

“FINNISH ATTITUDES TOWARD RUSSIANS”: NATIONAL NARRATIVE, IMPERIAL POLITICS AND THE MECHANISM OF GOVERNANCE OF THE REBELLIOUS BORDERLAND (1907–1910)

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The official version of the Russian national myth of the 19th and early 20th centuries was imperial in nature, built on images of military victory and the ideas of autocratic rule and the titular nation. However, an examination of the process of adopting this official imperial ideology in the Grand Duchy of Finland at the beginning of the 20th century reveals a surprising phenomenon. Over the course of three years (1907–1910), the official, Russian-language *Finlandskaya Gazeta* actively published articles and reports on “matters of contempt of the crown”. One might naturally assume that such cases should have immediately destroyed the Russian imperial myth in the Grand Duchy of Finland, especially since, to our knowledge, no such matters were publicized during these years on Russian territory. This raises the question of the pragmatics of this “contemptuous” story in the official press. Its study will help clarify the course of the debate around the “Finnish question” as a whole, as well as the status of the “Finnish problem” in the evolution of the Russian national myth.

As this article will attempt to demonstrate, the theme of “contempt of the crown” is an integral part of the narrative of the victorious empire and of the Russian national myth as a whole. In official practice, the narrative of “contempt” appears to have been intended to provide the moral legitimacy of future “victorious” actions by the empire in the Grand Duchy of Finland. The construction of an image of the enemy, rhetoric of “national offense”, and a policy of defending the titular nation/emperor were all methods used by state ideologues to achieve both external and internal political goals. In reporting on cases of contempt of the crown, the parent state seemed to “lose” the borderland on the ideological field, while at the same time winning in realpolitik.

Let us begin with the publications of the historian, military attorney, and political figure M. M. Borodkin, who was a member of the Special Meeting and an active participant in the settlement of the “Finnish question”. In 1902, Borodkin published his first handbook, *Finland in the Russian Press* (“Финляндия в русской печати” [Бородкин 1902]), and a few years later published *A History of Finland* (“История Финляндии” [Бородкин 1908]). The characteristic feature of the latter book was the appearance of a special chapter entitled “Finnish Attitudes toward Russians”. This chapter reflected national conflicts in response to the ideological demands of the new political situation¹, in which the description of the relationship between the native population of the regions and the titular nation (between Finns and Russians) became a part of the imperial narrative. This text built the prism through which the position of the Grand Duchy of Finland within the Russian Empire was characterized. Borodkin’s assertions about the territory of the state and its subjects form a specific system of ideological governance and preservation of the empire in this period.

In 1915 Borodkin published the continuation of his bibliographic guidebook, *Finland in the Russian Press* [Бородкин 1915], which included a new search term in the index — “Insults”. The historian classified material into nine thematic groups: contempt of the crown, state seal, and flag, and insults to the clergy, police, religion, Russians, Russian troops, and Russian officials. The section on “Contempt of the Crown” includes two additional sections from *Finlandskaya Gazeta*: “the Chronicle” and “Litigation”. The guidebook contains references to 164 articles, of which 137 relate to “Contempt of the Crown”.

Per the Criminal Code of 1903, contempt of the Imperial Majesty was classified as a crime against the state. The corresponding third chapter, entitled “On the revolt against Supreme authority and on the criminal acts against the Sacred Person of the Emperor and Members of the Imperial House”, went into effect in 1904. According to B. Kolonitsky, in 1911 62% of state criminals were convicted under the articles on insulting the imperial house. Kolonitsky examined the corresponding cases from 1914–1916, which occurred, for the most part, in the interior provinces of Russia (see further: [Колоницкий: 43–71]).

¹ Cf. Chapter 15, *Russo-Finnish Relationships*, in Borodkin’s work *History of Finland: The Time of Emperor Alexander I* (СПб., 1909), as well as Chapter 13, *Russo-Finnish Relationships*, in his book *History of Finland: The Time of Emperor Nicholas I* (Ир., 1915). See also individual observations [Гузаиров]. It is interesting to note that the second volume of *Picturesque Russia. Our Fatherland in its Territorial, Historical, Tribal, Economic, and Domestic Values* (“Живописная Россия. Отечество наше в его земельном, историческом, племенном, экономическом и бытовом значении” 1882), published by the Imperial Geographic Society under the editorship of P. P. Semionov, lacked a special chapter on Russian-Finnish relations.

However, it is significant that information about court cases involving contempt of the emperor began to arise in the Russian public consciousness and be given publicity beginning in 1907 specifically in the Grand Duchy of Finland.

Reports from the section on “Matters of Contempt of the Crown” frequently appeared on the front page of *Finlandskaya Gazeta*. Charges of preparing and distributing written and printed works designed to excite disrespect for the supreme authority, for the sovereign, or for his governance of the state were also classified by the Criminal Code as insults to the imperial dignity. Information about cases of this type taking place in Finland appeared in the pages not only of *Finlandskaya Gazeta*, but also in *Moskovskie Vedomosti*, *Novaya Gazeta*, *Birzhevye Vedomosti*, and others. Newspaper articles appeared irregularly from 1907 to 1912. The majority of these reports were published in the period up to and including 1910, that is, during the celebration of the 100-year anniversary of Russia’s victory in the Swedish war and the addition of Finland to the Russian empire. From the end of 1910, their number dropped sharply and dramatically: in *Finlandskaya Gazeta*, 58 articles and announcements were published in 1910, 12 in 1911, and one in 1912. This paper will examine the possible ideological role the publication of articles about contempt of the crown occurring in Finland had in the political script of the Russian authorities in 1907–1910.

The question of Finland’s status in the Russian empire has its own background. In the 1890s, historical and legal debates developed between the Finnish and Russian sides about whether Finland was a separate state united to the Russian empire, or an imperial province (see further: [Юссила: 539–593]). In the foreword to the book *The Modern Finnish Question According to Russian and Finnish Sources* (“Финляндский современный вопрос по русским и финляндским источникам”, 1891), the censor F. Yelenev wondered:

For Russians living in Finland, there has long remained an unresolved question: how has such an order been established in this province of the Russian state that Russian government authorities are clearly trampled there, and Russian people, the Orthodox religion, and her clergy are exposed to systematic harassment and insults? [Еленев: 5].

Yelenev had intended to write a special composition, “Finland and the Position of Russians in It” (“Финляндия и положение в ней русских”), in which he planned to provide numerous examples of the insulting behavior of Finns toward Russians in the 1860s. However, yet in 1889, Alexander III, having read the report of the Finnish Senate, declared: “Which is it, finally, Russia belongs to or is a part of Finland, or the G. D. of Finland belongs to the Russian em-

pire?” (quoted from [Юссилла: 528]). Gradually, in the statements of Russian publicists and officials, the theme of contempt for the titular nation became a part of an overall historical, legal, and political narrative about the parent state’s struggle with the rebellious borderland of the Empire. In 1891–1897, a three-volume edition entitled *The Finnish Province of Russia* (“Финляндская окраина России”) was published under the editorship of Sergey Petrovsky [Финляндская окраина]². The collection was comprised of texts published at different times in *Moskovskie Vedomosti*, including such authors as M. Katkov and K. Ordin — known for their research entitled *The Subjugation of Finland: A description from unpublished sources* (“Покорение Финляндии. Опыт описания по неизданным источникам”, 1889) — F. Yelenev, and M. Borodkin. Articles on historical, administrative, financial, customs, military, legal, and other questions were accompanied in the collection by reports from the lives of Russians in Finland depicting instances of attacks and insults by Finns on representatives of the titular nation. I have examined this theme in another article [Гузаиров: 158–169]. Here, two moments are of note:

1. In these articles, Russian clergy and military figures are named as the objects of contempt by Finns; that is, living symbols of two imperial concepts — “Orthodoxy” and “Autocracy”³.

2. The new historical context required previously uncirculated negative information about the conflict between the titular nation and the local population. The collection *The Finnish Province* (“Финляндская окраина”) formed a new strategy for describing the interethnic relationships between Russians and Finns. It served to establish a representation of Finns as enemies in the guise of subjects. This constructed image of the enemy could be used as a rhe-

² Regarding its reception by Russian public figures in Finland, see: [Витухновская 2004: 89–142]. This researcher demonstrates that the impressions of the elite changed under the influence of ideological attitudes, as did the situation in Finland and Russia itself.

³ A characteristic example of an article from the collection: “Life for Russians in Finland (*Moskovskie Vedomosti*. 1890, № 82. March 24). From Helsingfors: ‘<...> Today along the Esplanade (the main street of the city) artillery officer M. walked with his wife and child <...> Suddenly they were set upon by some Finn, who struck Mr. M.’s wife <...>. M. filed a complaint at the local Dragoon court, and revealed the following: on March 5, the blacksmith Lindel attacked the wife of officer M. and struck her in the eye with his fist. When Mr. M. tried to take him to the police, he began to resist. Deposited, at last, in a cab, along the way Lindel knocked off Mr. M.’s cap. In court he testified that he had been drunk and remembered nothing” [Финляндская окраина: I, 236–237]. On insults toward representatives and sacred objects of the Russian Orthodox Church see, for example, the articles “Mockery of Orthodox Clergy” (“Издешательства над православным духовенством” [Ibid.: I, 235–236]), “The Valaam Monastery Question” (“Вопрос о Валаамском монастыре” [Ibid.: I, 417]), and “The Burning of Icons by Finnish Soldiers (from Helsingfors)” (“Сожжение иконы финскими солдатами. (Нам пишут из Гельсингфорса)” [Ibid.: II, 453]).

torical argument in social and political debates between the parent nation and the imperial borderland. From a historical perspective, this text implemented ideological preparation for the deprivation of special privileges in Finland and the enactment in the Duchy of “unifying” laws by the Russian empire (1910).

The *Finlandskaya Gazeta*, which was founded in November 1899 in Helsingfors, issued a weekly supplement in Finnish (see: [Назарова: 113–146]). The first issue came out in January 1900. In that same year, the *Mosckovskie Vedomosti* published a series of articles by N. Talin entitled “‘Cultured’ Achievements by Finns” (“‘Культурные’ подвиги финляндцев”). Talin paints a picture of Finnish civil boycott of representatives of the titular nation:

<...> to not recognize on crowded streets one’s Russian acquaintances has long ago become a universal slogan; <...> to approach and speak with them among the “crowd” is certain to cause a hasty and disorderly “flight” <...> one of the people living in Helsingfors, due to his official activities, could not find a masseuse <...> one would appear to be a masseuse for two days, but suddenly, she refuses; after her a second does the same, then a third — and so all of them down the line [Талин 1900а: № 149. С. 2].

<...> it has occurred many times that, at references to advertisements or inquiries by telephone about a published apartment, said place was “unexpectedly” “already rented” as soon as the name, title, or nationality of the inquirer became known [Ibid.: № 150. С. 2].

Talin reinterprets the image of the Finn, underscoring the loss of those positive characteristics traditionally noted by Russian travelers: honesty, decency, and civility⁴. Despite the negative representation of Finns he has established, Talin ends his cycle with the article “Prayer for the Tsar in Finland” (“Молитва за царя в Финляндии”):

In Finland, of late there is a universal prayer for the good health of the Dear Tsar, all its residents, Russians and Finns alike, forgetting temporarily their scores and transient causes, are joined in a general irrepressible feeling <...> in a feeling of boundless love for the object unceasingly in the thoughts of all, the Sovereign Patient... [Талин 1900б: 4].

This reference to the monarch serves as a *rhetorical* resolution of the everyday, “contemptuous” conflicts between the local population of the rebellious borderland and representatives of the titular nation. The Emperor is depicted as a peacemaking figure who unites all his subjects, and the personal feelings

⁴ Here is a typical example: “But Finns justly court fame and glory throughout the world for their irreproachable honesty” [Водовозова: 21]. For more on the formation and evolution of the stereotype of Finnish honesty, see: [Лескинен: 277–301].

of Finns toward the Russian tsar as standing higher than their national and political priorities. This is characteristic also of subsequent publications of loyalist texts in *Finlandskaya Gazeta*⁵. Thus, during the Russian Revolution in September 1905, a letter by Finnish peasants was published, expressing their devoted love for the tsar [Всепооданнейший адрес: 1].

In spring of 1906 the constitution of the Russian Empire was adopted, which also defined the status of Finland. The final formulation of the articles of the Russian lawmakers, after negotiations with Finnish representatives, declined to mention that Finland was “under sovereign possession”. However, the remarks of Leo Mechelin, head of the Finnish Senate, which emphasized that Finland was governed not “on special grounds” but rather by her own constitutional laws, were not taken into consideration. According to the constitution, Finland was no longer a state, but a province of the empire, autonomous in its administration and legislation.

In the summer of 1907, Leo Mechelin began an initiative to define Finland’s status and entity. According to this secret initiative, Finland was defined as a separate state in union with the Russian Empire. P. Stolypin, head of the Cabinet of Ministers, having learned of this document only from *Novoe Vremia*, wrote to the head of the Chancery: “What is this project on the form of government? It must not slip by. Please report. 18.6” (quoted from: [Юссила: 704]). Stolypin refused to present Mechelin’s initiative to the emperor.

At the end of August and beginning of September 1907, the Finnish Parliament began discussing legislation on contempt of the crown. On September 29, 1907, issue № 139 of *Finlandskaya Gazeta* contained a notice entitled “The Case of Ida Valonne”; this was the first article to report on the prosecution of a case of contempt of the crown. On October 18, the Cabinet of Ministers formed a Special Meeting on the affairs of the Grand Duchy of Finland, whose attendees included the above-mentioned General-Lieutenant M. Borodkin. On November 1, the Third State Duma was called, with whom Stolypin

⁵ In 1900, *Finlandskaya Gazeta* published in two issues the text “Russian Tsars and the Finnish People. A Feuilleton” (“Русские цари и финский народ. Фельетон”). An essay about Nicholas I references “The Laudatory Ode of Old Luutinen” (“Хвалебная ода старика Лютинена”). In that work, Emperor Nicholas corresponds to the traditional image of the tsar-father (strong and caring), defender against outside enemies and guardian of the internal peace of the country. In this ideological construction, Finnish peasants are portrayed as the true representatives of their people, who receive the right to speak for all nations. The author constructs a “new” image of the loyal Finn, who is defined not by his ethnic or national self-identity, but by his affiliation with the empire. The fourth stanza of the ode is typical in this regard: “Suomi! Be able to appreciate your happiness at a time when you enjoy it, when you are under His power. Bow and thank the Sovereign, when He sends grace and bears a fatherly heart” [Русские цари: 117, 2].

was able to work, one way or another. A month later, on December 4, *Finlandskaya Gazeta* (№ 173) contained for the first time the section called “Cases of Contempt of the Crown”. On December 22, the head of the Cabinet of Ministers wrote to the tsar:

I found it not out of place to loudly declare [to the Finnish Governor-General and State Secretary] that Your Majesty firmly decided, in cases of violation of the law by Finns and disobedience to lawful demands, to act by the power of *manu militari*. Evidently, they are beginning to understand in Helsingfors that these are not empty threats, and it seems to me that the matter is taking a satisfactory turn [СТОЛЫПИН: 81].

The implementation of Stolypin’s systematic program to limit the legislative freedom and rights of Finland corresponded with the beginning of publications about cases of contempt of the crown. On May 5, 1908, in a Duma speech about Finland, Stolypin also mentioned the law on contempt of the crown⁶. The two processes — political and ideological — developed in parallel, comprising two parts of a single mechanism in the fight to control the recalcitrant borderland.

The *Finlandskaya Gazeta* began publishing yet another series of articles, about the prosecution of newspaper editors and distributors of revolutionary literature for contempt of the crown. Thus, in 1907, the publisher of the worker’s newspaper *Sociaalidemokraatti*, Etu Salin, was indicted for the article “Not All Can Be Said” (“Не все можно говорить”). In his statement, the accused insisted on an acquittal, emphasizing that “the basis for this accusation seems to him insignificant, since it boils down to the four words of an article title” [ДОб 1907: 1]. In the next year, Etu Salin was once again accused of contempt of the crown for his article “Helmikuun, 14 päivää (July 14)”, which was about the dissolution of the Second State Duma and criticized the actions of the government.

In 1908, the publisher of the newspaper *Hämeen Voima* was sentenced to four months in jail for printing the article “Clash of Giants in Russia” (“Борьба гигантов в России”) in 1906 [Два приговора: 2]. Typically, reports of this type were limited to a reference to the newspaper under prosecution and to the published article, as well as information about the trial.

The following two examples were exceptions to this rule. The occasion for the prosecution of the newspaper *Kansan Lehti*, according to *Finlandskaya Gazeta*, was the article “Against False Parliamentarism” (“Valeparlamentarisma vastaan”), which called for “a protest against the Russian Autocracy” [ДОб 1908: 1].

⁶ P. Stolypin insisted: “Then several legislative bills became known to me only through rumors in the papers. Is this proper? By the way, this is how I learned about the bill on trade, and on contempt of the Crown...” [СТОЛЫПИН 1908].

In 1911, *Moskovskie Vedomosti* republished an excerpt from the Finnish article, whose author and publisher were brought to trial:

Kansan Lehti. 1911. № 39: “Great Russia, however — her place on the map is reminiscent of the rear seats in the theater. Finland sits closer to the stage, and Russia only leans over the back of the chairs” [Шафров: 3].

As a result of the published report and excerpts from the contempt of the crown case, Russian readers formed an image of an unruly, revolutionary-minded, rebellious borderland, with which it was necessary to take stern and decisive measures. Not by accident, the *Finlandskaya Gazeta* drew readers’ attention to the fact that many contempt of the crown court cases ended in either acquittal, the suspension of proceedings, or a statement of the disappearance of the accused.

The Åbo Hofgericht heard on Thursday the case of the seamstress Ida Valonne of Helsingfors, accused of contempt of the Crown. <...> Ida Valonne, as is evident from the inquiry, confessed to the distribution of proclamations and subversive publications among soldiers <...> the Nyland provincial government has reported that Ida Valonne is not being pursued and she has not been summoned to appear before the Hofgericht [Дело: 1].

<...> Upon reading the indictment the judge called the accused persons to be questioned, of whom Heikkilya was nowhere to be found, and did not appear before the judge <...> The judge decided to defer further proceedings until November 17 [Gregorian style]. And to take measures to bring Heikkilya to court on the appointed day [ДОВ 19086: 1].

The Hofgericht, admitting that expressions in the article specified in the incitement could not be considered insulting to His Majesty, released the accused Paappanen from any responsibility [Судебные дела: 3].

Newspaper reports about cases like this were designed, among other things, to create the impression that local judicial authorities were incompetent to independently handle the growing threat of revolution. Characteristically, at the same time as these publications, articles appeared about insults by Finns towards the state flag, seal, and Russian clergy. In 1909, along with reports about the initiation of another case of contempt of the crown and a case against the editors of local papers for the article “Harassment of Women by Russian Soldiers” (“Приставания русских солдат к женщинам”) (in the “Court Cases” section), the 183rd issue of *Finlandskaya Gazeta* informed:

<...> deacon Nicholas of the Orthodox Church of the Assumption was subjected to an outrageous insult from two girls aged 11–12 years. One of the girls <...> spit on the right sleeve of his coat such that the entire sleeve was soiled; the other,

running up from the other direction, also spit, but missed, after which both ran away <...> (Местная хроника, № 183. С. 3).

On March 17, 1910, the conservative paper of the capital, *Novoe Vremia*, wrote indignantly:

The boy Pietikainen related that a bigger boy walking past told him to spit on a priest. He spit, but missed him. Then he ran home, where the police shortly arrived [Финляндия: 7].

In 1910 *Novoe Vremia* continued to publish articles by A. A. Stolypin, the Prime Minister's brother, about the "Finnish" question and about relations between the local population and representatives of the titular nation⁷. On March 21, the article "The Call for 'Speeches'" ("Вызов 'Речи'", № 12221. С. 2) appeared, and on April 16 — "Finland's Moral Obligation" ("Нравственный долг Финляндии", № 12247. С. 3). Newspaper articles thus portrayed in Finland a shock to the foundational institutions of the Russian Empire: Orthodoxy and the Autocracy. At the same time, as noted above, from the end of 1910 the number of publications about cases of contempt of the crown dropped sharply. To explain the reasons behind this tactical shift in the authorities' script, let us look at the court case of Hjalmar Procopè, which received considerable attention.

In February 1910, criminal proceedings were opened against the editor of the socialist newspaper *Framtid* for the publication of a poem by the Swedish-Finnish poet Hjalmar Procopè (1868–1927), the son of a lieutenant general of the Russian army. The poem, "On the Day of the Singer" ("В день певца"), called for a fight against Russian authority. In the article, "The Arraignment of the Newspaper *Framtid*" ("Привлечение к суду газеты 'Framtid'"), the *Finlandskaya Gazeta* journalist translated and quoted the seditious lines from the poetic composition: "Sing, singer, hope and consolation, sing the shot of the liberator" [Привлечение: 2].

The pressurized atmosphere of political unrest in the northwestern borderland and the emphasis on the image of the enemy-Finn in the press during the first half of 1910 accompanied the active legislative endeavors of Russian authorities to resolve the "Finnish" question. On May 25, the Third State Duma accepted Prime Minister P. Stolypin's proposal on nationwide legislation. The goal of the 1910 law, which had been under preparation since 1908 by commission of the Special Meeting, consisted of the implementation of empire-wide

⁷ In 1909 *Novoe Vremia* also published A. A. Stolypin's articles "The Limits of Patience" ("Пределы терпения", № 12070. № 2), "Finnish Cases" ("Дела финляндские", № 12071. С. 2), and "Vile Rumors" ("Гнусные сплетни", № 12093. С. 4), which reported on Finnish insults toward Russian priests.

laws in the territories of the borderlands, which resulted in the lowering of Finland's legal status to that of a province and destroying its constitution⁸.

In the second half of 1910, Procopè published a poetry collection entitled *The Storm* (“Буря”), which drew the attention of judicial authorities. The local intelligentsia of Helsingfors began a collection for a thank you gift for the persecuted national poet. In 1911 the Finnish Literary Commission awarded the poet a prize of 1,500 marks. On September 20 / October 13, 1911, *Novoe Vremia* published the article “From Finnish Customs and Attitudes” (“Из финляндских нравов и настроений”), in which the author expressed outrage at the poet's acquittal by the Finnish judge. As evidence of sedition, the author chose two poems from the poet's collection. He retold the text of “Peasant Bringing a Complaint to the Lord God” (“Крестьянин, приносящий жалобу Господу Бору”), about a court case regarding the murder of a Finnish worker by two Russian soldiers. The poem tells how God is unable to fulfill the murdered soul's request for vengeance, since “the laws of divine justice are accessible in Turkey and China, but not in Russia” [Из нравов: 3]. The article's author included lines chosen from another poem, translated into Russian:

Thus, on the banks of the Neva raves the parliament, full of malice and stupidity together; it shows the whole world its education received in Tashkent, and thinks that Tashkent is Europe <...> [Ibid.].

These lines come from the first stanza of the poem, but the author of the newspaper article skipped the opening lines: “Vårt öde är afgjort! Nu faller ridån, / och liken i sista akten” (Our fate is decided! Now the curtain / And the corpses are in the final act) [Procopè: 16]. He also failed to mention the title of the text — “Finis Finlandiae” (“The End of Finland”). The title was enclosed in parentheses, formulated like a micro-citation that referred the reader to a famous quote by deputy V. Purishkevich, which he uttered on May 25, 1910 after the Third State Duma's adoption of the law on nationwide legislation. From the Swedish edition of the collection, the reader learns that “Finis Finlandiae” was written on June 16, 1910. Thus, Procopè's verses became a sharp poetic response to Russia's political plans in 1908–1910.

The case against the poet was simultaneously the climax and the beginning of the end of the public coverage of court proceedings on contempt of the imperial majesty in Finland. The “contemptuous” narrative had successfully fulfilled its ideological role. These texts portrayed the central (mobilizing) feature

⁸ Although in 1910 the rights of the Finnish parliament were *de jure* considerably restricted, the parliament, Senate, central institutions, and provincial boards were not abolished. Regarding differing views on the consequences of the 1910 law, see: [Аврех: 44–78; Юссила: 725–733].

of the Russian national myth: a conspiratorial impression of threat “from without” and of never-ending imperial subjugation of the borderlands. Characteristically, along with information on contempt of the crown, the pages of *Finlandskaya Gazeta* in 1908–1909 were filled with articles on the events of the Russian-Swedish War of 1808–1809.

Thus the mechanism of restricting the Grand Duchy of Finland’s constitutional rights was put into action and operated parallel to the 1907–1910 media campaign to highlight cases of contempt of the emperor, Orthodoxy, state symbols, and the titular nation in the official press. The ideological construction of a conflict between the parent country and the borderland of the empire created pressurized political tensions and national enmity. These reports served as a demonstration of the dangerous power of Finnish separatists and revolutionaries, as well as the weakness, as it was portrayed in the parent country, of the independent Finnish judicial system⁹. Newspaper articles about cases of contempt of the crown depicted an image of a restless, revolution-minded, rebellious northwestern borderland, in relation to which it was necessary to take firm and decisive measures. These “contemptuous” texts establish an imperial narrative, allowing one to follow the parent country’s process of envisioning and constructing the interactions between itself and the imperial borderland in 1907–1910.

Translated by Allison Rockwell

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⁹ The Finnish court became the subject of particularly sharp criticism (leading up to a demand for its dissolution) in 1908–1909 in connection with the process of Herzenstein; see: [Витухновская 2006].

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