Towards the European transnational public sphere: Finnish liberal intellectuals and their periodicals between nationalism and internationalism under russification

Jukka Kortti

Social Sciences, University of Helsinki, Helsinki, Finland

ABSTRACT
An important era for the European Enlightenment-founded ‘republic of letters’ was the cultural internationalism of the late nineteenth and early twentieth century. The fin de siècle was also significant in forming the concepts of both the European intellectual and the European public sphere. The starting point of my article is the Finnish liberal cultural intellectuals during this period. In their activities in Europe, these Finnish intellectuals operated in the context of Russification, and that left a national mark. On the other hand, Scandinavia was the first frame of reference for literary-oriented Finnish liberal intellectuals. Through empirical examples from the cultural periodicals they edited, I discuss how periphery intellectuals joined the European republic of letters and how transnationalism in exchanging ideas and sharing universal ideals was realized. The outcome of the article is that although transnationalism in history studies provides a fruitful way to approach the era in question, often nationalism play a significant role in the transnational activities of intellectuals in small nations. Besides the political situation of a young small nation in turmoil, the close relationship between the State and ‘intellectual labour’ makes the Finnish case interesting in terms of transnational history.

Introduction

Politics is a stormy sea where thousands of winds blow, and Finland, once again after an interval of a hundred years has ended up a European theme of discussion. In the past it was discussed by rulers, now it is discussed by nations. But, for better or for worse, the sympathy of other nations is on our side. Hence, the preserving of this sympathy will be in our best interests. \(^3\)

The quotation above was written by a young Finnish writer, Eino Leino, who later in the twentieth century became a national poet. It was published in 1899 in the last number of the periodical Nykyäika (Modern Times), which Leino edited with his older brother Kasimir. The article, entitled ‘The delegation of European culture,’\(^2\) concerned the Pro Finlandia (or European) petition addressed to Tsar Nicholas II of Russia and was signed by 1,063 intellectuals from twelve European countries. The young Eino Leino clearly identified with Europe. These people, ‘the best of human kind’, came ‘from the forge of European culture (Bildung)’ to ‘state to us our own birth words.’\(^3\)

CONTACT Jukka Kortti jukka.kortti@helsinki.fi

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Nicholas II had begun Russification, the so-called ‘first years of oppression,’ in Finland through the ‘February Manifesto’ of 1899. The petition requested the Tsar to preserve the privileges of the Finns and the position Finland had under Russian rule during the ‘era of autonomy’ since 1809, when Finland became a part of Russia as a consequence of the Napoleonic Wars (the agreement between Alexander I and Napoleon at Tilsit in 1807). The Pro Finlandia petition consisted of the names of the major European liberal academics and culture figures, such as: Rudolf Eucken from Germany, Emile Zola from France, Herbert Spencer and Florence Nightingale from Britain, and the Norwegian Henrik Ibsen. In addition to cultural figures, the petition also included jurists and businessmen. The names were collected by Finnish international academics, such as the social anthropologist and the first professor of sociology at the London School of Economics, Edvard Westermarck. Although the petition gathered names in a very short time, it had a long history in a network created by Finnish constitutionalists to promote Finland by means of propaganda.4

The petition failed (Nicholas did not give an audience to the delegation because, according to him, it was a matter of Russian domestic affairs). For the Finns, however, it held great symbolic importance – not least because Finnish intellectuals felt that they were a part of the international cultural and political public sphere. On the other hand, the petition as well as the wider Russification of Finland that began in 1899 had major significance in creating the Finnish sense of nationality and historical culture. The intellectuals of the era had a major role in this process.

In this article, I look at this European cultural internationalism of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries from the viewpoint of a European periphery, Finland. My empirical analyses concern the cultural periodicals that (Finnish-speaking) intellectuals produced during the period. First, I look at the contents of the periodicals, which mostly, but not only, show the international influences and interests among the Finnish intellectuals of the era. I then analyse through three cases extracted from the periodicals how individual intellectuals took part in the European ‘republic of letters’ – a communicative network in which ideas and convictions are exchanged.

My aims are tied to the questions: How was the Finnish intellectual milieu connected to the European public sphere? How did these intellectuals on the European periphery adapt the current transnational intellectual flows for their national purposes?

The international activities of Finnish intellectuals of the era have been studied over the years, especially by literary scholars, albeit not very systematically.5 Recently, the activities of the Finnish intellectuals of the era have been studied from the point of view of the central–periphery dichotomy.6 Although this article also discusses the regional versus international spheres in intellectual life, the main focus here is on the role of nationalism in the republic of letters. I show through my examples that not only the importance of academic literary class for the forming of both Finnishness and the Finnish public sphere was important during the era, but also the era of Russification was etched in Finnish nationalistic thought. The approach reveals the importance of ‘the national’ when analysing transnational history.

**Intellectuals and the transnational European public sphere**

The concept of the ‘intelligentsia’ was formed in Eastern Europe (Russia and Poland) in the early nineteenth century, and the state was its ally. But since then, as a concept, the
intellectual has seen many variations, Finland being an interesting case on the border between East and West also from the viewpoint of the term’s history. In addition, the strong influence of German idealism shaped the activities of the Finnish intellectual elite, especially in creating the Finnish national identity through Volk, the people. The concept of ‘intellectuals’, on the other hand, entered European culture in the late nineteenth century – the period in focus in this article. However, the histories of intellectuals and the intelligentsia came to be intertwined, depending on the political culture of a particular European vicinity.\(^7\)

As intellectual historian Ron Eyerman puts it: ‘Intellectuals are first of all that social category which performs the task of making conscious and visible the fundamental notions of a society.’ Intellectuals (or the intelligentsia in its pre fin-de-siècle sense) also constitute a historically specific stratum that ‘forms a social category which takes form in varying social and cultural contexts in relation to norms and traditions reaching back to pre-industrial society.’\(^8\)

One of the great ideologies of the nineteenth century, liberalism, has distinctively been the ideology of the internationally oriented educated classes. In addition, European liberalism, in the many forms it took in political culture, was more radical than in the United States, where liberalism was very much related to questions of private property.\(^9\) As is well known, the decades before the First World War were also the peak of nationalism, which fascinated not only politicians but intellectuals as well. Especially in Northern and Eastern Europe, nationalism was also rather strong among the liberal parties. All in all, from the viewpoint of defining an intellectual, the fin de siècle era was crucial.

In the case of Finland, especially literary and liberal-minded intellectuals formed an interesting stratum in the context of a young nation in turmoil. As Eino Leino wrote, whereas the Russian Empire decided the fate of Finland in the early nineteenth century, now it became a matter for nations. Besides the era of liberalism and nationalism, the late nineteenth and the early twentieth centuries were also the era of cosmopolitanism and cultural internationalism. According to the diplomatic historian Akira Iriye, nationalism and internationalism have developed in tandem as the dichotomy between particularism and universalism.\(^10\) International historians have defined the period as ‘new internationalism’. It was ‘new’ insofar as international cooperation took place not only between states and non-state organizations, but also with a very self-conscious shift towards a transnational sociability between intellectuals in the West.\(^11\) This was most evident during the fin de siècle.

This era, moreover, is particularly interesting in terms of transnational history. Although the concept of transnational history has been applied to premodern societies and cultures, I agree with Pierre-Yves Saunier, another major transnational theorist, that ‘one should restrict application of the label “transnational history” to the moment when national states began to crystallize.’ Flows, ties and relations between nations reach back at least to the late eighteenth century, yet the end of the nineteenth century was especially central in terms of cultural transnationalism. Saunier notes that circulations and connections between nations are basic circumstances for the transnational perspective.\(^12\) Although transnationalism became a major academic trend in the humanities and social sciences in the 2000s – to the extent that one even might speak about an inflationary use of the concept in history\(^13\) – Iriye wrote how ‘the nation as the key unit of analysis still remained’.\(^14\)
The concept of transnationalism is especially relevant in analysing the emergence of new, modern times in late nineteenth and early twentieth century Europe when the continent, as well as the whole world, was rapidly becoming more interconnected and was on the move. The era ‘saw dramatically enhanced interactions on a global scale, drawing people and regions into networks of production and exchange’, as Vanessa Ogle writes in her fascinating study on the global transformation of time. Accordingly, the era is fruitful in analysing ‘space’ in intellectual history in its ‘international turn’.

Like the idea of transnationalism in general, so too the idea of a transnational public sphere has gained currency in scholarship in recent years. Most of these ideas are based on the analyses of late modern societies. On the other hand, it has also been emphasized that the transnationalisation of public spheres is not a question of postmodern times and the age of social media either, for internationalized intellectual milieus have constituted informal networks in modern Europe since the nineteenth century at the latest. The public spheres have never been confined solely within national borders. Transnational flows of information and cultural products have always been a feature of mass-media circuits, signalling broader social, political, and economic connections. The idea of the transnational public sphere has been adapted to the international diplomatic conflicts of the era in question, for instance.

In this article, I discuss how this transnational public sphere is realized in the activities of Nordic periphery intellectuals at the turn of the twentieth century. Empirically, I use three examples, the discussion of the Dreyfus affair, the debate on internationalizing Finnish literature in the Finnish cultural periodicals and the ways of engaging in long distance nationalism of a Finnish cosmopolitan activist. Methodologically, I combine ‘old school’ content analyses, powered by digital tools (Atlas.ti sofware), and close reading of articles. In the latter case, my narrowly selected examples concern literature simply because literature was a central field in the international intellectual milieus of the era. In addition, writers and poets had a profound role among Finnish intellectuals, especially in defining what Finnish culture and Finnishness meant.

The intellectuals and their periodicals

During the era, cultural internationalism made a powerful appearance in many political activities all around the world, such as the socialist movement. My focus here, however, is on liberal cultural intellectuals, in particular the Finnish-speaking liberals of the era. They rose from the nationalistic Fennoman movement after the movement divided into the conservative and moderate ‘Old Finns’ and the more liberal and radical ‘Young Finns’ in the 1890s. The Fennomen came into existence from within the Swedish-speaking elite in the early nineteenth century when they urged raising the Finnish language and Finnic culture from its peasant status to the position of a national language and national culture. The whole movement, as well as its successors, was highly influenced by the Hegelian philosopher and statesman J. V. Snellman (1806–1881), who was one of the main leaders of the movement.

The late nineteenth century and the early twentieth century was the ‘the Golden Age of Finnish Art’, and most painters, such as Akseli Gallén-Kallela, composers, such as Jean Sibelius, and authors, such as Juhani Aho and Eino Leino, were active ‘Young Finns’. Politically, the main dividing factor between the ‘Old Finns’ and the ‘Young Finns’ was
their attitudes towards the Russification policies that the Russian Empire had started in the late 1890s. Whereas the Old Finns supported Realpolitik and compliance, the Young Finns were Constitutionalists who eagerly resisted Russification.

Of the intellectuals here, I concentrate on ‘the first Finnish professional author’, Juhani Aho (1861–1921) and the ‘national poet’ Eino Leino (1878–1926), by looking at the cultural periodicals they edited with their brothers. Yet although these ‘great men’ were both fervent Young Finns partisans, they represented different generations. The key societal encouragement for Aho’s generation was the radical Fennoman student-based movement KPT, which was an ardent nationalist and eager social reformist organization in the 1880s that promoted Finnish language and culture, as well as democracy and liberalism, yet not individualism.\(^{22}\) For Eino Leino’s generation, the ‘formative years’ in the Mannheimian sense, were the first Russification period (1899–1905), although Leino had also absorbed the radical and liberal ideas of the ‘Young Finns’ of the former generation from his older brother Kasimir Leino (1866–1919). That is why it is difficult to see the Finnish liberal cultural intellectuals of the era as a generational movement. This confirms the notion that societal generation is distinctively a modern concept, created in the 1920s.\(^{23}\) In Finland, this means that the theory is difficult to apply even to the generations of the \textit{fin de siècle}. It was a \textit{Zeitgeist} – societal turmoil and internationalism – rather than a shared generational sense of unity that fuelled the cultural activists from several age cohorts.\(^{24}\)

Important for the ideas of the Finnish intellectuals of this era were not only novels and poems but also newspapers and periodicals. The newspaper \textit{Päivälehti} was of key importance for the whole Young Finns movement, the Aho brothers and Kasimir Leino being the founding figures of the paper.\(^{25}\) However, especially cultural periodicals, though having a smaller circulation than newspapers, were even more important for such intellectuals to develop and express their philosophies of life.\(^{26}\) Finnish intellectual life was significantly constructed around cultural periodicals since the late nineteenth century. As a combination of literature and journalism, they are also a fruitful source for analysing the dynamics of the cultural public sphere.

The periodicals I concentrate on in this article include \textit{Uusi Kuvalehti} (New Pictorial Magazine, 1890–1903), \textit{Nykyaika} (Modern Times, 1897–1899) and \textit{Päivä} (Day, 1907–1911). During the period of analysis, \textit{Uusi Kuvalehti} was edited by Juhani Aho, together with his brother Pekka Brofeldt. \textit{Nykyaika} was edited by Eino Leino with his brother Kasimir. Eino Leino was also a driving force behind the cultural periodical \textit{Päivä}, publishing articles and particularly poems in the publication, although he was not a member of the editorial staff. However, since the periodical \textit{Valvoja} (Supervisor or Monitor, 1880–1920), established by the Swedish-speaking liberal Fennomend Valfrid Vasenius, O.E. Tudeer and E.G. Palmén, was the major forum for ‘the Young Finns’, I also explored its content.

However, the precise occupations of this ‘intellectual labour’ are often difficult to identify since these ‘Renaissance figures’ were active in several areas, a significant proportion of their main works concerning different fields of literature: fiction, poetry, non-fiction and criticism. According to my content analysis (Figure 1) about one fourth of the known authors of the periodicals’ articles, reviews, aphorisms, causeries, essays, short stories, poems, plays and so on were professional writers and poets. In addition, the editors-in-chief, which have been classified as an occupation, can also be characterized as writers since editing a periodical was only one job among others in their literary work.\(^{27}\)
However, it is important to note here that we are talking about the Finnish-minded liberal intellectuals with their periodicals and associations. The Swedish speakers had their own cultural institutions, including the press. They often had more international connections, especially with other Nordic countries, than the Finnish speakers had. There were also more avant-gardist cosmopolitans among them than in the Finnish-speaking faction. However, the division was not very strict among – especially the liberal – intellectuals, since many of the Finnish-minded intellectuals were originally Swedish speakers and they wrote in both Swedish and Finnish newspapers and periodicals. Nevertheless, since ‘the Young Finns’ had a background in the nationalistic Fennoman movement of the 1860s and 1870s, there were more nationalistic tones to their activities than in those of their European liberal contemporaries.

For an intellectual of the era, establishing a cultural periodical was, of course, not a merely Finnish or even a Nordic phenomenon. In Germany, for instance, there were controversial intellectual figures, such as the critics Maximilian Harden and Siegfried Jacobsohn, who had their own cultural periodicals, just as their Finnish contemporaries did. In addition, the Great German writers of the early twentieth century, such as Thomas Mann and Herman Hesse, actively wrote for magazines and periodicals. For the Finnish cultural intellectuals of the period, however, the first frame of reference was Nordic. The works of Norwegians such as Bjørnstjerne Bjørnson and Henrik Ibsen and the Swede August Strindberg were important for Finnish writers, as well as their example regarding internationalization in European literary markets.

Before moving on to look more at what these ideas of cultural internationalism and the transnational cultural public sphere meant among Finnish liberal intellectuals, let us look at the content of the periodicals.
The article content analysis has been done according to the categories used in the history of the Finnish press. In practice, this means coding all the articles (excluding literary and other reviews, aphorisms, captions, causeries, essays, short stories, poems, plays, etc.) and classifying them into these various categories. The analyses include all the issues of the papers during the periods concerned; hence, no representative samples have been made. My content analysis provides information both on how diverse the contents of the articles were and how important roles political and societal issues had in the ‘cultural periodicals’ – taking into consideration that they were edited under the censorship of the Russian authorities. The symbolic forms of culture, especially literature, served as effective tools for the Finnish resistance. Nevertheless, the topics of the articles reflect the interests of the Finnish intellectuals in an era when they wished not only to take part in the European public sphere, but also to promote a national flavour in their internationalism.

Looking at the contents from the point of view of internationalism, whereas geography and travel issues take up about 5% of the articles in Nykyaika and Päivä and only a couple of per cent in Valvoja, they are dominant in Uusi Kuva-lehti. This is partly explained by the fact that Uusi Kuva-lehti was, as its title suggests, a pictorial magazine rather than a cultural periodical, although it was very literary when compared to the average magazine. Cultural internationalism also had a very practical side. Photographic plates, which were purchased mostly from international sources, were hard to get and expensive to use. Juhani Aho, for instance, had connections to the Swedish periodical Ord & Bild, which published his writings and, in exchange, Aho received photographic plates from the Swedish periodical for Uusi Kuva-lehti. However, the fact that Finland was not only culturally, but also geographically peripheral, communications being especially challenging during winter, made getting the pictures difficult. This also meant that the stories were often written based on the pictures received. Indeed, the pictures presenting different places, cultures and inventions from all around the world were a central part of the magazine. On the other hand, the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries also unfolded into the great era of literary realism. A photograph, or a drawing, was a manifestation of ‘truth.’

The British Review of Reviews was a model for Nykyaika. The idea behind the Leino brothers’ periodical was popular education work – the central overall idea of the Finnish cultural elite of the era. The impulsive all-round intellectual (academic, journalist, theatre manager, etc.) Kasimir Leino enticed his younger brother to establish the periodical after Kasimir had returned from his long ‘Grand Tour’ to Vienna, Munich and Berlin in 1897. Eino Leino had made his first trip of the European capitals when he visited Berlin during his early creative zenith in the previous year. During that time, Berlin was a sort of an extension of Helsinki for Finnish artists and several of them spent some time there in the pulsating city. However, Eino Leino did not go to Paris until 1906, when he travelled with his newly wedded wife through continental Europe.

New ‘modern-time’ inventions were a particularly important topic in Nykyaika. Articles concerning inventions and advances in science were translated from international periodicals. Besides Review of Reviews German Zukunft and Die Zeit and the French Rev. des Revues, and the American Scientific American were used as sources for the articles in Nykyaika. The Leino brothers wanted to adapt articles from modern cultivated Europe – where Finland was seen as a unique member – but also to present the life of more exotic
cultures. According to the content analysis, this fascination with the wonders of the world is manifested in the high proportion of scientific texts in the periodical. All the articles were published under the rubric ‘Practical science’ (Käytännöllistä tiedettä).

Besides the inventions and achievements of science, the internationalism in Päivä was also shown in articles that concerned religion and literature. Religion was a central topic in the periodical and the issues often related to international religious issues. There were many free thinkers among the liberal intellectuals behind the periodical, who, like their European contemporaries, had a very critical attitude towards state-church Christianity. I have, however, analysed the role of religion among intellectuals and the periodical in question elsewhere.

International relations scholars have emphasized that besides economic development and the rise of capitalism in the early modern period, the origins of liberalism in Europe also lie in the process of secularization, tolerance and the ‘taming of politics’, meaning liberal political ideas and the claims of democratization. These latter phenomena were at the heart of cultural internationalism and the rise of a modern European intellectual elite at the turn of the twentieth century.

### The Dreyfus affair and ‘poisoned patriotism’

One of the most renowned chains of events of both phenomena, liberalism and the demand for democratic justice in Europe was the so-called Dreyfus affair. In addition, it was the major international phenomenon of the era in terms of the European political and the cultural public sphere – the best-known transnational phenomenon at the turn of the twentieth century in which these ideas of cultural internationalism and transnational interaction emerged.

In the following, my first example from the content of the papers concerns the dealing of the case in the Finnish contemporary press, since the case combines three central dimensions of the activities of the Finnish liberal intellectuals of the era: nationalism, internationalism and literature.

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**Table 1 – 4. The article content of the periodicals**

| Subject            | Valvoja 1901–1910 | Nykyaika 1898–1899 | Uusi Kuvailehti 1897–1903 | Päivä 1907–2010 |
|--------------------|-------------------|--------------------|---------------------------|------------------|
|                    | n (%)             | n (%)              | n (%)                     | n (%)           |
| Politics           | 39 7,8            | 22 9,7             | 41 7,9                    | 49 10,7         |
| Economy            | 9 2,0             | 10 4,4             | 24 4,6                    | 7 1,5           |
| Society            | 14 3,2            | 20 8,8             | 32 6,1                    | 58 12,3         |
| Religion           | 14 3,2            | 7 3,1              | 33 6,3                    | 77 16,3         |
| Philosophy         | 29 6,6            | 9 4,0              | 2 0,4                     | 8 1,7           |
| Education          | 35 7,9            | 5 2,2              | 12 2,3                    | 26 5,5          |
| Science            | 13 2,9            | 29 12,8            | 45 8,6                    | 15 3,2          |
| Geography & travel | 7 1,6             | 13 5,8             | 123 23,6                  | 20 4,2          |
| History            | 58 13,2           | 36 15,9            | 61 11,7                   | 25 5,3          |
| Ethnology          | 18 4,1            | 6 2,7              | 12 2,3                    | 5 1,1           |
| Literature         | 96 21,8           | 11 4,9             | 19 3,6                    | 67 14,2         |
| Visual arts        | 33 7,5            | 9 4,0              | 38 7,3                    | 38 8,0          |
| Music              | 20 4,5            | 21 9,3             | 8 1,5                     | 18 3,8          |
| Theatre            | 34 7,7            | 25 11,1            | 16 3,1                    | 42 8,9          |
| Other              | 22 5,0            | 3 1,3              | 56 10,7                   | 18 3,8          |
| TOTALS:            | 441 100           | 226 100            | 522 100                   | 473 100         |
As mentioned, my cases concern literature, which was a central topic in the periodicals in question. Of the article contents, literature was particularly important in *Valvoja* and *Päivä* (see Table 1–4). Besides articles, literature dominated the other content of the publications as can be seen in Figures 2–4. Poetry in particular formed the major share of the other content of the periodicals.

Although Berlin and Vienna were popular continental Figure 3 Figure 4 cities to visit for the Finnish intellectuals of the era, the main reference point for liberal Finnish as well as all European intellectuals was of course Paris – the literary centre and international capital of culture. Already in the 1880s, Finnish cultural periodicals incessantly followed the current discussions and the winds of change blowing in Paris. The periodical *Finskt Tidskrift*, aimed at Swedish-speaking intellectuals, even had its own correspondent, who reported regularly from Paris. As mediators of modern French literature, the periodicals were central. It was not only that Finnish intellectuals could often read French; in addition, many of these same intellectuals could also read the texts as Swedish translations before they began the work of translating them into Finnish. Swedish booksellers had a relatively good foothold in Finland during the late nineteenth century.

As is well known, the Dreyfuss Affair was not only a major European political scandal that divided France in the 1890s and early 1900s, it was also a series of events in which the modern concept of an intellectual entered into European culture. The term ‘intellectual’,

![Figure 2](image.png)

*Figure 2.* Other content of *Uusi Kuvalehti* 1897-1903.
which at first had sarcastic connotations, first appeared in popular use in a newspaper article referring to author Emile Zola and his associates. The Dreyfus affair was not only a milestone in the history of intellectuals, it was also a milestone in literary history. Zola, especially his famous open letter ‘J’accuse’ in the newspaper L’Aurore meant that literature broke its links with the nation and with national honour when Zola proclaimed Dreyfus’s innocence. After the affair, to be an intellectual meant predominantly autonomy – distance from the corridors of power.

But what did the Dreyfus affair have to do with Finnish liberal-minded intellectuals of the era? The Dreyfus affair was discussed in the Finnish newspapers at the time, albeit not very widely. Of the approximately 12,500 pages in which Dreyfus was mentioned between 1894–1907 in all Finnish newspapers of the era, about 7,000 were published in 1898 and 1899 during the main trial. The periodicals – all Finnish periodicals, not just the ones analysed here – also wrote about the case before and after 1898–1899, but about 40% of the pages (153 of 389 pages) mentioning Dreyfus were from those years. It is notable that most of the periodicals that wrote about the case were Swedish language periodicals such as Euterpe (1900–1905) and Ateneum (1898–1903). These periodicals were more ‘European’, Euterpe being characteristically French minded, even decadent. All in all, the case was widely known among the Finnish educated classes also in the peripheries.

Figure 3. Other content of Nykyaika 1898-1899.
What was characteristic of the Dreyfus affair was that the intellectuals who concerned themselves with the scandal were divided into two camps. In addition to the liberals in defence of Dreyfus, there were also conservative defendants of national values, the army, and the established social hierarchy. Those representing humanities and modernism were often more autonomous and likely to choose the universalist liberal camp, while more traditional sciences, dependent more on the state, joined the conservative camp. All in all, the Dreyfus affair helped to solidify intellectuals as a distinct group in society with a moral mission against established authority. What is important in the Dreyfus affair from the point of view of this article is that the activities of ‘intellectual labour’ became distinctively political and hence affected the European political public sphere in the transition to modernity.

This does not mean, however, that the first generation of intellectuals of the eighteenth-century Enlightenment would not have been political in their struggle for freedom and artistic expression. The Zola-driven notion of intellectuals in the new (market) economic, political (movements) and societal (classes) context of the fin de siècle meant that these intellectuals identified themselves more collectively in their ‘struggle to constitute a public space for free discourse’.45
This public space was not only local and national and limited to a few activities, but now also concerned international intellectual milieus. In other words, the Dreyfus affair was a landmark in the European intellectual public sphere. However, it was not only a cultural phenomenon created by artists, it was more so a largely political public scandal in which cultural personalities played a central role.

Since historically the Finnish intelligentsia has characteristically had strong ties with the state, the concept of an independent intellectual that Zola represented was not – except among the faction of Swedish speaking cosmopolitans – very well suited in Finland even during the years of Russification. It has been common, and still is, that Finnish intellectuals have acted in the service of the state. At least, they do not stand against or apart from the contemporary dominant culture.46

However, the concept of a French intellectual was well known to liberal Finnish writers from the beginning as well. Juhani Aho, for instance, published several articles about the Dreyfus affair in Uusi Kuvalahti in 1898. Aho, who was one of the first writers to produce modern, realistic novels in Finland, was well acquainted with French literature and intellectual life in general. Aho spent about half a year writing in Paris during the winter of 1889–1890. It is said that Aho was the most ‘French’ author of the Finnish novel writers. During his Paris visit, Aho also wrote one of his major works, the novel Yksin (Alone, 1890). Influences from Gustave Flaubert and Guy de Maupassant are easy to pinpoint in his refined prose.47 In general, as for many writers worldwide in the late nineteenth century, Emile Zola and other French novel writers were rather commonly read among the Finnish intellectuals of the era.

The first article about the Dreyfus case in Uusi Kuvalahti in January 1898 consisted of three pictures of Zola, Dreyfus and the villain of the story, French army major Ferdinand Walsin Esterházy. There was no question who the hero was: Zola ‘wants to save his fatherland from shame, to which it has descended’ and he has ‘only one ideology to support, that of revealing the truth’.48 The writer (the text with no named author was most likely written by Juhani Aho) also emphasizes how Zola is alone against almost the whole French people in fighting for justice. Two issues later there was a picture and a short article about Zola’s attorney, Fernand Labori, who later in August 1899 was the victim of an assassination attempt: ‘He has his own place in the colonnades of history where the attorneys of the most precious and holiest eras of humankind stand.’49

The question of the right patriotism in the scandal is found in other Finnish accounts of the case as well. For instance, Kyläkirjaston Kuvalahti, one of the largest magazines in Finland in the 1890s, wrote how the Dreyfus case has ‘poisoned patriotism’. By this the writer meant the danger of this kind of military power over people, and how this leads to a situation in which ‘freedom ends, and slavery begins’.50

In emphasizing Zola fighting bravely against authorities in terms of legality and universal justice, Uusi Kuvalahti associates the scandal with the current political situation in Finland. Although actual Russification only started full tilt in the following year after Nicholas II appointed Nikolay Bobrikov as Governor-General of Finland, the Russian Empire had fortified its position in Finland little by little during the 1890s. In other words, the magazine subtly implies that Zola and his allies signified Constitutionalists – like Juhani Aho and other liberal Young Finns – and the French generals, the state and jury represented the repressive Russian Empire.
In the following issue a drawing of Zola’s trial was shown. The article concentrates on explaining the picture: ‘One should fix this picture in mind, because it is a historic picture, a picture from a scene which will apparently have great importance in world renown.’ Linked to the picture there was also a long and detailed article about the whole case written by the radical activist, cosmopolitan, and adventurer Konni Zilliacus, the ‘grand seigneur cowboy’. He had lived in Paris in the late 1890s (before that in North and South America), and he came back to Finland in 1898. Among other things, he was in the following year a prime mover behind the cultural petition Pro Finlandia mentioned in the introduction. He also translated Aho’s writings into Swedish. Zilliacus’s message was clear, Zola, one of France’s most astute writers, was victimized when trying to reveal the truth. According to Zilliacus, in France the concept of justice was subjugated by class and state prerogatives.

For Zilliacus and the Constitutionalists, justice was very much a matter of civil rights: the rulers cannot simply ride roughshod over the fundamental rights of the people. Like Zola, the Constitutionalists refused to follow decisions that they saw as illegal. In Finland during the era of Russification, civil rights were strongly associated with the Finnish nation and its position in the Russian Empire. The Finnish nation was something which was culturally determined by the Finnish people, its history and will.

In 1903, liberal culture politician and editor of Valvoja Zachris Castrén wrote in Valvoja about the importance of ‘public opinion’ (yleinen mielipide). Referring to Snellman, Castrén stated that public opinion led the leaders of a nation, since they – both autocratic or republican rulers – needed to take into consideration the trust and common sense of the people. This was manifested in the Snellmanian ‘national spirit’ that was based more on culture and education (Bildung) than on the Hegelian State. When Castrén discusses the development of public opinion in Europe, he notes, referring to the German jurist Franz von Holtzendorff’s book (Wesen und Werth der Öffentlichen Meinung, 1879), how in the nineteenth century it has predominantly operated within the borders of national states and at the cost of universal issues. The situation was different during the eighteenth-century Enlightenment on account of Montesquieu, Diderot, Rousseau and Voltaire. However, as cases such as the Dreyfus affair have shown in the late nineteenth century, Castrén sees a new dawn of universal rights in the straitened circumstances of nationalism. Castrén emphasizes the importance of civil rights. However, the Finnish word he uses is kansallisoikeus (national rights), not kansalaisoikeus (civil rights).

As the locus classicus of the theories of the public sphere, Strukturwandel der Öffentlichkeit by Jürgen Habermas, as well as other theorizing on the public sphere even before him state, the political public sphere has been culturally prefigured by the ‘literary public sphere’. People educate and develop themselves (Bildung) morally as humans in the cultural public sphere. Therefore, the political public sphere in terms of ‘reason’ needs the cultural public sphere. In Finland during this era, ‘reason’ was often reasoned by the ‘national spirit’.

The coverage of the Dreyfus affair in the Finnish periodicals shows the importance of the cultural elite for a young nation during this era. The activism of intellectuals – authors, artists and academics – evidently concerned the whole European republic of letters in this case, but the context of Russification created its own horizon of interpretation for the Finnish ‘modern’ literary elite.
Hence, for the Finnish cultural activists who lived as part of an Empire that was tightening its grip on its dependencies, it was Russia, not its own nation that needed to be broken off. In other words, the Dreyfus affair empowered the Finnish intellectual's attitude towards the Russian Empire. However, the attitude was not totally a one-way street. The climate of the Dreyfus affair for one thing raised compassion for Finland in France. As mentioned, Zola was part of 'the delegation of European culture' who signed the petition to Tsar Nicholas II.

**Internationalizing Finland or internationalizing the Finns?**

After the Dreyfus affair, French literature was increasingly seen from the point of view of cultural controversy. For instance, when L'Émigré by Paul Bourget was reviewed in Päivä, the reviewer was disappointed that he did not find any 'artistically objective description' of the controversy. But controversies were also created about how Finnish literature and Finnish readers should be internationalized. In order to show how the questions of nationalism and internationalism as well as transnationalism effected on the activities of literally minded Finish intellectuals, I analyse this often-controversial juxtaposing through the debate on translating literature in the following.

Literature was an important field for the international issues in Päivä. The articles concerning literature were about 14% of its content (see Table 4), and over half of these contents dealt with international literature. International literature consisted of about 40% foreign fiction (of which less than half was translated) and about 11% foreign non-fiction (see Figure 5). The content analyses concerning the literature reviews of Päivä not only show that foreign literature had as important a role as domestic literature in total but also that the proportion of both foreign fiction and non-fiction increased towards the end of the first decade of the twentieth century.

The increase was in fact due to the rise of book markets in Finland, which was also manifested in competition concerning translation rights between book publishers; it

![Figure 5](image-url)  
*Figure 5.* The proportion of literature reviews of the Päivä periodical.
also revealed the changing political atmosphere at that time. Although Russification was strengthening again since 1908 (the so-called second period of the ‘years of oppression’), the national issues were not as important now in the periodical as they were during the ‘first years of oppression’ (1899–1905). In other words, there was more room for international topics in literature.

Among the intellectuals of the peripheries, Paris, London and Vienna were literary centres of Europe. They were ‘world-leading’, ‘modern’, and ‘progressive’, and represented sites where cosmopolitan-minded intellectuals fashioned themselves as local representatives of the core’s modernity. Besides these literary centres, Brussels and Berlin were secondary centres for modernist literature at the turn of the twentieth century. Especially Brussels provided freedom from nationalist resentment and defensiveness, which made it attentive to all forms of cultural novelty and modernity, and therefore attractive in particular to intellectuals from smaller European cultures.

In Finland, the Scandinavian capitals of Stockholm and Copenhagen, as well as Moscow and St. Petersburg, were also important sub-centres for Finnish literature. Since the 1880s, Juhani Aho oriented himself internationally by translating literature, getting his own production translated into several foreign languages, networking internationally and determinedly striving towards internationalizing Finnish literature.

According to the French literary critic Pascale Casanova, translation ‘constitutes the principal means of access to the literary world for all writers outside the centre’. It means ‘ascending to the status of literature’. As one example of this, Casanova discusses the various attempts of the Swedish playwright August Strindberg, one of Aho’s Nordic idols, to achieve fame in France. On the other hand, ‘from the point of view of a major source language, translation permits the international diffusion of central literary capital’. Casanova also emphasizes the crucial, often underestimated role played by translators in the international republic of letters.

However, the role of international literature in Finnish culture and intellectual life was not something which increased by itself without discussion, quite the contrary in fact. The first issue of Päivä 1907, for example, contained a discussion between academic Werner Söderhjelm and Juhani Aho about the importance of translating Finnish fiction into foreign languages. The debate started after the newly established Finnish Parliament, one of the most modern at the time, granted funding in order to internationalize Finnish literature. The amount, 50,000 marks (about 220,000 euros today), however, did not provide much backing for the project.

Professor Söderhjelm was a central figure and a moving force behind many periodicals and magazines both in the Finnish and Swedish intellectual circles of the era, and he was one of those Finnish intellectuals who collected names for the Pro Finlandia petition. Söderhjelm proposed that a part of the literature grants funded by the Parliament should be aimed at translating Finnish fiction into major foreign languages, whereas such grants should not be aimed so much at translating foreign fiction into Finnish. He wrote: ‘Those who have been involved with international literary circles know the defects in this matter.’ Hence, Söderhjelm’s main concern related to the export rather than import of culture – or to use an even more anachronous term: ‘branding’ Finnishness rather than educating the Finns.

Juhani Aho commented on Söderhjelm’s argument in the newspaper article by saying that Söderhjelm thinks that Finnish people are not mature enough to receive the best of
world literature. Söderhjelm responded in Päivä, referring to Aho’s article in the Valvoja periodical in 1898, where Aho writes that there should be more funding to translate Finnish literature into Swedish. Aho repeated his claim that Söderhjelm underestimates the Finns in his response in Päivä and that Söderhjelm has not understood that the fund is not only for translating the foreign classics, such as Dante and Shakespeare into Finnish, but also for translating contemporary literature and non-fiction into Finnish.67

Söderhjelm’s criticism towards Aho’s view is justified in the sense that since the 1890s Aho himself had been the most active Finnish writer in internationalizing his own work. However, as the ‘first professional Finnish writer’, Aho also made his mark as a translator of foreign fiction. There was, moreover, another more personal stimulus behind the dispute. Söderhjelm was Aho’s translator (into Swedish) before the Valvoja article. After Aho had criticized the level of his translations into foreign languages, even into Swedish, Söderhjelm was insulted and refused to translate Aho’s texts. After that, activist Konni Zilliacus became Aho’s translator into Swedish.68

Overall, as an internationally oriented writer, Aho had wanted to go abroad, just as his Nordic idol Henrik Ibsen had done. Scandinavian capitals like Stockholm and Copenhagen were the international sub-centres of literature and Norway was a fellow periphery with which the Finnish literature of the era could be identified. At this time, in 1907, Aho was already a national writer in an authoritative position, and he probably spoke more as a gatekeeper of Finnish culture than as an internationally influenced writer.

Eino Leino, furthermore, saw no need to patronize Finnish as merely a ‘nursery literary’ language. He wrote in his review on the Finnish translation of Anatole France’s Le Crime de Sylvestre Bonnard in Päivä in 1907: ‘I think our literature, in its current phase, should pay more attention to the translated literature that chaotically dashes over us during these years, bringing along both good and bad.’69 Later in the same year, the writer Aarni Kouta, who translated Nietzsche, Strindberg and Ibsen into Finnish, complained in Päivä how Finns were late in translating literature – at least when it comes to the translating of world-class literature.70 When one of the most influential female writers of the era, Helmi Krohn (then Setälä), reviewed the first study on Shakespeare translated into Finnish, Walter Raleigh’s Shakespeare, she was worried whether the book would be too challenging for the Finns.71

Hence, as important as it was to connect to the network of the European republic of letters, and to see to it that Finnish literature should be translated into all the major languages, the internationalization of Finnish culture also meant educating the Finns through Finnish translations of world literature. As such, the role of a dissenting intellectual of the era was that of a public educator,72 but the educative ethos – the mission to enlighten and educate (Bildung) the common people – had longer roots among the Finnish intellectuals, especially in the activities of the nationalistic Fennoman movement of the nineteenth century.73 Nevertheless, while Russification weakened in Finland after 1905, the nationalistic tones gave room for international interests in literature.

However, this internationalism still had a strong nationalistic tone. As the last example of how internationalism and nationalism walked hand in hand among the Finnish minded liberal intellectuals of the era, I concentrate on the activities of Henri Biaudet in the following.
A cosmopolitan and a fervent nationalist

Literature also included non-fiction, however (see Figure 5). In 1908, the cosmopolitan and activist Henry Biaudet proposed that Finnish scholars should collect a list of major international publications of their discipline annually. As a result, these lists were printed and delivered to Finnish schools and libraries. It was thought that the government should also invest in funding for professors and other academics to collect those publications.\textsuperscript{74}

Born in Germany to a half Swiss, half French family, Henry Biaudet (1869–1915) was living in Rome at that time. Biaudet was forced into exile during the first years of Russification, but he returned to Finland in the early 1900s and maintained close relationships with the Finns throughout his life. He belonged to a circle of writers attached to the Päivä periodical from the very beginning, and this continued after he moved to Rome. During the winter of 1908–09, a Finnish intellectual community, including Eino Leino and hosted by Biaudet, spent their time discussing matters of culture in the restaurants of the Eternal City.\textsuperscript{75}

In January 1908, Biaudet wrote the major article for Päivä about Norwegian ‘national poet’ and Nobel Laureate in Literature, Bjørnstjerne Bjørnson. The article included a discussion of an article that Bjørnson had published in the major Parisian daily newspaper Le Temps in December 1906. Nationalist, but rather moderate in his later years, Bjørnson\textsuperscript{76} had written that Le Temps should write about the Finnish case, the situation of Finland under the Russian Empire at that time. Emphasizing the unfair situation that the Finns were in, Bjørnson also mentioned that one need not, however, question the loyalty of the Finns towards their Emperor. According to Biaudet, this sentence disappointed the Finnish people since ‘loyalty’ had reflected badly on the Finns during the years of oppression. After Biaudet had communicated this disappointment, Bjørnson deeply apologized for the article personally to Biaudet and told him that it was a letter to the newspaper that was not intended for publication. Accordingly, Biaudet disapproved of the policy of Le Temps, but also emphasized that Finland really needed such a guileless, fearless and zealous friend as Bjørnson.\textsuperscript{77} Either Bjørnson or Le Temps had failed to notice that although the Finns had believed that the Emperor was misled by bad advisers in the early phase of the Russification, this belief had not existed among the Finns for years.

As is well known, Bjørnson was not only a patriotic nationalist in championing the cause of small nations in their fight for cultural and political rights, but also a liberal advocate of parliamentarianism during the Norwegian autonomy within the Swedish/Norwegian union. He also strongly supported Zola and other intellectuals in the Dreyfus case. Like his Finnish colleagues, Aho and Leino, Bjørnson made his mark as a radical newspaper writer.\textsuperscript{78} As the article in Le Temps shows, he also contributed to the European public sphere.

Yet, according to Habermas, the ideal of the bourgeois public sphere (bürgerliche Öffentlichkeit) had already started to decay in the nineteenth century, and the fin de siècle was also significant in forming the European public sphere. In fact, one of the main factors behind the degeneration of the Habermasian ideal, the commercialization of the press, created a new kind of public sphere in Europe. Although the rise of the popular press concerned only a few European major countries, such as France and especially England in the late nineteenth century, the mass press had a key influence in creating a transnational public sphere at the turn of the twentieth century.\textsuperscript{79}
In practice, this meant that international issues were not something that was only discussed and debated in national newspapers and periodicals, but the party concerned had to take international media and widespread pan-European interest into consideration as well. In other words, intellectuals, politicians and especially diplomats had to balance their statements, bearing in mind both national and international audiences.

Biaudet was not only an ambitious historian of the Vatican archives, but also a fervent nationalist and anti-Russian activist. Before his career as a historian and revolutionary, he had served as an officer in the Russian army but was dismissed after he resisted the Russification of Finland in 1899. He had collected material for his doctoral dissertation in Rome since 1902, and defended his thesis on diplomatic relations between Sweden and the Holy See at the Imperial Alexander University (the University of Helsinki since 1919) in 1906. After that, he started a new research project on the early modern diplomatic history of the Catholic Church and recruited a young Finnish historian, Liisi Karttunen, to assistant him in the project.\(^\text{80}\) Karttunen also wrote regularly for Päivä.

Biaudet was a prolific writer in Päivä from the beginning of the journal. He wrote about history, museums and Italy, but also about the international views about Finland and the Finns in European newspapers. Having prolific language skills, Biaudet also actively argued on behalf of and made propaganda for Finland in these papers. He was a keen protagonist of internationalism in Finnish academia. Besides suggesting collecting a list of the major academic publications of Finnish libraries, he strongly suggested that Finnish historians take part in international history conferences.\(^\text{81}\)

Accordingly, Biaudet as well as Zilliacus could be classified as persons who practised long distance nationalism.\(^\text{82}\) This concept used by migration scholars fits perfectly the cosmopolitans, who eagerly represented different embodiments of nationalism, yet were not themselves territorially bounded. In other words, internationalism at this time was often subordinated to nationalism, especially among the intellectuals of small cultures.

At the periphery, being a cosmopolitan also meant holding a certain amount of symbolic capital in order to fight one’s corner in the national sphere. An important way of doing this was for intellectuals to ally themselves with foreign writers and their work. As the activities of Biaudet – as well as the Pro Finlandia citation at the beginning of this article – show, accumulating symbolic capital from abroad served in favour of Finnish cultural nationalism. At the same time, referring to international intellectual life was a way of compensating for the narrowness and newness of Finnish culture.\(^\text{83}\) On the other hand, building Finnishness was seen first and foremost as an opportunity take part in an entity, Europe.\(^\text{84}\) Nevertheless, the situation of Finland in the context of the Russification during the era left its national mark on the international activities of Finnish intellectuals.

**Conclusion: towards a transnational Europe from the periphery**

What makes the fin de siècle a turning point in the development of the European public sphere was the rise of cultural internationalism that created a common identification with a European intellectual sphere. This European Enlightenment-founded republic of letters could also be called the soft public sphere.\(^\text{85}\) This kind of public sphere educates citizens to work in the realm of the political public sphere. Cultural forms can play a central role in supporting people in their role as citizens. By means of culture, people are able to shape their subjectivities, to walk in other people’s shoes and, above all, provide models of rational deliberation.\(^\text{86}\)
This was also the case with the Finnish activists of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. In fact, what was characteristic of Finland during the nineteenth century is that rather than a capitalist bourgeoise class it was an academic elite that formed the Finnish public sphere. In other words, Finland lacked the Habermasian bourgeoise public sphere before the late nineteenth century and the University as well other cultural institutions played a central role in outlining the public sphere.

However, these Finnish intellectuals also wanted to participate in the new European public sphere that the promises of cultural internationalism provided. Although the historical European public sphere could be traced to Ancient Greece, it has often been seen as a modern phenomenon related to the rise of the bourgeoisie. Indeed, as philosopher Nancy Fraser emphasizes, the idea of the public sphere is based on the ‘Westphalian political imaginary’: the theory takes for granted the framing of political space based on the concept of nation-state sovereignty.87

At the turn of the century, Finland still faced the early phases of the development of the national movement. The national consciousness was predominantly the concern of a small intellectual elite and the masses adapted such ideas later in the early twentieth century.88 Moreover, since the Finnish academic and cultural elite had a central role in giving rise to the idea of the Finnish nation, ‘the national mind’ as Matti Klinge89 has put it, the relationship between nationalism and literature as well as other arts was very close. Unlike in European intellectual and literary centres, there was not really room for aristocratic aesthetics in the form of the avant-garde or decadence in Finland – except in small Swedish-speaking circles – as in the cultural centres of the era.

As shown in the case of the Pro Finlandia petition, the Finnish approach to the Dreyfus case, the debate on translating literature, other activities of internationally minded intellectuals, and the general ways that Finnish intellectuals acquired cultural capital, nationalism can play a significant role in the activities of intellectuals of small nations. During the Russification period, the liberal ideas of the Young Finns were mixed with nationalism, which distinguishes Finnish liberals from Scandinavian and other Western European liberals.90 This notion, among other things, highlights the importance of ‘space’ as an analytical lens in intellectual history.

Evidently, there were many political, ideological and technological factors behind the wider European development. Politically, the whole of Europe was, more or a less, in turmoil with the rise of militarism, nationalism, imperialism and alliances that soon led to the First World War. The era was also a crucial formation period for the major ideologies, such as socialism and liberalism – and nationalism – which had a central role to play in the activities of internationally minded intellectuals. We must not forget, moreover, the role of technology in the creation of this common European public sphere. Travelling became easier due to cheaper and faster trains and ships and thus it became more common for intellectuals from the peripheries to visit Paris, London and Vienna. The telegraph network and more efficient postal systems spread information from the European centres all the way to its peripheries in a relatively short time. The development of other media, such as the rise of the commercial printing press, the increase of European book markets and the advances in printing technology increased the amount and quality of information.

Even though the fin de siècle was an era of (modern) globalization,91 where networked communication (the telegraph), migration (especially to America) and improved
transportations (trains and steamships) played an important role, the linkages between intellectuals were not predominantly ‘non-state’ activities across national borders.

Although the ideas of interaction with transactions and negotiations between the European intellectuals are also relevant when adapted to the fin de siècle, it does not include the fact that often the primary frame of reference was their own nation. The idea of a borderless republic of letters was important for the self-understanding of intellectuals, but also intellectual life was organized by the nation-states in Europe in general when nationalism rose.92

Whereas the diplomatic conflicts between the major European countries during a very fragile era in the European political history were admittedly shaped by ‘mediatized politics’, where politicians had to reckon with general public opinion due to the rise of the mass press,93 national audiences were still the target for an internationally oriented periphery intellectual.

Nevertheless, as the examples of Pro Finlandia petition, the Finnish comments about the Dreyfus case and the activities ofHenri Biaudet show, Finnish intellectuals also took part in the transnational public sphere in this earlier age of globalization. As Saunier puts it, ‘the transnational perspective acknowledges and assesses foreign contributions to the design, discussion and implementation of domestic features within communities, polities and societies; and vice versa the projection of domestic features into the foreign’.94 Both perspectives fit perfectly the cases discussed in this article, especially in the debate on translating literature.

One of the key texts of transnationalism is the idea of histoire croisée proposed by the historians Michael Werner and Bénédicte Zimmerman. They point out how the approach could ‘open up promising lines of inquiry for the writing of a history of Europe that is not reduced to the sum of the histories of member states or their political relations, but takes into account the diversity of transactions, negotiations, and reinterpretations played out in different settings around a great variety of objects that, combined, contribute to shaping a European history “à géométrie variable”.95 How Finnish liberal-minded intellectuals reacted to the Dreyfus affair, a major European cultural and political conflict between conservatives and liberals, shows the importance of a particular national setting for applying the transnational, if not yet universal, phenomenon to domestic purposes.

The fact that nationalism and internationalism have developed in tandem is very evident with such young nations as Finland, which acquired national status – while still under the rule of the Russian Empire – at the turn of the nineteenth century. Moreover, intellectuals on the periphery were in a situation where very few of them had a chance to interact with major European intellectual networks of the era. Not that the Finnish liberal intellectuals, the men of letters of the era, such as Juhani Aho and Eino Leino would not have been ‘international’. They were educated, well-travelled and skilled at languages – personalities who knew the art circles and were interested in different kinds of social, political and cultural topics in Europe. In their own country, they knew everyone and everyone knew them, but they also had international connections with contemporary European intellectuals, at least in the other Nordic countries.

All in all, these rather small elite circles played a significant role in creating an identity for a young nation under an empire in turmoil. In addition, being on the periphery between eastern and western influences, the idea of a Finnish intellectual was not only influenced by the central European ideal of a man of letters (‘intellectual’), but also the
close relationship between an educated class (‘intelligentsia’ or ‘intellectual labour’) and the state made its mark on the development of Finnish intellectuals.96

However, there was clear asymmetry in the interaction between peripheral intellectuals in northern Europe and those living in Paris, Vienna, Berlin or London in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. In other words, there were hierarchies in the European republic of letters.97 There was asymmetry even between those coming from the margins of Europe such as Norden (Scandinavia plus Finland), when the young nations of Finland and Norway often served as peripheries of the periphery.98

On the other hand, the intellectuals of a periphery could now write about the topical new wonders of the world in a timely way by translating articles from international newspapers in their periodicals, they could also obtain pictures of these phenomena – as well as other illustrations of exotic places from around the world. The photographic plates from paintings, sculptures and major artists and writers, still relatively difficult to purchase, widened the worldviews of the readers of the periodicals and hence created a common identification with European contemporaries.

Intellectuals in the Nordic countries adapted the latest ideas rather quickly, nor did they easily fall into universalistic modes of thinking. For those on the periphery, it was easier to recognize that there are several centres and hence different universalisms. If an intellectual lives in Helsinki or Oslo, he or she does not ignore the ideas created in Paris, as those working in Cambridge might do. After all, the concepts of Europe and Europeanness are always dependent on ever-temporary national and transnational battles between elites in the European public sphere.99

Accordingly, studying the peripheries of the European republic of letters may provide interesting insights into the European public sphere. And this does not concern only the fin le siècle. Looking at the recent Catalonian, Flemish and Scottish independence movements – not only at Brexit and the rise of populist nationalism in contemporary Europe alone – it is clear that intellectuals and artists have also been involved in movements arising in Western democratic European Union countries.100

Notes

1. ‘Politiikka on myrskyinen meri, jossa tuhannet tuulet tuivertavat, ja Suomi on taas, sadan vuoden välillä jälkeen, joutunut Euroopan keskustelunalaiseksi: Silloin keskustelivat siitä hallitsijat, nyt kansat. Mutta käyköön, kuinka käynnekin, meillä on puolellamme kansojen myötätuntoisuus ja olkoon paras pyrintömme yhä oleva sen säilyttäminen’ (trans. Author).
2. E. L. “Europalaisen kulttuurin lähetystö.”
3. ‘Euroopan sivistyksen ahjosta’ lausumaan ‘meille meidän omat syntysanamme’ (trans. Author).
4. For more on the Pro Finlandia petition, see for instance, Reenkola, “Kulttuuriadressin matkassa.”
5. See e.g. Nummi et.al. Pariisista lisalmeen; Varpio, Matkalla modernin Suomeen; Tuominen, “Ranskalainen kirjallisuus Valvojassa 1800-luvun lopulla.”
6. Nygård, “Från Euterpe till Argus”; Nygård and John Strang, “Facing Asymmetry”; and Jalava et. al., Decentring European Intellectual Space.
7. Eyerman, Between Culture and Politics, 21–25; 42–43; and Kortti, “Intellectuals and the State.”
8. Eyerman, Between Culture and Politics, 6.
9. Beate, Liberal Internationalism, 60–71.
10. Iriye, Cultural Internationalism, 15, 162.
11. Sluga and Clavin, “Rethinking the History of Internationalism,” 4–5.
12. Saunier, Transnational History (cited 13–14).
13. Alcalde, “Spatializing Transnational History,” 554.
14. Iriye, Global and Transnational History, 12.
15. Ogle, The Global Transformation of Time, 3, 20–23.
16. Allemann, Jäger and Mann, “Introduction,” Armitage, “The International Turn in Intellectual History.”
17. Fraser, “Transnationalizing the Public Sphere.”
18. Armitage, Foundations of Modern International Thought; Gänger and Lewis “Forum: A World of Ideas.”
19. Gripsrud et al., “Editors’ Introduction,” xxiv.
20. See e.g. van Waarden, “Demands of a Transnational Public Sphere”; Orgill “Different Points of View?”
21. See e.g. Dogliani, “The Fate of Socialist Internationalism.”
22. See Klinge, K. T. P.:stä jääkärelhin, 59–142.
23. Wohl, The Generation of 1914, 2–3.
24. Kortti, “The Modern Cultural Intelligentsia as a Generational Movement.”
25. See e.g. Zetterberg, Eero Erkko; Jensen-Eriksen et al., Suomen Suurin, 28–89.
26. Kortti, “Generations and Media History.”
27. Note that the authors could be educators, academics, journalists, poets, writers, translators, writers and so on at the same time; the category of an occupation has been chosen with regard to their main position during the period. The source for identifying the authors comes from different data bases, such as the National Biography of Finland (see https://kansallisbiografia.fi/english). As is evident, almost 40% of the authors are as yet unknown. However, a large proportion of the names behind pseudonyms, pen names or other unidentified texts in the periodicals, are very likely writers.
28. Nygård, “Från Euterpe till Argus.”
29. Vares, Varput ja pääskyset, 85–108.
30. Leino-Kaukiainen, “Perinteiden vaalijat vastaan arvojen särkijät,” 404.
31. For the content analysis, see also Kortti, ‘Religion and the cultural public sphere.’
32. The content analysis of Valvoja has been taken from Leino-Kaukiainen, “Perinteiden vaalijat vastaan arvojen särkijät,” 408 with the exception that medical, botanical, biological, physics, chemistry and technical texts have been categorized as ‘science’. Also, philological content has been put under ‘other’.
33. See Kortti, ‘Kulttuurista politiikkaan.’
34. Rajala, Virvatuli, 48–49, 106–109.
35. ‘Käytännöllistä tiedettä’ (sample issue); ‘Käytännöllistä tiedettä.’
36. Kortti, ‘Religion and the cultural public sphere.’ 2017.
37. See e.g. Jahn, Liberal Internationalism, 60–71.
38. Captain Alfred Dreyfus, a young French artillery officer of Alsatian Jewish descent, had been falsely accused of leaking security information to the Germans. When the well-known author Emile Zola reproached the government for denying Dreyfus his right to justice, several public figures supported him.
39. See e.g. Ranki, ‘Suomalainen fin-de-siècle: frankofilia ja frankofobia.’
40. Nummi, ‘Helsinki–Tukholma–Pariisi,’ 293.
41. Casanova, The World Republic of Letters, 37, 363 (n. 82).
42. The analysis is conducted by the search engine of the digital collections of The National Library of Finland.
43. See note 28 above.
44. Vares, “Pikkumainen Marianne,” 156.
45. Kortti, “Intellectuals and the State,” 366–367; Sulkunen, “The Formation of Intellectuals as a Social Group,” 9; Eyerman, Between Culture and Politics, 37–38.
46. Kortti, “Intellectuals and the State.”
47. Lyyttikäinen, “Eiffeltorni ja korpikuusi,” 123.
48. ‘Hän tahtoo pelastaa isänmaansa siitä häpeästä, johon on joutunut’ (trans. Author) (‘Päivän sankarit Ranskassa’);
49. ‘Hänellä on oma paikkansa siinä historian pylvästössä, jossa seisovat ihmiskunnan kalliimpien ja pyhimpien aikakausien asianajajat’ (trans. Author) (‘Zolan asianajaja Labori’).
50. “Dreyfus,” 112.
51. ‘Sopii painaa mieleensä tämä kuva, sillä se on historiallinen kuva, kuva kohtauksesta, jolla varmaankin on oleva suuri merkitys maailman menossa’ (trans. Author).
52. The nickname was given to Zilliacus by his cousin, historian Alma Söderhjelm (Klinge, ‘Zilliacus, Konni’).
53. Zilliacus represented the activist fraction of the (Swedish-speaking) Constitutionalists, who published underground press and were ready for terrorism. The activists had also relationships with Russian revolutionaries.
54. Zilliacus, ‘Katsaus Dreyfusin jutun vaiheisiin, (part 1)’; Zilliacus, ‘Katsaus Dreyfusin jutun vaiheisiin, (part 2)’.
55. See e.g. Zetterberg, Eero Erkko, 307–326; Jussila, Nationalisme ja vallankumous venäläissuomalaisissa suhteissa 1899–1914, 62–63.
56. According to Reinhart Koselleck (‘Einleitung’) self-formation’ is the closest definition of Bildung in English. At least in this Snellmaninan meaning, it is accurate.
57. Castrén, ‘Yeisen mielipiteen olemuksesta ja arvosta.’
58. Habermas, Strukturwandel der Öffentlichkeit, 51; Manheim, Die Träger der öffentlichen Meinung. See also McGuigan, Culture and the Public Sphere, 24; McGuigan, ‘The Cultural Public Sphere,’ 435. I have analysed the dynamics between the cultural and public sphere through the same empirical data as here from the point of view of how Finnish cultural intellectuals developed their philosophies of life fuelled in times of political turmoil by attitudes towards religion. See Author. ‘Xxxx.’
59. Bauvois, “Albert Edelfelt ja suomalaisaiteilijat vuosisedanvaihde Ranskassa,” 51.
60. Hahl, ‘Ulkomaan kirjallisuutta.’
61. Häggman, Paras tawara maailmassa, 266–267, 287.
62. Nygård and Strang, “Facing Asymmetry,” 84.
63. Casanova, The World Republic of Letters, 131–133.
64. Nummi, “Helsinki–Tukholma–Pariisi,” 292–293, 300–301.
65. Casanova, The World Republic of Letters, 126–146.
66. ‘Ken on hieman liikkunut ulkomaan kirjallisuissa piireissä, hän tietää millaista puutteita tässä suhteessa on olemassa’ (trans. Author) (Söderhjelm, ‘Pari sanan Eduskunnan määämaimistä kirjallisuista apurahoista’).
67. Söderhjelm, ‘Kirjallisuista kultuuritarpeitamme’; Aho, ‘Päivän toimitukselle’ and Werner Söderhjelm’s response.
68. Rajala, Naisten mies ja aatteiden, 236.
69. ‘Mielestäni on meidän kirjallisuutemme nykyisellä asteella ruvettava kiinnittämään entistä suurempaa huomiota myöskään käännöskirjallisuuteen, joka näinä vuosina syöksy yliemme kaotetisena virtana, tuoden hyvää ja huonoa tullessaan’ (Leino, ‘Käännöskirjallisuutta’).
70. Kouta, “Kirjallisuutta.”
71. Setälä, “Kirjallisuutta.”
72. Eyerman, Between Culture and Politics, 102.
73. However, the educative ethos of the Finnish liberal intellectuals was seriously damaged later, especially during the 1918 Finnish Civil War, when the common people disillusioned the intellectuals with their revolution.
74. Blaudet, “Kritiki kulttuuritekijänä.”
75. Onerva Eino Leino, 388.
76. Bjernson lived in Rome at the same time as the Finnish community spent their time in the city in 1908–1909. Although the Finns noticed the old hoary sympathizer of Finland in a restaurant, there is no evidence that the Finns contacted him (Rajala, Virvatuli, 218).
77. Blaudet, “Björnsterne Bjørnson and Suomi.”
78. See e.g. Beyer, “Björnsterne Bjørnson.”
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Notes on contributor

Jukka Kortti, university researcher at the Faculty of Social Sciences, University of Helsinki, is a media and intellectual historian. He has published works within media history, the history of television, advertising, journalism and documentary film, as well on the activities of intellectual elites, culture and student activism, the history of everyday life, and the history of consumption and modernization processes.

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