only be articulated – if it was to be politically meaningful – within the limits of the field’s doxa. In this situation democracy and calls for democratization were premised not on consolidating the field or its autonomy, but on undermining the dominant, while the same was the goal of the dominant. There were no specifically pro- or anti-democratic stances, but a contest over defining democracy’s meaning and effect. This battle was fought via debates over the configuration of the empire vis-à-vis its intra-imperial configuration in the inter-imperial world.

### *Chapter Five*

Chapter five delved deeper into the contests and then their transformation in the German Empire. This chapter takes a retrospective clue from historical research and Bourdieu’s theory concerning the transformation of nations and nationalism from a particular dimension of imperial state politics into national metacapital actively appropriating states. The chapter focuses thus on the changing relation between empire and nation. Much like the case of the Country of the White Lilies in chapter two, it charts a continuous path for nationalism through the discontinuity between the pre-1917-1919 and the post-WWI worlds. During this path nationalism itself did not change particularly but its role in the configuration of field relations changed dramatically.

### *Chapter Four and Five*

In the wider imperial framework of the German Empire, considering socialist debates about democratization and the configuration of imperial power, democratization served as an argument to highlight specific forms and nodes of power, depending on the disposition of actors. It also served to highlight, contest, and possibly transform relations of power, politics, and especially sovereignty.

Nationalism in the imperial state ranged from Luxemburg’s horizontal alliance of one for all, and all against imperial oppression to Lamprecht’s layered ideas of expanding the empires capacity to

govern in multiple forms over varying nations. Just like democracy and democratization it was stretchable and debatable to the extent that the set of defining imperial politics were equally flexible. The empire's sovereignty was the result of an amalgamation of states and political relations.

Nationalism did not emerge against imperial sovereignty, on the contrary it developed along its veins, along the various possibilities that empire opened for national formation. It derived its capacity as an *idées-force* from mediating the inter- and intra-imperial encounter and emerged, as in the Finnish case, as a means to debate various possible configurations. In Western empires nationalism took a specific role in colonial relations. And once the colonial realm became inter-imperially organized by the intra-imperial logic of Western nationalism, it moved from a mediator to the position of an inter-imperial externality. Western nationalism was forcefully misrecognized as an inter-imperial measure of sovereignty, which on the other hand provided a strong claim for the Soviets by denying its legitimacy and projecting it as the main tenet of capitalist oppression. These became constitutive others along which separate fields and *idées-forces* could align themselves, something which intra-imperial relations needed to engage, or in Göcek's terms of Ottoman imperality, encounter and navigate. Reflective of this wider reconfiguration is the shift of colonial nationalists in the pre-1917-1919 context into supporters of the mandates system.

### *Chapters Two to Five*

My account of democratization in the German and Russian empires was primarily a means to shift our perspective and the lens through which we understand legitimacy and power. It could be the means to zoom out from the confrontation of good democracy and bad absolutism, to see the wider picture and the tanks behind the one lonely civilian of democracy, that was seen as oppositional to it. Equally, it could be a means to zoom in, and only focus on a very particular confrontation. As such, it enabled a variety of politics to 'see and recognize' each other in reference to sovereignty that was understood and defined by default as non-democratic. Sovereignty's relation to empire, state, and nation could be democratized, but not sovereignty itself. Self-determination was that in relation to something, not within something.

In the particular context of Russian and German imperial relations, democracy then did not take the role of legitimizing sovereignty. Its focus was much more dominantly on the horizontal relations in both the intra- and the intra-imperial realms. It was a means of debating the vertical relations that outside of democratic politics brought a multiplicity of states, nations and politics together. Democracy could not be defined on its own, its core tenet was that it itself could be contested, just as the Finns contested their democracy in the continuum of intra- to inter-imperial imagination. In simple sense, it did not channel opinions or connect political groups, but enabled opinions and connections.

Luxemburg pointed out that the dynamic of democratization is and must by default be connected to its particular place in the wider context of imperial states; “purely democratic “ingredients” of society, such as universal suffrage [on their own] ... may be suppressed” without transforming political relations, while remaining seemingly in place, bourgeois democracy may “logically move in a descending line” (1900, *Reform or Revolution* [Marxist.org]). Democracy was not the manifestation or expression of a nation’s or any other political unit’s will but the enabler of connections, equally possible transforming them to greater or lesser equality. This aspect of historical and political relationalism has disappeared from the mainstream analysis. On the very contrary, any such shifting relations are explained out, smoothened in order to get at the “core” of democracy. But in my pre-1917-1919 context they *were* the core of democracy. This does not mean a fluid, relativistic understanding of definitions. On the contrary, in both the Finnish and German cases, democracy’s definition was based on an analysis of existing structures, their relations, and imagined transformations. This in fact needed to be articulated for democracy to make sense. The logic between peoplehood and imperial rule in the Grand Duchy of Finland was one such articulation. Whereas, traditional sociology of democratization has lost its ability for this type of analytical definitions in the face of, first, a structuralist understanding of democracy on the international level that privileges commensuration over relational differences, intransigently bound to nation-state sovereignty. And, second, due to a superficial, relativistic listing of democracy’s forms on the national level, true to, for

example, the Western powers' original approval of Finnish sovereign democratization by way of replacing the title of king with that of a president, as discussed in chapter three.

Wilson and Lenin's formulations of national self-determination resonated with each other and helped push through a transformation of what Bourdieu termed national metacapital, and with that a transformation of sovereignty and statehood, within which democracy and socialism became the expression of sovereignty, not its interpreters.

### *Empire, Democracy, State, and Nation, and The Sociology of Democratization*

The main empirical aspects of the Western model of democracy and democratization highlighted by the German and Russian Empires then are the occlusion of non-incrementalistic democratization, normalization of hierarchical democratization along existing lines of domination, and misrecognition of western intra-imperial as global.

In this dissertation I have not strived to show that the sociological tradition of democracy research is wrong, or that it should be wholly revised, but that it is based on specific historical narratives, empirics and definitions of what type of democratization counts. In doing so, I have in fact shown that its assumptions do hold and are at the core of the current configuration of sovereign relations and nationalism's power on one hand, and democracy's inability to address it on the other.

What this maybe reveals, also, is that incremental democratization looks very different and does different things when the wider background is in focus. It reveals the non-universality of assumption and definitions of democratization derived from a particular imperial narrative. Key characteristics of these imperial lenses shaping mainstream sociology of democratization then are the following:

- 1) Binding together of nation, state, democracy, sovereignty through an intransigent social epistemology defined by nation-state sovereignty and its flipside of occlusion of non-sovereign democratization as well as horizontal political relations and economic relations between independent/autonomous sovereign or non-sovereign polities.

- 2) Separation of metropole from colony and periphery.
- 3) Separation of metropole from its imperial state.
- 4) Critical perspectives and self-reflection based on an immanent analysis of the hegemonic narrative, i.e. the intra-imperial relations of Atlantic empires; Atlantic-centrism and the misrecognition of Western intra-imperial relations as international
- 5) Democratization moving along the veins of imperial power; incremental diffusion of democracy reifying existing hierarchies, moving from men to women, rich to poor, metropolises to colonies.
- 6) Democracy's historical and political relationalism has been occluded...
- 7) ...if not reversed, by the rigid structuralism of democracy's analysis on the international level, yet vague relativistic definitions on the national level.
- 8) Democracy theorized as inflecting the relation between the dominated and the dominant within a political unit that defines democratic relations' borders; occludes democracy as a transformational political instrument of the dominant against the dominated, and in this role (doubly) occluding definitions of domination advanced the dominated or the subaltern.
- 9) Theorization of democratization as the manifestation of sovereignty; dismissing the democratization of international and global economic and political relations separate of sovereignty's sources.

All together democracy has been developed with a sociology that is in step with the development of Western metropolises into nation-states. Sociology's approach has become an instrument of controlling the historical narratives and analytical lenses of domination, sovereignty, and emancipation, as well as confirming and reproducing a specific imperial logic while occluding others. I hope to have shown another way of connecting histories and sociologies, and rethinking the logics of democratization itself.

## *Coda*

Through a comparison of what appears to be negative cases, built on a theoretical framework of historical sociology regarding sociology's imperial lenses, I have analyzed the transformation of imperial states into nation-states with democratization as my proxy, especially the occlusions of the sociology of democratization. By focusing on the blurred and out of focus background of the picture that sociology has captured of democracy's history, we can also better understand the context in which that, which sociology has focused on, has taken place.

The point is not to criticize incremental democratization for example, and then offer an alternative or wider definition, because the history of incremental democratization is equally true. Rather, with another focus we see it too in a different light, specifically as something that is exclusive in its emancipatory capacity and can oppose other forms of democratization. The prevailing sociological concept of democratization is not all-inclusive and all-encompassing and we should not use it as such. Specifically, we should avoid complementing and adding other forms of democratization by necessity under its umbrella or define them as-non democratic if they do not seem to fit there.

What does revealing the out-of-focus do? Does it say more about what was in focus, or does it simply reveal something has been overlooked because it has been fuzzy? Or does it reveal a new whole, a set of connections that could not have been made before with the previous focus? That depends. The new sociology of empires considers these as questions that are equally analytical and historical as others, and not just the stuff of concluding remarks as the closing statements of analysis. Therefore, we need a framework that is sensitive to self-reflexivity and sociology's own imperial baggage, or otherwise those questions can never be moved into the analytical sections of research papers. What will be revealed is not and cannot be determined beforehand by that what is in focus at the moment. The fate of alternative histories cannot be analyzed, not to mention judged, from the perspective of the very machine that initially discarded or disregarded them

*Accounting for the contemporary configuration of the world, and addressing the inequalities that we find there, requires taking seriously the understandings of historical processes upon which disciplines are based. (Bhambra 2014, 146)*

## Appendix



Picture 1.(Source: <https://scrapsfromtheloft.com/2017/06/11/democracy-slaughtered-tiananmen-square-byjon-swain/>)



Picture 2. (Source: [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Censorship\\_of\\_images\\_in\\_the\\_Soviet\\_Union](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Censorship_of_images_in_the_Soviet_Union))

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