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Discourse in the Production of Political Space: Decolonizing the symbolism of provinces in Finland

Jouni Häkli

ABSTRACT: Recent work in 'critical geopolitics' has opened new important ways of understanding the discursive constitution of world order and the epistemic underpinnings of international statecraft. Much of this research has focused on the textual practices and strategies of actively writing the global space in a multiplicity of discursive settings. In this article I explore 'geopolitical imagination' within a national rather than international context. In an approach tentatively titled 'the political geography of knowledge' I wish to capture the effective history and geography of a particular geopolitical discourse, one promoting the idea of a natural subdivision of the Finnish state's territorial space. A reform of regional administration in Finland exemplifies a state-centered discourse based on the *savoir* of regions as spontaneous organic entities. I seek to demonstrate that the historical preconditions for the reform emerged together with the increasing governmentality in Europe from the 18th century onward. I elaborate upon four aspects in the process: the history of territoriality and its relation to the changing role of knowledge in state government; the role of mapping and survey in visualizing Finland and producing infrastructures for the reform discourse; the invention of 'region' as a field of knowledge inherent to and consistent with the liberalizing state's politico-administrative practices; and finally, the role of state committees in objectifying and universalizing the division of Finland into provinces. The article concludes with a contemporary critique of the institutional production of space in Finland, i.e. a history of the present.

KEYWORDS: governmentality, state, region, discourse, geopolitics

Introduction

In the early 1881 Edvin Avellan, a member of the first state committee with the task of reforming the Finnish regional administration, outlined his dissentient statement to be attached to the committee's official report. In the text he reflected upon the Finnish society's cultural and historical specificity which he thought should be taken into account when planning the new self-governmental system. He also anticipated tasks to be given to the governmental bodies in order them to foster the "lively interaction between citizens" he expected as a result from the reform. Furthermore, he carefully distinguished between different types of regional divisions on which to base the reform, and arrived at an understanding that jurisdictional districts [*kihlakunta*] which in his opinion best conformed to the traditional provincial regions would serve as an appropriate starting point (Committee report, 1881: 49). However, what he did not reflect upon were the principles of recognition which made it possible for him to argue for the superiority of provincial regions as self-

governmental units. In other words, he took the nature of the historical provinces for granted.

Of course, Edvin Avellan does not stand alone in committing this omission. The cast of his thinking has been replicated in numerous instances during the past century when attempts have been made to realize the administrative reform. The particular political and administrative reasons for the reform's slow progress are beyond the scope of this paper; suffice it to say that struggles for political power (narrowly defined) among the governmental elites and the largest parties of the Finnish political field have eroded any chances to easy consensus upon the issue. Consequently, even today there is no equivalent in Finland to a "provincial" (intermediate) self-governmental system proper.

Over the history of the Finnish polity, and for reasons that have varied, several intellectuals of statecraft, for the most part leading politicians, administrators, and university men, have perceived the "missing level" of self-government as a pressing problem.¹ At times the issue has been interpreted as an unfulfilled aspect of the Finnish constitution, but it also has been framed in connection with more concrete questions such as the problems of cultural and political autonomy of the Swedish-speaking population in Finland. More recently, provincial self-government has been cast against the idea of 'Europe of Regions' and the reform promoted as a precondition for a *truly* European political system. The year 1867 witnessed the first clearly articulated demands for provincial self-government and since then altogether 34 related initiatives have been taken up in the highest governing bodies of the state. When finally in 1994 more political power and administrative tasks were transferred from the state to 19 provinces, this "125 year project" reached completion, albeit only a partial one.²

Not surprisingly, the prolonged efforts to reach an agreeable reform have produced a great deal of official texts and reports dealing with the aims, grounds and practical aspects of the proposed provincial government. And quite expectedly, the institutionally produced texts make their case from within the governmental reason typical to modern administrative institutions, procedures, analyses, and reflections. The reform has been planned in the spirit of rationalism and positivism, which have granted the society and its "spatial manifestations" full transparency in the official discourses. Elementary for the whole project, and of particular interest from the point of view of this paper, the discourse on *provinces* has sought to manifest the inevitable reality of these regional spaces.

In the reform discourse, the category of province has been burdened by assertions concerning province's ontological status and political significance. Provinces have come to represent spontaneously evolved regional space, organic totalities of a certain kind with their own mind and political will within the larger society. The idea of province is, therefore, associated with the ultimate promise of liberation from the constraints of the state by means of unimposed "belonging together" and increased local self-determination (see also Hepple, 1992).

The reform discourse has presented itself as a project *using* space which it claims to know in an impartial, objective and universally valid manner. In so doing it has disguised its defining characteristic which is to *produce* – in this case to produce space that enables an increasingly "efficient" and "humane" government. Following its own logic, the discourse views government as institutions and practices that are introduced *upon* the provinces which already are "out there" as truthful entities, i.e. as objects that exist independently of the governmental interest seeking them. In reality, however, governmental conceptions of space and governmental praxis emerge from each other and thus are inseparable, that is, the reform discourse is an advocate of a specific essence of provinces which reflects and articulates

rationality tied to governmental institutions and practices. At the inviolable core of the discourse lie ideas concerning the nature of those regional entities which ultimately provide the reform's *raison d'être*. This idea, the (hi)story of Finnish provinces as genuine, spontaneous and self-sufficient entities, exists in the form of structures of knowledge, or a particular set of discursive limits, which have actively influenced the production of political space in Finland.

For a critical assessment of the discourse and its truths, both the workings of knowledge in society and the very idea of region itself must be brought under scrutiny. Official reports do not represent simply the "practical side" of the reform – that is, the transparent definition and demarcation of provinces, or description of the tasks given to the new authorities. An understanding of one-way relationship between objects (regions "out there") and their representations (maps, statistics etc.) must be refuted, along with the conception of region as an entity existing independently of its representations. In this article my aim is to show the extent to which it is precisely the governmental interest and respective (deep structures of) knowledge that have given life to the idea of province as a natural whole, or an organism-like subject. I explore the history and characteristics of region's 'essence', and the various guises in which the Finnish provinces have been depicted in the course of the reform. In so doing I navigate through the force fields of image production where power and knowledge become one another; a dimension of social power embedded in supposedly objective and universal knowledge of provinces. To arrive at a deeper understanding of the production of political space in this particular case I derive from two specific theoretical approaches; 'critical geopolitics' and 'the new regional geography'.

'Critical geopolitics' regionalized

Political geography research has in recent years joined the larger movement within the social sciences emphasizing the situatedness of knowledge, the contextuality of discourses and the active role which spatial images play in political life. Conceptual and theoretical accounts of this "linguistic turn" are now numerous, and different viewpoints, philosophical positions and strands of research have been employed in highlighting discourses' social implications and forms of existence (e.g. Agnew, 1987, 1993; Dalby 1991; Driver, 1992; Pickles, 1992; Smith and Catz, 1993; Ó Tuathail, 1992b, 1994a). We may no longer have to "go outside geography for the best critiques of the politics of geographical dialogue" (Taylor, 1989: 104).

The growing interest in linguistic phenomena has given rise to a rapidly expanding field of discourse analysis which resists categorization, even when applied to a particular sub-discipline, such as political geography. Also the transgression of disciplinary boundaries has become a standard practice in a world where practically everything has become politicized, and where research is faced with the challenge of addressing 'politics', 'state', 'nation', or 'government' without falling into the domain of thought-and-action of traditional politics, sovereign nation-states and definite territories (see Clarke and Doel, 1994; Philo, 1994). However, amidst an abundance of approaches, methodologies, and objectives of research explicitly focusing on the nature of signs, discourse and (con)text, it is possible to distinguish a collection of potentially tangential research perspectives loosely termed 'critical geopolitics' (Dodds and Sidaway, 1994). The practitioners of critical geopolitics have analyzed the politics of space and place but in a manner which seeks to resist the linguistic and epistemic conventions prevailing in the world of 'real politics', and in the 'old' political geography as well. Itself a highly contentious area of research, critical geopolitics has

nevertheless become something of a rallying cry for those who have sought to give alternative accounts of phenomena defined as 'geopolitical'.

Several assessments of the place of critical geopolitics within the larger field of political geography have been made recently (e.g. Dalby, 1991; Reynolds, 1993; Dodds, 1994a; Dodds and Sidaway, 1994; Sidaway, 1994; Ó Tuathail, 1995, 1996). Rather than provide yet another reading of this heterogenous and contradictory endeavor, I seek to point out affinities between my own project and what in various instances has been presented as the core arguments of 'critical geopolitics'.

The critical interrogation of geopolitical reasoning and the interpretation of international politics as a set of discursive practices were first extensively developed by critical theorists of international relations who were inspired by poststructuralist interpretations of knowledge and its role in politics (e.g. Ashley, 1984; Walker, 1987). This was done largely in response to realist argumentation and positivist-behaviouralist methodology which tended to give ahistorical, naturalist accounts of states and the international state system, and to view their ability to wage war as the determining aspect of international politics. The shift to poststructuralist methodology and postmodern approaches has involved analyses of the taken-for-granted constructions on which conventional international politics are based, such as the large scale divisions of the world into East and West or the territorial imagination of the global political space. By refusing to accept reality as presented by the dominant discourses these critical approaches have called into question the very foundation of international relations (Dalby, 1991: 264-269).

Although it is difficult to define a founding moment for critical geopolitics (see Dodds, 1993: 71; Ó Tuathail, 1996: 143-168), it can be asserted that specifically post-positivist and post-realist modes of analysis surfaced in political geography by the late 1980's (Dalby, 1991: 273). The 1990's has witnessed a rapid increase in critical analyses of various 'geographs' and their discourses, i.e. of naturalist descriptions and orderings of the global political space prevalent both in the practices of (post) Cold War international politics, and realist (policy oriented) scholarship (see Dalby, 1991; Reynolds, 1993; Dodds, 1994a; Dodds and Sidaway, 1994; Ó Tuathail, 1995). Consequently, assumptions of the territorial state system as the most important framework for global politics, and along with that both the taken-for-granted formulations of the state and the governmental and academic representational practices, have all been subjected to scrutiny. The research has sought to demonstrate that geopolitical phenomena are both material and discursive, that is, dependent on as well as conducive to the production of geographical knowledge, statements and understandings embedded within the material practices of government, global economy, development, and war-making (Ó Tuathail and Agnew, 1992). In Dalby's (1991: 274) words, "[w]hat is being argued for ... is nothing less than a recognition of the importance of studying the political operation of forms of geographical understandings, recognizing that geographs are specifications of political reality that have political effect".

A critical geopolitical analysis of (the production of) political space seeks to expose the "politics of the geographical specification of politics" (Dalby, 1991: 274). This involves reflexivity with regard the dominant texts produced by intellectuals and practitioners of statecraft, but also with regard the material contexts within which the dominant discourses have historically emerged. The production of geographical depictions, whether these are termed 'codes' (Taylor, 1990), 'geographs', or 'scripts' (Ó Tuathail and Agnew, 1992), must be analyzed not in order to provide 'better' or 'truer' ones, but to problematize the relationship between academic research and political practice, and to document the forces of power/knowledge that are in operation in the discursive practices of intellectuals,

administrators, and politicians (Dodds, 1994a; Ó Tuathail, 1994a). However, what results is “not a discourse outside of and separate from geopolitics but equally a geopolitics, a geopolitics that displaces and emplaces” (Ó Tuathail, 1994a: 542). The aim of critical geopolitics is not to directly inform policy making. Yet, it has a politics of its own, one that seeks to open up a space for alternative geographs and respective counter-practices.

Ó Tuathail (1996: 63) has recently argued for the need to “deepen critical geopolitics as an approach”, and suggested “methodological principles” with which a deeper level of intellectual engagement with the problematic of critical geopolitics could be achieved. Sharing his conviction I wish to pursue a few methodological guidelines which seem to underlie the contested field of critical geopolitics, ones that inform the approach put forward here as well. However, it should be noted that I draw from several critical geopolitical writers who may or may not accept all of the methodological assertions I am presenting. Furthermore, the issues I emphasize naturally reflect my own concerns with discourse analysis as applied to the production of political space.

Firstly, in distinction from the traditional geopolitical reasoning critical geopolitics approaches the geographical depictions of the world not merely as passively mirroring “that which exists” but deeply involved in the construction and presentation of the world to social human beings. Therefore, what traditionally has presented itself as a dualism of representation and reality, bridged by the quality of truthfulness of knowledge, is resolved in the poststructuralist understanding of the inevitable condition of knowledge intermeshed with material practices, cultural codings, worldly interests, and power. The implications of poststructuralist thinking for the analysis of (the production of) political space are, of course, vast: “the ideas expressed by practicing politicians are not seen as false accounts of a true reality. Rather they are seen as ideas which make certain things *become real*” (Painter, 1995: 146). Thus, for critical geopolitics a seemingly neutral and apolitical geographical depiction may in fact imply asymmetrical relationships of power between expert discourses and popular understandings of place. To expose power/knowledge relations embedded in geopolitical discourses is perhaps the single most important methodological objective of the critical geopolitical approach (Ó Tuathail and Agnew, 1992; Dalby, 1993; Dodds, 1994b; Dodds and Sidaway, 1994; Ó Tuathail, 1996).

Consequently, the critical geopolitical analysis tends to emphasize the discursive aspects of (international) political practice, and in empirical terms focus on the analysis of texts, images, and maps. Such linguistic orientation is not without risks, however. Scholars such as Ó Tuathail (1992a, 1993, 1996) and Reynolds (1993) have argued that in order to avoid narrow interpretations of language as a closed, self-sufficient sphere subject to analysis merely in terms of textual rhetoric and ideological contents, the analysis of textual production must be counterweighted by a careful scrutiny of the material *contexts* and *practices* within which discourses emerge and become meaningful. In practice, some authors have sought to contextualize geopolitical discourses along the processes and flows of transnational *economy* (e.g. Ó Tuathail, 1992a; Ó Tuathail and Agnew, 1992; Ó Tuathail and Luke, 1994; Agnew and Corbridge, 1995), whereas others have put more weight on the *institutional*, *professional*, or *cultural* contexts of discourses (e.g. Dalby, 1993; Dodds, 1993; Ó Tuathail, 1993, 1994b). Understandably, the ramifications of contextuality in critical geopolitics have varied depending on the research problematic in question.

Thirdly, the focus of study in critical geopolitics must not be restricted to geopolitics in a nominal (global/western/elitist) sense. The problematic of geopolitics must be broadened from particular 20th century official articulations to the general processes of writing global space by intellectuals and institutions, and even further to the larger problematic which Ó

Tuathail (1994a, 1996: 67) has termed *geo-power*, involving “the mutually defining interdigitation of geography and governmentality in modernity”. In an earlier article Ó Tuathail and Agnew (1992: 194-195) argue that: “the study of geopolitical reasoning necessitates studying the production of geographical knowledge within a particular state and throughout the modern world-system”. Dodds (1994a: 186-187) argues along similar lines when he writes that “post-structuralist inspired international relations literature on foreign policy could ... be profitably linked to the existing efforts of political geographers working on geopolitics, territoriality and the state, and identity formation”. Finally, Routledge (1996: 509) has called for “more detailed consideration of political processes at scales other than the global”. Even if not stated explicitly, a broad interpretation of the geographical, historical, and social applicability of critical geopolitics is evident from the diversity of topics studied, including environmental security, the gendering of geopolitics, ‘dissident’ geographers, and global development issues (e.g. Dalby, 1992, 1993, 1994; Slater, 1993; Ó Tuathail, 1994c).

Finally, in addition to the analysis of contemporary texts produced within various sites of intellectual or popular ‘geographing’, also the basic structures which have enabled the construction of geographical texts and discourses should be taken into account. Dodds and Sidaway (1994: 518) have referred to “geo-optical supports (ways of seeing, sites of production) that underwrite and *undersee* geopolitical traditions”. In particular attention has been focused to visualizing devices and techniques such as maps, regional descriptions, surveys, and statistics which have become the infrastructural foundation for governmental technologies of power (Herb, 1989; Dodds, 1994b; Ó Tuathail, 1994a, 1995, 1996). In privileging the act of seeing, these visualizing devices and techniques, and the resulting archives of strategic knowledge, have instituted ocularcentrism and the Western ‘seeing-man’ firmly into the space/power/knowledge nexus of modern states (Latour, 1986; Gregory, 1994; Ó Tuathail, 1996). The politics of this institutionalized way of seeing is closely related to the history of territoriality and the development by which geographical knowledge has become instrumental to government. It also informs (geo)political imaginations on different scales ranging from global projections of cores and peripheries to the more local panoptic machineries operating the Foucaultian ‘microphysics of power’.

It should be noted that attempts at distinguishing “methodological principles” notwithstanding, it is not immediately clear whether it is possible to talk about the ‘basic tenets’ of critical geopolitics, let alone their application in research practice (Dalby and Ó Tuathail, 1996). Therefore, the discussion above must not be read as an attempt to impose consensus over issues where none can be found. Indeed, there are several questions upon which the critical geopolitical writers disagree and which make the whole approach less coherent than the above discussion perhaps suggests. Among the issues that remain controversial is the problematic of textuality vis-a-vis materiality of the social world. Since this issue has direct bearing upon my approach to the production of political space, it is worth elaborating upon more deeply.

The Derridean notion of the textuality of the social world implies that it is impossible (for humans) to step outside the signified or meaningful. Furthermore, the communicative faculty of language is based on an unstable system of differences and distinctions between signifiers, not on relations of correspondence between the signifiers and the signified. Therefore the idea of an essential reality lying underneath its representations in language is an untenable one. The use of language is about making distinctions, yet none of them should be trusted; “the taken-for-granted is not in the content of the distinguished, but in the marks of distinguishing” (Olsson, 1991:139; cited in Gregory, 1994: 73) Reflexivity with regard

this inevitable condition of the social life is vitally important, particularly when addressing questions of knowledge and power, visibility and signification, and mapping and government. However, I do share Ó Tuathail's (1992a: 978; 1996: 73) reservations concerning the possibility of collapsing the social world to the play of difference that is language. For instance, the state's politico-administrative practices should not be reduced to their textuality, but rather the institutionally produced texts or geographs should be viewed as embedded within particular (practical, material, historical) contexts, constitutive of as well as constituted by discourses. Consequently, the term discourse should not be restricted to the internal structuring of linguistic expressions but extended to cover the weaving *together* of thought-and-action, text and practice, image and interest, truth and power.

Furthermore, rather than fuse in a Derridean manner contexts with the general condition of (human, social) textuality, I seek to radicalize the notion of contextuality by arguing that the socio-spatial setting of signification makes a profound difference with respect to the power relations embedded in discourse. For instance, when thinking of the relationship between institutional practices founded upon the abstract space of surveys, maps, statistics and regional descriptions on one hand, and everyday social life literally taking 'place' within a myriad of unspecifiable spatial, practical, cultural contexts on the other, a question arises concerning the authority of the geographs produced and reproduced within such very different modalities and sites of social action. Critical analysis that seeks to expose "how geographical knowledge is transformed into the reductive geopolitical reasoning of intellectuals of statecraft" (Ó Tuathail and Agnew, 1992: 195) must pay close attention to the unequal relations of power between dominant official discourses and the geographs produced and meaningful in everyday social life (see also Dalby, 1991, 1993; Dodds and Sidaway, 1994). The official discourses may well dominate, even colonize the popular ones, but it should be noted that the latter may equally come to resist the former even where the resistance does not manifest itself politically (as social movements, conscious production of counter-discourses, explicit political argumentation, or violence).

The question of power/knowledge embedded in official discourses is particularly intriguing when geopolitical discourses are analyzed within state-society rather than inter-state contexts. Differences in the frames of meaning across distinct spheres of social life within a state-nation may be more subtle or covert than the constructions of 'other' across states. Accordingly, in the former case it may be more difficult to pin down the power relations inherent in discourse, or to account for forms of popular dissidentism towards the official projections of space. In my attempt to tackle this problematic, I have found Michel de Certeau's (1984: 24-31) discussion of the "tactics" of resistance particularly helpful: "[t]he actual order of things is precisely what 'popular' tactics turn to their own ends, without any illusion that it will change any time soon. Though elsewhere it is exploited by a dominant power or simply denied by an ideological discourse, here order is *tricked* by an art". Distinguishing between 'tactics' as ways of using, manipulating and diverting spaces imposed by the 'strategies' of the powerful institutions de Certeau sheds light on an important dimension in the relationship between the elites (of statecraft) and (ordinary) people, one in which the supposedly repressed are in fact able to resist, albeit in a covert manner, the postulation of power and the imposition of knowledge 'proper' by the official thought-and-action. Unlike institutional strategies engaged in the constitution of readable, controllable, fixed spaces, a tactic does not "have the options of planning general strategy and viewing the adversary as a whole within a district, visible, and objectifiable space. It operates in isolated action, blow by blow ... [i]n short, a tactic is an art of the weak" (de Certeau, 1984: 37).

Recognizing that there are discursive forms of social life which may fall outside the ocularcentric grasp of institutional discourses does not mean automatic commitment to any form of essentialism. This is what I find especially appealing in the notion of 'deep space' formulated by Neil Smith (1990) and adopted by Derek Gregory (1994). 'Deep space' according to Smith (1990: 160-161) refers not to "the sheer immensity of absolute space ... explored, defined, and refined by physics and astronomy, space science and cosmology. Rather [it refers] to the relativity of terrestrial space, the space of everyday life in all its scales from the global to the local and the architectural in which, to use Doreen Massey's metaphor, different layers of life and social landscape are sedimented onto and into each other". Smith sees deep space as "quintessentially social space; as physical extent fused with social intent". Innumerable texts, geographs and discourses traverse the deep spaces but none of them can assume a transcendental status as a privileged representation of the 'reality beyond'; the products of human signification practices circulate across the deep space as mere things among other things.

Even if we acknowledge the fact that everyday life is discursive just like the practices of statecraft, and that popular geographs can be just as geopolitical as are their institutionally produced counterparts, the notion of deep spaces enables us to recognize the different modalities of social action from which these geographs emanate. In discussing how the practice of everyday life is filled with propitious moments when "the weak" can "turn to their own ends forces alien to them", de Certeau (1984: xix) points out that such an endeavor "takes the form, however, not of a discourse, but of the decision itself, the act and manner in which the opportunity [to manipulate events] is 'seized'". The spaces discursively produced by the political and administrative elites are not necessarily resisted through an engagement in an overt political discourse (centered around, for instance, national security, development issues, regionalism, cultural values etc.). The resistance may equally dwell in the countless instances of everyday social life in concrete lived spaces, that is, in deep spaces which evade the formal geopolitical discourses built upon the abstract spaces of maps, archives, surveys, and statistics.

Yet, instead of celebrating the popular tactics of everyday life as perfectly capable of turning institutional projects to their own ends, I wish to investigate the production of political space as an endeavor seeking to colonize symbolisms pertinent to the lifeworld. I set out to explore the gap between the lived social space and its institutionally produced representations – the distance from 'deep space' to politico-administrative discourse which allows and bears within itself a space for social power, as well as for resistance to that power. The starting point for a critical analysis of this gap could be set in terms of Foucault's power/knowledge as well as de Certeau's tactics of resistance. In this article I have chosen the former problematic. In so doing I do not intend to belittle the significance of the popular, albeit silent and scattered forms of resistance to dominant discourses. On the contrary, convinced about the persistence of popular, tactical, and context specific ways of using and producing provincial symbolisms I wish not to survey, measure and represent the 'ways' and 'wheres' it prevails. In other words, I do not want to "usher in the discovery of *deep space*" (Smith, 1990: 161), but rather to expose the processes involved in its subtle and unnoticed colonization under the banner of rationality, organic community, and common good.

Therefore, my focus is on the historical development by which in Finland popular provincial symbolisms have become a strategic element in a regional administrative reform, and thereby part of the official regional discourse built upon the institutional infrastructures of statistics, survey, and mapping. Instead of investigating how the 'ordinary people' make-use-of institutionally produced regional geographs, I set out to reconstruct the particular

architectonics of power/knowledge vested in this long standing project, one so apparently informed by the (masculinist) idea of measurable and visible society.

I wish to offer this article in the spirit of critical geopolitics. In following its methodological guidelines my tactical goal is to explore that which is taken-for-granted in a governmental project seeking to establish a natural division of Finland into provinces. To reiterate Olsson's (1991) words, this taken-for-granted is not to be found in the *content* of the provinces distinguished by the governmental agencies, but rather in the marks of distinguishing, in the modern 'regional' code of space which makes the governmental *search* for true, natural, organic regions rational in a self-explanatory way.

My undertaking for the history of regional imagination and its societal implications does not follow the tradition of studies exploring the issue from within the disciplinary confines of geography, i.e. as a history of thought, or rather "a history of opinions, that is, of the choices operated according to individuals, environments, social groups" (Foucault, 1970: 75). Where a history of the regional concept (e.g. Dickinson, 1976; James and Martin, 1981; Stoddart, 1986) proceeds steadily from early thinkers toward the present day, reporting the controversies that occupied men's minds and framed particular bodies of formal knowledge (*connassaince*), an account of the *invention of region* explores knowledge in a more underlying sense, as *savoir* which refers to "the conditions that are necessary for this or that object to be given to *connassaince*" (Foucault, 1972: 15). In an archeological endeavor the object of analysis is not only knowledge in its materialized sense (as statistics, maps, and archives) but crucially also the "domain in which the subject [of formal knowledge] is necessarily situated and dependent, and can never figure as titular (either as a transcendental activity, or as empirical consciousness)" (Foucault 1972: 183). The production of formal, disciplinary, or governmental, knowledge of regions makes use of surveys, statistics, and maps but is nevertheless conditioned by the *savoir* of 'region', that is, the rules of formation of questions, propositions, and statements which enable it to discover, validate, and arrive at a positivity concerning 'empirical regions'. However, the *savoir* of region is immanent to a discourse on regions and thus can not in itself be named nor brought to consciousness by those who engage in the discursive practice.

I set out to trace the marks of distinguishing regions in a politico-administrative discourse by first locating its material embeddedness in the practices of governmentality and territoriality through which modern states have developed into important discursive contexts for the production of knowledge of society. I pay particular attention to the visualization of territory as material, space-transcending practice (survey, statistics, and mapping) which has systematically sought to collapse the depths of time and space into governmental archives and thereby make the society more governable. Importantly, from my point of view the projects of survey and mapping have also laid ground for the production of formal (scientific or governmental) knowledge of regions and regional divisions. I apply the approach of critical geopolitics into a historically oriented and locally contextualized discourse analysis, i.e. put forward an approach which emphasizes discourse's historical origin in the broad field of governmental praxis, and focuses on its role in the production of political space. A most challenging task for such a Foucaultian "history of the present" is to show how spatial discourse and its social significance not only figure within the realm of representation but also in intimate connection with situated political routines and projects – a task that I wish to term the *political geography of knowledge*.

As mentioned above, my focus is on the discursive practices of the Finnish intellectuals of statecraft. Yet, as space is produced not only by intellectuals but also by 'ordinary people' within the larger society, the theoretical framework put forward here must be broadened to

cover ideas expressed by the theorists of the 'new regional geography'. What this position entails is a conception of region as a social construct (Murphy, 1991; Paasi, 1991; Entrikin, 1994; Thrift, 1994). Socially constructed regions are not merely empirical units or containers of social processes, but social and symbolic processes interconnected with regional formations (Thrift, 1983; Paasi, 1986a; Urry, 1987; Häkli, 1994a). In the framework of the new regional geography regions have been conceptualized as symbolic processes integral to the situated social processes being studied. Thus, instead of being immutable, regions are humanly produced and subject to change as they are continuously reinterpreted and reproduced (Johnston, 1991; Paasi, 1991; Taylor, 1991).

The active role of knowledge and representation in this historical construction also has been highlighted. Regions do not exist outside the multiform social practices of representation, but rather emerge and transform as social and symbolic constructs in association with situated social practices ranging from everyday life to institutional projects (Berdoulay, 1989; Entrikin, 1991; Häkli, 1994b). These practices subject regions to a discursive logic not reducible to any single 'essence' of regions. Likewise, socially constructed provinces do not determine their representation; there are as many different kinds of provinces as there are sites and contexts of representation with their particular discursive determinants. However, in view of the gap between the deep spaces of everyday life and institutional representations it is important to note that not all representations were created equal. Rather, some constructions of province enjoy more "societal weight" than others. This is one dimension along which power and knowledge fuse as representations' capability to manifest truth derives from their institutional foundation, rather than correspondence with the "external reality". Thus, governmentally produced representations (of provinces) have more authority than those produced within non-institutional settings – a basic tenet in a Foucaultian understanding of discourse (e.g. Foucault, 1972: 50-51).

The present day Finnish provinces are constructed in myriad practices of signification in various socio-spatial contexts (Paasi, 1986b). Perceived and represented in the everyday life of the people, provinces are nebulous and ephemeral spatial signposts rather than objective and universally defined territories. This quality of vernacular indetermination has made provinces subject to the politics of representation. By substituting a governmental rationality for the popular symbolism of provinces, state's discourse practically speaking colonizes them, that is, presents in an objective and universal mould what actually is only one particular formulation out of many possible imaginations of provinces.

As the above discussion already indicates I draw from the theoretical frameworks of critical geopolitics and the new regional geography, but also from the thought of influential thinkers outside the field of human geography. In exploring the institutionally produced knowledge of provinces I resort to Michel Foucault's ideas on the interrelationships of power, knowledge and government. I mainly use the contents of his 'toolboxes' when analyzing the relations between political practice and a discursive field. However, while Foucault's work so very ardently seeks to expose the institutional embeddedness of power/knowledge, it offers relatively little insight into the question of discourses' relation to the 'deep space' – a theme that somehow seems to fall outside his concerns which at times have been labeled 'antihumanist' (Philo, 1992; Kofman and Lebas, 1996). In this respect I have found Henri Lefebvre's thinking of abstract space useful, particularly as expressed in his monumental 'The Production of Space'. Lefebvre's insistence upon the production of space as inherent to the processes of modernization, economic as well as governmental, and his sense of the spatial embeddedness of power and knowledge provide critical arguments

for my analysis and help intensifying its reflections on the 'concrete' or 'material' dimensions of the social world.

I am fully aware of the risks involved in bringing together these two thinkers, who for some have come to represent rather antipodal positions with respect to thinking about politics and agency. However, to state categorically that Foucault and Lefebvre do not fit together is to claim that their theoretical thoughts form two separate closed systems following the lines of difference in their opinions about society and politics. In contrast to this interpretation it can be pointed out that Foucault explicitly urged his readers to treat his books as 'toolboxes' for free use, and that Lefebvre's corpus similarly tends to evade exegetic readings. Furthermore, even though resulting in different outgrowths, both Foucault and Lefebvre have their Nietzschean roots, and indeed, starkly comparable interests in questions of history, space, city, and society (e.g. Kofman and Lebas, 1996: 5, 25). While I do not wish to speak for eclecticism in combining Foucault and Lefebvre, I also do not want to overstate their 'otherness' by remaining within an immanent reading of their works (compare Philo, 1992: 140).

The third thinker I derive from is Pierre Bourdieu whose theoretical position regarding politics and human agency could perhaps be located somewhere in the middle between Foucault and Lefebvre. Whereas I use Foucault's thought in tracing structures of power/knowledge, and Lefebvre in relating them to the material embeddedness of everyday life, Bourdieu provides keys to the social dynamics and agency within the institutional fields of power. His ideas help in explicating the foundation upon which the symbolic power of state committees rests, as well as the turning of a *savoir* of region into a taken-for-granted knowledge of provinces.

A small contribution to bringing discourse analytic research in political geography closer to the world of situated political practice, this article looks at the history, or rather genealogy, of a particular discourse embedded within institutions, knowledge, and actions of the Finnish state. My aim is to show how the state's discourses have given rise to and reproduced what Foucault (1991) has called governmentality; how state's development into a modern territorial system of power in fact also required and produced symbolic-discursive territoriality; how the logistics of state activities, concrete practices and material operations weaved seams of knowledge which have symbolized and rationalized its politics of truth.

The discourse under scrutiny was produced along with the reform of regional administration in Finland, a political project with a long immediate history dating back to the 19th century, but growing from broader genealogical roots of increasing governmentality in the kingdom of Sweden since the 17th century. The reform represents a case where the state's ability to manifest truth is actively involved in the production of political space discursively tied to ever-shifting governmental interests. In seeking to account for the social and political practices that have given rise to governmental interest in regions, and to illuminate the relations of social power involved in the encounter between state's discourse and popular parlance on provinces, I first set out to explore the production of knowledge of society, its historical relation to state, and the state's development toward territorially confined, rationally managed system of administration.

State and the perspective of power

It has long been accepted that knowledge of society is not politically innocent. It is a two-way avenue running back and forth in our social world. Research on ideology, imagery and discourse has shown that knowledge of society does not reflect 'reality-as-it-is', rather it is

both conditioned by society and involved in its social construction. Furthermore, knowledge always represents a particular point of view highlighting certain features of the social world while eclipsing others. Different perspectives of knowledge imply unmentioned preconditions, techniques, and practical and historical contexts which enable and regulate the representation of social space (Bensman and Lilienfeld, 1973; Agnew, 1987, 1993; Driver, 1992).

The focus here is on a particularly powerful and enduring perspective – that embedded in the political and administrative practices of the state. This section briefly outlines the history of states as the centers of production of knowledge of society. Particular attention is paid to the emergence of state as a *perspective* in connection with the processes of modernization in Europe. To really understand the role of the state as an institutional context of knowledge of society, and with that, some central features of the politico-administrative discourses that begun to map states' territories by the 17th century, it is necessary first to briefly look at how states assumed some of their most basic modern features (for a tentative genealogy of territoriality, see Häkli, 1994a).

As a base of governmental power territoriality is not a universal feature of human history. Rather, the ubiquity of territoriality, whether socially expressed in administrative or property relations, is markedly a characteristic of modern societies (Mann, 1984: 201; Ruggie, 1993; Häkli, 1994a). The pre-modern structures of administrative power lacked efficient (technological) means for integrating far-flung territories "horizontally". Thus, even the great pre-modern empires were heterogenous realms with porous frontiers rather than tightly knit social and territorial systems (Giddens, 1984: 181-182; Mann, 1986: 318). Administration was primarily motivated by states' need to extract tax revenue for maintaining and increasing their power through warfare. In relation to peasantry, the practical units of administration were typically not individuals but village communities (e.g. Stahl, 1980: 38-40). The states – whether territorially large or not – were unable to carry on detailed surveillance of the population within their territories (Giddens, 1985).

By contrast, the modern state is a clearly demarcated field of interaction with a far reaching functional division of labor between politico-administrative "system" and the "civil society" (Soja, 1971; Williams and Smith, 1983; Sack, 1986). It is this conception of territoriality that is often erroneously used in historical contexts where its central features did not exist (Harley, 1989b; Häkli, 1994a). The increasing importance of territoriality as a principle of politico-administrative practice was closely associated with new needs and technologies to co-ordinate people, things and activities into a common event horizon. This new field of societal interaction was both spatially larger than the traditional communities and reached "deeper" into the civil society than the pre-modern state (Mann, 1984; Dandeker, 1990).

The changing role of the state and its government has often been traced back to the emergence of new kinds of social relations in the medieval Europe. A wide agreement exists on the central role of technology and economic factors in the social and political transformations leading to states' deepening administrative control (e.g. Anderson, 1974; Mann, 1984; Giddens, 1985). Technological development raised productivity in agriculture and industrial capitalism detached people from their traditional ways of life. A deepening urban-based division of labor gained momentum, and relations of production, commerce and trade integrated societies spatially (Harvey, 1989; Lefebvre, 1991). In the end of the 16th century states began to assume an increasing concern in regulating the development within their territorial bounds. In Foucault's (1991) terms this led to the consolidation of the 'administrative state' which gradually replaced the medieval 'state of justice' – a mere

guardian of order. Permanent bureaucracies were created, military mobilization organized, taxes levied on a regular basis, and monopolies of law-making and enforcement established (Taylor, 1985; Mann, 1986; Mellor, 1989). An accompanying development was the replacement of old cosmologies by a new kind of rationalism, which eventually shattered the unquestioned authority of religion in times of crisis (Anderson, 1991; Habermas, 1991)

As new "problems" hitherto unknown began to loom large in the routines of the increasingly active states, they responded by turning to the society, by questioning its situation (Wagner, 1989). The increasingly dynamic and territorially integrated society with new kinds of "social questions" became a strong impetus for the production of knowledge of society (Revel, 1991; Tilly, 1992b). In Europe the activities to make known the "face of the earth" and the "laws of society" were strongly encouraged by the modernizing states which eventually gave rise to the accumulation of state centered discourses on the social world (Foucault, 1977; Manicas, 1987; Driver, 1992; Tilly, 1992a).

The increasing role of states as contexts of discourse was intimately associated with new rational ways of governing societies. Rational government came to require a new empirical knowledge of society and rest on *savoirs* no longer attached to the territory as an administrative realm, but rather the multiple relations within the population and territory (Foucault, 1991: 101). In the course of the 18th century the 'administrative state' gave way to a 'governmental state' "gazing at" societies and utilizing positive knowledge derived from these "vistas". When thinking of the relationship between state and knowledge of society, this development marked the consolidation of the "perspective of power", i.e. discursive structures and limits of knowledge of the social world stemming from political and administrative interests of the state, and based on the absolute distinction between "external reality" and representation (or between the social world of matter and the conceptual orders, structures, and laws which the political practice sought to know and visualize) (Mitchell, 1988; Rabinow, 1989). In distinction from the "advice to the prince" characteristic to the feudal and to a certain extent to administrative government, the governmental state anchored its routines to a vantage point which actually is a *non-perspective*, detached from any subjectivity and personality of its advocates (Burton and Carlen, 1979; Alpers, 1983; Crary, 1990; Jay, 1992). A map both as a metaphor and representation exemplifies well this mode of knowing (Harley, 1988, 1989a; Ó Tuathail, 1994a).

The metaphors of vision are particularly apt here because it was largely through new visualizing devices and techniques that states assumed better hold of their territories and the societies "within" them (Latour, 1986; Revel, 1991). The rise of knowledge to a strategic tool for rational government gave impetus to the proliferation of maps and statistical data which assumed a new function and meaning as the *raw material* of policy making (Porter, 1986; Foucault, 1991; Hacking, 1991). It is on this visualizing foundation that the state centered discourses on social space began to grow.

The fact that states have become significant centers of symbolic power in modern societies is not without consequences. Many authors have pointed out that much of the social scientific knowledge is discursively related to the state (Giddens, 1985; Manicas, 1987; Wittrock *et al*, 1987; Wittrock, 1989). This intertwining is based on a shared (non)perspective from which the social world is viewed and portrayed. Among the recurring discursive limits implied by the perspective of power are the conception of "society" as a territorially confined unit – usually the state-nation, the conception of space as a dead container of social relations, and conception of knowledge as an impartial mirror-image of reality (Wagner, 1989, 1990; Harley, 1989a; Agnew, 1993).

Whether produced within academia or bureaucracy, official discourses have the important function of providing policy-making with legitimate representations and categories of the social world (Bourdieu, 1989). They must sort out and ignore various different, allegedly more "subjective" view points arising from the socio-cultural complexities of the "civil society" in order to make space for an objective and universal one. Hence, the perspective of power presents itself as a non-perspective – as an objective, universal and impartial ground of knowledge. The official discourse on provinces has been no exception to this. By means of visualization and objectivistic rhetoric it has sought to establish the 'real' Finnish provinces and subject their symbolism to governmental territorialization. To fully understand the powerful bases of this discourse it is necessary to turn to the history of its institutional foundation in the Swedish state.

Finland was mapped to be looked at

Region is a category commonly denoting a portion of earth's surface, a community of people or social relations across a given area, none of which can be perceived directly. Scientific or governmental observation of regions is possible only by means of "visualizing devices" like statistics and maps. Knowledge based on observation of regions and territories are, thus, discursive constructions which rely on and presuppose a solid institutional foundation. This alone makes their relation to the state's discursive practices most intimate.

In Finland, as elsewhere in Europe, the foundation for the observation of regions was laid in projects of mapping, which here are broadly understood in terms of centralized and systematic collection of empirical knowledge of society. Mapping was an important part of the transformation from a 'juridical' into an 'administrative' state for two interconnected reasons. Firstly, it was in and through systematic surveys of the state territory that the potential "building blocks" of societal relations (as well as their geographic guise, 'regions') became visible. By means of mapping the state created a coordinatory grid covering its whole territory, thus opening an abstract ground for totalizing projections of the 'civil society' (Harvey, 1989; Hacking, 1991). Secondly, large mapping projects called for a uniform methodology and well arranged disciplinary organizations to ensure that the data collected is "optically consistent" (Latour, 1986). In this sense statistics and maps are inseparable from the structures of their institutional production, and in fact have been quite concretely involved in the construction of the administrative structures of the state (Dandeker, 1990; Häkli, 1994a).

Three great mapping projects were launched by the Swedish state in the early 18th century, all of which were connected to the rationalizing state's attempts to control large complex totalities. It should be noted that although Finland did not yet exist as a polity, the lands that later became Finland belonged to the kingdom of Sweden and thus were subject to the governmental actions of the Swedish state.

The first mapping project was the gathering of population statistics for which the collaboration between the church and the state was of crucial importance. The church had in the 16th century began to keep census lists of each parish's population for its own administrative purposes. Because the Swedish Lutheran Church had well educated officials, hierarchical organization, carefully enforced church laws, and most importantly, a parish network covering the whole kingdom, it provided the most solid institutional foundation available for the state's effort to aggregate population statistics from its census data (Liedman, 1989). Inspired by John Graunt's statistical analyses and William Petty's political arithmetic the government started planning the collection of population statistics in 1747. In

the beginning of 1749 an institution called *Tabellverket* was established with the task of making statistical surveys of the kingdom and its different parts (Hjelt, 1900a; Kovero, 1940).

An excerpt of the first official report given by the statistical institution unambiguously shows the politico-administrative interests behind the project, and makes understandable the enthusiasm for the new way of knowing the kingdom.

... serious and severe lack of population unfortunately *lies before our eyes*, and as everyone knows, a population is the most essential wealth and strength of a country, as well as the best instrument in the improvement of all kinds of land and city industries; however it is of no use only to regret this state of affairs, instead it must be noted, that the shortage itself demands the strongest efforts possible to increase the population so that the economy would better sustain on its own (cited in Hjelt, 1900b: 6, my translation, emphasis added).

It was the increasing visibility of the society that stimulated the minds of the politicians and administrators of the time, and provoked the politics of governmentality in the state's conduct. This excitement also accompanied the second large mapping project – mapping in the proper sense of the word. The project served the land reform politics of the state which strived for more efficient agricultural production by reorganizing rural landownership. *Storskifte* ('great partition') was one of the first state-wide programs where geographical imagination and maps as its instrument played a central role. By means of maps it was possible first to codify the available land and then redistribute it according the adopted economic, and notably, visual rationale which demanded the number of individual land parcels to be minimized and replaced by large clusters for more effective farming (Kuusi, 1933a; Pred, 1986; Kain and Baigent, 1992).

From 1757 onward, albeit slowly, the process of enclosure came to cover the whole country so that by the 1970's practically all of the land in both Sweden and Finland had been assessed (Gustafsson, 1933; Kuusi, 1933b; Kain and Baigent, 1992). However, more essential than the slow progression of the project is the fact that it quickly showed the government the utility of maps as tools of administration and as device with which the kingdom could be subjected to the observing gaze of "one single pair of eyes" (Latour, 1986; Widmalm, 1990). This 'will to see' also pushed forward the third great mapping project of the 18th century Sweden: the economic survey with the purpose of making the kingdom better known to its rulers.

Economic survey was to provide a combination of cartographic, statistical and verbal description of the kingdom's parishes so that the most suitable actions for their economic development could be determined (Kuusi, 1933a; Johannisson, 1988). A report given to the government in the mid 18th century pointed out that the conditions in the eastern provinces (Finland) were suitable for all kinds of sources of livelihood and industry. Full utilization of this potential, however, required better knowledge of the territory; its extent, borders, lakes, rivers, archipelago, climate, soil, natural resources, industries, etc. Because only a comprehensive survey could provide this kind of knowledge, a project was launched with the task of drawing up detailed descriptions of "the quality of soil, products and part of the natural history, the number of population, ways of living and sources of livelihood" (Gustafsson, 1933: 100).

Between 1747 and 1767, altogether 66 Finnish parishes covering the total area of 90000 km² were surveyed. The politico-administrative interests in the project were economic, and inspired by Petty's political arithmetic (Johannisson, 1988). These principles

are clearly manifest in a published analysis of the parish of Laihia titled *Försök til en Politisk Värdering på Land och Folk, i anledning af Lajhela Socken* [Essay for the political evaluation of the land and people of the parish of Laihia]. By applying a set of equations and coefficients to the empirical data collected, the calculus showed that the monetary worth of the parish's population was 955 440 *daler* for its 'capital value', and 57 330 *daler* for its 'interest value'. These numbers were to be compared with the potential values of 13 747 720 *daler* and 824 915 *daler* respectively, which would be reached if the parish's population could be increased to its optimal size (*Figure 1*).

In addition to the political arithmetic there were also more strategic and territorial motivations for the mapping measures. The "measured" parishes formed a lengthy strip in the eastern part of the kingdom running roughly along the Russian border. This shows that collecting accurate knowledge of the eastern periphery was also considered a strategic defence manoeuvre (Widmalm, 1990). Indeed, the case provides a good example of the intimate relation between the techniques and projects of surveillance and the territorialization of the state government.

Through these three, and many other less ambitious projects, mapping grew into an important part of the rationalized state administration. It also gave a tangible guise to "abstract space", a development which entailed the systematic and centralized inscription of space on paper (Häkli, 1994b). Mapping gave social space the qualities of being both *fixed* as a representation and *movable* across time and space (Latour, 1986). As David Harvey (1989) has pointed out, the 'compression' of time and space in the 19th century had a vast impact on how world came to be conceived of and lived in. Likewise, the centralized accumulation of time and space revolutionized the ways in which societies were governed (see also Harley, 1988; Revel, 1991; Ó Tuathail, 1994a).

The exciting new power of mapping was based on its potential to visualize – to make literally visible – phenomena which would otherwise be beyond observation. Furthermore, the new kind of empirical data made possible, and in fact often invited more advanced analysis of the intricacies of the society. An analysis using maps and statistics could associate the prevailing social relations among population with a certain spatial context and geographical area. Thus, the great mapping projects played an important role in the governmentalization of the 'administrative state'. Not only were state institutions developed with the particular task of producing knowledge of society, but new ways of seeing and thinking in and about government also emerged. Mapping supported discursive practices with novel ways of framing the social world and the government's role in it, i.e. new *savoirs* (Procacci, 1991). Empirical knowledge of society also assumed a uniform base in maps and statistics, which gave it a new kind of reliability and compatibility. From this foundation the state began to develop practical and institutional infrastructures for modern policy-making, including new realities previously unknown in the practices of the state. 'Region' as a discursive product is an apt example of this.

The invention of region

The word 'region' derives from a latin word *regere*, which means to rule (Olwig, 1996: 72). However, within the abstract space of survey and statistical inquiry, regions gradually assumed a new meaning in the state's discourse. Traditionally a concrete category, denoting a particular administrative realm, 'region' now became a discursive product as well; a geographical expression of the various orders and relations in the 'liberal civil society' representing the new "natural" domain of government (Burchell, 1991). No longer tied

merely to the praxis of administration, regions could also be constructed in terms of scientific discourses and political trends and aspirations of a given time.

The larger intellectual and social contexts of this transformation are meticulously described in Paul Rabinow's (1989) study of the emerging modern urbanism in the 19th century France. For him the category of region was one of the candidates for attempts to rethink and formulate policy for a society based on unities other than individuals. In France the efforts at replacing the Napoleonic *département* administration with a provincial self-governmental system were strongly gauged in the idea expressed by one of the reform's leading protagonists P. J. Prodhon: "It is spontaneously, by a process of agglutination of ethnic, climatic, geographic, commercial, agricultural, artistic, literary, and still other elements – that the region gradually constitutes itself. The administrative division will then be imposed quite simply as the consecration of this *fait accompli*" (cited in Rabinow, 1989: 201-202).

The discussion below will show that there are striking similarities between the French case and the Finnish regional administrative reform. In both cases it is important to realize that the discourse on regions began to involve new, more abstract power relations. 'Regions' became part of the politics of representation. Furthermore, due to the social division of expert labor, 'regions' became discursive spaces that were most often produced on the expanding fields of professions (e.g. Freidson, 1986). For instance, by the early 20th century the regional imagination had been carefully coded into the language of disciplinary geography. As is well known, the holistic principles of regional geography were developed in most European countries with institutionalized geography (e.g. in Germany by Ritter, in Great Britain by Geddes, in France by Vidal de la Blache, and in Finland by J. G. Granö) (Vartiainen, 1984; Stoddart, 1986; Livingstone, 1992). What all these rigorous aspirations had in common with the *savoirs* of the state was that they were accounts of the "systematic co-operation of forces" which made regions. By the end of the 18th century 'region' had emerged as a *savoir* in various contexts and sites of knowledge production. This *savoir* conditioned the consciousness of a spontaneous socio-spatial order of things, i.e. order that appears natural in its existence, only waiting to be found by means of scientific inquiry and careful observation (Rabinow, 1989; Häkli, 1994b). Regions as discursive products were spatial units formed by various unforged connections between the "related features" shown in surveys and statistics; they were 'things in themselves' existing in a state reminiscent of that of an independent organism (Stoddart, 1986; Olwig, 1988).

The invention of region originates in the epistemic break at the beginning of the 19th century. At that time, as Foucault (1970) has pointed out, European societies were impregnated with a strong historical consciousness, and the idea of one general history was replaced by the knowledge that different things had histories of their own (see also Lowe, 1982; Anderson, 1991). The idea that a spatial entity grows like an organism, has its own history and future, can be understood as internal to this epistemic shift. In epistemic terms the invention of 'region' was also linked with the rise of man into the center of "human sciences". The homogeneous *episteme* of the classical period broke into the three different directions typical to the modern *episteme*: mathematical and physical sciences; empirical sciences of linguistics, biology and economics; and philosophical reflection. None of these, nor any of their configurations could comfortably accommodate the sciences of man, which gradually assumed 'history' as the condition of their positivity, as their "homeland" (Foucault, 1970). Thus, by the 20th century the historical man assumed the epistemic role of establishing connections between elements of the social world, and 'culture' provided an empirical field on which to analyze that which happens spontaneously to a society as a whole

– it became the "nature" of social organisms (Williams, 1983; Mitchell, 1995). Approached from the directions of geometry and mathematics this anthropological conception of soci(et)al totalities was given a viable geographical outfit in 'region'.

Region was invented in much the same way as 'landscape' which emerged as a structured world perception in the fifteenth century Europe (Cosgrove, 1984). However, whereas landscape has come to imply a perspectivist connotation as a way of seeing from a particular vantage point – seeing, controlling, and possessing – 'region' is a discursive product that tends to deny any particularity in the relations between viewer and the viewed. As a space of observation, analysis and reflection it claims to represent all perspectives, and thus resonates the discourses of modern governmentality. In this sense, in the course of the 19th century, 'region' overlapped with, but also partly replaced 'landscape' as a way of seeing of the powerful classes, which, via state supported professional systems, more intimately than before were attached to the bureaucracy. This was particularly the case with state-centered societies (for instance Finland, Germany, and Sweden) (Collins, 1990; Konttinen, 1991).

The idea of 'region' as an organic entity informed not only academic research, but official discourses as well.³ It has also been an inseparable part of the Finnish politico-administrative discourse on provinces. As a given understanding of the spatial ontology of society it guides the ways in which provinces are represented within and for politico-administrative practice. This discursive formation is politically highly significant even where it proclaims itself rigorously apolitical. At the most elementary level the political appeal of organic space is based on its capability to evoke images of unity and originality which give consistence, legitimacy and justification to political order (Lefebvre, 1991: 274-275).

According to Foucault, while the possibility to infinite universalism was shattered by the coming of modern *episteme*, knowledge founded on man could still be recognized as having validity in particular cultural and geographical contexts (Foucault, 1970: 371). In fact *savoirs* conditioning the positivity of knowledge of man, society, and culture ceaselessly inform scientists, writers, politicians, administrators, and any producers of particular knowledge (*connaissance*) with the potential of being instrumental to the government of society. The political praxis of a liberal democratic society creates a continuous demand for 'truth': legitimate knowledge resting on taken-for-granted perceptions of the social world – knowledge which Bourdieu (1977) has termed "doxa".

The 'truth' of provinces [*maakunta*] in the Finnish political discourse is that they are spontaneously evolved regional wholes.⁴ It should be noted that this doxa of provinces is so taken-for-granted that at no point has it been forced to be defended as an orthodoxy against heterodoxic conceptions (that is, against "natural" divisions of the Finnish polity based on an alternative spatial ontology). True enough, the number, size, and shape of provinces has varied over time. There also have been disputes about whether provinces should be granted self-governmental powers or not. Some practitioners of statecraft have even wished to reform the Finnish regional administration on the basis of the readily established state administrative districts [*lääni*]. However, as the discussion below shows, what the disputants never have called into question is the very existence of the spontaneously evolved "natural" regions lying somewhere out there within the 'messy-but-ordered' civil society.

The power of this 'truth' has made any fundamentally different conceptions of space fall outside the governmental reason, somewhere down into the depths of noise and madness. Meanwhile, the *savoir* of 'region' as an organic whole has charged provinces with politically invaluable connotations of authenticity and indisputably historic origin. It is no wonder, then, that when the regional government reform was launched in the latter half of the 19th

century, the concept of province became one of its keywords. Despite the changing guises in which provinces appeared in reports written in different societal and political contexts, the reform had this doxa as its unquestioned and unchanging core.

The discursive transformation of provinces

Before the age of mapping rulers and governments were not able to determine the number of their subjects, let alone numerous other tangible features of the kingdom. Of course there were attempts and techniques to estimate the size of the population, but most often these produced results that were not much better than wild guessing. For example, some estimates for the population of Sweden (including the eastern lands of Finland), made as late as in the 18th century, were gross exaggerations showing figures almost twice as large as the one established by the first statistical survey (Hjelt, 1900a; Johannisson, 1988).

The projects of mapping provided governments with a visualizing device that changed all this. They provided empirical knowledge of the kingdom and encouraged more analytical perception of the society as the basis of government. The rationalizing government began to produce discourses from its own powerful perspective, that is, the governmental politics was complemented and enhanced by the politics of representation. Knowledge of society came to assume an increasingly important role in the practice of modern government.

State committees were one particularly important instance and practical context for the politics of representation. Their increasingly frequent use as advisory bodies tellingly reflects the modernization of the Swedish state. As far as is known, only one committee had been appointed before 1634, while more than fifty had assembled by the end of the 17th century. In the period from the beginning of the 18th century until the formation of the autonomous Grand Duchy of Finland in 1809, more than 180 committees had been appointed (Hesslén, 1927: 23-50). Although the figures may not be exact, they clearly show increase in the demand for expertise in the state's businesses.⁵

The committee institution was one of the features inherited by the Finnish state from the Swedish politico-administrative system when in 1809 'Finland' was born as an autonomous grand duchy in the Russian empire.⁶ Committees remained more or less temporary advisory bodies consisting of experts, appointed by the state government to give guidance in particularly demanding questions (Tuori, 1976). However, in terms of the above discussion, their function was not only practical but also discursive. Committees were used for establishing what is real, and in what form, from the point of view of the state government. Their task was to reduce uncertainty and diversity with regard to categories and perceptions of the social world, and thereby enable the politico-administrative practice of the state – usually in fields and issues that were new to it (see also Burton and Carlen, 1979; Bourdieu, 1989: 22).

Thus, it is not surprising that when the question of regional administration surfaced in the latter half of the 19th century, it became the task of committees to attempt the definition and demarcation of a new political space within the Finnish polity. Within the space of more than 120 years the work of eight successive committees weaved together the *savoir* of organism-like space and the governmental interest in reformed regional administration. The resulting reform discourse built upon and reproduced the doxa of Finnish provinces.

In the official committee reports the doxa made its appearance in discussions of the proper regional division to serve as the basis for a new administrative system. Significantly, both the proponents and opponents of provincial self-government made recourse to the fundamental difference between provinces [*maakunta*] representing "spontaneous evolution"

stemming from the society, and counties [*lääni*] representing "arbitrariness and artificiality" stemming from the state's order from above. In the second committee report (1884) the idea is expressed as follows: "[a]s mentioned above, the committee has not been able to unanimously suggest the building of the new representative bodies on the basis of counties. We have been reminded that county division, which first and foremost corresponds to *administrative* relations, does not produce any *real unity* between the places it encompasses, and that the county boundaries have not been determined in view of our nation's historically based differences of language, dialect, habits, and character" (Committee report, 1884: 29, my translation, emphasis added). The committee of 1923 had the following formulation of the same issue: "even though the areas of counties and provinces roughly correspond ... they are of different character", the counties have not become "integrated wholes to any mentionable degree" (Committee report, 1923: 112, 116, my translation).

Not even several revisions of the state county division to make it better accord with the provinces, nor the fact, that over the history of the reform, the socially constructed provinces themselves had changed in shape, size and number, were able to disturb the basic distinction between natural and artificial political space (Tiihonen and Tiihonen, 1983; Paasi, 1986b). This is evident from the report of the fifth committee (1963) which stated that: "[the new administrative districts] should conform to the general administrative division of the country, i.e. counties, ... but still, as well as possible comply with the unified wholes of provinces and functional regions" (Committee report, 1963: 27). In the reform discourse now reflecting the new functional conception of economic space there still is an 'underlying' reality of provinces or functional regions upon which the county division can be imposed. The committee of 1970 writes: "as yet, some adjustments of the county borders have not been realized, even though they would have been necessary so as to make the counties correspond with the traditional provincial and present day functional regions" (Committee report, 1970: 105).

In addition to the doxic representation of provinces, the committee reports demonstrate a paradox characteristic to the governmental perspective of power. From the latter part of the 19th century onwards a consciousness of provinces was growing among the larger population, largely due to the rise of regional newspapers and school geography (Salonen, 1974; Paasi, 1984). This was actually an important part of the Finnish nation-building process as the provinces could conveniently be used in representing the stereotypical character and history of different parts of the Finnish territory established in 1809. A sense of national belonging together was strengthened with images showing that all those regionally varying economic bases and trade orientations, habits, dialects and experiences actually only reflected different sides and parts of one unified nation (Wilson, 1976; Paasi, 1986b; Alapuro, 1988).

However, the symbolism of provinces that gradually became embedded in the people's everyday life did not imply clearly demarcated nor defined regions. On the contrary, a considerable confusion prevailed when it came to people's provincial identities in Finland (Palomäki, 1968; Paasi, 1986b). Only a few large "historical provinces" stood out as providing and reflecting a relatively established regional identity. Outside the canonized representations of the academic historico-geographical discourse (*Figure 2*), a single generally accepted definition of the provinces would have been quite inconceivable. Furthermore, entirely new popular provinces were being constructed from within the processes of spatial restructuring, industrialization and urbanization of the Finnish society. Often these new 'functional' provinces reflected the mobility within and sense of belonging to areas defined by urban centers (Paasi, 1986b; Heikkinen, 1986; Rasila, 1993).

When encountering this messy history of provincial symbolisms the committee reports, one by one, proceeded by singling out a universal and objective regional division of the country. From a committee perspective this was as inevitable as it was necessary. The task, however, was not easy for the 19th century and early 20th century committees because of the swift transformations in the "conceptual space" of provinces around the turn of the century (Committee report, 1881, 1884, 1923). The last few committees faced a less ambiguous situation as they were able to resort to a regional division established by municipal associations which had adopted a provincial label in their activities (Committee report, 1970, 1974). Finally in 1992 this provincial division, based on functional urban regions rather than the historical provinces, was established by a principal decision of the Finnish government (see *Figure 3*) (Committee report, 1992).

In the light of the latter development there is a temptation to interpret the reform in terms of the victory of 'people's provinces' over the state's discourse, or the revenge of 'deep space' over the eye of power. After all, it was the state that had to adapt to the provinces constructed by municipal associations. Yet, contrary to the prevailing understanding, I argue that if anything, this development has not marked a victory of the lived space, or the popular symbolisms of provinces. Firstly, however "close to the people" in intent, the committees could only represent these vernacular, organic provinces by means of, and embedded in, the abstract spatial grid which the state had established and reproduced by mapping its territory. It was only in terms of this "second reality", seemingly more real than the "deep spaces" of everyday life, that provinces could be defined, demarcated and objectivated into an official, universally valid regional division. In this sense the state committees, whatever they resorted to, produced provinces representing the spontaneous organic entities of which the Finnish society consisted. These entities were subject to evolutionary transformation, but nonetheless definable in terms of an abstract spatial reality.⁷

Secondly, the governmental discourse grounded in the abstract space of institutional strategies has a logic of its own which does not grasp the everyday lived world even when the 'perspective of power' is made to conflate with the vernacular ones. In other words, instead of bringing about a politico-administrative system of a "more humane scale and quality", the conflation of governmental conception of political space and the popular symbolisms of provinces only defines the *moment of colonization* of the latter by the former. Yet, it should be noted that sometimes this conflation/colonization takes place, but often it does not. The popular parlance on provinces residing in the deep space - the contextual 'ways-of-using' institutionally produced representations - is replete with blind spots which evade the governmental gaze and its suggestive power to conflate perspectives.

The discursive transformation of provinces took place within the mapped space of the committee reports in the course of 125 years. During that time provinces were represented in various different guises on various different grounds. The criteria which defined the provinces as organic wholes shifted gradually from historical (real or imagined) tribal ties in 19th and early 20th century committee reports to modern functional-economic relations roughly from 1950 onwards (Committee report, 1884, 1923, 1953). Whatever the criteria, the provinces were viewed naturalistically, as outgrowths of a spontaneous historical, cultural or social evolution. The fact that the transformation of provinces did not exhaust their appeal as organic units, ready to be taken in political use, speaks for an undisturbed and enduring doxa, not yet seriously upset. In fact only very recently it has been reinforced by Finland's membership in the European Union with regional policies wrapped up in discussions of the "Europe of Regions" (Häkli, 1993).

There are good grounds to say that the whole project of administrative reform reflected the demise of the administrative state and its replacement by the governmentalism of a liberal state. Firstly, the reform was initiated soon after many central parts of the state legislation concerning economic activities had been renewed and liberalized by the 1863 Diet – the first Diet to convene since 1809 (Jutikkala, 1962). Secondly, the reform was preceded by changes in ways of thinking about the state itself, which no longer represented a mere financial apparatus but rather meant government in general (Jussila, 1989). Against this background it is understandable that the reformers wanted the country's governmental structures to meet the requirements of the liberal times.

Provinces provided the reform with a perfect formula representing "in flesh" the liberal idea of the civil society. Paradoxically, inscribed into the official committee reports the discourse on Finnish provinces reduced them into a geometric, homogenous, one-dimensional plane. By implanting the doxa of organic provinces on the abstract spatial grid of the state's perspective of power the committees petrified an indeterminate, multi-dimensional vernacular symbolism into a visible and definite space of the politico-administrative system – an act that in Bourdieu's terms bears all the characteristics of legitimate symbolic violence: "the power to constitute and to impose as *universal* and *universally applicable* within a given "nation", that is, within the boundaries of a given territory, a common set of coercive norms" (Bourdieu and Wacquant, 1992: 112). As a part of real governmental action this objectification and universalization of space had consequences reaching far beyond the realm of symbolism, language or imagery. The geometricalization of popular regions was an expression of governmental system seeking a renewed legitimacy by producing a platform from which new political action could spring, new institutions be established, new political structures forged, new economic relations built (for abstract space and political legitimation, see Lefebvre, 1991). This may have been a manoeuvre performed on paper, but its seams have always been sewn in the corporeal world of everyday life, people, events, interests and material projects.

Conclusion

Contributions to a more critical and reflexive political geography have been numerous in the last decade, and many interesting aspects of the discursive and geographical conjunctions of politics have been highlighted. However, important processes of the social production of space have not yet received enough attention within this research agenda. Hence, calls have been made, especially by the 'critical geopolitics' writers, for research exploring more carefully the governmental technologies of power, the sites within which geographical representations are produced, and the taken-for-granted assumptions about the state (Driver, 1991; Dodds and Sidaway, 1994; Dodds, 1994a; Ó Tuathail, 1995). In this article I have attempted to tackle some of these challenges by relating discourses to their practical contexts and histories. Instead of viewing everything as text, a particular set of texts (in the literal sense) has been viewed against the contextuality of everyday life and approached as inevitably reductionist with respect to the complexity of the social and spatial world (see also Ó Tuathail, 1994a; Peet, 1994). When claiming to mirror world from a universally valid perspective discourse, however reductionist, equals power and becomes unavoidably interwoven with the political geography, or the multi-scaled geopolitics, of a society.

The article can be read as a "political geography of knowledge" – an account of the inherent relation of discourse to the production of political space, and to the increasing governmentality of a modern society. The term political geography of knowledge represents

an attempt to incorporate the discourse analytic approach of critical geopolitics with a theoretical framework looking at regions and territories as social constructs. A central starting point has been to underline the fact that the social world is actively constructed not just passively reflected in knowledge. Furthermore, social space is saturated with meanings that can not be reduced to our knowledge of it – no matter how accurate, or "objective" we would think that knowledge is. Hence, representations of space are never politically innocent nor exhaustive. The idea is crystallized in what Smith (1990) and Gregory (1994) have called 'deep space', a socially produced space that is constantly negotiated and represented in social practices, but which nonetheless can never be reduced to *any single* representation of it. That is, not without violence against other ways of seeing.

It is the realm of social power, dwelling within the gap between universalistic and objectivistic representations of space and deep space, that this article has sought to chart. A political geography of knowledge was developed here with particular reference to the reform of regional administration in Finland. This case provided an example of a state-centered discourse based on the *savoir* of organism-like space. In historical terms the emphasis was on the transformations in the production of knowledge of society, and its relation with the rising power of the modern state institution.

The Swedish state was drawn toward more rational government largely in reaction to the pressures of capitalist transformation and the increasingly competitive European state-system (Tilly, 1975). Through large mapping projects the state became the most important context for concrete knowledge of society. This new empirical knowledge also encouraged more "theoretical" accounts of the state of kingdom and its potential to prosper. As the politics of government was supplemented by the politics of representation, discursive structures began to emerge giving rise to official ways of seeing and representing space: new rational ways of governing society gave birth to the 'perspective of power'.

In terms of this article, the formation of 'region' as a discursive product stands out as the most interesting phenomenon associated with this transformation. Out of mere administrative realm grew a 'region' as an object of analytical scrutiny and a modern 'code of space'. Thus was created a field of knowledge within which social phenomena became visible and subject to observation, their interconnections and relations detectable, and finally, through which territorial integration became possible when the time was ripe for nation building in Finland. Thus also emerged the *savoir*, or the "ontology" of regions as independent organic wholes, consisting of relations between elements tied together by the activity of the 'liberal humans'. In the reform discourse this *savoir* was inscribed into the doxa of Finnish provinces as spontaneously evolved socio-spatial units. These regions, and the geometric pattern they formed, served the production of political space as a kind of 'black box' that was useful when complex society needed to be represented as organized communities, that is, as 'units' that can be defined, demarcated, and controlled.

There is a common misconception that the ideas and discourses, which academic research has criticized to the point of extinction, have successfully been shoved to the dustbin of the "history of thought". In reality, critical reflection confined to narrow scientific communities seldom matches the powerful will to know prevalent in politics and administration. Thus, even though organistic conception of regions has been thoroughly criticized by the community of (critical, human) geographers (e.g. Cosgrove 1984; Gore, 1984; Stoddart, 1986; Olwig, 1988; Entrikin, 1991), in the case of discourses prevailing in the larger society this *savoir* still makes a vast network of particular knowledges (*connaissance*) coherent and meaningful. The reform of regional administration in Finland is a good example of discursive practice which has not conformed to, or respected,

developments within the critical understanding of regions as social constructs, but instead has continued to take for granted a doxa negotiated in association with the modernizing state's political projects.

Attempts to reform the regional administration in Finland have a long history during which a substantial amount of official documentary has been produced. The article analyzed the discussion as an official discourse produced by eight state committees. The committees responsible for producing the reports were regarded primarily as bodies empowered by the state to establish the 'real' – i.e. produce knowledge imbued with the authority of being universal and objective. This objectifying act, which inscribed the *savoir* of 'region' into a body of provincial discourse, was considered of crucial importance for the production of political space in Finland.

In the discourse both a given understanding of provinces and the abstract spatial grid of mapping figured prominently. They provided the committees with the means of representing social reality from the perspective of power – as a governable, regular and well-defined entity. What this one-dimensional (non)perspective of power entails is a homogenizing gaze with potential to colonize the multidimensional and heterogeneous symbolisms of provinces embedded in people's everyday lives. It is argued here that the official Finnish provinces emerged in and through the rift, or break, between "lived provinciality" (i.e. customs, dialects, habits, traditions, and memories meaningful in the lives of the people "in" the regions) and "discourse on regions" (i.e. regional surveys, statistics, maps, and demarcations aimed at objectifying the provinces). This gap between the lived social space and its scientific or politico-administrative representations – the distance from 'deep space' to spatial discourse – allows and bears within itself a space for social power, or in Foucault's terms, power/knowledge.

In official discourses representation is understood as the depiction of that which already exists. The fact is, however, that discourses also produce space. By bringing Finnish provinces into discourse state committees have objectified and reified them as organic totalities which can and, in fact, should be demarcated by administrative borders. This is how something new was created out of the provincial symbolisms, traditions, habits, memories, and languages of the people living in different parts of Finland. This is how in 1994 provinces were finally established as part of the Finnish politico-administrative system.

Official discourses, thus, have tangible consequences. Knowledge of society is an important constituent in the production and reproduction of societal institutions and structures. Therefore the power of discourse is not just repressive but, perhaps more importantly, productive (Burton and Carlen, 1979; Pratt, 1991). Discursive production has its price, however. The reductionism of the (non)perspective of governmental gaze is easily detectable in the case of the Finnish provinces which also bear meaning as 'vernacular regions'. Part of the cultural existence and everyday life of the 'ordinary people', they sometimes provide important signposts for navigation through the contexts of the social world. Seen in this light, the governmental discourse on provinces has sought to colonize the provincial symbolisms by imposing its own rationality to phenomena which are significant in the cultural life of 'streets and marketplaces'.

However, while creating provinces in its own image – visual, geometrical, and homogeneous – the eye of power is not capable of penetrating the scattered and silent production of meaning which takes place within the myriad contexts of the 'quotidienne'. In conflating the perspective of power with the vernacular the governmental discourse only has managed to subsume under its own rationality those aspects of the lived space which can be abstracted and objectified. Even though the 'ordinary people' have precious few means by

which to resist the political definition of the Finnish provinces, they nevertheless dwell in deep spaces replete with blind spots, contradictory definitions, and heterotopic places. Deep spaces enable the everyday tactics of resistance; ways of using old, 'defunct', and stereotypical symbolisms of provinces in a manner which does not necessarily present itself as resistance. Therefore, while it can be asserted that there are instances in which the perspective of power unreservedly conflates with the vernacular ones, i.e. where governmental colonization of provinces occurs as a moment of internalization by the ordinary people of the categories of world perception produced for governmental purposes, the everyday ways of using provincial symbolisms, hidden from the governmental gaze, nonetheless preserve something of the popular imagination of the Finnish cultural and political space. In this article I have not attempted to explore these tactics of resistance. The implication is not that they lack significance, but rather that attempts at their capturing may well result in a 'noisy' and incoherent output, instead of a glorious history of a popular resistance movement.

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Notes:

¹In this article the history of the Finnish polity proper is taken to begin in 1809 when Finland gained autonomous position as a grand duchy of the Russian empire. This political status had a decisive impact on the development by which Finland became an independent nation-state in 1917 (Jutikkala, 1962; Alapuro, 1989). This is not to argue, however, that Finland's development into statehood was not influenced by earlier periods. In fact, governmental structures built during the Swedish rule before 1809 provided an important springboard for the Finnish state-building process (e.g. Alapuro, 1988; Jussila, 1989).

²Partial in the sense that many administrative tasks which require economic or practical resources exceeding those of a single municipality are still undertaken by municipal associations or organised by the state through its county administration. Furthermore, the representatives in provincial governments are appointed by local councils instead of being directly elected.

³The research on nation-building and the history of nationalism shows clearly how this conception of regional space made its way both into the philosophical reflection and the political practice of the modern nation-state. The invention of region, thus, coincided with the emergence of national self-determination as the modern principle of political legitimacy, reflecting the

powerful geographical imagination that the principle in-itself implies. 'Region' was also well in tune with the demands of time where empirical evidence of cultural and/or linguistic areas had become essential for determining the territorial shape of nation-states. For the transformations in the legitimative role of history and geography in political philosophy from Rousseau to Herder, see Barnard (1988). The social, political and cultural constructions of 'nation', and the associated rise of geographical or regional imagination, are well captured in Breuilly (1982), Gellner (1983), and Anderson (1991).

⁴'Province' derives from the latin word *provincia*, which means conquered territory. Yet, contrary to this rather militant etymology, in many languages the word province has come to bear the connotations of spontaneity, naturality and organicity. This was the case at least with the French regionalists, as well as with the provincialism of Josiah Royce in the early 20th century America (Rabinow, 1989: 197-199; Entrikin, 1991: 68-71). There is no doubt in my mind that the Finnish word *maakunta* with its organic and spontaneous connotations translates well into province in its contemporary sense.

⁵The figures may not be precise because bodies performing the tasks of committees were termed variably as *kommitté*, *kommission* and *utskott* (committee and commission) (Hesslén, 1927). However, for showing the tendency of the state to rely on expert knowledge they are sufficiently accurate.

⁶Sweden lost its eastern provinces to Russia in the course of the Napoleonic wars (Jutikkala, 1962). From these areas the emperor Alexander I created a Russian grand duchy in 1809, an event that the historians have distinguished as the founding moment of the Finnish state (Alapuro, 1989; Jussila, 1989). See also footnote 1 above.

⁷When it comes to the professions involved in the production of discourse - that is the professional composition of the committees - an interesting feature was the steady increase in the expertise used for securing the legitimacy of the committees' representations. On the latter half of the 20th century geographers began to assume a central role in providing the committees with expertise on regional divisions (Committee report, 1953; see also Tuominen, 1965)

