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# Re-mapping Journalism History:

Development of the Press in the Swedish Empire and Its Former Colonies Finland, Estonia, and Livonia until the Early 20th Century

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## Abstract

With history writing in general, press history is often linked to the framework of the nation state. Such nationalist approaches may, however, lead to a fragmented view of history. We should remember that many current European nation states have fairly short histories, and, even old kingdoms, such as Sweden, have changed shape several times. During the 17th and 18th century, the Swedish Empire included Finland, Estonia, Livonia, Ingria, Pomerania, Wismar and Bremen/Verden, and the previously Danish areas in the south and northwest. Later, Sweden even had small colonies in Africa and the Caribbean. The empire, however, began to disintegrate during the Great Nordic War. During the 18th century Finland, Estonia and Livonia belonged to the Russian Empire. My purpose is to provide an overview of the development of the press in the Swedish Empire and the 19th century Finland, Estonia and Livonia, and discuss limitations of national perspectives.

As with history writing in general, press history is often linked to the framework of the nation state. Klinge (1990, p. 113) warns against retroactive history writing using the emergence of the nation state to explain entire historical development. We should remember that many European nation states have short histories, and even old kingdoms, such as Sweden, have changed shape several times. Europe has seen many multiethnic empires, such as Polish-Lithuanian Commonwealth, Russia and Austria - itself formerly a part of the Holy Roman Empire. Burbank and Hagen (2007, p. 1) point out that revulsion against empires and imperial power is a fairly recent phenomenon. Nationalism first appeared in the 19th century. For example, until the 1860s, Estonians were known as “country folks” (*maarahwa*), not Estonians (Höyer, Lauk, & Vihalemm, 1993, p. 74).

Sweden emerged as one of the great European powers during the 16th and 17th century. Conquest of Finland began in the early 13th century, and Estonia became Swedish in 1561. Ingria, Vyborg province, Livonia, the previously Danish areas in the south and northwest, and German Pomerania, Wismar, and Bremen/Verden were annexed during the Thirty Years War. Later, Sweden even had small colonies in Africa and the Caribbean. Historians have debated whether to call this country Sweden, Sweden-Finland, or the Swedish Empire. This seemingly trivial matter

highlights problems of writing national history. What should be included? When and where does national history begin? To avoid confusion, I will use the term “Swedish Empire” for the entire kingdom, and “Sweden” for the territory of present day Sweden.

The Swedish empire began to disintegrate during the Great Nordic War (1700-1721), when Bremen/Verden and the Baltic provinces were lost. Wismar was lost in 1803, Finland in 1809, and Pomerania in 1815. In 1814, Sweden formed a union with Norway, against the wishes of Norwegians, which lasted until 1905. (Melin, Johansson, & Hedenborg, 2006, Engman, 2009) Finland, Estonia, and Livonia were part of the Russian Empire until the end of World War I. Were they in a colonial situation? Balandier (2010, p. 36) lists five conditions: domination by a foreign minority, difference, industrialized society, antagonistic relationship, and system of justification.

The Baltic Germans were an ethnically and culturally different foreign minority that imposed its domination on native majority populations. So did the Swedes in Finland. Finns and Estonians, (and Latvians and Livs), outnumbered the invading foreigners, but were inferior from a material point of view. Balandier’s third condition does not apply, since here the conquest of the borderlands began hundreds of years before

modern industrialization.

The second, fourth and fifth conditions address the relationship between the dominating and dominated ethnicities and how that domination is maintained and justified. In the Baltic provinces, the native population clearly had a subservient role. The Baltic Barons claimed that the security they provided was only positive, and that serfdom, abolished in the 1810s, was for the peasants' own good. Such paternalistic arguments, founded more on demagoguery than reality, were widely used. The gap between the Germans and the Estonians was sanctioned by tradition and law, and was accepted as the normal way of the world until the 19th century. (Seppel, 2006; Zetterberg, 2007) Sweden's attempt to introduce Swedish legal and administrative systems threatened the Germans' privileges. The relationship between Finns and Swedes was a more complicated matter. Elenius (1999) says that, although Sweden and Finland were equal on the institutional level, Finns suffered discrimination, since social advancement meant Swedification. Yet, until the end of the 19th century, there was no sharp conflict between these two ethnicities.

My purpose is to provide an overview of the development of the press in the Swedish Empire and 19th century Finland, Estonia, and Livonia, and discuss limitations of national perspectives. My focus is on the period from the late 17th to the early 20th century. Actually, the story should end in the 1810s, with Sweden's loss of Finland and the remaining German areas. However, the shift to Russian rule did not totally end the Swedish influence in Finland. Besides, the majority language press and the national movements in Finland and the Baltic emerged during the 19th century. There were only a few non-elite minority language publications. Nationalism in Sweden, on the other hand, had a different meaning. Norway and Russia are excluded, since post-1809 Sweden, despite the union with Norway, turned into a more Swedish Sweden. Finland and the Baltic provinces may have been part of the Russian Empire, but journalistic influences came from elsewhere. The empire, however, provided the institutional framework within which the press operated.

A further complication is the administrative

division of Estonia. During the second half of the 16th century, the Old Livonia, *die Ordensstaat*, or Monastic state, was split into three areas: Estonia, Livonia, and Courland. This division lasted until 1917 (Taube, Thomson, & Garleff, 2001, p. 54). Thus, Livonia contained both Estonian and Latvian speaking areas. What, in this case, constitutes Estonian press history?

There are many works that study specific periodicals, publishers, journalists, or periods of time. Since my purpose is to discuss the difficulties arising within national perspectives, the focus is on works, seeking to provide an overall picture. National perspectives are demonstrated in the decision of where to begin the story. Swedish press histories begin with the first newspaper published in Stockholm, Finns start with the first one published on Finnish soil, and Estonians begin with the first Estonian language paper. None of the studied works covers the whole Swedish empire. Another tendency is to exclude women and minorities, or study them separately, which makes journalism an unnecessarily male and monoethnic

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affair.

I have primarily used *Suomen lehdistön historia* (1988) and *Tidningar för alla* (2000), which provide an overall picture of Finnish journalism. Mervola's (1995) study of the outward appearance of Finnish newspapers, and Pietilä's (2008) analysis of the journalistic genres are also longitudinal studies, but focus on specific journalistic aspects. All of them use 1771 as a starting point. The extent to which the earlier Swedish press is presented varies. Nieminen (2006) writes about the development of the national public sphere, but since press is only one of the aspects, and his story begins in 1809, it is not included.

As for Baltic press history, *Towards a Civic Society* (1993) compares the development of the press in Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania until the early 1990s. This approach makes the parallel development of Estonian and Latvian language press clearer. It also covers the Baltic German press. Since parts of the Latvian speaking area

never belonged to Sweden, I have excluded the Latvian press. Peegel (1966), Peegel *et al* (1994), and Annus (1993) present the Baltic German newspapers, as well. The tendency, otherwise, is to begin in 1766 and focus on the 19th century. Kurvits (2010), partly inspired by Mervola, has an interesting study of the outward look of the Estonian press. Her empirical material, however, consists of Estonian language papers starting from 1806 and it is therefore not included here.

Early press history is not well researched in Sweden, either. I have mainly used *A History of the Press in Sweden* (2010), *Den svenska pressens historia* (2000), and Leth (1998), which offers a periodization of the Swedish press. Only Önnarfors (2003, 2004) seems to have written about Pomeranian newspapers. His main focus, however, is Pomeranian people and their cultural identification.

## The 17<sup>th</sup> Century Press

The first newspapers in the Swedish Empire emerged during the 17th century, with the first attempts in the 1620s. Influences, technology, expertise, and news stories came mainly from German cities, particularly Hamburg. The foundation of *Ordinari Post Tijdender*, (or *Posttidningen*), in Stockholm 1645 is linked to Sweden's territorial expansion during the Thirty Years War. The war, better and more reliable postal service, larger cities, and improved national bureaucracy created the conditions necessary for its establishment. Reforms in the education system, new schools, and universities also played important roles. Universities were founded in Dorpat/Tartu in 1632 (in German), Åbo/Turku in 1640, and Lund in 1666. *Posttidningen's* content was carefully monitored, although censorship wasn't officially introduced until the 1660s, and codified twenty years later. (Gustafsson & Rydén, 2010; Leth 1998, *Den svenska pressens historia I*, 2000) The codification of the Swedish autocracy also increased state control over print media.

Periodicals were founded in other cities, as well. In Estonian press histories, the Swedish Empire mainly provides the larger societal context. For example, the importance of the postal service and the improved economic and cultural life are mentioned. Since the ruling elite consisted of Baltic Germans, there were more ties to the German cultural world than to Sweden. In Riga, newspapers from Königsberg satisfied the need for news until the 1680s, when distribution was

prohibited. Letters were opened to make sure no copies slipped through the border. The loss of the newspaper led the municipality to start its own papers. *Rigische Montags Ordinari Post-Zeitung* was founded in 1680, and *Rigische Novellen* in 1681. It is unclear whether they were two different publications, or the same under different names. Reval/Tallinn also had two newspapers, *Ordinari Donnerstags Post-Zeitung*, founded in 1675, and *Revalsche Post-Zeitung*, founded in 1689. German papers appeared also in Pernau/Pärnu and Narva around 1700. (Höyer, Lauk, & Vihalemm, 1993, pp. 50-52; Annus, 1993, p. 17; Peegel et al 1994, pp. 268-270) Two newspapers were published in Stralsund, Pomerania during the 1680s and 1690s (Önnarfors, 2004, p. 31).

These German language papers do not seem to be fully integrated parts of any history. Neither Leth (1998), Gustafsson & Rydén (2010), nor the studied Finnish works mention them. Although *Den svenska pressens historia I* (2000, p. 57) describes the papers in Riga and Reval/Tallinn briefly, it pays more attention to *Åbo Tidningar*, founded in 1771 in Finland. Nor does it explain why the Baltic papers were published in German. Estonians appear to have somewhat ambivalent feelings about the Baltic German press, which is interesting when compared to the way Finns handle their Swedish language papers. They are seen more as *Finnish* papers written in Swedish, than as Swedish papers, which might also be problematic.

In Estonian and Finnish press histories, this early period is seen as a preface to the main chapter, the emergence of national press markets. Klinge (1990, p. 117) thinks the empire's main axis was west-east, reaching from Gothenburg to Stockholm, Åbo/Turku, Vyborg, and Reval/Tallinn, whereas Elenius (1999) speaks only of the Stockholm-Åbo/Turku axis. Although the axis first turned in the north-south direction after the loss of Finland in 1809, Swedish press histories apply it even in the imperial era.

The national perspectives both highlight and obscure the link between ethnicity, social class, readership, and development of the press. Aru (2002, p. 90), for example, states that the Baltic German papers entirely ignored the Estonian-speaking population, which wasn't part of the world reflected on newspaper pages. This is true, of course, but, things look slightly different from an imperial point of view. Swedish readers came from the top five percent of the population (*Den svenska pressens historia I*, 2000, p. 83). Finland

can be included, since its higher social orders were either Swedish or Swedified. Thus, neither Swedish nor Finnish peasants belonged to the target audience, or as Nieminen (2006) puts it: “people stood farther away”. In the Finnish and Baltic context, however, this exclusivity is more palpable, since the social stratification followed the ethnic/linguistic division. In Sweden, the papers may have been intended for the elite, but they were written in the majority language.

Further, by dealing with the various German-speaking areas separately, these people, their cultural world, identity and publications appear in a vacuum. Also, if we assume that the Swedish Empire rotated around the west-east axis, the lack of newspaper publishing in Åbo/Turku is interesting. *Suomen lehdistön historia I* (1988) explains it by saying that, until the 1750s, access to Swedish and (occasional) German papers satisfied the need for news. However, this closeness to Stockholm becomes much clearer if put in an imperial context.

### **Baltic New Beginning and Diversifying Swedish Press**

The Great Nordic War affected various areas differently. Sweden suffered less direct damage, whereas Finland was occupied by Russian troops for eight years. Despite difficult times, newspaper publishing in Stockholm continued, although *Posttidningen* became smaller, thinner, and more infrequent (*Den svenska pressens historia I*, 2000, pp. 61-62). Estonia's and Livonia's Swedish history came to an end. All German newspapers disappeared, and during 1710-1761, almanacs were the only available periodicals. (Höyer, Lauk, & Vihalemm, 1993, p. 52) The Russian Empire, just as the Swedish Empire before it, mainly provided the institutional frame. Estonian language journalism was modeled on Baltic German, not Russian, papers. Zetterberg (2007) says the Baltic Barons welcomed the Russian takeover, since Tsar Peter I returned their old privileges and system of self-government. Raun (2001) places the zenith and eclipse of serfdom in the period of 1710-1860.

In Sweden, the 18th century turned out to be rather positive. The death of Charles XII and the lost war ended autocratic rule, and the Age of Liberty began. A weaker royal house and stronger parliament, with two rival parties (Hats and Caps), made more open debate possible, although freedom of speech was still limited.

The first Freedom of the Press Act, drafted by Finnish chaplain Chydenius, was issued in 1766. Pre-publishing censorship was abolished, post-publishing control was restricted, and the general public was granted access to government documents. However, the freer political climate was short lived. Gustav III's coup d'état in 1772 brought a return to autocracy, more restricted press policy, and harsher censorship. The number of periodicals diminished, public debates became more careful, and the press developed more slowly. (Gustafsson & Rydén, 2010; Leth, 1998; *Den svenska pressens historia I*, 2000) With the king's murder, control relaxed somewhat, but the regime remained restrictive until the turn of the century.

Swedish press histories write at length about the flourishing and diversifying press market. New moral, cultural, and educational papers were founded. *Then Svenska Argus*, the first moral paper, was founded in 1732, whereas the first one in Åbo/Turku was founded fifty years later. Journalistic influences came mainly from the British press. Political journalism emerged as Hats and Caps started their own party newspapers. *Posttidningen's* news monopoly was broken with the foundation of the first daily, *Dagligt Allehanda*, in 1767. *Stockholms Posten* was known for its enlightened and cultural spirit. The founders were Lenngren, and the author Kellgren. Contributors also included Lenngren's wife, Anna Maria, another well-known author. Lundgren & Ney (2000) and Berger (1977) write about printers' widows, particularly Margareta Momma, who, together with her husband, edited two Stockholm papers. In 1738, she founded the first magazine written from a female point of view. Women were involved in moral journalism and attempted to start such magazines. Printers' widows in Finland do not seem to have founded any periodicals.

Swedish regional press emerged in the 1750s, as local printers in administrative city centers saw new business opportunities in newspaper publishing. In the 1770s, newspapers were founded in the university cities of Lund, Uppsala, and Åbo/Turku. Although *Den svenska pressens historia I* (2000, pp. 178-180) describes *Åbo Tidningar* and the short-lived Finnish paper *Suomenkieliset Tieto-Sanommat*, they do not quite belong to Swedish press history. Neither Leth (1998) nor Gustafsson & Rydén (2010) mention them.

Finnish press histories must pay more attention to Sweden and its newspaper tradition, since Finland

was a fully integrated part of the state, and, on the institutional level, equal with Sweden. Thus, Finland's status, relevant state policies, social stratification, and the use of Finnish language have to be clarified. However, by beginning the story in 1771, the multifaceted development of the Swedish press is turned into a minor contextual detail. If we see *Åbo Tidningar* primarily as a *Finnish* paper written in Swedish – and not as a Swedish newspaper – we need to ask, what does it mean? Did it differ, for example, from the newspapers published in Lund, or Uppsala?

Newspaper publishing in Estonia and Livonia began again in the 1760s and 1780s, when Riga, Reval/Tallinn, and Dorpat/Tartu acquired new German language papers. By the end of the century, the Baltic German press progressed to political journalism. Papers covered the French revolution, for example. The first Estonian language periodicals were *Lühhike Öppetus*, founded in 1766 by Peter Ernst Wilde, and *Tarto maa rahwa Näddali-Leht*, founded in 1806. Wilde's aim was to educate and enlighten the peasant population. His magazine was also published in a Latvian translation, but both versions were short-lived. The educated classes were still German speaking, and Wilde needed to translate his own texts. *Näddali-Leht* contained mainly translated articles from *Dörptsche Zeitung*. (Höyer, Lauk, & Vihalemm 1993, pp. 54-56; Aru, 2002, pp. 90-91; Peegel *et al*, 1994, pp. 271-272; Peegel, 1966)

Estonian scholars link this new beginning to the influence of rationalism and enlightenment, and the gradual disintegration of the conservative, self-centered Baltic German public life. Peasant mass organizations and pietist Herrnhutism, with its emphasis on literacy and self-awareness, also played an important role. They offered forums for oppressed persons to express themselves more freely, and learn the basic elements of democracy. Peegel *et al* (1994, p. 270) also speaks of the importance of German book imports, Baltic students in German universities, and the influence of incoming German school teachers. The emergence of a majority language press and the continued administrative division, however, means that Latvian and Estonian press histories now begin to overlap in Livonia.

The national focus obscures possible cultural and personal ties across the Baltic Sea. Connections between Germany and the Baltic have been mentioned. There were also personal ties between

Finland and Sweden. For example, Catharina Swedenmarck, who published poems in *Åbo Tidningar*, came from Stockholm. Her literary ambitions, however, were thwarted by Kellgren, one of the founders of *Stockholms-Posten*. During the 1770s, he studied at the university in Åbo/Turku and wrote for *Åbo Tidningar*. Catharina Ahlgren, who, during the 1770s and 1780s published women's magazines in Sweden, may have also written for *Åbo Tidningar*. However, there doesn't seem to be any definite proof. (Lundgren & Ney 2000, pp. 15-23; Zilliacus-Tikkanen, 2005, p. 20; Berger, 1977 and 1984). Personal contacts did not end when Finland became part of Russian Empire. Katajisto (2008), who has studied the elite's identity shift after 1809, shows that many aristocratic families had close ties to Sweden.

## National Press Markets and National Awakening

The 19th century was a time of emerging national movements, increased urbanization and industrialization, expanding school systems, new economic and social relations, as well as the evolution of the public sphere and modernization. New technical innovations were adopted. Telegraph services expanded as cables were installed around the world. News agencies were founded both globally and locally. More publishers could afford steam-powered printing presses and typesetting machines. (Höyer, Lauk, & Vihalemm, 1993; Lauk 1996, pp. 11-13; Tommila & Salokangas, 2000, pp. 73-76; Rantanen & Boyd-Barrett, 2004, pp. 39-41) As national press markets began to develop, the national perspective of history writing seems less problematic. The focus on the nation states, however, makes it difficult to follow the varied pace of development.

The role of the institutional framework of the state in the development of the press becomes particularly visible when comparing Sweden with its former colonies. Although Sweden suffered serious losses, it stayed independent. Estonia and Livonia remained traditional, hierarchical agrarian societies with German elites. While serfdom in Estonia and Livonia was abolished, the peasants' life did not improve significantly until the passport laws were changed in the 1860s (Raun, 2001, pp. 37-38). Tsar Alexander I allowed Finland to keep its existing Swedish constitution, and gave it fairly broad self-government, which was an important factor in the development

of the national identity, society, and the press. Thus, the Swedish influence in Finland did not end abruptly. The shift to Russian rule, however, put Finland in a similar situation to that of the Baltic areas. The Russian Empire was the colonial master. The local elite spoke one language, and the masses spoke another.

Russian censorship practices hampered the development of the Finnish and Baltic press, although the practices varied. During the reign of Alexander I, the relationship between the press and the state was fairly good. As an enlightened autocrat, he aimed to use the press

and the censorship as means of advancing knowledge. Nicolas I, on the other hand, feared political and social revolution. His reign was characterized by tight censorship, surveillance and repression, frightening the educated classes, and discouraging enlightenment. Alexander II issued a new press law in 1865. Although

relief from preliminary censorship lasted only a couple of years, the burden of censorship was still eased. (Höyer, Lauk, & Vihalemm, 1993, p. 66; Ruud, 1982, pp. 25-31; Balmuth, 1960; Choldin 1985)

Russification began in earnest in 1885, after the coronation of Alexander III, who chose not to confirm the Baltic Germans' old privileges. Censorship was also tightened. Earlier Polish uprisings had angered the Russians and encouraged panslavist and slavophile trends. A heated debate about the Baltic provinces broke out in Russian papers in the 1860s, when Katkov, editor of *Moskovskie Vedomosti*, accused Baltic Germans of unacceptable separatism. Russian liberal papers, on the other hand, were more upset about the Baltic Barons' medieval oppressive privileges. (Zetterberg, 2007, pp. 445-447; Durman, 1988, pp. 70-78) In Finland, a new censorship statute was issued in 1891. It increased the power and the authority of the General Governor and made the Finnish censors obsolete (Leino-Kaukiainen, 1984). The Estonian national movement's struggle against the Baltic German elites and Russian authorities, and the struggle between Tsarist policies and Baltic German separatism made censorship a very complicated matter.

As Finland was becoming accustomed to its new self-government under the Russian

umbrella, a new kind of Sweden began to take shape. The new king had more limited powers, and his conservatism met resistance from the liberal faction in parliament and the emerging liberal press (Melin, Johansson, & Hedenborg, 2006). The loss of Finland changed the image of the Swedish nation. This trauma could only be handled by selective memory, which meant seeing the remaining Sweden as more genuinely Swedish, and erasing Finland from the Swedish history (Elenius, 1999, pp. 75-77). As already demonstrated, this tendency can be seen in the press histories, as well.

As national press markets began to develop, the national perspective of history writing seems less problematic. The focus on the nation states, however, makes it difficult to follow the varied pace of development.

Although the Swedish government's right to confiscate provocative publications was not abolished until the 1840s, the press market flourished. New topics and genres, such as crime stories, satirical columns, and feuilletons

were introduced. Liberal papers, particularly *Aftonbladet*, had a leading position. The first female reporter, Wendela Hebbe, was hired by *Aftonbladet* in 1841. Liberal papers were greatly influenced by their British counterparts. The foundation of *Publicistklubben* (Association for Newspaper Editors) in 1874 was an important step in the professionalization of journalism. Mass circulation press, modern political parties, and party papers emerged. The conservative *Svenska Dagbladet* and the leftist *Social-Demokraten* were both founded in the 1880s. Liberal *Dagens Nyheter*, founded in 1864, was a new type of newspaper, with its lower price, less demanding style, clearer layout with larger headlines, and more entertaining topics. Its main competitor, *Stockholms-Tidningen*, was the first mass circulation paper. Regional press developed as well, particularly in the northern and middle part of the country. (Leth, 1998; *Den svenska pressens historia II*, 2000) Minority media was not very successful, but *Haparandabladet* began to publish a Finnish edition, *Haaparannan lehti*, in 1882 (Elenius, 2001, p. 425). Later, there were attempts to start periodicals for the Sámi. New cultural, family, and illustrated magazines, as well as women's magazines, such as *Idun* and *Dagny*, were founded. Female reporters were still rare. In Estonia, the first women's magazine was *Linda*, founded in 1887. (Lundgren & Ney, 2000; Lauk,

1996, p. 33)

From a humble beginning, the Finnish newspaper market grew rapidly. *Åbo Tidningar's* monopoly was broken in early 1820s, when new Swedish language papers and the Finnish *Turun Wiikko-Sanomats* were founded. Vyborg even had German language papers. Åbo/Turku, however, lost its leading position after the 1827 fire and the relocation of the capitol and the university to Helsinki. Helsinki papers took the leading role. Fredrika Runeberg, wife of author and newspaper editor Johan Ludvig Runeberg, is thought to be the first female reporter. However, Adelaide Ehrnrooth, in the 1860s, was the first to use her own name. While more women entered journalism, and the first female editor in chief was hired in 1889, their numbers remained small. There were a few liberal papers, but, unlike their Swedish counterparts, they appeared within an authoritarian system. Finnish language periodicals outnumbered Swedish ones by the late 1870s. The market for magazines

began to grow and diversify during the second half of the century. (*Suomen lehdistön historia I*, 1988; Tommila & Salokangas, 2000; Zilliacus-Tikkanen 2005)

The politization and nationalization of the press did not occur simultaneously, nor did it mean exactly the same thing. Swedish press histories do not explicitly speak of politization, at least not in the same manner as the Finnish and Estonian ones. Swedish political journalism was born in the 18th century with the Hat and Caps. Modern political parties and party papers emerged in the 1880s. This process was not possible under Russian rule. The Swedish press struggled against the Royal House, censorship and control, and, at times, challenged ideas of good taste and what was considered appropriate. In Finland, Estonia and Livonia politization was linked to national struggle, the relationship between the ruling elites and the majority population, and to Russification that began at the end of the century. There were, however, important differences.

Finnish self-government created so-called language parties: Svekomans and Fennomans. Fennomans sought to protect self-government by forming an alliance with the Finns. In the process, they were willing to make concessions

and improve the status of the Finnish language and people. A Finnish national movement was thus born among the Swedish speaking elite. For example, Fennomans crusader, Snellman, couldn't speak Finnish. The Svekomans, on the other hand, wanted to maintain Swedish dominance. Just as in Sweden a hundred years earlier, the existence of competing political groups led to the foundation of political papers. Fennomans *Suometar* (in Finnish) and *Saima* (in Swedish) were founded in the 1840s, and Svekomans *Vikingen* in 1871. (Tommila & Salokangas, 2000, pp. 34-44; *Suomen lehdistön historia I*, 1988)

Politization of the press in the Baltic began with debate about the peasant question and accelerated during the 1860s, the years of the great reforms. *Revalsche Zeitung* and *Neue Dörptsche Zeitung*, both founded in 1860s, criticized the German elite's conservatism, while defending its rights against Russian interests. These Baltic German public debates influenced the Estonians' rising national self-consciousness. Jannsen's

pro-Estonian, anti-German papers, *Perno Postimees* and *Eesti Postimees*, functioned as voices of a national movement. Jannsen was also the first person to speak of "Estonians". As his papers lost popularity, his former reporter, Jakobson, started *Sakala*, which was the first publication with a clear political profile, and the first to be used as a political weapon. His aim was not only to describe, but also to set up goals and lead the people. (Höyer, Lauk, & Vihalemm, 1993, pp. 71-74; Aru 2002, pp. 94-96; Peegel *et al*, 1996) The Estonian national movement was inspired by Finnish experiences. However, the rise of the Finnish national movement was connected to the birth of language parties and party papers, a development which was not possible in the Baltic. The first female journalist in Estonia was hired in 1861. By the turn of the century, ten women were fully employed, and around thirty published texts in various papers. The first woman working in the field of political journalism was Marie Koppel, employed at *Olevik*, in 1903. *Olevik* was shut down in 1906, and was restarted four years later. During the late 19th century, there were also Russian language papers in Riga, Narva, Reval/Tallinn, and Dorpat/Tartu. (Annus, 1993; Lauk & Pallas, 2008; Mälk, 2000)

The politization and nationalization of the press did not occur simultaneously, nor did it mean exactly the same thing.

Russification affected different areas and different layers of the societies in different ways, and led to a new wave of politization of the press. The Estonian national movement initially swore loyalty to the Tsar. Nationalists saw Russians more as allies than enemies, since the new reforms undermined the Baltic German elite's privileges and improved the life of native inhabitants. Russians tolerated it, until the movement radicalized and could no longer be seen as merely an anti-German opposition. Russians tried to use majority language papers to promote their cause and create a more positive public opinion. The Estonian language press played an important role by strengthening the national consciousness and defending continuity. For example, Jaan Tõnisson and his *Postimees* believed in national unity and sovereignty and held the concept of nation very high, but he preferred peaceful and legal demands for political and economic rights. (Aru, 2002; Höyer, Lauk, & Vihalemm, 1993; Peegel *et al*, 1996)

Finns, on the other hand, had nothing good to say about russification, which began ten years later than in the Baltic. Tensions between the Swedish speaking elite and the Finnish speaking masses existed, but, due to the Fennoman dominance and the wide public support for self-government, the primary target here was not the local elite, but the Russians. Russification both efficiently united the people and created new dividing lines. The crucial question was no longer the language, but the tactics used against the common enemy. The Fennoman party split, and a new dividing line was drawn between the Old Fennoman government, with its appeasement politics, and the opposition, defenders of the Finnish constitution. The Constitutionals consisted of several different political parties. From their point of view, Tsarist politics were plainly illegal, which of course was contrary to the idea of autocracy. These new political parties had their own newspapers. (Tommila & Salokangas, 2000; *Suomen lehdistön historia I*, 1988)

Despite russification, the newspaper market in Finland, Estonia and Livonia expanded rapidly. During the second half of the century, Estonian newspapers began to have supplements, extra pages with educative or entertaining content (Lauk, 1996, p. 31). Circulation numbers grew, and retained multiple readers per issue. Increasing advertising revenues created better economic conditions, and it was easier for papers to survive - at least economically. Still, it would be

a couple of more decades before one could speak of a fully developed commercial press market. Journalism became more diversified. New genres, such as feuilletons, became popular, and papers contained more pictures. The press became more political as well, although formation of political parties was not possible in the Baltic until after 1905. Newspapers often served as instruments for creating public opinion and challenging power, whether the local elites or the Russian authorities. The 1905 revolution halted the Russification in Finland and the Baltic, and, for a while, a pleasant thaw reigned. During the revolution, many papers functioned not only as providers of the latest news, but also as political centers. Finland legalized universal suffrage in 1906, and with it came modern political parties and party papers. Parliamentarism, however, was only possible after 1917. In Estonia, new political parties were founded around certain newspapers, for example, Tõnisson and his *Postimees* belonged to the Progressive Party. He was also one of the Estonian members in the Duma. The Estonian press was dissatisfied with the new press law, with its threats of confiscation and legal action. Yet, more diversified journalism still developed, the level of professionalization increased, and the first interest organizations were founded. (Höyer, Lauk, & Vihalemm, 1993, pp. 99-112; Zetterberg, 2007, p. 464; Tommila & Salokangas, 2000, pp. 92-104)

The rise of the working class movement seems to have been a fairly simultaneous process. The first social democratic newspapers were founded in the 1880s and 1890s, for example, *Zhizn* in Russia, *Suupohjan Työmies* and *Työmies* in Finland, and *Social-Demokraten* and *Arbetet* in Sweden. Estonian *Uudised* was founded in 1903. Finnish papers were often a result of local initiatives, which, to the party's great irritation, could create competition between them. Swedish social democratic papers were more of a party affair. Many editors and reporters were leading figures in the movement, and newsrooms could, at times, resemble party headquarters. (Tommila & Salokangas, 2000, pp. 57- 63; *Den svenska pressens historia II*, 2000, pp. 277-281; Höyer, Lauk, & Vihalemm, 1993, pp. 106-108)

## Conclusions

We should, perhaps, consider avoiding retroactive history, and refrain from applying a national frame to multiethnic empires. An imperial and more postcolonial approach to early press history

de-centers ethnicities, shows their multitude, and reveals how an ethnicity - even a dominating one such as the Swedes - may be a majority in a specific part of the empire, and one of many minorities in other areas. Such an approach makes even small ethnic groups, their existence, and often long histories more visible. It is naturally important to study female journalists and minority media separately, just as it is important to pay attention to specific types of journalism, publications, publishers, reporters, corporations, etc. Women and minorities should, nevertheless, be included in more general press historical presentations. After all, it is the grand national narratives that make them look marginal and unimportant.

Wider comparative or imperial perspectives can provide a sharper picture of journalism's common features. Such features may encompass technologies used for newspaper production, distribution and information retrieval, or patterns for professionalization of journalism, growth, and diversification of press and audience markets. The pace at which such changes take place naturally varies. Journalism's dependence on language should, perhaps, also be mentioned. National press histories tend to ignore this aspect, or reduce it to a rightful conquest of majority language press. The matter is, however, more complicated. For example, during the 19th century, Estonian language press was an important bearer of Estonian language and culture. The press can, thus, contribute to preservation and development of lesser-used languages, whether representing majorities, or minorities. The press can be

particularly important for small minorities, since once an ethnic majority has reached the dominating position, its own experience of being colonized does not necessarily stop it from discriminating others. Access to periodicals published across the border may be beneficial, but this can change, once the building of nation states has begun; for example, the Swedish newspapers in Sweden did not necessarily address the needs of Finnish or Estonian Swedes, who were part of different national projects. After all, the press has been deeply involved in nation building projects. The fact that only certain minorities have been able to sustain their own publications deserves more attention. Possible existence of, (or lack of), multiple voices should be taken into account. For example, Husband (2000) speaks of minorities' right to communicate and to be understood.

Lastly, national perspectives make it difficult to see an overall picture of how imperial governments' actions, policies, censorship practices, etc., and local reactions to them, affected the development of the society and the press in different areas. In colonized areas, the struggle took place on two fronts. Both Sweden and Russia, in their time, tried to harmonize the administrative system and more firmly integrate all their territories into the state. Such attempts affected different social classes in different ways. The local ruling elites developed different survival strategies, which reflected their attitudes to the common people, as well as to their colonial masters. Sweden and Russia also differed from each other. Burbank & Hagen (2007) wonder whether the imperial

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