Maintaining a Balance of Power that favors Human Freedom:

The Finnish Strategic Experience

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1 Finnish strategic culture: Who cares?

Why should anyone be interested in Finnish strategic thinking and the historical experiences informing it? After all, the country is one of the smallest and most peripheral in a continent that is rapidly marginalizing itself in international politics. While being safe and boring can sometimes be a result of a successful grand strategy – especially for a small state – the answer to the question above might lie in realizing that for half a millennium Finland's external security environment has been anything but safe and boring, and yet the country has managed to develop a republican/liberal political culture and to defend it against external threats.

In short, the Finnish strategic experience for the last five centuries is about learning, through trial and error, to live with a rather difficult enemy and the fear created by that enemy. Since the late 15th century Finland has had to develop its political culture next door to the Russian empire, which has subscribed to an authoritarian/totalitarian political and strategic culture, and has had – by Finnish standards – an infinite supply of manpower to draw upon when conflict broke out.

The essence of Finnish strategic culture: non-offensiveness, a strong will to defend republicanism when needed, and a commitment to the idea of international society –could provide some lessons that the international community might find useful in the Age of Terror. After September 11th, the populations of even the most secure of offshore balancers have to come to terms with the omnipresent fear of violence from actors, which have little respect for liberal values. Al-Qaeda is not the Red Army, but in an age when a microscopically small organism can do more damage than a division of conventionally armed troops, and where globalization has provided new opportunities for transnational terrorists to operate, the liberal world faces a threat that politically and psychologically has many similarities with the one Finland has been facing for quite some time.

In a more theoretical sense, Finland provides a unique case of republican/liberal IR theory[1]: For Finns, the liberal legacy has been not only

[1] On republicanism and liberalism see Onuf, The Republican Legacy in International Thought (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998).

an intellectual inspiration for armchair-theorising or thinking about international law, but a reason to die for. Finns have, time after time had to face a situation where Russia has threatened the security of the population of Finland, and where international law or other liberal countries have been of relatively little help when push came to shove. Finnish strategic culture has developed from the experience of defending liberal/republican values in a distinctly un-liberal (and "un-Nordic") strategic environment. Consequently, realist instruments such as balance of power policies and war, have played an important role in complementing more liberal strategic practices, such as tying Russia into international society. One could even say that liberalism has survived in Finland partly because realist practices have been merged with liberal practices in the country's strategic culture.[2]

In the following, relying on the theoretical framework explicated in Leira, Neumann & Heikka, I will sketch the interplay of some of the key structural and cultural factors that lie behind the Finnish strategic experience. The reason for going back in history for several centuries is that the "formative experiences" that inform Finnish strategic culture have roots that are several centuries old. In particular, a loose commitment to the idea of balancing has remained unchanged for almost five centuries, and the importance of non-offensive defence goes back three centuries. The third pillar of Finnish strategic culture, besides balancing and non-offensiveness, the legacy of liberalism, is more difficult to locate within individual strategic experiences. In the following, I have tried to sketch the evolution of the idea of international society within Finnish strategic culture as it emerged over a long period of time from the Grotian influences within Swedish-Finnish strategic culture.

[2] By "Finnish", I refer to that part of the population of that lived in the Finnish part of the Kingdom of Sweden-Finland (from mid-12th century to 1809), the Grand Dutchy of Finland (1809–1917) and the Republic of Finland from thereafter. This means that until the 19th century, Finnish strategic culture evolved mostly in relationship to Stockholm and was often "made" in Stockholm; while from 1809, it was territorially located in Finland, with Helsinki as the center of gravity and Prussia/Germany as probably the most important source of ideas; whereas in the 20th century Helsinki-centred strategic culture wavering between Nordic, British, German and US influences, and a consistent pressure for accommodation from Moscow.

2 Summary of the argument

The main argument of the paper is that Finnish grand strategy, for the last half millennium has continuously reflected a similar abstract logic, sometimes referred to as "the Nordic Balance", implying an imperative of tying Western great powers into the regional balance of power in order to counterbalance Russian power.[3] As suggested by the title of the paper, I argue that Finnish balancing policies have been based on a moral imperative arising from the gradually expanding gradually expanding realm of law-based political and civil rights in Finland over the centuries, combined with the lack of them in Russia. For Finland, the goal of the regional balance of power has been to safeguard these rights.

The logic has been reflected in several security patterns in the region, depending on the availability of balancers, the "thickness" of international society, and the size of the Russian threat. When taking a long view at the history of security patterns in the region, one can see Russia counterbalanced first by regional balancers (Kalmar Union, and Swedish-Finnish Kingdom), and later with neutrality backed by a combination of Western security guarantees to the region, and finally the prospect of slowly integrating the whole Nordic-Baltic region into the emerging European pole. Along these lines, the challenge facing Finland, and even more so the Baltic states, seems to be that the continuing weakness of Russia together with Moscow's policy of bandwagoning with the US means that the interest of Western great powers to contribute to the regional balance of power is relatively low. As a consequence, some of the causally most important practices relating to strategic culture will take place at the national level, which explains the focus in the last part of the paper.

3 The Background of the Finnish Security Dilemma

The main security problem facing Finns over the last millennium has arisen from the fact that the Finnish-Russian border has been a border separating two vastly different political cultures, characterised on the Finnish side by a

[3] Not to be mistaken with Olav Arne Brundtland's theory of the cold war military balance in the Nordic region. According to Brundtland, Norwegian reliance on Nato and the US counterbalanced Finland's presumed reliance on the Soviet Union – a claim which grossly misstates the nature of Finnish-Soviet security dilemma, the goals of Finnish defence policy, and the dynamics of the regional balance of power.

gradually expanding realm of law-based political and civil rights, and by authoritarianism and the lack of rule of law on the other side. The integration of Finnish political culture to the "West" and Northern Russia to the "East" happened originally as a result of the expansion of Western (Catholic) Christendom and Eastern (Orthodox) Christendom, which began in the Adriatic region around the 9th century and gradually spread Northwards. Western Christianity travelled to Fenno-Scandia in the early 11th century largely as a side product of the Northward expansion of the Copenhagen-based empire of Cnut the Great, although it is the English-born bishop of Uppsala, Henrik (referred to as St Henry in English-language books about Finnish history), that is usually credited for converting the rather rebellious Finnish population to Christianity in the early 12th century. While the strategic rationale of Henrik's trip was related more to adding Finnish territories to the Swedish monarch's possessions, and while the Finns' interest at the time was related to finding a balancer contributing to the defense against raids from Novgorod, the long-term political significance of this development was that it consolidated the division between Latin and Byzantine civilisation on the Finnish-Russian border.[4]

4 Swedish-Finnish strategic culture

The next step was the formation of the Kalmar Union among the Nordic kingdoms, and the simultaneous emergence of the powerful political units in the Slavic world, in particular Poland-Lithuania and the principality of Muscovy. Out of these, Muscovy was far more dangerous to Norden, since the principles of governance applied by the rulers of Muscovy reflected a continuity of the principles, which had been used to rule over Russian territories that were part of the empire of the Golden Horde (essentially all of Russia except Novgorod).[5] As Novgorod was integrated into Muscovy in the 1470's, the principles of governance of the Mongolian empire began to be applied in areas adjacent to Finland. At this point, the security of Finland's eastern border was no more a local security issue, but became part of a regional balance of power logic involving the Kalmar Union, Muscovy and Poland(-Lithuania).

[4] The cultural and economic connections between Eastern Sweden and Western Finland themselves are much older, and to some extent the expansion of Western Christianity simply exploited these connections. However, in terms of political culture, these connections became relevant only with the expansion of Christianity, which tied Finland into Europe.

[5] Tiihonen, op. cit., pp. 147–150.

The Kalmar Union can thus be said to have been the first balancer available for Finland in dealing with the threat that Russian political practices posed. The Union was however, weakened by intra-Nordic rivalries, which interacted disastrously with the external balance of power. The basis for Finnish balancing policies crumbled in 1495, when Denmark entered into the first of its many strategic alliances with Russia. The alliance, which was primarily meant to weaken Stockholm's power and included a Danish proposal for territorial concessions to Muscovy from Karelia and Northern Finland, coincided with Russia's attempt to invade Finland.[6] After the Russian invasion was defeated, the Swedes and Finns, with the help of the wealthy Hansa town of Lybeck revolted against the Danes, effectively ending the Union.[7] Sweden now replaced the Kalmar Union as the main balancer available for Finns, and Finnish strategic culture began developing as a part of Swedish strategic culture, in effect serving as the first line of defence of the Swedish Kingdom and later a springboard to expansion into Estonia.

4.1 Structural dilemmas, doctrinal solutions

Swedish hegemony in Finland in the 16th century, and the Swedish-Finnish hegemony in the Baltic Sea region during the 17th and 18th centuries had several implications for Finnish strategic culture. The large-scale Russian campaign against Finland in the mid 16th century taught both Finns and Swedes that Russia's supply of manpower, which was growing rapidly with Russia's expansion to the South and the East, had to be countered by an efficient, well-armed and well-disciplined military. As a result, Stockholm embarked on a project to build a military establishment, which later proved out to be – in good and bad – one the most efficient war-machines in Europe.

The possibility of being caught in a two-front war, which included the possibility of being isolated from Atlantic trade (the main trade routes from

[6] Before Denmark broke the united Western front against Russia, some Finns had hoped to tie not only Sweden but also the Holy Roman Empire into a grand alliance to stop Russia's expansion to the West. Maunu Särkilahti, the Bishop of Turku (Åbo), and thus head of the church in Finland, had been particularly active in hoping for a large Western coalition to contain Russia.

[7] See e.g. Petri Karonen, *Pohjoinen Suurvalta: Ruotsi ja Suomi 1521–1809* (Helsinki: WSOY, 2001), pp. 69–72.

the empire's heartland to the Atlantic ran via the Baltic Sea), was the main structural problem facing the strategic planners of Sweden-Finland. The experiences of the Seven Years war, the Kalmar War and wars with Russia during 1555–1595 provide the main explanation for the strive for regional hegemony in the next century. The strategy adopted to solve this dilemma was distilled in the doctrine *dominium maris Baltici*, which dates from the 1560's, and later found its way into official documents.[8] The doctrine implied denial of the use of the Baltic Sea by hostile fleets, which in practice implied maintaining a power navy and Swedish-Finnish control of the main ports on the Baltic coastlands.[9] In practice the doctrine implied a desire to keep Poland and Russia, as well as the Habsburg Empire, out of the Baltic Sea, and replacing Denmark as the premium naval power in the Baltic.

To this aim, King Gustavus Adolphus (1594–1632) engaged in a series of administrative and military reforms modelled on the more successfull great powers of the era and perfected many institutions and tactics that had been created, but not turned into reality, in other countries.[10] The reforms included creation of a "national" army based on conscription, introduction of mobile, light artillery, as well as improvements in cavalry and battlefield tactics.[11]

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[8] While the doctrine became a key component of Swedish-Finnish strategic culture during the Age of Greatness, the formative experiences behind it can be found already in the two-front war against Denmark and Muscovy in the late 15th and early 16th century (see above). Ivan III's expansion through Novgorod to Vyborg simultaneously with the continuing violent Swedish-Danish struggle for mastery in the Kalmar Union taught Swedish and Finnish decision-makers the importance of secure borders and friendly maritime trade routes.

[9] Roberts, op. cit., p. 16.

[10] Michael Roberts, The Military Revolution 1560–1660 (Belfast, 1956). While there is discussion about the extent to which the military revolution at the time was a specifically Swedish phenomenon or whether the crucial innovations took place in the Spanish or Dutch armed forces, the strategic importance of military reforms in Sweden-Finland at the time is not under doubt. See e.g. Andrew Ayton & J. L. Price "Introduction: The Military Revolution from a Medieval Perspective", in Andrew Ayton & J. L. Price (eds.), The Medieval Military Revolution (London: I.B. Tauris, 1998), pp. 1–17; Williamson Murray & MacGregor Knox, "Thinking about revolutions in warfare," in MacGregor Knox and Williamson Murray, *The Dynamics of Military Revolution 1300-1550* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2001), pp. 1–2. One might argue that when the military revolution is seen in the context of society-wide administrative and cultural reforms (including the reformation), the Swedish-Finnish reforms stand out as more comprehensive and novel than the Dutch or Spanish ones.

[11] In his study on Gustavus Adolphus, Theodore Ayrault Dodge goes as far as to argue that Gustavus recreated the art of war, which had sunk into oblivion since Caesar. See

The introduction of conscription, which was necessitated by the country's relatively small population (approximately 3 million, compared to e.g. Russia's 14 million, which was growing rapidly), created a relatively well-motivated "national" military, which differed from the armies of most other European powers, which were still relying on mercenaries as the backbone of their defence.

The improvements in fortification during the time of Gustavus Adolphus made fortresses less vulnerable to artillery fire, thus leading into specialisation of infantry troops able to conduct sieges. In battles, Swedish-Finnish military leadership preferred shock, mobility and surprise, while most European generals still preferred traditional infantry firefights. The Swedish-Finnish troops' aggressive mobile offences, which consisted of infantry men arranged in four lines hurling themselves upon the enemy, with the lines taking turns in shooting until reaching point blank range, after which hand to hand fighting with bayonets would begin, often proved superior to the opponents tactics, partly because of the fear and terror they created in the enemy.[12] Sweden-Finland was also the first country to introduce the grenadiers, a special hand-grenade troops whose job in rapid offensives was to clear the way for the main troops by destroying the enemy's fortified defenses.[13]

Gustavus Adolphus also constructed a powerful navy, which was vital for the security of the empire whose different parts were separated by the Baltic Sea. The military-industrial complex of the empire, which produced large amounts of standardized equipment for the army and navy, also greatly benefited from the skills of foreigners, especially Dutch entrepreneurs and German mining technicians, who increased the efficiency of the use of Sweden's large iron and copper resources.[14] Linked financially to the largely Amsterdam-based mercantile economic order, Sweden-Finland rapidly became Europe's largest producer of iron ore and copper, achieving the rare

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Theodore Ayrault Dodge, *Gustavus Adolphus*, (London: Lionel Leventhal, 1996), pp. 28–46. When referring to the Swedish-Finnish army as a "national" one, it is worth remembering the "nationality" in the case referred to Sweden, implying that Finns had to fake a Swedish identity (speaking Swedish, translating last names into Swedish etc.) in order to get promoted.

[12] See e.g. Fuller's brief description of Swedish-Finnish operations in the Great Northern War, Fuller op. cit., p. 65.

[13] Fuller, op. cit., 24.

[14] Anthony Upton, *Europe 1600–1789* (London: Arnold, 2001), p. 168.

strategic advantage of self-sufficiency in armaments.[15] Military reforms at the time were complemented by reforms of the civilian sector, which included the rationalisation of public administration through long term planning and the introduction of codes of conduct to control and monitor the behaviour of civil servants. The monarch's power was limited by the founding of "Collegiums" – groups of experts from higher nobility – which acted as independent source of executive power in day-to day governance of the empire. Particularly important were the War Collegium and the Admiralty, which formed a smoothly functioning civil-military interface.[16]

Swedish-Finnish hegemony, which emerged in the after math of the Thirty Years War, was facilitated by structural changes in the overall European balance of power. Economic and demographic power in Europe was shifting north towards France, the Netherlands, and England, with control of the German lands being a point of conflict between the Habsburgs and their balancers. The rapidly growing economic benefits derived at the time from international trade, especially from the exports of naval stores, made Sweden-Finland a rare "wild card" in the European balance of power.[17] The fact that it was Sweden-Finland, and not Prussia, the Netherlands, or Denmark, that emerged as the leading challenger to the Habsburgs in the North, owed a lot to the power-political calculations of France, which was the leading foreign financer of the Swedish-Finnish war effort. From the French perspective, Sweden-Finland was the most useful ally (and proxy) in the war since the Kingdom's geopolitical interests did not threaten those of France, with Swedish expansion targeting primarily Habsburg-dominated German and Central European territory.[18]

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[15] Kennedy, The Rise and Fall of Great Powers, pp. 81–82.
[16] Karonen, op. cit., 185–190.
[17] A useful summary of the literature of the causes of the Thirty Years War is Myron P. Gutmann, "The Origins of the Thirty Years' War," in Rotberg & Rabb (eds.), op. cit., pp. 177–198. For an argument that the war was driven primarily by Spain's fear of imperial decline, see Dale C. Copeland, *The Origins of Major War* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2001), pp. 216–218.
[18] Roberts, Michael, *Gustavus Adolphus* (London: Longman, 1992), pp. 90–108; Kissinger, *Diplomacy*, pp. 60–62

4.2 Cultural challenges, Grotian solutions

When thinking about the impact of the Swedish-Finnish imperial experience on Finnish strategic culture, it is worth noting the extent to which the spirit of Protestantism reformed the whole political culture of the Kingdom. The Reformation, instigated by King Gustav Vasa I in 1527, made possible administrative reforms, especially the reduction of the power of the nobility, the strengthening of the economic basis of society, and the conversion of peasants into a relatively effective fighting force, which were prerequisites for the rise of Sweden-Finland.[19] Important administrative reforms included also the creation of supreme courts, reforming the Treasury, and enlargening universities (including the creation of a professorship for politics) in order to create a corps of civil servants to run the empire. The educational reforms implied the secularisation and egalitarianisation of education in Sweden-Finland, reflecting the spirit of Protestantism.[20] These administrative reforms were in part financed by the capital that the Swedish monarch received as the wealth of the church was transferred to his hands.[21] Many foreign experts, mostly from Germany, were hired to ensure the quality and impartiality of administrative reforms and to compensate for the lack of domestic expertise. Northern Germany, especially Wittenberg, gained a prominent role as an educational centre of the administrative elite of Sweden-Finland.[22]

The Reformation was also of great importance for the grand strategic picture, since it created a *common culture* in Northern Europe, and made possible the creation of a Protestant block in Northern Europe to balance against the hegemony of the Catholic Habsburgs, whose empire at the time ranged from Gibraltar to Hungary and from Sicily to Jutland, and was about to expand to the Baltic Sea.[23] In other words, the emergence of an anti-hegemonic coalition to bring Europe into balance was facilitated by the

[19] Cooperation between the Swedish King and the representatives of the four Estates (the nobles, the clergy, the burghers and the peasants) was institutionalised during the 16th century. The King had to consult the Estates when making major policy decisions including questions of war and peace.
[20] Roberts, op. cit., pp 59–89.
[21] Karonen, op. cit, pp. 72–77.
[22] Karonen, op. cit., pp. 81–85.
[23] Op. cit., p. 222.

existence a common Protestant culture.[24] Obviously, Protestantism was supported by rulers in Northern Europe at the time partly in order to create and maintain such a coalition, and the struggle for mastery among Protestant states was fierce. However, the fact remains that the formation of coalitions did emerge along confessional lines and that confessional solidarity among Protestant leaders was strong.[25]

From this perspective, what was stake in the Swedish-Finnish intervention to European politics in the Thirty Years War and the hegemony that followed was the defence of a legal order based on the law of natural reason, i.e. man's inherent rationality, as opposed to medieval conceptualisations of international law and just wars which informed the worldview of Sweden-Finland's opponents.[26] Sweden-Finland's commitment to the law of natural reason was all the more important for Finland because developments in Russia were pointing to an entire different direction. In contrast to the egalitarianisation, secularisation, and rationalisation of society in Sweden-Finland, Russian society was characterised by military absolutism, the monopoly of education in the hands of the Orthodox church, a corrupt bureaucracy, and the institution of serfdom.[27] Influences of modernisation, embraced by Sweden-Finland, were resisted by Russia by extreme measures such as segregation of foreigners from natives. Participation of elites, old and new, in representative institutions championed by Sweden-Finland through the Council of Estates (which included representatives of the Peasants), was denied in Russia by the tsar.[28]

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[24] See Anthony Upton, *Europe 1600–1789* (London: Arnold, 2001), pp. 39–70; Paul Kennedy, *The Rise and Fall of the Great Powers*, pp. 39–93; Gutmann, op. cit., pp. 177–198.

[25] Roberts, for example, writes about Gustavus Adolphus: "His Protestantism was based on education and founded in conviction; his piety was genuine; his sense of confessional solidarity was strong. Of course he was troubled by the threats to the religious and political independence of his fellow Protestants in Germany". Roberts, Gustavus Adolphus, p. 46.

[26] Gustavus Adolphus himself took a personal interest in international law and Hugo Grotius' tractatus *De jure belli ac pacis* in particular. The discussion in Sweden-Finland leading to the decision to intervene in the Thirty Years War is full of references to Grotius' ideas. See Erik Ringmar, *Identity,Interest and Action: A cultural explanation of Sweden's intervention in the Thirty Years War* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1996), pp. 170–173.

[27] Kennedy, op. cit., p. 19.

[28] Lieven, op. cit., pp. 245–246.

4.3 The Significance of Westphalia

Of special importance to small states was the emergence of the principle of neutrality, championed by Switzerland during the 17th century. The importance of Westphalia in this respect was two-fold. First, by replacing the doctrine of suzerainty with sovereignty, Westphalia made it possible for smaller states and princedoms to claim policies independent of emperors and other overlords, and to claim an equal right for such policies in the face of international law. Second, by replacing Christian (Catholic) theories of just wars with *raison d'etat*, Westphalia facilitated the evolution of neutrality as impartiality in wars.[29] While it took almost two centuries for neutrality to become a key instrument in the Nordic countries' search for security, Westphalia can be seen as starting point of the evolution of the norms of neutrality, which the Nordic countries later used in positioning themselves vis-à-vis great powers.

However, from the perspective of strategic culture, the most long-lasting consequence of the Peace of Westphalia was the recognition by great powers of the need for moderation in foreign policy objectives in order to maintain stability in the international system, which in turn facilitated the emergence of balancing policies among European great powers. A complex balance of power system, as Michael Sheehan has observed, "requires the existence of a functioning international system in which the sovereign independence of states is the central goal of national policy and in which there is comparative moderation in foreign policy objectives and an absence of ideologically based interstate bitterness".[30] In this perspective, the Peace of Westphalia can be seen as the first step in a process of defending international society from states informed by a revolutionary strategic culture.

For Sweden-Finland to benefit from the logic of Westphalia, three preconditions had to be in place. 1648. First, Russia should have shared the principles of the Westphalian system. Second, a balancer had to be available to compensate for the decline of Swedish-Finnish power vis-à-vis Russia.

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[29] See Risto Penttilä, "Non-Alignment – Obsolete in Today's Europe?" in Mathias Jopp & Hanna Ojanen (eds.) *European Security Integration: Implications for Non-alignment and Alliances* (Helsinki: The Finnish Institute of International Affairs & Institut für Europäische Politik, 1999), pp. 168–170. The beginning of Swiss neutrality is normally traced to the year 1674, though the Swiss Confederation adopted a policy reminiscent of neutrality already at the end of the 16th century.

[30] Sheehan, op. cit., pp. 37–38.

Third, respect for sovereignty had to cover not only great powers but also small states. None of these elements existed in the late 17th century. In the first instance, the Orthodox powers barely figured in the Westphalian scheme and did not share the common culture of other European powers. As comes to the second point, potential balancers were hard to find: Prussia had not yet emerged as a great power, Britain was caught in a domestic struggle between King and Parliament, and the interests of France at the time were related more to colonial and continental matters than the balance in the Baltic Sea region. Thirdly, it took almost three hundred years until international society extended the same rights of sovereignty for small powers that it had granted for great powers. Thus, the impact of Westphalia on Norden remained at the level of an idea potentially facilitating order and justice, rather than something empirically observable.

4.4 Why did it end?

This said, one cannot fail to see how little thought was given to moderation of grand strategic ambitions in Sweden-Finland herself before and during the Great Northern War. While the underlying causes of the collapse of the Swedish-Finnish empire were essentially structural – the Kingdom was simply to small and weak to be the hegemon of the whole Baltic Sea once Russia was able too mobilise its resources – the clearly counter-optimal strategic choices made by King Charles XII were partly to blame for the result of the Great Northern War. In hindsight, it can be said that Charles XII made two major mistakes: he underestimated Russia's military strength and ranked Stockholm's geostrategic priorities in a way not optimal for Sweden-Finland's survival. The Swedish King's underestimation of Russia's military strength had its roots in the easy victory of Narva, mentioned earlier, which led Charles XII to conclude that Russia was not a serious peer competitor for hegemony in the region. This strategic belief, in turn, can be found behind the Swedish King's perception of King Augustus and his Saxons as the main strategic rival.[31]

Charles XII's geostrategic priority of focusing on chasing Augustus' forces around Poland, while leaving garrisons in Baltic rimland poorly manned and Finland largely on her own, were directly related to the strategic misperception of the identity of the rising hegemon. Had Stockholm shifted the center of gravity of the war to the areas that were vital to the preservation

[31] Fuller, op. cit., pp. 40–41.

of the empire – the areas surrounding the Gulf of Finland – instead of trying to divert the attention to the South, Sweden might have been able to contain better the expansion of Russia and to maintain some of the strategically important bridgeheads in the Gulf of Finland and the Baltic rimland.[32] Charles XII was, however, no match for Peter the Great as a strategist. He overstreched Sweden-Finland's military capabilities, especially on German, Polish, Latvian and Lithuanian territory, while at the same time failing to acquire adequate support for balancing against Russia.[33]

In sum, the strategic culture of Sweden-Finland during the Age of Greatness reflected both continuities from the Union of Kalmar as well as a radical break from the previous era. The continuity was reflected in the identification of Swedish-Finnish security interests with the community of states, whose core at the time included all states on the Baltic shores (except Russia), and which embraced a protestant Germanic culture (as opposed to Byzantine Orthodox or Roman Catholic culture). That the community was referred to as the Protestant community instead of the Kalmar Union or the Hanseatic League, does not mean that the underlying strategic rationale for the identification would have been qualitatively different from previous times. The main structural factors, defense of territory and trades from potential threats from the East and the vortex of Continental power politics, were the same, though the expansionist plans of Ivan the Terrible made them even more urgent than was the case during the Union of Kalmar. However, the Reformation did mark a qualitative shift in the geographical centre of gravity in international society at the time. No more was Sweden-Finland merely an outpost of Western Christendom, it was, for a while, the core and the leader of the Protestant community – even if that role was largely facilitated by Richelieu's policies, French direct subsidies, German expertise, and an Amsterdam-based system of foreign finances.

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[32] Michael Roberts has argued, "the immediate cause of the collapse of the empire was an avoidable military catastrophy". Roberts, *The Swedish Imperial Experience*…, p. 152.

[33] Karonen, op. cit., pp. 310–315. The exception was an agreement on financial cooperation with France, which was achieved in 1716. Op. cit., p. 321. The results of Charles strategic mistakes were far reaching: had Sweden-Finland been able to maintain its hold on the Gulf of Finland and the banks of Neva, Peter the Great could never had began his project of building St. Petersburg and moving his government there. The strategic consequences of this would have been immense, since the justification for Russia's heavy military presence in Finland's vicinity have, for the last three hundred years, revolved around the "legitimate defence interests" of St. Petersburg/Leningrad.

The events of the late 17th century in the Baltic Sea region can be seen as part of the end to 200 years of bipolar struggle between France and the Habsburg Empire, where Sweden-Finland had acted as a proxy of French power, into a multipolar one, where France, the Habsburg Empire (now dominated by Austria), and Britain where joined by Russia and a few decades later, by Prussia, among the great powers. Sweden-Finland's rapid decline in the late 17th and early 18th century thus happened at a time when the French capability to subsidising Sweden-Finland was gone because of the Wars of the Spanish succession, Russia was on the rise, and Prussia – the potential balancer to Russia to replace France – had not yet taken the final steps to become a great power.

In practice, the Great Northern War turned Sweden-Finland from a European great power into a second-class regional (Baltic) power, a role which the distribution of capabilities in the European system would probably have obliged it to play sooner or later any way.[34] Most importantly from the military perspective, the war destroyed most of Sweden-Finland's naval power projection capabilities: in 1710 the Kingdom still had 38 battleships in the Baltic and 5 in Gothenburg, by the end of the war she had lost fifteen of her ships in the Baltic and all of those in Gothenburg. Russia, in turn, had no battleships in the Baltic in 1710, but acquired 53 of them during the war (22 of them being bought from abroad). Despite suffering big losses, the Russian Navy, which had hardly existed before the war, emerged from the war numerically as the premier naval power in the Baltic. This was a position it held until the rise of the German navy in the end of the 19th century.[35]

[34] While Sweden's fall from the ranks of European Great Powers was structurally predetermined – with neighbours like Russia in the East and Prussia in the South possessing huge capabilities, the mobilisation of which was simply a question of time – the greatness of the fall was very much a result loosing the Great Northern War. On the political and administrative side, the empire showed few of the signs of imperial decay: the empire had no internal conflicts, such as ones based on religion or nationalism; the central government was functioning well; tax-collection did not pose major problems; and the semi-professional tenure army faced no lack of recruits. For a chart comparing Sweden and Habsburg Spain at the time, see Karonen, op. cit., p. 326.

[35] R.C. Anderson, *Naval Wars in the Baltic 1522–1850* (London: Francis Edwards Ltd., 1969/1910), pp. 206–207.

5 The Utrecht System and Swedish-Finnish Strategic Culture

The Peace of Utrecht in 1713 brought into being a more real balance of power system in Europe, with the bipolar balance between France and Austria being stabilised by British aid the to the weak "buffer states" – Germany, Italy, and the low countries.[36] In Northern Europe, the main structural feature of the Utrecht system was the shifting balance of power between Russia and Sweden-Finland, which formed the background for three wars between the two countries (1741–1743; 1788–1790; 1808–1809), all of which reflected the continuing rise of Russia and the unwillingness (or inability) of Stockholm to come to terms with it.[37]

The logic of the Utrecht system in the Nordic region was reflected in the 1721 Peace Treaty of Uusikaupunki (Nystad), according to which Finland was restored back to Swedish rule, while Russia was "compensated" with the southern shores of the Gulf of Finland (Estonia, Livonia, Ingria), including the strategically important islands of Saarenmaa and Hiidenmaa.[38] Of the various factors making possible this settlement, two stand out. European great powers, especially France and Britain (united at the time by the so-called Quadruple Alliance of 1718 and still fearing the Habsburgs), were keen to see a Sweden strong enough to balance against Russia, a potential hegemon in the North.[39] Britain insisted that Sweden must not be allowed to collapse and backed this by sending the Royal Navy to the Baltic

[36] Sheehan, op. cit., pp. 105–107.

[37] The three wars are known by slightly different names in English, the first as "The War of the Hats" or "The Russo-Swedish War of 1741–43", the second as "The Russo-Swedish War of 1788–90" or "The War of 1788–90"; and the third as "The War of 1808–09", "The Finnish War" (*Suomen sota*), or "The Russo-Swedish War of 1809–9". See George C. Kohn, *Dictionary of Wars* (London: Doubleday, 1987), pp. 398–399. The last of these wars, while happening in the context of the Utrecht system (if the Vienna system is considered as the next step in the evolution of international society), coincided with Napoleon's bid for hegemony and its causes were directly related to it.

[38] It is worth noting that already at these negotiations Russia suggested that Sweden should be provided Norway as compensation for larger losses of Finnish territory – a suggestion which Russia made with more success again a century later. Karonen, op. cit., p. 322–325.

[39] Michael Roberts, *The Age of Liberty: Sweden 1719–1772* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press), p. 10; Hughes, op. cit., p. 42. The minister in charge of British policy in the region, general James Stanhope, actually sought – unsuccessfully – to build a grand coalition of Britain-Hanover, France, Prussia, Austria, Saxony and Denmark to aid Sweden in balancing against Russia in the North. McKay & Scott, *The Rise of the Great Powers 1640–1815*, pp. 91, 123–124.

in an attempt to protect the Swedish coasts against Russian raids, and France provided diplomatic backing for Sweden by acting as a mediator in the negotiations leading to the peace treaty.[40] Thus, the motives of Britain and France were identical to those behind Sweden-Finland's doctrine of *dominium maris Baltici*: to prevent Russia from achieving regional hegemony in the Baltic Sea region.

The second factor favouring Finland's position in the negotiations of the Peace Treaty was the small Finnish army's determined resistance in its fight against the Russians at the time when the Swedish army had already left the theatre, which had made an impression on the Russians.[41] The Russian commander described the final battle of the war in Western Finland as the hardest fight his troops had seen since the battle of Poltava.[42] Having secured the coast of the Gulf of Finland from Riga to Viipuri, the Russians felt secure enough to let the heartland of the weakened Swedish-Finnish Kingdom remain in tact – especially when total encroachment of Swedish sovereignty might have led to a more forceful intervention by Britain and France.

The strategic logic at work in post-Utrecht *Norden* can be seen as the predecessor of the Nordic Balance: while common norms and rules about sovereignty and neutrality were still rather underdeveloped, Sweden's growing strategic importance for Western powers made it possible for her to rely partly on their capabilities in balancing against Russia, while Russia had to acknowledge the security interests of Sweden in order to not provoke Western powers. Finland's dilemma was also beginning to crystallise: Finnish territory, especially after the founding of St. Petersburg, was strategically far more important to Russia than to any Western great power (and Sweden was no more a great power), leaving Finnish security increasingly dependent on the population's own ability to affect Russia's cost-benefit calculations through military, political, and other means.

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[40] George I had plans to assist Sweden not only in defending herself but in recovering the lost territories from Russia, but the financial crisis of the South Sea Bubble in Britain in 1720 put an end to the plans.

[41] For a detailed account of the war and the motives of Stockholm and St. Petersburg, see Antti Kujala, *Miekka ei laske leikkiä: Suomi suuressa pohjan sodassa 1700–1714* (Helsinki: Suomalaisen kirjallisuuden seura, 2001), pp. 282–334.

[42] Singleton, op. cit, p. 46.

5.1 Hawks vs. Doves

The reasons behind Sweden's revanschist and clearly counter-optimal military adventures after the Peace of Uusikaupunki were numerous, but continuities in Swedish strategic culture from the Age of Greatness to the post-Utrecht era can be seen. During the period, Stockholm faced a major strategic adjustment from being the regional hegemon into being a small power in a multipolar system.

An important factor hindering Swedish strategic adjustment was the liberalisation of Swedish-Finnish political culture during the so-called "Age of Liberty", which lasted from 1719 to 1772. The period began with a deal between the Swedish King and the Estates, which implied an increase in power of the Estates vis-à-vis the monarch.[43] A prerequisite for this arrangement was the defeat in the Great Northern War, which had eroded to power and popularity of the monarchy in general. While the system fell far short of present-day standards of liberal democracy, it had commonalities with the English parliamentary system and differed radically from the absolutist monarchies of the time.[44] The weakness of the system was that it transferred the making of security policy from professional bureaucrats and officers to the hands of political parties. This was especially dangerous at a time when Sweden was military and economically weak, making domestic party politics and easy target for foreign interventions.[45]

The advocates of strategic moderation at the time were led by the Arvid Horn, a native Finn, who after a career as an officer and diplomat had became one of the most prominent politicians in Sweden-Finland and the main opponent of Charles' XII expansionist policies during the Great Northern War.[46] His views have been credited for Sweden's brief alliance

[43] A useful summary of the division of powers in the deal can be found in Karonen, op. cit., appendix 5.
[44] See e.g. Singleton, op. cit., pp. 53–54.
[45] For an illustrative case study, see Metcalf, op. cit. It is, however, worth noting that Russia's heavy influence in Swedish domestic policy at the time was partly a result of the lost war in the 1740's. Likewise, Russia's ability to influence policy-making in Sweden decreased after 1790 not only because of changes in the Swedish domestic situation but because of the war in 1788–90, in which the Swedish-Finnish navy defeated Russia's Baltic fleet, thus limiting Russia's power projection capabilities.
[46] See e.g. Eino Jutikkala, Arvid Horn (1664–1742); Kenraali, kreivi kaikkivaltias kansliapresidentti. http://www.histseura.fi/biografia/artikkelit/2550b.html.

with Britain and France in the late 1720s, as well as the alliance agreement with France in 1735, which for a while allowed Sweden-Finland to balance against Russia in a defensive way. Horn's main power base (the so-called cap party) in the parliament consisted mainly of clergy and peasants as well as people residing in Finland, excluding nobility. Horn's opponents, the "hats", consisted mostly of military officers, businessmen, civil servants. The domestic balance of power tipped in the hats' favour during 1738–1739, leading to Horn's resignation and preparations for war against Russia.[47]

Denial of strategic realities among the hats was commonplace. Totally unrealistic military plans were drawn, of which the plan for the 1741 attack is an illustrating example..[48] Swedish leaders could hardly bring themselves to believe "that in a fair fight one Swede could not beat five Russians any day".[49] The plan did not differ much from other revanschist plans drawn up in Stockholm at the time. Revanschist strategic culture was upheld by history books and other books glorifying the Swedish imperial experience.[50] The Finns in turn, having had to bear the brunt of fighting and occupation during most of the preceding wars, and not being used to the luxury of Western powers interfering to save them at critical moments, were beginning to think in more realistic terms.[51]

While the 1741–1743 war was lost, the Age of Liberty had a more positive long-term effect on Finland. During the period Finns enjoyed the same rights of representation and had the same laws as Swedes. The period socialised the Finns into a political culture, in which the rights of the citizen vis-à-vis the sovereign were relatively wide and protected by law.[52] In 1766 new

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[47] Karonen, op. cit., pp. 384–390.

[48] According to Roberts, in case of victory, the Swedes planned to demand Russia to cede all Baltic provinces plus all the land between Lake Ladoga and the White Sea. In the case of defeat, they would have demanded "only" Karelia and the Neva Estuary, including St Petersburg and Kronstadt. Roberts, *The Age of Liberty*, p. 24.

[49] Roberts, *The Age of Liberty*, p. 16.

[50] Karonen, op. cit., p. 333.

[51] See Kalervo Hovi, Jussi T. Lappalainen, Oscar Nikula, Pentti Virrankoski, *Hattujen Sota ja Turun Rauha* (Turku 1993). Finnish strategic culture was later distilled in the saying: "One Finnish soldier may equal ten Russian soldiers, but what do you do when the eleventh one comes around?"

[52] The rise of political liberalism was coupled with the rise of economic liberalism, which culminated in the work Anders Chydenius, a Finnish priest, who was the first thinker in the world to publish a theory of free trade (even though it was his English-speaking

outlets for expressing criticism against the government emerged through laws guaranteeing the freedom of press. The period was also responsible for the birth of a politically and socially conscious middle class in Finland, which was later to play an important role in balancing against extremism from the right and the left.[53] The age also provided widened possibilities for peasants and regional communities to pursue their agendas and to be heard by decision-makers.[54] The liberalism of Finnish political culture was all the more important compared to the political culture of the great powers in the region, Russia and Prussia, which were still in the grips of absolutism – "Enlightened" absolutism though it may have been in the case of Prussia.[55]

From the mid 18th century Swedish strategic culture seemed to accept some aspects of Horn's thinking and thus come closer to strategic culture in Finland. The Hat party initially concentrated on strengthening the defences of peripheral regions and emphasised the importance of maintaining good relations with Russia. These developments were undermined by the cap party's extensively pro-Russian policy, and the general lack of direction in foreign policy. In the 1770's power shifted from the estates to the monarch in a coup, which was largely motivated by the perceived inability of the estates to run country and to defend its international position. In the turmoil following the coup, King Gustavus III sought to gain the approval of the population by resorting to rhetoric envisaging a new great power era for Sweden. His foreign policy was a combination of moderation and revanschism, the former reflected in cooperation with Russia in the sphere of international trade (the Armed Neutrality Pact), and the latter in plans for enlargening the empire by pushing Finland's borders eastwards, as well as capturing Norway. The war with Russia during 1788–1790 was perceived by many officers in Finland as unnecessary and unlawful, leading 112 officers to revolt against the monarch. The attempt might have been successful, had it not been for the Danish attack on southern Sweden, which led to an

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colleague Adam Smith, who made the ideas famous a generation later in the English-speaking world).

[53] On the changes in political culture at the time, see Karonen, op. cit., pp. 343–373.

[54] Harald Gustafsson, *Political Interaction in the Old Regime. Central Power and Local Society in the Eighteenth-Century Nordic States* (Lund 1994), pp. XX.

[55] Russian absolutism differed from its Western counterparts (including Prussia) in its lack of legal constraints on the government's powers. An example of this was the 1730 revival of the Chancellory for Secret Investigative Affairs, which, like its predecessors, was a political police above the law.

upsurge of patriotic sentiments in Stockholm and consolidated Gustavus' power.[56]

5.2 From Strategic Optimisation to Liberalism?

From the perspective of strategic culture theory, the events are interesting since they reflect the way in which geopolitics affected the political culture in Finland and Sweden. The military opposition in Finland did not attempt a violent coup based on nationalist ideas, but made Gustavus' infringement of international law (the 1788 attack) the reference point of its struggle. To a large extent, this was motivated by the fact that neither the nobility nor the ordinary people supported an independent Finland. The fear of having to deal with Russia without Stockholm's help was greater than the frustration towards Gustavus' opportunistic foreign policy. After the officer revolt in Finland had failed, the military returned to its loyalist policy towards the monarch. The situation in Sweden, after the Swedish-Danish war was over, was different. Protests against the monarch's policies culminated in his assassination 1792, which was followed by a palace coup in Stockholm. While the coup did not lead to further violence (nor to a real revolution, like the one in France), Swedish-Finnish foreign policy continued without a clear direction, which, in the turmoil following the French revolution proved fatal to the country.

Illustrative examples of how the balance of power interacted with the emergence of international society can be found from1780 onwards in the formation and functioning of the Armed Neutrality pact between Russia, Sweden-Finland, and Denmark, and Prussia, (including, eventually, the Dutch Republic). Armed Neutrality was at the same time a product of the European balance of power and the first application of the principles of neutrality through neutral shipping rights. The need for the latter arose from the former, i.e. from British naval hegemony. After victory in the Seven Years War, Britain had little need for continental allies to balance against France, and was using her naval mastery to impose strict conditions of trade on the neutral countries. British policy clashed with the interests of Russia and Sweden-Finland, which were both major producers of naval stores, as well as Denmark and the Dutch Republic, which possessed sizeable merchant fleets. At the same time, the strength of Russia made it possible for Tsaritsa Catherine II to resist Britain and to unite the neutral countries in

[56] Karonen, op. cit., pp. 413–414.

defence of free trading rights. The policy of the neutrals was supported by France, whose policy of "free ships, free goods" was motivated less by a commitment to economic liberalism than by opposition to British naval supremacy.[57] Thus, the strategic situation reflected the paradox of a small state (Sweden-Finland) balancing against a regional great power (Russia), while both Sweden-Finland and Russia were at the same time united in common defence of their foreign trade interests, which were threatened by British protectionism.

The long-term importance of the situation arose from the fact that Armed Neutrality marked the emergence of principles of neutral shipping rights, which were to gain full international recognition only in the mid-19th century.[58] While applying legal norms of neutrality was, at the time, confined to the sphere of economic affairs, Armed Neutrality can be seen as the first step in the process which led, half a century later, to application of neutrality to security affairs in the Nordic region. Differences between Sweden-Finland and Denmark with respect to Armed Neutrality under the Utrecht system reflect the differences that emerged in their policies of neutrality during the Vienna system. Sweden-Finland's attitude to Armed Neutrality convention was extremely ambivalent. The country often played down economic conflicts with Britain in order not to isolate her from the region. Like Prussia, Sweden-Finland feared Russian military power more than the British navy. Copenhagen, in turn, was the most enthusiastic participant in the pact. The convention between Denmark and Russia included secret clauses arranging for naval cooperation.

In sum, Swedish-Finnish strategic culture during the Utrecht system reflected an understanding of two critical components of the Nordic Balance: the need for an external balancer and the utility of international law. In this sense, strategic culture in Sweden-Finland can be seen as shifting from strategic optimisation towards liberalism. However, at the same time, the continuous state of war between Sweden-Finland and Russia during the Utrecht system reflects the fact that international society at the time had not yet matured to the level institutionalised in the Vienna system, and that the Nordic states could not effectively use arguments relating to an accepted body of norms and rules when dealing with the Russian threat.

[57] McKay and Scott, op. cit., pp. 261–261.
[58] Derry, op. cit., p. 187.

Moreover, the above-mentioned emerging distinction between Swedish and Finnish strategic cultures is worth noting: the Finnish emphasis on moderation in strategic objectives emerging out of the experience of being the front line states of continuous warfare, and the Swedish grand plans reflecting a strategic culture based on the structural realities of the Age of Greatness, as well as knowledge of the continuing interest of Western great powers in keeping Russia off from the Scandinavian peninsula.[59]

6 Napoleon's Challenge to International Society and the Break-up of Sweden-Finland

The period between the French Revolution and the Congress of Vienna was characterised by the fall of the *ancien regime* in France and the exportation of revolutionary ideas across Europe. For the Nordic region, the effects of the French revolution were paradoxical. On the one hand the Nordic countries were unable to avoid the war, and the end-result was unfavourable to them, leading to the break-up of Sweden-Finland. On the other hand, the liberal ideas embraced for a short while by the Russia Tsar Alexander I allowed the Finns to use international law to compensate for military weakness, and thus to gain a semi-independent status of an Autonomous Grand Duchy.

6.1 Structural problems

Europe was thrown into two decades of war (1793–1815) as Napoleon deployed the national energies of the French revolution to impose new ideas and French mastery upon the Continent. Sweden-Finland's policy initially was to attempt to stay aloof from the war. Russia could then have used the

[59] One could speculate endlessly about the moral justification of Swedish strategic plans of extending Swedish-Finnish rule to cover areas West from Lake Ladoga and the White Sea. The indigenous people in the regions were more Finnish than Russian in their origin, and Swedish rule would probably have been more beneficial to them than Russian rule in the same sense as was the case for the population of Finland. However, following such a line of argumentation would open up a pandora's box of questions relating to the national determination of all kinds of minorities in the region, and that is not the topic of this paper. Nevertheless, the point worth considering here is that the Swedish strategic plans during the mid 18th century were not expansionist in the sense of claiming land that would have been Russian in its origin, but claiming land lost by non-Russian people to Russia through war.

opportunity to attack Poland.[60] Initially, Russia's strategy looked succesfull: in 1793 Britain, Prussia, and Austria created a coalition to check French expansion in Belgium and Holland. Rather soon, the responsibility to balance France fell on Austria, with the Britain army being too small to make a difference and Prussia exiting the war in 1795. As Austrian proved to weak to balance France alone, a second coalition emerged in 1798, this time complementing Austria and Britain with Russia. With Russia leaving the coalition a year later and Britain preferring to let others pay the price for containing France, Austria was left alone and after a series of defeats made peace with France. Balancing France was now left to the reluctant remaining great powers, Russia and Britain.[61]

King Gustavus IV's anti-Napoleonic sentiments (enforced by his long visit to Germany during 1803–1805) and the role of Britain as an export market of naval goods, led him to join forces with the British and Russians in the Third Coalition and to declare war against the French in October 1805. Gustavus' hopes of territorial gains in Pomerania were crushed by military defeats and a Franco-Russian armistice, which essentially meant the Russia passed the buck to Britain. The looming possibility of Franco-Russian (or separate French or Russian) dominance on the continent increased Scandinavia's strategic significance. This was further underlined in 1806 when Prussia fell under Napoleon's *blitzkrieg* in one week. Denmark and Sweden-Finland now faced a tough choice between Britain, which had become one of their main markets, and the Franco-Russian alliance, which ruled the continent.

Nordic security thus became directly related to the unfolding triangle between France, Russia, and Britain. From spring 1807 onwards, Russia was the only continental great power left to balance France. After suffering two major defeats at Eylau and Friedland, Russia was ready to make peace with France at Tilsit in June 1807. The treaty broke the Armed Neutrality pact and required Russia to join in the blockade of Britain and to force Denmark and Sweden-Finland to comply with the blockade.[62] The treaty also signalled Russia's abandonment of any diplomatic support to Prussia against France. While Prussia's removal into Napoleon's sphere of influence proved a

[60] Mearsheimer, Tragedy of Great Power Politics, pp. 154.
[61] For an excellent summary of the strategic choices of European great powers during the Napoleonic wars, see Mearsheimer, Tragedy, pp. 274–281.
[62] Alan Palmer, *Alexander I: Tsar of War and Peace* (London: Phoenix, 1997), p. 140.

mistake for Russia's overall grand strategy (paving the way for Napoleon's invasion to Russian heartland), it provided short-term advantages for Russia in the Nordic region by removing a major counterweight for expansion.

While it was Napoleon's bid for hegemony in Europe and the Franco-Russian deal against Britain that cast the shadow of war over the Nordic region, the final step in drawing the region into the vortex of war happened as a result of intelligence failure. Due to her dependence on naval stores, Britain needed to make sure that the Danish straits remain open for shipping.[63] In 1807 the British government received two mistaken diplomatic reports claiming that the Danish fleet was preparing for action and that the Danish were ready to close their ports in Holstein and accept occupation by the French. As a result, the Royal Navy launched an attack on Copenhagen, resulting in the destruction of the Danish fleet and the creation of a military vacuum in the region.[64] Not surprisingly, Denmark soon became a strong supporter of the Franco-Russian alliance. Sweden-Finland, in turn, refused to join the blockade of Britain, making Sweden-Finland an enemy of France, Russia, and Denmark simultaneously.

In 1808, with French encouragement, Russia launched an attack on the Eastern border of the Swedish-Finnish Kingdom.[65] Around the same time, Danish military activities began on the southern border of Sweden. Military plans concerning Finnish defence at the time were based on the premise that troops based in Finland would take care of the country's defence alone. Reinforcements would arrive in South-western Finland from Sweden only in case of an overwhelming attack.[66] As the attacked came, the badly outnumbered Swedish-Finnish troops retreated westwards, where they waited for reinforcements from Sweden. However, once again Stockholm decided to prioritise the country's southern border at the expense of the eastern one. The turning point of the war was the surrender of the Sveaborg fortress off the coast of Helsinki, which resulted in Finnish coastline falling

[63] In particular, the British need for masts from the Baltic Sea region for its fleet was immense. Kennedy, Rise and Fall,of the Great Powers, p. 165–167.
[64] Derry, op. cit., p. 202–203; McKay and Scott, op. cit., pp. 324.
[65] In a letter to Alexander I dated February 2 1808, Napoleon wrote "Your need is to remove the Swedes farther from your capital. Let your frontiers be extended as far as you wish in that direction. I am ready to assist you in this with all the means in my power"… "By 1 May our troops could be in Asia and Your Majesty's army in Stockholm". Cited in Palmer, op. cit., pp. 152–153.
[66] Karonen, op. cit., p. 421–422.

to Russian hands.[67] By March 1809 the Swedish-Finnish army was demobilised and the country declared an independent Grand Duchy of the Russian empire.

After it became evident that Napoleon was unable to conquer Russia, Sweden joined in the Fourth Coalition with Russia, Britain, Prussia, Spain and Portugal, to drive the French army back into her borders. As compensation for her loss of Finland, Sweden received Norway according to Russo-Swedish and Anglo-Swedish treaties, accepted also by Denmark in the Treaty of Kiel in 1814. In effect, the treaties marked the decline of Sweden and Denmark from middle powers to small nation states and the shift in the regional balance in the region in favour of Russia and Prussia.[68] The treaties also transformed Sweden from a Baltic Sea power, where the geographical and geopolitical centre of the country lay somewhere in the middle of the Baltic Sea, into a purely Scandinavian state with no possessions on the Eastern or Southern coasts of the Baltic Sea.

Russia's power vis-à-vis Sweden-Finland was so vast that Swedish heartland was saved from dismemberment by Russia and Denmark only by intervention of the British Navy, which had entered the Baltic to keep trade routes open every year since 1807 and continued to do so until 1813. The Russia victory was, however, a hollow one. Finnish guerrilla troops

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[67] The surrender, though preceded by a two-month siege, remains unexplained. A possible motive of the Swedish officers was to back a conspiracy, being planned in Stockholm at the time, against the King. The theory seems to be supported by the behaviour of the Finnish troops in the fortress (who had little to gain and much to loose from the King's removal) and rebelled against the Swedish officers in order to avoid surrendering to the Russians. After the surrender, many who had been made to surrender joined the Finnish forces fighting on the mainland and performed well when properly led. See J.E.O. Screen, "The Last Decades of the Tenure Army in Finland: Military Effectiveness and Cost Effectiveness," in *Sotahistoriallinen Aikakauskirja* 20 (2001) p. 253. However, the strategic role of Sveaborg was from the beginning weakened by failures in planning and construction. Sveaborg's planning was influenced heavily by the Swedish leadership's desire to copy French models of large maritime fortresses, instead of strategic necessities and realistic threat-assesments. Major mistakes were made in simple questions such as protection of guns and men, and the implementation of the plans suffered from personal conflicts. See Christoffer H. Ericsson, "A Critical Survey of Eighteenth Century Sveaborg as a Sea-Fortress – Sweden's Major Bulwark against Imperial Russia," in *Sotahistoriallinen Aikakauskirja* 18 (1999), 278–312.

[68] See Kent Zetterberg, "Sverige of drömmen om Finland och Norden under 1800-talet," in Suominen and Björnsson, op. cit., p. 88.

continued to resist in the forests and the war had failed to capture the public imagination in the way hoped by Russian generals.[69]

The main structural factors in the situation were strikingly similar to the one a century earlier: Sweden-Finland proved too small to resists Russian expansionism, Britain acted as the balancer to save Swedish heartland from Russia, while Finland was left to resists Russia alone. As was the case a century earlier, Finnish resistance sent a powerful signal to St. Petersburg and won the country crucial concessions from the Russians. Unlike a century earlier, France and Britain were unable and unwilling to provide the required military backing for Sweden to maintain control of Finland.[70] However, the strengthening of international society with the emergence of the Concert of Europe provided Finland with other means to defend her autonomy vis-à-vis Russia.

In hindsight, it can be seen that strategic mistakes made in Stockholm were partly to blame for Sweden-Finland's defeat in the war. King Gustav's personal hatred of Napoleon was a factor in leading Sweden-Finland to be entangled into the war in the Southern part of the Nordic-Baltic region, which in turn decreased the country's ability to fight effectively on the North-Eastern front when the need arose.[71] King Gustavus IV thus repeated, with some variation, the mistakes that King Charles XII had made in the Great Northern War a century earlier. By prioritising territory that was not essential to the survival of the Kingdom, Gustavus lost territory that moved the real security threat in the region – Russia – closer to Swedish heartland and had adverse effects on the regional balance of power. Had Gustavus shown more moderation with his war aims, many of the problems that in the following centuries faced the Nordic countries, and Finland in particular, would probably never have materialised or would have appeared in a less threatening form.[72]

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[69] Alan Palmer, *Alexander I: Tsar of War and Peace* (London: Phoenix, 1997) pp. 153–154.

[70] Join plans by the Swedes and the British were drawn up in the aftermath of the war, which aimed at recapturing Finnish territory. The plans were never carried out. See Zetterberg, op. cit., 89.

[71] See Zetterberg, op. cit., pp. 88–90; Screen, op. cit., pp. 252–255.

[72] This said, it is worth noting emphasising the role that bad luck played in the coalition-formation at the time and the effects that it had on the regional balance of power: Had the British not received mistaken intelligence in 1807 about Danish naval preparations in they would not have attacked Copenhagen. In that case Denmark would probably not

6.2 Cultural promises

While the constraints and opportunities forced upon the Nordic countries by the structure of the international system during and after Napoleon's defeat were in many ways similar to previous times, the cultural context was revolutionary: the French revolution had resulted in the realisation of the idea of national self-determination based on the will of the people, as opposed to rule by the *ancien regime.*

The shift was particularly important for the future of the Finns, whose resentment against Russian rule was well known to the Russians. Alexander I – at the time a self-styled liberal – conceded Finland an unprecedented degree of autonomy in 1809, handing back territories the country had lost in the wars of 1721 and 1743. The Tsar sought to gain the loyalty of the Finns by enabling the country – in his own words – to take its place "in the rank of nations, governed by its own laws" – even if these laws implied a direct continuity of the Swedish-Finnish legal system. Underlying the Tsar's views was recognition that the forces unleashed in Europe by the French revolution could not be ignored permanently. Granting autonomy to Finland was part of his larger vision at the time, which implied the reordering of the European system to reflect the principle of national self-determination.[73] Another factor was the weakness and ineffectiveness of the Russian empire's administrative system, and Alexander's recognition of the fact that extending it to Finland, which already had a well-functioning administrative system, was not logical at the time.

In practice, Russian policy included letting the Finns keep their Swedish legal system as well as representative political institutions, which differed radically from the Russian ones.[74] A Russian governor-general was officially

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have joined hands with Russia and France against Britain, and Sweden-Finland would not have been drawn into a two-front war against Denmark in the south and Russia in the east. With Sweden having the possibility of concentrating its forces on Finnish territory, Russia might not have attacked Finland in the first place, and might have lost if it did. In short, Stockholm should have ranked its grand strategic priorities already before a crisis, not during the crisis – and should have seen Russia as the main threat to Swedish interests while seeking to maintain peaceful relations with Denmark, even if that would have implied territorial small concessions.

[73] Sheehan, op. cit., p. 129.

[74] Many Finnish laws dated from 1734, when a long-planned collection of general laws was introduced in Sweden-Finland. The spirit of these laws reflected the Age of Liberty and some them still exist in Finnish law. See Karonen, pp. 378–379. Finland's autonomy

head of state in Finland, but interventions into the working of the Finnish Senate were rare, especially since the working language of the government throughout the 19th century remained Swedish. The result was that Finland was no more considered a province, as was the case during Swedish rule, but as a "nation" subject to the rule of the Russian Tsar in only limited areas. To complete Finnish autonomy a separate currency, *Markka*, was later created. It was initially tied to the value of the Russian Ruble, but entered the gold standard two decades before the Ruble.[75]

Yet another factor facilitating Finland's autonomy was the Russian political elite's recognition of the decreasing role of serfdom as a basis for recruitment in the Russian military. Finland became part of the Russian empire at a time when the Russian military was being turned from a peasant mass army into a territorially decentralised force, with civil society and local elites able exert a more powerful influence over the military.[76] As a result, Finland was able to maintain its own War Department and a small army, which was under the command of the Finnish government, even if its role in the larger scheme of things was less strategic than political. In contrast to Swedish times, the Finnish Army, founded in 1812, was the first military force created explicitly to defend Finland. In contrast to troops elsewhere in the Russian empire, the Finnish army was recruited from Finland, commanded by Finns, and had as its mission the defence of Finland.[77]

Finns also had some success in maintaining a measure of autonomy in the conduct of foreign affairs. While Russian authorities had the right to

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was officially codified in Alexander I's Act of Assurance at the Porvoo Diet in March 1809: "We, Alexander I, … have desired by the present Act to confirm and ratify the religion and fundamental laws of the Land, as well as the privileges and rights which each Estate in the said grand Duchy in particular, and all the inhabitants in general, be their position high or low, have hitherto enjoyed according to the Constitution. We promise to maintain all these benefits and laws firm, unchanged, and in full force. In confirmation whereof We have signed this Act of Assurance with Our own hand." The fact that in his speech, given in French, Alexander I actually used the word *nation* when referring to Finland, would have been unthinkable during Swedish times.

[75] See e.g. Singleton, op. cit., pp. 61–67.

[76] Fuller,

[77] The Army was subordinate to the Finnish government's Department of War Affairs from 1809–1841 and again 1858–1904. During 1841–1858 the Department of War Affairs was temporarily replaced by the Finance Department. A useful summary of the developments can be found in the introductory chapter of Jarl Kronlund, *Suomen Puolustuslaitos 1918–1939* (Porvoo: WSOY, 1988), pp. 15–22.

negotiate international treaties on behalf of Finland, ratification by Finnish authorities was required before the treaties could be applied to Finland. In practice, the Finnish Senate became in involved in preparations of international negotiations and was able to initiate and comment upon policies related to Finnish foreign trade, as well as to have Finnish delegates in the negotiations. Over the years Finns also managed to have independent Finnish representatives in key embassies, such as London, Paris and New York, though their mandates were limited to consular duties and trade relations.[78]

Thus, paradoxically, the structural changes set in motion in the European system by the French revolution, which led to Finland sliding into the grey zone between Western (Swedish, British and Prussian) and Russian spheres of influence, resulted in the emergence of principles which facilitated Finland's legal defence of her political culture and domestic order from the Russian challenge at a time when the military alternative had largely failed due to Swedish strategic blunders. While Finland was now an entity distinct from Sweden, and could not rely on active military measures to defend itself against Russia, the strategic culture of the Finnish elite subscribed broadly to the same ideas as the elite in Stockholm: a strong reliance on international law and the idea of international society.

While the rules of great power cooperation set out in Vienna made possible one of the longest absences of major war in Europe, the experiences of the Nordic countries in the Napoleonic Wars, as well as the lack of respect for the rights of small countries in the Vienna system, led to debates in Sweden-Norway, Denmark, and – eventually – Finland, about the basic security policy orientations of the countries. The advantage of the Vienna system as opposed to the Westphalian and Utrecht systems was that the policy of neutrality was now in the process of being codified into international law as a non-partisan, continuous policy, to which countries could explicitly refer to. In the end, the period beginning with the Congress of Vienna and the ending in World War II tuned out to be seen one where all Nordic countries attempted, with varying motives and degrees of success, to pursue policies of neutrality.

[78] Ora Meres-Wuori, *Suomen ulko ja turvallisuuspoliittinen päätöksentekojärjestelmä* (Helsinki: Lakimiesliiton kustannus, 1998), pp. 44–50.

The kind of neutrality that was eventually adopted by Sweden in 1834 was a compromise between strict neutrality and the power political realities at the time. Seeing Russian power as the most dangerous threat to their security, Swedes – followed later (1853) by the Danes – adopted a policy of keeping their ports open to warships of all great powers. This benefited Britain and France, who did not have bases in the Baltic, while Russia already had hers.[79] The policy adopted by Sweden and Denmark can be seen as the starting point of the Nordic Balance as we presently understand it: it was a policy designed to provide a counterweight to Russia, while trying at the same time to decrease the strategic importance of Scandinavia for all great powers through neutrality. Unlike the Swedish-Finnish balancing act during the Utrecht system, Sweden and Denmark were now able to benefit from a more binding system of rules and norms, i.e. from the thickening of the common culture (international society) in the region. This was one of the paradoxes of the Vienna system: while the system was based on the interests of great powers, and many small powers were sacrificed during its creation, the common culture among the great powers provided additional security for the small states that were allowed to exist within the system.

Finnish policy after Vienna highlights an even more interesting aspect of international society: the way in which a people still lacking full sovereignty could use the norms of international society to further its own interests. The Finnish balancing act was initially more subtle from that of Sweden and Denmark – it involved the defence of Finland's autonomy vis-à-vis Russia and the construction of a national identity separate from the Swedish one – but it relied on the same principles of classical international law that were institutionalised in the Vienna system and reflected in the neutrality of Sweden and Denmark.

7 The emergence of Finnish strategic culture

The years between the Congress of Vienna and the Crimean war were characterised by a national awakening, with a surge of Finnish-language books and political newspapers being introduced in the 1820's and 30's to compete with Swedish culture. Initially, the Russian government did not oppose Finnish nationalism, even though it was rather anti-Russian in its content, since it was seen as a useful counterweight to the prevailing

[79] Derry, op. cit., p. 241

Swedish influence in Finland.[80] The key political text in constructing the idea of a Finnish state separate from Russia (and Sweden) was a theory by Professor Israel Hwasser, which was dressed up in legal form by A.I. Arwidsson and J.J. Tengström, and gained general acceptance in Finland in the mid-19th century. The "doctrine of the state" developed by them was based on the contract theory of natural law, and it implied that the Porvoo Diet in 1809 had emancipated Finland from Sweden, thereby turning the country into a state governed by a constitution. According to this interpretation Finland was an autonomous state in union with Russia. The text gained political relevance in 1862 when the committee making preparations for the Diet in Helsinki started referring unashamedly to the concepts of "fundamental law", "constitution", and "government powers" in reference to the Estates' relation to the Russian Tsar.[81]

The English School is useful in elaborating the radically different responses of Finland and Eastern European countries to the Russian reforms. The Finnish response – defending the rule of law according to principles of the contract theory of natural law – relied roughly on the same intellectual principles as the Vienna system, i.e. classical European international law.[82] As Swedish-Norwegian and Danish policies of neutrality relied on the same principles, one can argue that the operation of the Nordic Balance at the time reflected the expansion of international society combined with a realist policy of counter-hegemonic balancing.[83] In other words, the balancing act was a combination of military and political-legal actions, with the former taking precedence over the latter in Sweden-Norway and Denmark, and vice versa in Finland. Finnish policy stands in stark contrast with the policies of Eastern European countries (e.g. Poland and the Baltic States), not to mention the peoples of the Caucasus (e.g. Armenians), which sought

[80] In 1863 Tsar Alexander II decreed that Finnish language should be the official language of the government and that it should be used beside Swedish in courts.
[81] Osmo Jussila, Seppo Hentilä, Jukka Nevakivi, From Grand Dutchy to a Modern State: A Political History of Finland since 1809 (London: Hurst & Company, 1995), pp. 38–39.
[82] On the principles of classical international law, see e.g Peter Malanczuk, *Akehurst's Modern Introduction to International Law* (7th ed.) (London: Routledge, 1997), p. 18–23.
[83] It is worth noting that in 1863 Sweden (together with Spain, Portugal, and Italy) protested by diplomatic intercession against the methods used by Russia during the Polish uprising. Malanczuk cites this as an example of humanitarian intervention based on political liberalism during the era of classical international law. Malanczuk, op. cit.

autonomy from Russia through revolution and insurrection while not having the capabilities of achieving permanent results through such policies.[84]

The pragmatic and law-abiding strategic culture of Finland in the 19th century suggests that while international society had not yet expanded to Eastern Europe, Finland was already acting, as part of the Nordic Balance, as a subject of European international society and classical international law. The differences in strategic culture between Finland and Eastern Europe thus echo the differences that could be found in political culture in general: in Finland, the tradition of liberalism and rule of law, which stabilised political and economic relations; in Eastern Europe, the weakness of these traditions, which made political life more violent, economic life less productive, and the prospects of constitutional democracy bleak. Thus, under the Vienna system one can see a shift in Nordic strategic culture from the Utrecht era culture of realism coupled with hopes of society-building to a more real application of the ideal-type of a liberal strategic culture. This policy received its first test under the Crimean War, and was put under immense pressure with the break-up of the Vienna system and the outbreak of World War I.

7.1 Liberals versus Nationalists

While Finnish identity and its relationship to the idea of international society was beginning to look increasingly coherent by the mid 19th century, the Finnish political elite was divided in its assessments about Finland's room of maneuvre as well as the ultimate goals of Finnish policy. In the public discussion two variants of the idea of national self-determination started emerging. In the wake of the Polish uprising, the liberal newspaper *Helsingfors Dagblad* suggested that Finland's policy in case of war between Russia and the west should be one of neutrality. The paper went so far as to propose that King Karl XV of Sweden should attempt to gain international recognition for Finnish neutrality through an international agreement similar to the one on which Belgian and Swiss neutrality were based.[85] This

[84] See e.g. Lieven, op. cit., pp. 271–274; Hosking, op. cit., pp. 382–388; Osmo Jussila, "Konservatiivinen imperiumi,," Heikki Kirkinen, (ed.) Venäjän Historia (Helsinki: Otava, 2000), p. 232.

[85] Erkki Osmonsalo, "Perustuslaillisen kehityksen kausi", in Arvi Korhonen (ed.) *Suomen Historian Käsikirja* (Porvoo, WSOY, 1949), p. 118; Risto Penttilä *Finland's Security in a Changing World: A Historical Perspective* (Helsinki: National Defence College, 1995) (Finnish Defence Studies no. 7), pp. 8-9.

interpretation took the mainstream "doctrine of state" formulated by A.I. Arwidsson and J.J. Tengström (see above) to a new level by seeking to construct Finland as an actor in international relations instead of as an autonomous Grand Duchy without an independent security policy. The liberal position received support in Stockholm, from a group of Finnish emigrants who had kept alive the issue of separating Finland from the Russian empire and reuniting it with Sweden.[86] In other Nordic countries, this school was supported by advocates of "Scandinavianism", a strongly anti-Russian school of thought seeking to recreate the Union of Nordic countries, including Finland. [87]

The most prominent opponent of aspirations for full independence, neutrality or a new Union of Nordic countries, was J. V. Snellman, who declared them unrealistic at the time. Snellman warned that Finnish separatism would only lead to violence between Russia and Finland, with the smaller actor being in the receiving end. Snellman was also a Hegelian Fennoman, who believed that nation-states should be based on homogenous linguistic and ideological foundations, which he believed in the Finnish case to be the Finnish language and a nationalist ideology, not the Swedish language and Scandinavianist ideology.[88]

Snellman's policy, referred to as "separatistic loyalism", by later historians became the grand strategic paradigm of the political elite.[89] The reason for adopting the policy was related less to conclusions concerning the debate between the Scandinavists and the Fennomans, than to conclusions relating to what was realistically possible to achieve. In the shadow of the increasing centralisation of the Russian empire, the Finnish governments strategy was to defend the realm of the rule of law by isolating the Russian Governor-General from the civil administration of Finland. Obviously, the starting point in the Finnish case was different from other regions of the empire: an autonomous domestic political system run according to Swedish laws.

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[86] Ibid.

[87] Zetterberg, op. cit., pp. 102–105.

[88] See e.g. Penttilä, *Finland's Security*, pp. 8–11. At the same time as he was a fierce nationalist and an opponent of Swedish culture, Snellman also managed to be pro-German and pro-Prussian. He had studied in Germany in 1840–41 and sough to import a Hegelian philosophy of the state into Finnish political culture. See Visuri & Forsberg, op. cit., p. 197.

[89] Jussi Lappalainen, "Venäjä vai Skandinavia," in Heikki Viitala (ed.) *Snellman, valtakunta ja keisarikunta* (Jyväskylä: Snellman Institute Publications, no. 10, 1990).

However, equally important was the cautious and pragmatic policy of the Finnish administration. Step by step, the Finns were able to consolidate the role of the Senate, to create and strengthen the role of a Supreme Court, and to limit the Governor-General's duties.[90] The essence of the policy from the Finnish side was to reassure St Petersburg that liberal reforms and autonomy were in the interest of Russia, since introducing administrative reforms of the kind done in Eastern Europe and the Baltic States at the time (e.g. the *zemstvo* system of local government) would backfire in Finland and lead to political unrest.

An understanding of Russian grand strategic considerations can also be found behind the Finnish policy of separatist loyalism. The Crimean war had taught the Finns the lesson that Finland could become a theatre of war in conflicts between Russia and Western maritime powers – a particularly threatening scenario because of Finland's dependence of Western export markets.[91] The aim of the Finnish policy of separatist loyalism at the time was to ensure the Russians that Finland would not slide to the Western camp to the extent that Finnish territory could be used as a logistical springboard for operations against Russia. The pro-German connotations of Scandinavianism were particularly important here, since the rise of Germany and the growth of Berlin's ambitions were watched closely in Moscow.

The grand strategy of separatist loyalism can be seen as an application of the Nordic Balance: just like the neutrality of the other Nordic countries, it implied restraint towards Russia, while at the same time relying implicitly on the Western (i.e. Royal Navy) presence in the region to contain Russian power. The danger inherent in the strategy was the same as in all previous and future attempts to couple the Nordic region into the European balance: while a Western presence in the region helped balance Russian power, it also brought it the possibility that Russian-Western tension elsewhere could escalate into Nordic territory. The commitment to a Western-leaning neutrality by Sweden, Norway, and Denmark and to separatist loyalism by the Finns can be seen as a conscious Nordic attempt to maximise the benefits

[90] For an excellent analysis of the process, see Jussila, Hentilä, Nevakivi, pp. 44–55.
[91] See Penttilä, *Moskovasta Brysseliin*, p. 19. Finland's merchant fleet at the time was larger than the Russian merchant fleet, and because the fleet could not sail under the Finnish flag, it risked being a target of military operations aimed at Russian ships. Finnish shipowners were in fact the first ones (in 1859) to make an official request to the Finnish merchant fleet to declare the country neutral, a request which they also submitted to Russian authorities. See op. cit., p. 23.

of Western involvement, while sending a signal of strategic restraint towards St. Petersburg at the same time.

The method of communication between Finnish Grand Duchy and the central government reflected the grand strategy of keeping Finland out of the Russian political realm: As far as possible, the Finnish leadership attempted to deal directly with the Russian Tsar, reassuring him of their personal loyalty and sidelining the bureaucrats of empire, who were inclined to treat Finland as just another Baltic province.[92] In this policy, the Finns were successful: only one of the reforms taken in Russia and Eastern Europe as a result of the Crimean war was applied to Finland. It was the army reform, and even its implementation the Finnish government was able to water down by requiring all officers and non-commissioned officers to be Finnish citizens and by prohibiting the use of the army outside of Finland.[93]

In the post-Crimea Russian-Finnish security dilemma we can thus see both the imperatives of structural realism and the promises of the English School at work. The growing appeal of autonomy in Finland (and other countries occupied by Russia in Europe) was a result of opportunities and pressures created by structural changes. Russia's defeat in the Crimean War was made possible by Russia's economic decline in relation to Western great powers. The reform program undertaken after the war was facilitated by structural pressures: it was meant to ensure that the military defeats of the Crimean War would not happen again. The combination of Russian weakness and increasing centralisation of power resulted in a situation, where countries like Finland not only had the incentive of pursuing a more independent course, but also the opportunity to do so. However, it took the breakdown of the Vienna system for these countries to realise their ambition.

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[92] It is worth noting the extent to which this was reminiscent of Finnish attitudes to Swedish monarchs, who were often seen by Finns as far more useful than Swedish nobility or the bureaucracy of the Swedish-Finnish empire.

[93] Jussila, Hentilä, Nevakivi, op. cit., p. 53. Kronlund, op. cit., pp. 19–21. The Crimean War did, however, show the limit of Finnish autonomy in a major international crisis: as a result of the increased need to defend Finland's coast against the bombardment of the French and British navies, about 45 000–50 000 Russian troops were temporarily sent into the country. As a result of the tightening of the Russian empire during the reforms after the Crimean War, some of the Russian troops stayed in Finland, thus directly violating the autonomy of the country.

7.2 Structural problems and strategic practice

The brief summary provided above describes the structural factors behind security dilemma, which characterised Nordic security during World War I as well as the Second World War. For Russia, the rising power of Germany constituted a direct threat, which increased the strategic importance of Finnish territory, especially the country's Southern coastline. The old balancers, Britain and France, which had provided Sweden-Finland help against Russia at crucial moments, were too weak to be of much help in the Baltic Sea region. From the late 19th century onwards, British and French policy in the Nordic-Baltic region fell repeatedly into the same pattern – a pattern, which was broken only with the outset of the cold war. The main determinant of this pattern was an attempt to limit German influence in the region, which in turn required a tacit acceptance of Russian influence in the region. This proved particularly problematic for the small democracies in the region, since Germany constituted their only hope for a credible external balancer against Russia.

The policy of the Sweden and Finland during the break-down of the Vienna system followed the logic familiar from previous centuries, the exception being only the source of an external balancer. Sweden, too weak to project power to Finnish territory – and unable to rely on the Royal Navy or the French to balance against Russian power[94] – maintained its neutrality and declined to provide any official support for Finnish aspirations of independence.[95] Sweden's policy was, however, not one of strict neutrality. Rather, it was a policy, which relied – as in both World Wars – partly on German power to balance against Russia. Already in the 1870's cooperation with Germany replaced Scandinavianism and the reliance on Britain and France as Sweden's main balancing instrument against Russia. The strategic partnership ("Vereinigung") did not constitute an infringement of Swedish neutrality, but it raised hopes of the possibility of regaining Finland from Russia – hopes, which the policy of Russification in the last years of the 19th century made urgent.[96]

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[94] Churchill, First Lord of the Admiralty, ordered a preliminary study in 1913 about the Royal Navy entering into the Baltic Sea once again. However, expert naval opinion in Britain turned against the Baltic project. See Derry, op. cit., p. 304.

[95] See e.g. Stig Jägerskiöld, *Mannerheim: Marshal of Finland* (London: Hurst & Co., 1986), pp. 56–58.

Finland, not yet sovereign, struggled against increasing Russian pressure through legal means and active resistance. The crucial step was taken by the Finns in 1904–1905, as a result of five years of intensive "Russification", which had included abolishing the autonomous Finnish army. The Finnish reaction included a general strike, murder of the Russian Governor-General and – most importantly – the setting up local militias (the Civil Guards), to protect the population against Russian "oppressive measures" and to provide a counterweight to the Finnish Red Guards, which were starting to emerge.[97] From this moment on the policies of Russia and Finland started evolving rapidly in directly different directions. The Finnish unicameral parliament, which was set up in 1906, was based on principles of Western liberalism (it was the first parliament in Europe to provide females the right to vote) and managed to create a measure of political unity among the left and right in

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[96] Zetterberg, op. cit., pp. 109–110. In 1906, Sweden signed a trade treaty with Germany, which secured favourable terms for Swedish timber exports to Germany in exchange of freer export of high-grade iron ore from Lapland to Germany. By 1910, Sweden under King Gustav V, an authoritarian and pro-German figure, had accepted a German invitation for an exploratory meeting of the chief of staffs of the two countries. As World War I broke out, Sweden declared neutrality, but shipments of iron ore for German arms industry continued and a lucrative trade of goods to Germany through the allied blockade began. Sweden also forced the allies to accept the policy of "transhipment", which implied that for every ton of goods bound to Russia through Sweden (the only available route to Russia), the Swedes could export an equivalent amount to Germany. While the allies did not approve of the policy, they had to accept it since they knew that too much pressure on Sweden – where the ruling class was pro-German and, even more so, anti-Russian – would push Sweden to join the war on the side of the Central powers. See e.g. B. C. J. McKercher, "Economic Warfare," in Hew Strachan, *The Oxford Illustrated History of the First World War* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1998), pp. 129–130; Derry, op. cit., p. 281, 304–305. Swedish policy included a major miscalculation in 1918 when the Swedes induced the commander of the Finnish Civil Guards to leave the Åland Islands, which had administratively been part of Finland since 1643. Swedish occupation was soon complemented by a German military presence, which was welcome by the Finnish government. The episode left a scar in Swedish-Finnish relations for decades.

[97] See Jussila, Hentilä, Nevakivi, op. cit., pp. 82–83. The first conflict between the Civil Guards, composed primarily of students, and "red guards", composed mostly of workers, happened already in 1906 in Helsinki. If one is searching for continuities in Finnish military culture, then the early civil guard formations from 1905 onward, which a decade later later developed into the Jäger-movement can be seen as the link between the armed forces of the Finnish Grand Duchy that existed from 1809 to 1904, and the post-1917 Finnish defence forces. See Kronlund, op. cit., pp. 23–31.

Finland, while Russia drifted into militarism and eventually revolutionary chaos.

Strategic practice in terms of doctrine had to follow realist imperatives. A neorealist "sameness effect" can be seen at work behind the birth of the Finnish defence forces as well as the military strategy adopted by the Finnish Government's troops during the War of Liberation against the Red Guards and the Russians.[98] The outbreak of the First World War provided Finns with an opportunity to strengthen ties to the West. The most significant move made by the Finns was sending 2000 volunteers – despite Russian opposition – to Germany to obtain military training. Out of these men, a separate Prussian military unit, *Königlich Preussisches Jägerbataillon Nr 27*, was later formed.[99] The immediate reaction of Russia was to halt the planned conscription of Finnish citizens into the Russian army, because of the pro-German bias of the Finnish civil society unveiled by the Jäger-movement.

The real significance of the Jägers was revealed as Russian troops in Finland joined the revolutionary Finnish Red Guards in an attempt to overthrow the Finnish government. The Finnish government, which had begun a process of turning the Civil Guards into a more effective fighting force, lacked an experienced officer corps, and the Jägers, moved from the Germany to Finland in early 1918 after a request by Marshall Mannerheim, Commander in Chief of the Finnish government forces, were able fill this role. With them, the Jägers brought a large number of armaments for the Finnish government troops, including 44.000 rifles, 63 machine guns, 9 million bullets, and some artillery.[100] The Jäger-movement had also produced a five-volume basic text in Finnish on tactics and military education. The books were based on German textbooks on the topics, and translated the knowledge and experience of the Prussian officer corps to the Finns.[101]

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[98] The "War of Liberation" (Vapaussota) is used here instead of "Civil War" (Kansalaissota), because the war was carried out by Finnish government forces to liberate the country from Russian troops and Finnish communist revolutionaries, who cooperated with the Russians. "Civil War" would thus fail capture the nature of the war and the goals, which the Finnish government troops were fighting for.

[99] Consequently, the movement became known as the Jäger-movement.

[100] Tomas Ries, *Luja tahto: Suomen puolustaminen* (Helsinki: Suomen Mies, 1990), pp. 18–20

[101] Kronlund, op. cit., p. 29.

The conduct of the war between the Finnish government troops and the Red Guards aided with Russian troops, was itself influenced by the logic of the Nordic Balance. Marshall Mannerheim believed that it was a vital interest for Finns to be able to defeat the Russians and the Red Guards within Finland – if possible – without direct German help. Otherwise the key components of Finnish grand strategy, balancing against Russia while reassuring at the same that Finnish territory would not be used by Western great powers for attacking St Petersburg, would be compromised. Mannerheim's goal was made urgent by the pro-German policy of the Finnish Senate, which sent a formal request in March 1918 to Germany asking for aid in the war against the Red Guards in Finland.

Paradoxically, in order to assert that Finland was not a just German province, the Finnish officer corps had to resort to the same military tactics that had been proven successful by the German army against Russia – rapid, mobile, offensives. By the time the German reinforcements arrived, the Finnish government troops had defeated the strongholds of the Reds in Tampere, and the turning point of the war had been achieved.[102] In sum, the emulation of the German military, facilitated by the education of the Finnish officer corps in Germany, played an important role in defeating the Bolsheviks and preventing Finland's slide into the camp, which was about the mount a revolutionary challenge to international society.

7.3 Liberals vs. Nationalists, round two

The dilemma Finland faced in the turmoil of the breakdown of international society during the two pre-war decades above mentioned structural and cultural factors. In particular, three factors influenced Finland's security dilemma. First, the tightening of Russia's grip on Finland as a result of the centralisation of the empire in the aftermath of Crimea (the "sameness effect"). Second, an increase in the attractiveness of military solutions to political problems throughout Europe (the cultural component). Third, an increase in the possibility of major war with hardly predictable alliance patterns (the structural situation).

[102] The *Sonderverband Ostsee* that landed in Hanko between 3-5.1918 consisted only of 9000 men, and the infantry brigade "von Brandenstein" that landed in Loviisa consisted of 3000 men. They were accompanied by a naval formation led by two battleships.

The situation forced the above-mentioned two camps, liberals and Fennomans, to formulate concrete policies on how to maximise Finnish security. It is at this point, that one can see a distinct Finnish strategic culture being born out of Finnish political culture. The two paradigms emerging in the Finnish debate have been labelled as "constitutionalist opposition" and "restricted compliance".[103] The constitutionalists began formulating actual policies based on the premise that Finland was a state, not a province. A central figure in this group was Leo Mechelin, whose book, "Précis du droit public du Grand-duché de Finlande (1886), made the constitutionalists known also outside the country. The constitutionalists were behind the above-mentioned policies, which included the general strike, the murder of the Russian Governor-General and the setting up of the Civil Guards. Mechelin himself was behind a 1907 proposal for a Finnish constitution, which was based on earlier Gustavian notions of constitutional law, and later became the basis for the 1919 constitution.

"Restricted compliance" was based on the strategy of trying to maintain Finlands' special position by dealing directly with the Tsar. The strategy was formulated most clearly in J. R. Danielson-Kalmari's pamphlet "Mihin suuntaan?" ("In which direction") published in 1901. The limits of compliance, according to Danielson-Kalmari, were dependent on Russian policy: if the aim of Russian policy was complete subordination – as increasingly seemed to be the case in the beginning of the 20th century – then compliance had to be abandoned in favour of resistance. The difference to constitutionalists, however, was that according to the doctrine of restricted compliance, the defence of Finnish autonomy should not be based on claims to formal rights (i.e. a reference to a codified system of laws), but on pragmatic deals with the Tsar.[104]

As war broke out, the Finnish dilemma crystallised into the following question: how to achieve the aspiration of full independence from Russia while ending up on the side that stood for the maintenance of international society – i.e. the Western Allies. The achievements of the Finnish governments troops under Mannerheim's leadership ensured that Finland achieved this – an achievement that draw a crucial distinction between

[103] See Penttilä, *Finland's Security*, pp. 11–13.
[104] Finnish culture was nevertheless seen by Danielson-Kalmari as meaningful only within the European context. See Jukka Tervonen, *J. R. Danielson-Kalmari, historiantutkija ja –opettaja* (Helsinki, 1991).

Finland and the Baltic States, where it was the German troops that liberated the countries from Russian occupation. The Baltic states received their independence as a result of the Brest-Litovsk peace treaty between Germany and Russia, while Finland fought itself to independence.[105] The logic applies to the end result of World War I in general: out of the string of countries from the Baltic Sea to the Black Sea that gained their independence as the Romanov, Habsburg, and Hohenzollern empires collapsed, only Finland was able to maintain its independence and liberal constitution throughout the 20th century. The rest lost their independence in the struggle between Germany and the Soviet Union, and their fledging democratic systems collapsed under pressure from communism and fascism.

8 In search of balance: the inter-war years

The Finnish decision to allow transit of German troops to Lapland – making Finland a co-belligerent of Germany – came at the moment when the shift in German strategic culture to a fully revolutionary form had not yet taken place, while the Soviets' offensive and revolutionary intentions, manifested in the full-scale invasion attempt of 1939–1940, were clear to almost everyone in the Finnish elite. However, the controversial choice was the final link in a two-decade long search for means of dealing with the growing Soviet threat. In chronological order the following alliance policies for balancing Soviet power were tried and rejected by the Finnish leadership in the interwar years. Attempts to engage Germany (1918–1919), Britain and France (1919–1921), building a coalition of states from the Baltic rimland (early 1920's), realiance on the League of Nations (1920's and 30's), Nordic cooperation (1930's), and, finally, requests for help from US, Britain, and France (before and during the Winter War).

8.1 Germany and Britain as potential balancers

The policy of attempting to engage Germany, Britain and France in Finnish security in the immediate aftermath of independence in 1917 was preceded by a parliamentary debate on whether Finland should include a statement of neutrality in the constitution, which was being drafted at the time.[106] The

[105] The mirror image of this process happened in 1939, when the Baltic States acquiesced to Russian demands for military bases, leading to occupation, while Finland, again, fought successfully on its own to retain its independence.

[106] Jukka Nevakivi, "Finnish neutrality" in Nevakivi (ed.), *Neutrality in History – La Neutralité dans l'histoire* (Helsinki, 1992), p. 34.

proponents of such a statement referred to the Swedish experience, where neutrality had been the guiding principle of foreign policy for over a century and had helped the country in avoiding being dragged into European wars during the whole period. The counter-argument was that Bolshevik Russia posed such a threat to the very existence of Finland, that the door had to be kept open for Western assistance if need arise. Sympathies towards Sweden in general had decreased with Swedish reluctance to provide Finnish volunteers with officer education before the war (which Germany did offer), Sweden's unwillingness to provide military help in the war against the Red Guards and the Bolsheviks, and Swedish occupation of Åland islands in 1918.[107] Moreover, the Finns were well aware of the compromises that Sweden had made to her neutrality in terms of the policy of transhipment (see previous chapter) as well as the general pro-Western sentiments of the ruling class, which made the difference to Finnish policies seem a matter of degree rather than quality.

In the immediate aftermath of the War of Liberation, cooperation with Germany seemed like a natural option. Equally natural was the abandonment of that option after the defeat of Germany. France and Britain temporarily replaced Germany's role, with the Royal Navy replacing the German fleet as the main Western navy in the Baltic. During 1919–1920 Finland provided logistical support for the Britain, which sought to help the counter-revolutionaries in Russia as well as to affect the course of events in Estonia. In practice, British-Finnish cooperation at the time remained thin and was manifested mostly in Finnish logistical support for British naval operations. British torpedo boats, for example, were allowed to dock in Finnish ports between their raids against Bolshevik naval forces.[108] Franco-Finnish relations remained at the level of diplomatic support. France recognized Finnish independence in February 1919 and worked to gain official recognition for Finnish independence from Britain and the US as well.

British policy fitted particularly well with Finnish policy in the aftermath of independence, since Finnish policy included several interventions into

[107] Nevakivi, "Finnish and Swedish Policy before 1945," in Bo Huldt, Teija Tiilikainen, Tapani Vaahtoranta, and Anna-Helkama-Rågård (eds.) Finnish and Swedish Security: Comparing National Policies (Swedish National Defence College & The Finnish Institute of International Affairs, 2001), pp. 20–21. Sweden had been the initial choice for the location of educating the Finnish officers. See Visuri & Forsberg, op. cit., p. 200.

[108] The British naval formations left the Gulf of Finland in 1920 and the Baltic Sea in 1921. Kronlund, op. cit., pp. 103–105.

Soviet-occupied Karelia, conducted under the blessing of Mannerheim, as well as the sending of a large number of volunteers to take part in the Estonian war of liberation in 1918. While the strategic rationale behind the interventions was to secure Finland with the most easily defendable border against Bolshevik Russia, ethnic and linguistic sympathies towards Finns in Eastern Karelia also played a part, as did anti-Bolshevik ideological motives.[109] Mannerheim himself was attracted with the idea of using military force to pursue regime change in Russia, but the Finnish political elite did not see his point.[110]

The interventions stopped after the liberal non-interventionist K.J. Ståhlberg was elected president in July 1919. In October 1920 Russia and Finland signed a peace treaty, which recognized Russian occupation of Eastern Karelia. While Britain's activities in the Baltic Sea began decreasing after the brief and rather adventurous engagements into the civil war in Russia, Finnish conservatives continued to hope for a weightier British role in containing Russia.[111] The Finnish conservative party went as far as to make a parliamentary proposal in 1922 that Finland should conclude a defense treaty with Britain.[112] However, neither the British or the Finnish governments were really ready for such a treaty, especially when the Soviet Union had made it clear that it wanted to keep its Western neighbours out of the British and French orbits.

The next attempt to create a coalition to balance Russia involved discussions with other Western neighbours of Russia in the region, Estonia, Latvia, and Poland. Extensive military cooperation between Finland and Estonia took

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[109] The Finns had initially demanded a referendum in Eastern Karelia about the status of the province but had to settle for the Bolsheviks' promise of respecting the rights of the Karelians. The abandonment of the Finns in Eastern Karelia to the mercy of the Bolsheviks and the following brutal policies of Sovietisation carried out by the Bolsheviks in the region led to the emergence in Finland of a powerful right wing student movement, the *Akateeminen Karjala Seura* (the Academic Karelia Society), which kept alive the issue of Soviet occupation of Karelia and created friction in Finnish-Soviet relations for almost two decades.

[110] For an interpretation of Mannerheim's thinking, See Henrikki Heikka, "Mannerheimin perintö ja suomettumisen varjo." Suomen Kuvalehti (forthcoming).

[111] Britain officially denounced its naval interests in the Baltic.in the Anglo-German naval treaty of 1935.

[112] Interestingly, the conservatives claimed that such a treaty would not constitute a violation of Finnish neutrality. See Jorma Kallenautio, *Suomi katsoi eteensä – Itsenäisen Suomen ulkopolitiikka 1917–1955* (Helsinki, 1985), p. 134.

place also, and intelligence cooperation between Finland, Estonia, and Latvia (shared also with Germany and Poland) began.[113] However, the practical uselessness of the effort of pooling the resources of weak players with differing geostrategic interests, opposed by Marshall Mannerheim from the beginning, soon dawned to everyone.[114] Particularly problematic in the plan was the involvement of Poland, whom Germany viewed which suspicion. Consequently, Germany expressed its approval of Finland's abandoning the policy and turning towards strengthening neutrality and the Nordic connection.[115]

8.2 *Norden* as a balancer

Cooperation between Finland and Sweden was based on the common Nordic incentive of remaining outside of the German-Soviet security dilemma. The hard core of the strategy of the Nordic states was later (1938) summarized by Sweden's foreign minister Rickard Sandler: "*Norden* must be wiped from the calculations of the great powers' military headquarters."[116] Swedish-Finnish cooperation was, somewhat surprisingly, initially problematic, because the Swedish social democratic government saw the Finnish conservatives as dangerously right-wing, and the Swedish conservative opposition was bitter about the Åland dispute (settled eventually by the League of Nations in Finland's favour). The League of Nations was important for both Finland and Sweden, since both countries emphasised security arrangements based on international law and saw collective security as a useful instrument in containing Russia.[117]

In practice, differences arising from Finland and Sweden's geostrategic location and historical experiences led them to follow different policies in the founding negotiations of the League of Nations in Geneva. Finnish strategic culture continued to be influenced by a search for security

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[113] On the extent of Finnish-Estonian cooperation, see Jari Leskinen, *Veljien Valtiosalaisuus: Suomen ja Viron salainen sotilaallinen yhteistyö Neuvostoliiton hyökkäyksen varalle vuosina 1918–1940.* (Helsinki: WSOY, 1999).
[114] Ries, op. cit., pp. 41–43.
[115] Visuri & Forsberg, op. cit., p. 206
[116] Cited in Jakobson, op. cit., p. 227.
[117] In 1926 Finland also used her membership obligations in the League of Nations as an excuse to rebuke a Soviet proposal for a bilateral non-aggression treaty, which would have violated Finnish neutrality. The proposal was a part of a Soviet attempt to tie its neighbours into a Moscow-based system of treaties as opposed to the Geneva-based one.

guarantees. As a result, in Geneva Finland joined the camp led by France, which advocated the use of sanctions (article 16) against future aggressors.[118] In contrast, the emphasis between defending the inviolability of neutrality and the development of effective collective security institutions was, in Swedish policy, clearly on the former. In Geneva Sweden thus found herself, together with Norway and Denmark, in the British led-camp, which emphasised disarmament (article 8).[119] The Swedish social democractic government saw the collapse of Tsarist Russia as an opportunity for international disarmament, and carried out unilateral reductions in her armed forces from mid-1920's onwards.[120] Finland, at the same time, made the opposite conclusion about the Soviet threat and started to strengthen her armed forces.[121]

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[118] While the chances of the French position being accepted in the League of Nations were small, and the practical implications of such a policy being adopted by the League of Nations unclear, the negotiations nevertheless gave a reason for the Finnish social democrats to actively oppose the conservatives' plans for raising defence expenditure at the time. For a useful description of the situation, see G. Mannerheim, *Muistelmat, toinen osa* (Helsinki: Otava, 1952), pp. 33–36. The Defence Policy Programme of the Social Democratic Party, adopted in 1930 and changed only in 1939, stated that "military expenditure should be decreased immediately and across the board, without waiting for general disarmament" and that proposals for increasing military hardware should be "strictly opposed". Jorma Juottonen, "Suomen puolustusvoimien materiaalinen valmius talvisodan edellä," *Sotahistoriallinen Aikakauskirja* 19 (2000), pp. 8–9. It is worth noting that the policy of seeking to strengthen the sanctions mechanism in the League of Nations also distanced Finland from Germany, who opposed the idea. See Visuri & Forsberg, op.cit., pp. 206–207.

[119] Penttilä, Moskovasta Brysseliin, p. 36. Finnish policy was exemplified in the 1926 proposal by Finland to the League of Nations that victims of aggression should receive financial assistance from other states. Nevakivi, op. cit., p. 25. In general, intra-Nordic conflicts in the mid-1930's repeated the patterns of previous centuries. Sweden supported Finland's participation in Nordic institutions while Denmark, Russia's old ally, saw inclusion of Finland as more of a liability.

[120] The developments in Sweden were noted with alarm also in Britain. General W. M. Kirke, speaking at the Royal United Service Institute noted that historically the role of Finland had been to contain Russian expansion vis-à-vis- Sweden and thus to prevent Russia from acquiring access to major oceans. Kirke argued that this role was likely to continue "unless Sweden through her policy of disarmamament would hasten the realisation of this threat". Cited in Kronlund, op. cit., p. 316.

[121] Nevakivi, op. cit., p. 25. From the Finnish perspective the disarmament proposals tabled in Geneva were utopian in their idealism and unfair to small countries. In his memoirs, Mannerheim mentions as an example the League's proposal to limit the Finnish air force to 25 aircraft. (After Finnish protests, the number was raised to 125, which Mannerheim still considered to small.) See Mannerheim, op. cit, p. 35.

After Italy's invasion of Ethiopia even the social democrats in Finland and Sweden started loosing their confidence in the League of Nation's role in maintaining international security. In 1930 an influential group of young Swedish officers published a programme recommending Swedish military assistance to Finland in case of an attack on Finland. In short, their argument was that it was in Sweden's interest to start her defence against the Soviets from Finland's Eastern border rather than at Sweden's borders. The programme also included recommendations for a common defence of the Åland islands. While the programme was never carried out, the Swedish government did already in 1930 give it's blessing to a plan for sending forces to the Åland islands in case of a crisis. [122]

To reassure the Soviets about Finland's defensive intentions, the Finnish government signed a non-aggression treaty with the Soviet Union in 1932.[123] The Finnish government was under no illusions about the practical usefulness of the treaty. "Treaties like this do not give us any protection against the Soviets", wrote president Svinhufvud in a private letter at the time.[124]

Nordic cooperation in security policy increased steadily throughout the 1930's. Since 1928 Mannerheim had devoted energies for lobbying for higher defence expenditure and stronger fortification of the Karelian Isthmus, which he saw as the key point in Finland's defence. In 1934 Mannerheim argued that Finnish security should be seen as part of a comprehensive vision of Nordic security, and called for all Nordic countries to strengthen their defences.[125] Mannerheim outlined his argument for

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[122] Nevakivi, op. cit., p. 26–27. Raising the volume of Finnish-Soviet trade, which at the time was almost non-existent, also played a part.

[123] Negotiations on the treaty had begun in 1928, but ended unsuccessfully after disagreement about the procedures for settling disputes. The final version accepted in 1932 reflected the original Finnish proposal, and was later imitated by the Baltic states in drafting similar treaties with the Soviets.

[124] Cited in *Suomen historian pikku jättiläinen* (Porvoo: WSOY, 1987), p. 656.

[125] An interesting compromise advocated the Finnish Defence Council (the inter-ministry organ coordinating defence policy in Finland) between reliance on Nordic cooperation and the League of Nations was the proposal for geographically defined "sanctions-groups" in the League, which would compose of groups of countries enforcing sanctions against aggressors amongst themselves. These groups would be made up of countries with a common interest in maintaining the status quo in the region. According to

Nordic cooperation in more detail a presentation to 30 newspaper editors in June 1935. According to Mannerheim, economic and military aid from the West would be vital for Finland if the country was attacked by the Soviet Union. British and French aid Mannerheim believed to be out of the question. Britain would, according to Mannerheim, stick to its traditional policy of not committing itself to anything related to Finland, and France could not be counted upon because of its entente with the Soviets.[126] Mannerheim noted that while Germany was an openly anti-Soviet country and therefore a potential ally for Finland, it was unacceptable and unreliable because of its Nazi leadership. Poland and the Baltic states Mannerheim rejected categorically as too weak. This left the Nordic countries, and Sweden in particular, as the only actors with the interests and the capability to come to Finland's aid in a crisis. Mannerheim also argued that Baltic Sea would not be a safe route for transporting goods to Finland, which left the Scandinavian peninsula as the only supply route to Finland in a crisis involving Russia.[127]

Replacing collective security by a more clearly Nordic orientation became official policy in 1935, when prime minister Kivimäki declared Finland's aim as "establishing cooperation between Finland and the Scandinavian countries in order to secure common Nordic neutrality".[128] By 1936 all four

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Mannerheim, the Nordic countries could have composed one such grouping. This line of thinking was strictly opposed by the Swedes. Mannerheim, op. cit., pp. 34–35, 61.

[126] The low probability of Britain's availability as a balancer was underlined in the 1935 Anglo-British treaty which allowed Germany to rebuild its Kriegsmarine so that it could, together with the Luftwaffe, effectively keep the Royal Navy from entering the Baltic Sea.

[127] For a summary of Mannerheim's presentation, and its impact on Finnish policy, see Kari Selén, C. G. E. Mannerheim ja hänen puolustusneuvostonsa 1931–1939. (Helsinki: Otava, 1980), pp. 248–252. Prior to Mannerheim's influential outcoming, the argument for Nordic cooperation had been pushed by Foreign Minister Antti Hackzell, who during 1933–35 warmed up the relations with Sweden, and together with the Swedish Foreign Minister Rickard Sandler took the first steps in constructing a common policy in the League of Nations on issues such as disarmament and policy towards the Soviet Union. At the time, public opinion in both Finland and Sweden was still reserved about Nordic cooperation, due to the language question and other well-publicised issues. See Selén, op. cit., pp. 252–254.

[128] Cited in Mannerheim, op. cit., p. 60. Besides Mannerheirm, Chairman of the Defence Council, the key politicians in Finland pushing forward the policy of Nordic military cooperation were president Svinhufvud,, prime minister Kivimäki, foreign minister Hackzell, Chairman of the Conservative party Paasikivi. The social democrats in Finland, especially Väinö Tanner, were also active in pursuing cooperation with their Swedish

Nordic countries had distanced themselves from the League's article 16, and tightened their cooperation with each other. Low-level military planning for cooperation especially between Sweden and Finland was carried out for several years. Finnish-Swedish high-level talks on military cooperation were carried out during May 1938–January 1939, but they ended up in quarrels about peripheral issues – such as whether the Swedish-speaking regiments of the Finnish army, earmarked to protect the Åland Islands, should be commanded in Finnish or Swedish – while more important issues of defence cooperation were left unsolved.

While Germany's rising military might in the mid 1930's would theoretically have made her an attractive candidate for a balancer against Russia, the unstable domestic situation in Germany prevented Finnish political parties from building close relations to German parties. In Finnish eyes, the image of the German Nazis deteriorated gradually, initially as a result of their trade war with Britain in 1934, which harmed Finland, and after the mid 1930's as a result of their radicalism in general.[129] The anti-Nazi attitudes of the Finnish political elite led to a situation where also the Germans perceived their former ally as having moved away from the camp of countries sympathetic towards Germany into the liberal Western camp. In the end of the 1930's, the German Ambassador in Helsinki came to believe that Finland would not side with Germany in a future war because public opinion in Finland was so pro-democratic.[130]

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counterparts, even though Tanner's analysis of the Soviet military threat and the adequate level of defence expenditure was rather different than that of the conservatives.

[129] See Vesa Vares, *Hakaristin kuva; Kansallissosialistinen Saksa Suomen johtavassa puoluelehdistössä sisä- ja ulkopoliittisena tekijänä 1933–1939* (Turku: Turun yliopiston poliittisen historian laitoksen julkaisuja E:2/1986). Britain had traditionally been the most important market for Finnish exports, and Finland belonged to the Sterling zone. Even in 1938 44% of Finnish exports went to Britain. In comparison, Soviet trade amounted to less than 2%. Jukka Nevakivi, Apu jota ei annettu: länsivallat ja Suomen talvisota 1939–40 (Helsinki: WSOY, 2000), pp. 17–18.

[130] A major role in creating this perception were played by Mannerheim, who was not only anti-Nazi but also critical towards Germany in general, as well as the anglophile foreign minister Holsti, who had angered the Germans by referring to Hitler as a "mad dog" in the League of Nations. .See Visuri & Forsberg, pp. 213–214. The situation was slightly different among military officers, who seemed to be more pro-German – a situation which led foreign observes puzzled about the country's direction. Selén's study refers to a discussion between to British experts on the issue: The British military attaché to Finland (stationed in Riga), major R. Firebrace, wrote in a memo in late 1934 that most of the high-ranking Finnish officers had been educated by the Germans, and would be inclined to rely on Germany in case of a Soviet attack on Finland. The head of the Nordic

Reliance on Germany was also restricted because Mannerheim and the Finnish military leadership believed that any German help would be perceived by the Soviets as a direct threat to Soviet interests – even if German and the Soviet Union would not be in a war against each other. The Finnish leadership went to great lengths also to send the right signal to the liberal West, Britain in particular. The key defence procurement items in the mid 1930's were air defence artillery and bombers for the Finnish air force. In the case of the bombers, the British option, Bristol Blenheim, was chosen even though it was perceived by Mannerheim and top military officers as technically inferior to the available German one (the *Junkers* bomber, made also by license in Sweden, and therefore available on the international market despite the restrictions on German arms exports according to the Versailles treaty). Officially, Finland promised to prefer British armaments when they were technically comparable to the German ones. In reality, according to Mannerheim, technical considerations had to be set aside and British weaponry was to be preferred in order to maintain friendly Anglo-Finnish political relations and keep Germany at arms length. For a long time, the British Vickers air defence artillery was preferred to the Swedish Bofors option, but after Britain refused to sell Italy arms after July 1935 when the situation in Abessinia started escalating, the Finnish leadership made the conclusion that relying on British arms would be too risky if war in Europe broke out. The Swedish option was therefore finally chosen in order to ensure that ammunition and spare parts would be available also in a protracted European crisis.[131]

At the time, in July 1939, Mannerheim's own assessment was that war between the Soviet Union and the Germany was inevitable. In this

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department in the British Foreign Office, Lawrence Collier, rebuked Firebrace's analysis and reminded that Finnish foreign policy was made by the political leadership, not by military officers. See Selén, op. cit., pp. 221–222. Foreign Office documents show that in general in general the British government seems to have been relatively well informed about Finnish policy in the 1930's, regarding Finland as a normal Nordic liberal democracy bearing the same resentment towards Nazi Germany as other Nordic countries. See Nevakivi, op. cit., p. 15–19.

[131] Going for the Swedish option – Bofors artillery was initially perceived by the Finnish leadership as tantamount to sending a pro-German signal to Britain, since Swedish arms industry was so closely connected to Germany. The Swedish option was therefore initially abandoned in order to send the right signal to Britain. The Swedish ambassador to Finland regarded this a betrayal "so typical of Finnish diplomacy". See Selén, op. cit., pp. 213–220.

assessment he differed from Prime Minister Cajander and Minister of Finance Tanner, who were more optimistic and saw Mannerheim as an alarmist. According to Mannerheim's assessment in the summer of 1939, the ongoing negotiations between the Soviets and Western powers could end in three results: a treaty between Britain, France, and the Soviet Union; a treaty between Germany and the Soviet Union; no treaty at all. According to Mannerheim, the first option would have been the preferable one, since he believed that within the coalition Britain would act as a balancer to Soviet power. The second one Mannerheim believed to be the worst one for Finnish security, since it would leave Finland within the German-Soviet security dilemma, which he believed to be heading for war. [132]

Besides Nordic cooperation and gestures towards Britain, the Finnish government also considered American help as a potential option. The Finnish government send a military attaché to Washington in April 1939, whose mission was to explain Finnish concerns to the US leadership and to reassure them of Finnish neutrality. Besides this, his goal was to inquire about possible loans for military purchases from the US. The loan and the purchases, which in hindsight could have been decisive to Finland's ability to defend her neutrality alone beyond the Winter War, were refused. British lobbying played an important, probably decisive, role in the decision. From London's perspective, anything that weakened Germany had to be preferred, even if it meant denying aid from a small democracy under attack by the Soviet Union. [133]

Thus, in hindsight, Finland's costly signals to the West, and Britain in particular, came to nothing, and one might speculate whether greater reliance on the technically best German and Swedish weaponry would have saved more lives when the Soviet attack came. On the other hand, the record of having shown reservations about Germany before the war turned out to be very useful after the war, when Finland had to shed the shadow of co-belligerency with Germany in the Continuation War in order to pursue a policy of neutrality in the Cold War. The record of a clearly Nordic orientation in 1935–1939 was also useful throughout the Cold War when Nordic cooperation became an important instrument for keeping the Soviet Union at arms length.

[132] See Selén, op. cit.
[133] See Jukka Nevakivi, *Apu jota ei annettu…*

9 The experience of total war

The complexity of Finland's security dilemma during the Second World War does not make it possible to deal with the problematique here.[134] One aspect of the war does, however, merit discussion since it has had lasting effect on Finnish strategic culture – and explains some of the differences between Finland and the other Nordic countries.

For Finland, World War II was a total war. The Winter War, lasting from November 1939 to March 1940, was a result of a full-scale Soviet invasion attempt to occupy key parts of the country (Karelia, Southern Finland including Helsinki, Petsamo (a nickel-rich area on the Finnish Barents Sea coast) and Oulu (in order to slice the country in two). The Soviet Commander had 80 times more tanks, 5 times more artillery, and 18 times more bombers at their disposal than the Finnish Commander, Marshall Mannerheim.[135] By the end of the Winter War, the Soviet Union, which was the pre-eminent land-power in the world at the time, had deployed 45 divisions (almost half of the Red Army's total of 110 divisions), and about half of his 6000 tanks, exclusively against Finland. The operation was supported by strategic bombing of Finnish cities and attacks from the sea.

The experience on the Finnish side was one having to face overwhelming manpower and firepower alone – expressions of sympathy and plans for help from the liberal powers were of little help for the men in the trenches waiting for reinforcements that never came. The willingness of the Russian to suffer casualties during the invasion, and the amount of killing that the Finns had to do to stop it, obviously left their scars on Finnish strategic culture. Even after hundreds of thousands Red Army soldiers lay dead or wounded in the frozen forests of Karelia the Soviet attack continued. At the

[134] See chapter on WWII in the manuscript of Henrikki Heikka "Strategic Culture and the Northern Dimension of European Security" (forthcoming). The most interesting aspect from the perspective of strategic culture and grand strategy was Mannerheim's balancing act after Denmark and Norway had been occupied by the Nazis and the possibility of help by the Western Allies had disappeared. Despite the narrow room for maneuver, Mannerheim was able to use German military power to counterbalance the Soviets without committing Finnish troops into offensive operations in Soviet territory related to Hitler's main war aims. Historians still find it difficult to explain how Mannerheim was able to maintain such a distance vis-à-vis Germany in a position where Finland's room for maneuver was so small.

[135] Ries, op. cit., p. 107.

back of the minds of individual fighters – as well as the civilians on the homefront – was the omnipresent fear that should defence fail, the result would likely be a large-scale revenge at civilians, the integration of Finland into the totalitarian structures of the Soviet empire, and mass expulsion of people to Siberia.

A similar experience came at the end of the Continuation War. In June 1944 the Red Army mounted a full-scale attack against Finland, which lasted for six weeks. The aim of the offensive was to crush all resistance in Finland and to occupy Southern Finland. Soviet forces participating in the attack included 450 000 men, 10 000 pieces of artillery and 1500 tanks. The forces were supported by over 1000 airplanes and 1000 rocket launchers. The operation was the heaviest attack in the history of Northern Europe.[136] While the attack was eventually defeated, the experience of being in the receiving end of a full-scale mechanised Soviet deep strike operation had effects on Finnish political culture. For Finns, the imperative of "never again war" became synonymous with avoiding a situation where overwhelming power is aimed at ending the existence of the nation.

10 Finnish strategic culture during the Cold War

The development of Finnish defence during the cold war can be divided into several phases, which reflect the evolution of the doctrines of the two superpowers, especially their nuclear doctrines.[137] The first phase, from the mid 1940's to the mid 1950's included the emergence of the cold war constellation in Europe, with its alliance systems and doctrines that still reflected the ideas of total war as experienced during World War II. The security policies of Finland and Europe's other neutral states reflected continuities from the war, though obviously lessons learned during the war were incorporated into their strategies. Superpower deterrence was asymmetric: the US had a de facto nuclear monopoly and could hold Soviet cities as hostages, while the Soviets had conventional superiority and could credibly threaten with an offensive to Western Europe from the newly occupied areas of Eastern Europe.

[136] See e.g Ries op. cit, pp. 171–186.
[137] In the following, I am relying standard references on the topic such as Visuri, op. cit., and Ries, op. cit.

The second phase, from the mid 1950's to the mid 1960's reflected the emergence of strategic nuclear weapons and their incorporation into the doctrines of the superpowers. "Massive retaliation" became the backbone of NATO's strategy and the Soviets scrambled to create the capabilities for a mirror image of the strategy. As part of this development, tactical nuclear weapons started playing a major role in the East-West security dilemma in the early 1960's and Finland, as well as other small frontline states, had to start preparing against the use of nuclear weapons.

In the third phase, beginning in the mid 1960's and lasting until the latter half of the 1970's, both sides started to incorporate flexible tactical nuclear options into their doctrines and to consider war-fighting with tactical nuclear weapons as a real possibility, while Mutually Assured Destruction – strengthened by the approximate nuclear parity – remained the basis for the use, or rather, non-use, of strategic nuclear weapons. The institutionalisation of parity and strategic arms control, in turn, provided the structural basis for a general superpower détente and the strengthening of the position of small frontline states, especially Finland, Sweden, and Austria.

The fourth phase, beginning in the late 1970's involved increased tension and the "second cold war", which ultimately led to the defeat of the other side. During the 1980's, US doctrines, Air-Land Battle and its application FOFA and the US maritime strategy involving the idea of horizontal escalation from the central front to the Northern waters, created a challenge for Soviet strategic planners, which they could not solve with the money available to them. As NATO's ability to capture the initiative on the Central Front through mobility, firepower and accuracy by destroy the Warsaw Pact's second echelon troops, and to escalate the conflict horizontally to areas where the West's naval strength was superior to Soviet capabilities, the Pact's offensive grand strategy began to look increasingly outdated and counterproductive. These developments led to the first real re-evaluation of Soviet grand strategy since Frunze's times, and ultimately to the end of the cold war, they also meant that the 1980's with its cruise missile problematique, the Soviet naval build-up in the Kola peninsula, emphasis on special forces and shortening warning times, and submarine intrusions into Swedish and Finnish territorial waters etc. was a time of increasing tensions in the Nordic region – even if the strengthening of West's resolve ultimate contributed to the Nordic states' defence efforts.

10.1 Finnish strategic practice during the early Cold War

During the first decade of the cold war, the economic situation did not allow for weapons procurement, and Finland had to rely on exising World War II stocks of weaponry, which allowed for 15 divisions of ground troops. The task of preparing Finnish defences for the post-war environment was delegated to a committee of 6 parliamentarians and 5 military officers in 1945. Following the committees of the 1920's it was named a "defence revision" committee (*puolustusrevisio*), and its task was to devise a doctrine for defending Finland and constructing a system for mobilisation needed for implementing that doctrine. The paradigm chosen was, unsurprisingly, a territorial defence doctrine, relying on conscription and large reserves.[138] The military doctrine reflected the material realities of the Finnish defence forces at the time, with rather an emphasis on static defences, relatively low mobility, and the use of territorial advantages for defence as had been the case during the second world war. In March 1948 President Paasikivi accepted a plan by the commander in chief of the Defence Forces, which gave the General Staff full authority to begin planning for large-scale mobilisation and operational contingency planning. At the time, rumours of a communist coup circulated in Finland, and the defence forces took steps for securing strategically important sites against possible moves by communists.[139]

A important step at the time was also the creation of a semi-voluntary "stay behind"-network, involving over 10 000 voluntary activists, and establishing links to Western intelligence agencies. The move was particularly important, since it was opposed by the Soviets, as well as communists in Finland, who saw it as unacceptable. The fact that Finnish authorities, despite pressure from the Soviets, let it happen – many arms caches were deliberately not found by Finnish authorities and most of those "caught" in possession of arms caches were jailed with minimal sentences, usually days or weeks, rather than months – sent a powerful signal to Moscow that all crucial

[138] After the war, conscripts had served, according to the 1932 law on consription, between 350–440 days, with long vacations in peacetime. A new law was adopted on 15.9.1950, which set the number of service days for reserve officers and other specially trained personnel to 330 days while the rest served for 240 days. The system lasted for almost half a century.
[139] See Visuri, op. cit, p. 177–183.

components of a normal defence system would be created by Finland, whether the Kremlin liked it or not.[140]

In the second phase, beginning from the mid-1950, the economic situation allowed for modest steps in procurement which involved gradual reform of the ground forces, increased capabilities for airspace control and surveillance of Finland's territorial waters. Major influences in the development of Finnish defence were Soviet and Western strategic doctrines, US massive retaliation doctrine and the incorporation of nuclear weapons to Soviet doctrine, and the emergence of tactical nuclear options. These forced Finland (just like the other neutrals) to develop capabilities for protection against the effects of nuclear weapons, especially through developing a decentralised defence system capable of functioning effectively even if key strategic targets were destroyed.

To act as the central advisory organ in defence policy, the Defence Council was created in 1957. The members of the Council were the President, the Prime Minister, the Minister of Defence, the Foreign Minister, and other key ministers as well as the Commander in Chief of the Defence Forces, the Head of the General Staff and other officials whose expertise was needed. The job of the Defence Council did not involve discussing threat perceptions and the international situation as such, but was limited to issues such as

[140] On the controversial history of the network, see Matti Lukkari, *Asekätkentä*. The early development of Finnish signals intelligence and military intelligence would require a book of its own. During 1940–41 Finnish military intelligence received modest amounts of secret donations (cash, real estate, and bonds) from private sources in Finland and government sources abroad, mainly Sweden, US, and Japan. The Japanese government was mostly interested in signals intelligence about the Red Army – which it did receive from the Finns – while the motives of Sweden and the US as well as the private donors in Finland, were more directly related to the survival of Finland as an independent Western democracy. The funds were used mostly to buy villas and farms in remote areas around Helsinki, Southern-Eastern Finland, and Lapland, to be used as signals intelligence listening posts and training of staff, as well as for special operations (e.g. maintaining a small flotilla of motor boats for running a network of agents in Estonia until 1945, and a flotilla ready for evacuation of key government personnel to Sweden during 1945, had Finland been occupied). The financial transactions were made in the names of officers as private persons so as to avoid any official government involvement in the business. These secret funds were transferred as real estate and a separate foundation to the General Staff and the Ministry of Defence during the 1950's, though some as late as the 1980's. See Tapio Koskimies, "Suomen sodanaikaisen tiedustelun salainen rahoitus ja sen käyttö," *Sotahistoriallinen Aikakauskirja* 20 (2001), pp. 169–214.

procurement, construction of bases and legal and economic issues related to national defence.[141] The situation reflected the paradox of defence policy making in Finland during the cold war: while the president had a dominant role in foreign affairs, defence policy – which through conscription touched the whole society – was made by the parliament and the government.

During his presidency, President Kekkonen believed that in order to survive in the rapidly evolving and volatile security environment, the country needed a strong President that was not answerable to the parliament in the same daily sense as the Prime Minister was. According to him, the country needed a person above domestic tensions, with the authority to deal with the Soviet leaders on a personal basis. A parliament, characterised with tensions between left and right, could have posed problems for Kekkonen's personal shuttle-diplomacy. However, Kekkonen did not want a secretariat or an advisory organ of his own, but instead fulfilled his idea of parliamentary control over foreign policy by using the relevant Ministers as his advisors on a daily basis.[142]

While foreign policy essentially rested in the hands of one man, defence policy, in essence, rested in the hands of half a million men, and the making of defence policy represented a continuity which created credibility to

[141] The alternative at the time was the so called K-plan, which would have implied an emphasis on air defense and the navy, and would have required considerably larger defence budgets. Visuri, "Suomen turvallisuuspolitiikan ja maanpuolustuksen linjaukset", pp. 25. In theoretical terms, the K-plan was a plan for defending the neutrality and inviolability of Finnish territory, airspace and waters (which essentially became the doctrine in the 1980's), while the territorial defence system was a system for deterrence rather than defense – i.e. a system of signalling that using Finnish territory for support operations in a larger campaign would have been unacceptably costly to the attacker, even if Finland's ability to defend every part of her airspace atc. Would not have been credible.

[142] There is a lively debate among historians in Finland, which deals with the question of whether Kekkonen went too far in his ignoring of the parliament in foreign policy and whether his policies were more motivated by the desire to stay in power than by the requirements of Finland's external environment. At the same time, a more important question has been largely ignored: the question of whether Kekkonen's grand strategy was the right one. A more thorough study on the latter question might reveal that while Kekkonen's attitude towards the parliament was not that different from Mannerheim's autocratic attitudes, Kekkonen's skills as a grand strategists were far inferior to those of Mannerheim. Most importantly, Mannerheim's grand strategy was driven by a conviction that the future belonged to liberalism, while Kekkonen genuinely believed in the potential of the Soviet Union.

Kekkonen's diplomacy. Already in the late 1950's all aspects of "total defense", including economic, academic, medical, psychological aspects began to be planned and developed consciously through separate inter-agency committees. The 1960's general were a period when the economic situation allowed the Finnish territorial defence system to be reformed to reflect the realities of the times, even though it took about years until the system became fully operational. Several factors favoured a territorial defence system, relying on large ground forces. The system was non-offensive, hard to defeat with surprise strike, relatively affordable, went well together with the grand strategy of neutrality, and worked in "all azimuths".[143] The last argument was important because it did not point a finger directly at the enemy (as would have been the case with for example a more mobile, armoured land-based force, which for could theoretically be used for offense towards the east but for geographical reasons not to the West).

The system's logic can be found for example from the Rules of Engagement (Kenttäohjesääntö) of 1958 and the Officer's Handbook of 1963. In theoretical terms, the system did not rest on the logic of defence, which would have been too expensive (requiring almost two times higher defence budgets) but on the logic of conventional deterrence – on dissuading the enemy from aggression by increasing its costs. In concrete terms, the system aimed at making the use of Finnish territory too costly to be used as a launching pad for offensive operations or their support operations against a third party (i.e. against Sweden and NATO).

In 1966, the country was officially divided into seven military districts, which were all capable of fighting independently, if other parts of the country were destroyed or occupied. The system implied a widely dispersed territorial defence system, with an emphasis on flexibility and the ability to concentrate forces to critical areas. The forces were divided into local troops and the main force, the former spread like a mat throughout the country with a job of slowing down the enemy, while the more heavily armed main forces would have been used to engage the enemy in critical areas. In the 1960's, arms purchases and domestic production allowed also for reforms of the air force and the navy through purchases of modern fighters, navy vessels and coastal artillery. The development of tactics in this phase still largely

[143] Visuri, op. cit., p. 29.

followed the lessons of wartime experience, and emphasis was on total war and the use of defensive depth to thwart a large-scale offensive.[144]

The Berlin crises, the Note crisis, and the Cuban missile crisis did reveal deficiencies in Finland's capability to respond to crisis, with especially the relations between civilian and military leadership not operating as smoothly as needed. The Warsaw Pact operation to crush the anticommunist movement in Prague in 1968 revealed to the Finns the large scale and fast pace in which the Warsaw Pact was able to conduct its military operations, thus underlining the need for developing the efficiency of the territorial defense system.[145]

10.2 Finnish strategic practice in the late Cold War

In the third phase, coinciding with the decreasing East-West tension from the late 1960's onwards was characterised by a domestic political consensus (materialising in three "parliamentary defence committees" [1970–71, 1975–77, 1980–81]) to increase Finland's defence capabilities allowed defence budgets to grow steadily with about 4% per year until the late 1980's. Doctrinal evolution in the 1970's reflected the continuing need to adapt to Western flexible defence doctrine and Soviet tactical nuclear options, which were widened with the modernisation of Soviet tactical nuclear capabilities at the time. Emphasis of the system was on the defence of the big cities in Southern Finland and the defence of Lapland, which became more important as Soviet capabilities in the Kola peninsula grew. According to a publication by the Defence Council on operating procedures for crisis (poikkeusolojen määrittely):

> "The main target of attack would probably be Finnish heartland, the Helsinki–Turku–Tampere triangle. In the initial stage, the attacker would aim at suppressing air defences. By taking control of airfields, ports, and key traffic nodes, the enemy would aim at supporting the offensive of the main force and to obstruct defence and the moving of troops. The [enemy's] main strike would be made by motorised

[144] Vesa Tynkkynen, Hyökkäykestä puolustukseen: Taktiikan kehittymisen ensi vuosikymmenet Suomessa (Helsinki, Maanpuolustuskorkeakoulu, julkaisusarja 1, 1/1996).

[145] The Warsaw Pact operation in Prague operation initially involved about 250 000 soldiers, but grew rapidly to a military operation of half a million men with about 5000 tanks.

> troops, moving rapidly in the direction of the main roads despite pockets of resistance. Tactical use of paratroopers in the vector of attack could be used. Evacuation of civilians would be possible only to a limited extent. Characteristic [to the conflict] would be simultaneous battles, terror from the air, and rapidly changing situation".[146]

The description of the "enemy's" strategy here was, of course, a description of a rather standard Soviet deep strike operation. In general, the evolution of Finnish strategy culture at the time can be described as a move from a deterrence strategy towards a "deterrence plus" strategy, where the backbone of the system, deterrence via a territorial defence system, was complemented with a limited defence capability, which was seen as necessary for responding to crises (such as one involving a rapid deep strike), and thus to lending credibility to the grand strategy of neutrality. The combination of a favourable international atmosphere in the 1970's and the strengthening of Finnish defence capabilities contributed towards stability in the Nordic region.

The fourth phase, beginning from the late 1970's and the beginning of the "second cold war", moved the Finnish defence system even further towards crises prevention, with the capability to react rapidly to crises involving Finnish territory, airspace and territorial waters. The emphasis in threat perceptions changed to include not only nuclear but also non-nuclear precision-guided strikes and special-forces operations. Since the capabilities of the Air Force and the Navy were thought of as up their tasks, the emphasis on material acquisition was on improving of the 250 000 –strong main force (suojajoukot), which was the main instrument through which the strategy of deterrence via territorial defence could be used as a tool for crisis management. The capability to defend key strategic targets, such as the capital, Lapland and Åland islands was emphasised – even if the credibility of the commitment in the case of the latter two might have been somewhat doubtful.[147]

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[146] Poikkeusolojen Menettely (Puolustusneuvosto, 1977), cited in Visuri, pp. 221–222.

[147] In the case of Lapland, the question was not so much whether Finland had the *capability* to come up with a conventional deterrence posture in Lapland – in case the Soviets would have made their move in the High North and used Finnish territory to attack NATO's airfields an other assets in Northern Norway,
moving large numbers of the reserves from Southern Finland to Lapland would have theoretically been possible (had it been done in time) – but a question of whether it would

11 Finnish strategic culture after the Cold War

The evolution of Finnish defence capabilities in the 1990's reflects the developments in the last two decades, mostly because the military balance in Northern Europe did not see such a profound change as was the case in Central Europe. Until the mid-1990's threat perceptions still emphasised the possibility of a large-scale attack on Finland, because of the growth of Russian capabilities due to the moving of military hardware from the Central Front to the Flanks as agreed in the CFE Treaty.

11.1 Creating a credible Nato-option

In contrast to Parliamentary Defence Committees of the 70's and early 80's, the preparation of defence policy during the 1990 was done by the government, which issued three Reports (1995,1997, 2001), which were then discussed by the Parliament. The system was heavily driven by the Government and experts, with the fresh bad memories from the last Parliamentary Defence Committees of the 1980–81 decreasing the role and power of the Parliament.

Initially, adjustment to the changing environment was reflected in the report of a Parliamentary Defence Committee (Parlamentaarinen puolustus-poliittinen neuvottelukunta), led by Ambassador Jaakko Iloniemi. It made public its assessment in December 1990, which assessed the capabilities of the Defence Forces and set some broad outlines for the development. The trained reserve at the time included about 700 000 men, of which about 500 000 were given a role according to the 1990 report. In case of crisis, the standing force would have been strengthened somewhat to include about

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have been in the *interest* of Finland to get entangled in a war in the High North if Southern Finland (where a majority of the population lives and where practically all of the industrial power of the country is located) would have been left outside of the operations. The problem with counting on the latter option was that the Soviets could not have been sure that the Finns would have left the existing Finnish troops in Lapland (a peacetime strength of about 8,000) on their own, and the Soviets would have been tempted to strike targets in Southern Finland in other to prevent reinforcements from arriving from the South to the North. Thus, Finnish weakness in Lapland could have entangled Southern Finland into war – which is probably why Finnish authorities insisted that Lapland was to be defended at all costs, while never commenting on how it would actually be done, a situation which caused considerable confusion in NATO circles, where the Finnish dilemma was not particularly well understood.

60 000 men. The main force would have composed of 250 000 men, and the somewhat more lightly equipped reserves would have composed of 200 000. Thus, the need for rapid crisis management capabilities changed the two-level system of the previous decades into a three-level one.[148] One of the initial goals was to continue the reform the ground forces and to move to the reform of air defences in mid 1990's, including new interceptors, command and control systems, transport helicopters and attack helicopters.

The 1990's was characterised by bitter inter-service rivalry between the Air Forces and the Ground Forces, settled in favour of the former. The new interceptors for the Air Force, the F/A-18 Hornet, proved more expensive than had been calculated in the 1990 report, and a significant amount of the new hardware for the ground forces had to be bought on the cheap from the supplies of the former East Germany – a purchase that seemed to make strategic sense at the time because the Russians moved significant amount of hardware to the Northern Flank as agreed in the CFE treaty.

While the competition for scarce resources looked like an inter-service rivalry, it was also a paradigm conflict between advocates of, on the one hand, independent territorial defence based on conscription and, on the other hand, NATO interoperability, with the latter scoring a clear victory. Even when the time came to modernise the ground forces with Western technology beginning in the late 1990's emphasis was on the Readiness Brigades – a NATO interoperable force. As money was spent on NATO-interoperable, more professional and mobile forces, the reserve of the ground forces was cut dramatically. In the end of the Cold War the reserve had been about 700 000, by 2009 it is set to be about 350 000.

Deepening NATO integration was reflected in Finnish participation in PfP from 1994 onwards and the closely related Planning and Review Process from 1995 onwards.[149] Finland's goals in PfP were set in a document delivered to NATO in May 1994, in which Finland expressed its interest in cooperation in crisis management operations and several other fields not

[148] *Arvio puolustusvoimien tämänhetkisestä tilasta ja suorituskyvystä sekä kannanotto puolustusvoimien kehittämisen suunnitelmiin ja puolustusmäärärahoihin 1990-luvulla* (Komiteamietintö 1990:57).

[149] The following facts are from Pentti Olin, Naton rauhankumppanuusohjelma ja Suomi (Helsinki: Pääesikunnan kansainvälisen osaston julkaisuja 3/1996); see also Jyrki Berner, "Nato ja sen merkitys Suomen turvallisuuspolitiikassa," in Visuri (ed.), pp. 120–160.

openly and directly related to the hard core of national defence.[150] In 1995 Finland announced a modest contribution to NATO-led missions, which included a mechanised battalion and engineer battalion and three war ships for peace-support operations. In the initial round of PARP Finland accepted 13 out of 20 interoperability goals offered by NATO, mostly related to the interoperability of command and control systems. In the second round (1997–1999) Finland adopted 36 out of 45 interoperability goals offered by NATO, 21 of them related to all services, 9 to ground forces, 3 to navy and 4 to the air force. By 2001 Finland had fulfilled practically all of these second-level goals. These second round goals come close to what in NATO's terminology is referred to as "interoperability" (the first level being "compatibility" and the next layers being "interchangeability" and "commonality"). Finland thus currently belongs to the group of countries with interoperable systems. It is worth noting that only a few alliance members have reached the higher levels.[151]

In the third round, lasting until 2006 Finland has 64 goals, which aim at a more comprehensive contribution to NATO crisis management capabilities. Earmarked troops include an infantry battalion, a mechanised infantry battalion, a pioneer-battalion, two minelayers, a transport company, and 4 to 8 F/A-18's – though the air force's contribution to NATO-led operations is so far only for training, not combat purposes. Also the Navy's operations are restricted to European waters (Pohjanmaa) and the Baltic Sea (Hämeenmaa-class). It is worth noting that the present stage of the PARP program includes extensive, long-term, goals, which make it very similar to the principles and development cycles that NATO uses to develop its member states collective defence capabilities.

Besides PARP, Finland has contributed to NATO-led operations, IFOR/SFOR and KFOR. In KFOR, the Finnish infantry battalion was, in August 1999, the first non-NATO country to take operational control of territory in KFOR. The Finnish battalion is part of a multinational brigade led by Britain. Finnish officers have served in the staff of the brigade as well as KFOR's general staff.[152] During 1995–2000 Finland took part in about 50

[150] It is difficult to draw the line between interoperability for crisis management and interoperability for collective defence, because during the 1990's NATO's CJTF-paradigm began blurring the line between crisis management and defence of the new NATO members.
[151] Berner, op. cit., pp. 132–133.
[152] See Olin in Berner op cit.

PfP exercises and numerous exercises "in the spirit of PfP". Annually, Finnish military personnel take part in approximately 180 PfP events.

11.2 Threat Perceptions in the Post-Cold War Era

The Command and Control systems of the Defence Forces were reformed in 1993. The seven military districts were replaced by three "defence regions", one in Western Finland (with Helsinki as a separate district in it), one in Eastern Finland, and one in the North. The Navy and the Air Force have national headquarters of their own. A rather detailed picture of the post-cold war Finnish defence system can be found from the 1995 Rules of Engagement (Kenttäohjesääntö). The system was still based on a combination of territorial defence based on a large reserve and the capability to react rapidly to crises. Improving the latter capability had clearly been the priority in procurement in the post-cold war years, as reflected in the puchases to enhance the capability to control Finnish airspace and maritime areas and to increase the mobility and firepower of the Readiness Brigades. The 1995 Rules of Engagement describes three threat perceptions: a strategic strike, and attack to use Finnish territory to pass through the country, and an attack to occupy the country. Security was seen as a broad term covering both "hard" and "soft" security threats, though the Report was rather vague on both.

The 1997 Report was slightly more detailed, and included a coherent plan for realising the remaining goals set in the beginning of the decade. The threat perceptions mentioned in the report included "political or military pressure, implying the threat or limited use of military power"; "a strategic strike aiming to paralyse vital strategic targets and to subjugate the national leadership"; "a large-scale offensive, aiming at seizing strategically important areas or making use of Finnish territory for action against a third party".

The plan for the development of the defence forces in the report was for the whole decade 1998–2008, though many of the details were re-evaluated during the following years to take into considerations the changing situation. The strategic paradigm continued to rest on the combination of deterrence via territorial defense, and modern capabilities for NATO interoperable crisis management both home and abroad. According to the report the ground forces would consist of three Rapid Deployment Brigades (PR 2005), six (mechanised) Jäger-brigades, two armoured brigades, and 11

(light) infantry brigades.[153] The emphasis on procurement would be on the Readiness brigades, including ensuring their mobility by helicopters. The wartime strength of the defence forces was set to decreased from 540 000 to 430 000 men by the year 430 000. Some military bases and depots, mostly in Western and Southern Finland, were closed or mothballed, and more flexibility was introduced into the duration of conscription (12 months for officers, non-commissioned officers, 9 months for special duties personnel, and 6 months for other rank and file).

A new Security Policy report was issued in 2001. It did not signal any paradigm change from the previous Report, though the imperative of interoperability with NATO was even more clearly reflected in it. The report set "participating in international cooperation to enhance security an stability" as one of the three goals of Finnish security policy, the two others being maintaining a credible independent defence and pursuing a policy of non-alignment "in the present situation". The report also added the threat perception of "regional instability" to the existing "military pressure", "strategic strike", and occupation attempt (the latter including attempts to use Finnish territory to a third party). The emphasis on procurement was almost solely on the three Rapid Deployment Brigades, with wartime strength of the defence forces being downgraded to 350 000 and several smaller bases and arms depots being closed.

In sum, the evolution of the Finnish defence system during the post-cold war years can be seen as continuing the principles through which the country had been defended for its whole existence as an independent entity. The backbone of the system was deterrence via a territorial defence system, resting on a large, well-motivated reserve commanded through a decentralised command and control –system, with significant power delegated to commanders of small units. Russia's increased reliance on tactical nuclear weapons seemed to make the decentralisation of command and control even more urgent. On top of this, the capability to actually defend the country's territory, airspace, and waters, including the capability of maintaining air superiority above crucial strategic targets, and to have capabilities to react rapidly to crises, was added. Key purchases were the F/A-18 interceptors, the creation of the Readiness Brigades for the ground forces, and the modernisation of the navy. These, done with the aim of achieving Nato-interoperability, contributed towards the grand strategic aim

[153] Euroopan turvallisuuskehitys ja Suomi, valtioneuvoston selonteko 1997.

of creating the means of tying the West – the balancer – into the balance of power in the region. Thus, the defense system can be seen as one aiming for a credible defense in a crises as long as needed to enable NATO forces to come into the equation – while maintaining the mat of territorial defense to deter the enemy, should the NATO-option for some reason fail.

11.3 Procurement

The Finnish defence forces spend about 30% of the military budget in procurement. About 15–50% of procurement is directed at Finnish suppliers.[154] The level of procurement is relatively high by international standards and is explained by the low costs of conscripts, the modest salaries of the officers, and the general streamlining of expenditure that has taken place in the Defence Forces during the last decade.[155] The political background for these developments, in turn, can be seen in Finland's security dilemma: contrary to many other European countries, national defence is taken seriously by a majority of the political elite and Russia is still seen as a potential threat.

The paradigm guiding procurement currently is an interesting application of network-centric strategy, seeking to fit together the needs of an essentially conscript-based army and the promises of network-centric command and control systems. The main threat perception is a "strategic strike" – a rapid

[154] In certain key areas, such as certain explosives and munitions, there is a policy of maintaining a high degree (about 90%) of reliance on domestic suppliers. Procurement of information technology for the military's C3I systems is also targeted on domestic sources.

[155] Finnish defence budgets have traditionally been much smaller than those of Sweden and somewhat smaller than those of Norway. The explanation for the difference with Sweden lies mainly in the difference in the size of the air force (Swedish air force is about three times larger and domestically procured, which, especially in the case of the JAS-Gripen has proven to be very expensive for Swedish taxpayers). The main difference with Norway lies in the Navy. The Finnish Navy operates only in the Baltic, and it firepower is composed of small fast-attack missile craft, while the Norwegian Navy has a need for larger and more expensive ships as well as submarines. It is also important to note that historically some key areas of Finnish defence have been funded outside of the defence budget. Currently, civilian defence (e.g. air raid shelters in every apartment-house) is being paid for outside of the defence budget. Even when omitting these, when one looks at military procurement per capita, Finland ranks fourth in Europe after Britain, France and Sweden.

operation aimed at paralyzing the country's political decision-making capabilities in a crisis situation and influencing the population's will to act against the enemy. Unlike is the case for Sweden, the possibility of a large-scale offensive against the country is not ruled out in Finnish defence planning. Largely this reflects the fact that Russia still maintains large a number of troops (around 170 000 in standing forces) in the Northern Military District, and the fact that all that one needs to do to invade Finnish territory is to drive (or just walk) across the border. However, a clear priority in defence planning for the last decade has been in preparing for a strategic strike and international peace-support operations. The same applies for procurement, where the emphasis has been on the Air Force's interceptors, the Navy's new strike force (Flotilla 2000), and the ground forces three Rapid Deployment Brigades (P2005).

11.3.1 Command and control: towards a network centric approach

The most recent update of the governments defence policy states rather that besides preparing for a strategic strike, a priority is in developing the capability for raising the readiness of Finland's defence capabilities in a crisis in order to support Finnish foreign and security policy. In practice, both priorities refer to developing the C3I systems and integrating them with the systems in other EU countries and to develop the information-processing capability, mobility and firepower of key parts of the national defence system.[156]

Surveillance, reconnaissance, and C3I systems are developed with a wartime requirements as a priority. The goal is to develop a system that is able to provide the information needed for the leadership of the country and its defence forces to make well-informed decisions in a crisis. Capabilities of receiving real-time information relevant to Finnish security from other European countries are being created.

A separate program for developing the surveillance, reconnaissance, and C3I systems of the defence forces will begin around 2005. The goal is to have a fully integrated system providing real-time information of activities in the country's territory, airspace, and territorial waters.

[156] Puolustusministeriön hallinnonalan toiminnan perusteet.

The three P2005 brigades, all 3 wings of the Air Forces, and the Navy's 2 commands (Gulf of Finland command and the Archipelago Sea Command) are designated as Readiness Units (Valmiusyhtymä), which means that they are prioritized in procurement, their reservists are prioritized in refresher training and their C3I systems will be fully integrated to national network-centric C3I systems. The guiding doctrinal idea behind the Readiness Unit–thinking is that having a well-equipped rapid deployment force will serve as a deterrent, raising affecting the enemy's cost-benefit calculation concerning a possible strategic strike. Almost equally important is, however, the fact that the Readiness Units compose that part of the defence forces, which can be sent for international duties in EU or NATO-led peace-support operations.

In general, while Sweden has been branding its defence as a network-centric one, Finland has been the one to make more progress in the actual implementation of the concept. On more than one occasion, Finnish officers have expressed frustration in the lack of integration within the Swedish C3I systems, which do not allow closer integration between the two countries.

11.3.2 Ground forces

Emphasis on procuring weaponry for the ground forces is currently on the three Rapid Deployment Brigades (known as P2005). The procurement of their weaponry began in 1996, with full readiness planned by 2007–2008). The brigades reflect the direction in which Finnish defence forces have been moving in during the last few years: an emphasis on mobility, firepower and network-based battlefield awareness. The main threat perception guiding the development of the brigades has been the strategic strike model – although requirements for participating in international crisis management operations often point to the same direction.

The P 2005 consist of about 5000 men each. Compared to normal jäger brigades, they have a higher percentage of professional personnel, the reservists trained in them receive more refresher training than normal reserves and the median age of the reservists (about 25) is lower than in other units. One of the P2005's (the Pori Brigade) is earmarked for "European peace support operations", which means EU, NATO, or UN-led

operations, preferably with a UN mandate. The Pori Brigade is also the home for Finland's contribution to NORDCAPS.[157]

The command and control systems of the brigades are on mobile platforms, with reconnaissance capabilities enhanced by Ranger UAV's. Emphasis in C3I systems has been in security and combat effectiveness (e.g. the YV12 radio system). The firepower of the brigades consists of the medium and short-range anti-tank missiles (Euro-Spike), air defence missiles (ASRAD-R), the 40mm gun of the Patria-Hägglund's CV9030 FIN Infantry Combat Vehicle and AMOS mortar launcher, and 155mm artillery fitted on mobile platforms.[158] The mobility of the brigades is taken care of by ICV's, APC's (PASI XA203) and transport helicopters (NH90). The brigades also have APC's for reconnaissance, which are fitted with capabilities to operate in an ABC-environment. The brigades make use of simulators in training, both in the training of the brigades command and control personnel as well as in the training of individual fighters.[159]

11.3.3 The Navy

The Finnish Navy's traditional job has been surveillance, mining the approaches to the country's Southern coast (four of the country's five largest cities are on the coast), stopping enemy vessels attempting an invasion (this is done together with the coastal defence forces, equipped with missiles and artillery) and to engage in anti-mine, anti-ship and air defence operations to keep the sea lanes of communication (SLOC) to the West open. The latter is particularly important since currently approximately 80 percent of Finnish trade goes through water.

During the last ten years, the development of the navy has reflected a shift in emphasis from anti-invasion capability towards real-time surveillance and guarding of SLOCs. The gradual disappearance of the Russian Baltic Fleet's landing capabilities has meant closing down some coastal artillery fortresses in the Gulf of Finland. In the future, the main jobs of the navy are likely to be surveillance, tasks related to defense against a strategic strike, and guarding of SLOC's. As Finland's integration into European and

[157] The Finnish contribution to the EU's Rapid Reaction Force, 2000 men, overlaps to some extent with the NORDCAPS contribution.
[158] Recently, Leopard-2A4 tanks were bought from Germany to complement the CV9030 vehicles.
[159] See, "Taistelukenttä hallintaan uusilla varusteilla," Ruotuväki, 4/2000, p. 5.

transatlantic security structures deepens in the future, the strategic importance of the latter function is likely to grow.

The main procurement project underway is the development of the so-called Flotilla 2000. Flotilla 2000 will complement the existing Helsinki and Rauma class fast-attack missile craft with 2 stealthy Hamina-class missile craft (for operations in open seas) and the T2000 hovercraft (4 for operations in the archipelago and two slightly larger ones for open seas). All vessels are domestically made.[160] A priority in the Navy has also been increasing the mobility of the marines (called "coastal jägers") with light and fast vessels and to increase the firepower of the coastal defence forces. A new Euro-Spike missile system will be operational by 2006 to complement the existing systems.

In the future, the Finnish Navy is planning to develop its surveillance capabilities (both above and under the water), as well as continue to develop its C3I systems and information warfare capabilities. By the end of the decade, these systems will be fully integrated into the national system. Currently, an experiment of integrating maritime surveillance capabilities between Sweden and Finland is being prepared.[161]

11.3.4 The Air Force

The big procurement decision in 1990's for the Air Force was the purchase of 63 F-18 Hornets. For the time being, the primary missions of the Hornets

[160] The T2000 is a futuristic platform, the design of which reflects the unusual strategic environment (a littoral area dotted with islands, with an ice cover over water during Winters) in which the Finnish Navy has to operate. First in the world, it has turned a hovercraft into a platform able to shoot missiles (both anti-ship and anti-air), launch torpedoes, and lay mines. The vessel's development has been guided by the needs of the environment in which it will operate: it can move over both water and ice, it is in practice immune to mines and it can land easily on islands, thus obviating the need for docking infrastructure. The T2000's sensors have been fitted on a 12-meter telescope antenna, which allows it to see over islands, small tress and obstacles to visibility typical of the archipelago.

[161] In the future, the navy will also have to consider its attitude towards submarines. In particular, submarines would be useful in monitoring submarine activity in Finland's vicinity, operating in areas where Finnish forces would not have superiority at sea and in the air, and to covertly deploy special forces if needed. Currently, the Finnish Navy makes contacs with submarines in Finland's vicinity on a monthly basis. Usually the observations are of Russian Baltic Fleet Kilo-class boats.

have been surveillance of the country's airspace in peacetime and maintaining air superiority in a crisis. The Hornets have been compiled in Finland with some key components being Finnish-designed. In the near future, the Air Force's surveillance, reconnaissance and command and control systems will be updated as part of the general development of the national integrated C3I systems. While maintaining air superiority will be main task of the Hornets, the question of procuring ground-attack capabilities for them is being studied. Since the topic is a heavily political one – ground-attack capabilities are considered "offensive" and thus problematic by some political parties, and acquiring real-time intelligence about targets during a crisis is far easier if one is able to enjoy NATO's surveillance capabilities – it will be dealt with as part of the government's next White Paper on defence policy (out in 2004).[162]

11.3.5 Reserves

About 80% of the males of each age-group undergo military training. In the coming years, the number of men in the reserves will continue to decrease, with an emphasis on the training of younger reservists. In 1997 the reserves totaled about 540 000, by 2008 their number will be approximately 350 000. Refresher training focuses on the younger (under 35) reservists, especially those with skills that require frequent updating. The wartime reservists of the P2005 brigades will receive refresher training within two years following the completion of their conscription, and in five years they will be moved off the planned wartime personnel of the P2005 into normal Jäger (light infantry) divisions.

In 2002 about 32 000 reservists received refresher training. The plan for 2003–2006 is for 35 000 per year, which makes a total of about 175 000 training days. A priority has been given to reservists whose training is related to duties needed in countering a strategic strike, such as reservists trained in the Rapid Deployment Brigades as well as reservists with skills in C3I systems and electronic surveillance. In all likehood, this trend will continue in the future.

[162] Background work on the topic is being carried out in the Defence Forces under the strike capabilities project (iskukykytutkimus), aimed at increasing the firepower supporting the main units of the ground forces. Other systems being considered include attack helicopters. The study will be completed in 2003.

To complement the official system, voluntary national defence organizations have increased their activity in the recent years.[163] Voluntary national defence work is carried on under supervision of the Defence Forces. Voluntary national defence work is done by about 4000 voluntary reservists, and the total number of regular attendants is about 40 000. The Defence Forces pays a daily allowance for the reservists attending the training as well as pays for travel, food and other expenses. Currently an experiment is being planned, under which regular reservists (privates, referred to as Jägers, sailors, etc. depending on their service) without reserve officer training could receive warrant reserve officer training under the auspices of the voluntary national defence organizations.

A part of the surveillance, reconnaissance and rapid reaction capability of the defence forces comes from the Frontier Guard and the Coast Guard. The 2004 Government White Paper will likely include expanded duties for them, which blurs the boundary between them and the defence forces. Currently, the Frontier Jäger School at Immola provides training for conscripts to act as war-time reconnaissance troops for the Defence Forces. At peacetime, the Frontier Guard is fully professional. [164]

[163] Prior to 1991 voluntary national defence work was very informal, due to the clauses of the Paris Peace Treaty.

[164] The development of Special Forces reflect the country's needs as well as the limitations of a conscript-based force. The number of professional special forces is small – usually limited to training of special forces – but the number of conscripts trained on intensive 12-month special forces courses is relatively large. The quality of the troops is considered good enough for the current requirements. Currently the Paratrooper School at Utti (located in Southern Karelia, in the vicinity of the Russian border) trains about 100-130 consripts as long-range reconnaissance troops and "Special Jägers" per year. The reconnaissance troops' main duty is to gather intelligence behind enemy lines, while the Special Jägers specialize in different explosives and sabotage operations behind enemy lines. The Navy trains its Special Forces in the Diver School at Upinniemi. Annually about 20 conscripts are accepted for the course. Training focuses every other year on combat, reconnaissance and sabotage missions, and every other year on counter-mine operations. Training of Special Forces takes 362 days, which is added to the possible basic training that has been received elsewhere. Some of the Special Forces continue to serve with short contracts and can be deployed to international operations as well. In the coming years, a key aspect of Finnish defence will likely be increasing the readiness for SOF and of counter-SOF operations in all areas of the country.

12 Conclusion

The Finnish strategic experience seems to burn down to three imperatives: balancing; a republican/liberal commitment to international society; and non-offensiveness. The overall aim of Finnish grand strategy seems to be what – in the lack of a better one-liner – could be summarized as "maintaining a balance of power that favors human freedom". In other words, Finnish strategic practice seems to get its meaning as part of larger normative project of defending the republican/liberal legacy in Northern Europe and vice versa: the liberal legacy has been able to flourish in Finland partly because of realist practices followed by Finnish leaders when needed.

When one looks at Finnish strategic culture in a historical perspective, it would be tempting to treat it as a footnote to Swedish strategic culture, since the formative experiences behind Finnish strategic culture, as argued in this paper, come from the era during which the two nations were one. However, as shown in this paper, the experiences of the population in the Eastern half of the Swedish-Finnish Kingdom have been rather different from those in the Western half and especially the experiences of Finland during the first half of the 20th century have given the Finnish elite a crash-course in international security of which the Swedish elite has been saved from.

A heality dose of pragmatism, concern for the regional balance of power, and realism with respect to Russia's future have worked fine for the Eastern half of Fenno-Scandia for half a millennium. While the challenges of the future may be very different from those of the past, at an abstract level some things have not changed. Most importantly, Russia does not yet belong to the ranks of liberal democracies, if the term is used to refer to polities, which subscribe to the rule of law, human rights, and the freedom of speech. The defence of the republican legacy in Fennoscandia still might require following some realist practices, and Finnish strategic culture seems to provide some abstract wisdom as to what they might be.

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