

**ARMINEN Elina / АРМИНЕН Элина**

University of Eastern Finland / Университет Восточной Финляндии

Finland, Joensuu / Финляндия, Йоэнсуу

[elina.arminen@uef.fi](mailto:elina.arminen@uef.fi)

## **ENCOUNTERING THE WILDERNESS AND URBAN LANDSCAPE IN TRAVEL BROCHURES FROM THE EARLY 20TH AND 21ST CENTURIES**

### **ЗНАКОМСТВО С ДИКОЙ ПРИРОДОЙ И ГОРОДСКИМ ЛАНДШАФТОМ В ТУРИСТИЧЕСКИХ БРОШЮРАХ НАЧАЛА XX И XXI ВЕКОВ**

**Аннотация:** В статье прослежена репрезентация и визуализация Карелии в финских туристических брошюрах первой половины XX в., а также на современном веб-сайте *VisitKarelia* (<https://www.visitkarelia.fi/fi>). Визуальный и текстуальный анализ позволил выявить темы, из которых состоит традиция образной репрезентации Карелии, а также установить, какие из этих тем сохранились до сегодняшнего дня, а какие исчезли и почему. В брошюрах 1920–1930-х гг. природные ландшафты Северной Карелии описываются как состоящие из высоких лесистых холмов, скал и озёр. Однако наряду с фотографиями деревень и дикой природы столь же важны были фото, представляющие модернизацию и развитие городов региона. В межвоенный период интерес к туризму в приграничных областях рос не спонтанно, а благодаря экономическим, политическим и идеологическим усилиям. К примеру, Северная Карелия позиционировалась как пограничный регион, что увязывало туризм с задачами обороны. На сайте *VisitKarelia* традиционные элементы оказались наполнены новым содержанием, порождаемым актуальным контекстом сегодняшнего дня. Проведенный анализ прежде всего демонстрирует, что «карельскость», создаваемая туристическими брошюрами, изменчива и текуча.

**Keywords / Ключевые слова:** Karelia, the 1920s and 1930s, early 21st century, Finnish travel brochures, photos / Карелия, 1920-е и 1930-е гг., начало XXI в., финские туристические брошюры, фото

This article examines the changes and continuities in the imagery of North Karelia in Finnish travel brochures from the early 20th and 21st centuries. The focus of my interest is particularly on the role of the photographs in the brochures. I will analyse how Karelia is represented and visualized in the brochures from the 1920s and 1930s. My particular interest is on what kind of themes are included in the visual tradition of imagining Karelia, which of the themes have remained up to the present day and which themes have disappeared, and why. My hypothesis is that the image of Karelia as constructed by travel brochures includes ideological, economic, and cultural meanings. I will argue that Karelianness of the travel brochures is connected with the changes in human-nature relationships and centre-periphery relationships.

The imagery of Karelia in Finnish travel brochures is an interesting and contradictory case because Karelia is a cross-border region. Administratively, Karelia belongs to both

Russia and Finland. For cultural and historical reasons, it is possible to identify Karelia as one region, and Karelian regional identity is strong on both sides of the border. This article provides knowledge on the geopolitical use of travel advertising and its general role in the process of creating regional identities in the cross-border regions.

The research material includes seven travel brochures published in the 1920s and 1930s, and the website VisitKarelia <https://www.visitkarelia.fi/fi>, which is the official tourist website of North Karelia. All of these sources use photographs for illustration purposes. However, the focus of this article is on the old brochure material, and the VisitKarelia site is used for comparison. The most important brochures for my analysis are *Karjala* ('Karelia', the 11th issue of the series *Matkailijayhdistyksen matkakäsikirja* — 'The Travel Handbook of the Travel Association,' 1925)<sup>1</sup> and *Pohjois-Karjalan matkailuopas* ('North Karelian Travel Guide,' 1935)<sup>2</sup> because of their regional coverage and specificity. The photographs used as illustrations in the travel brochures are a special research subject. They are a select group of pictures that are supposed to positively crystallise some characteristic aspects of the region. In the old brochures, the role of the photographs is to illustrate the text. However, as visual objects, the photographs often include different and more detailed information, rather than just brief and factual text.

My interest is in the region that was identified in the old travel brochures as North Karelia and Border Karelia. After the Continuous War between Finland and the Soviet Union, some parts of this region, for example, Värtsilä and some villages in the municipalities of Ilomantsi and Tohmajärvi, were annexed by the Soviet Union. These days, the regions that remained part of Finland belong to the North Karelia province. The concepts of North Karelia and Border Karelia have always wavered because the borders between Sweden (including Finland) and Russia, the Autonomous Grand Duchy of Finland and Russia and Finland and the Soviet Union/Russia have changed several times. Also, the regional borders inside Finland have changed. In the interwar years the regions of North Karelia and Border Karelia partially belonged to the Vyborg and Kuopio provinces.

However, travel brochures, guides and posters create a sense of belonging and differences between the regions by restricting some areas, listing the tourist attractions, and proposing routes. The old brochures from North Karelia and Border Karelia, as well as the brochures from Ladoga Karelia, have also created the imagery of Finnish Karelia and the regions it includes. I understand the borders in Karelia, according to David Newman,<sup>3</sup> as a socio-cultural process and an institution. The socio-cultural definition of the border highlights that borders direct our action and experience, and the kind of meanings we

<sup>1</sup> *Karjala*. (*Länsi-Karjala lukuunottamatta Viipurin ja Haminan välistä seutua*). Matkailijayhdistyksen matkakäsikirja XI (Helsinki: Suomen matkailijayhdistys, 1925).

<sup>2</sup> *Pohjois-Karjalan matkailuopas* (Joensuu: Suomen matkailuyhdistyksen paikallisosasto, 1935), <https://www.doria.fi/handle/10024/80847> (accessed December 3, 2020).

<sup>3</sup> David Newman, "The Lines That Continue to Separate Us," in Johan Schimanski & Stephen Wolfe (eds) *Border Poetics De-limited* (Hannover : Wehrhahn, 2007), 27–57.

associate with certain places. According to Chiara Brambilla,<sup>4</sup> the border as a socio-cultural construction is a communicative place: we are negotiating in order to belong to something and separate ourselves from something else.

### **The Beginning of Commercial Tourism in Finnish Karelia**

Tourism for commercial purposes developed rapidly between the First and Second World War in Finland. Some Karelian nature resorts, such as Koli and the Imatra Rapids, have attracted visitors since the early 19th century, but during the 1920s, some remote regions also caught the tourists' attention. The state funded the growing tourism industry. One of the most important operators in Finnish tourism at the time was the Travel Association of Finland, which built youth hostels and hotels in the nature resorts around Finland and published travel brochures and route guides.

As historians Harri Siiskonen<sup>5</sup> and Petri Raivo<sup>6</sup> have pointed out, it is symptomatic that the focus of tourism in the 1920s and 1930s was on the east, in the areas of Pechenga and Eastern Karelia, former Russian areas, which were annexed to Finland in the Tartu Peace Treaty of 1920. The Finnish Association of Border Areas (*Suomen Rajaseutuyhdistys*) particularly promoted tourism on the eastern border. The priority of the society was to support the livelihood and well-being of the inhabitants of all Finnish borderlands. The society also maintained youth hostels and published travel guides.

The enthusiasm for tourism in the borderlands and the wilderness did not happen spontaneously, but through economic, political and ideological contributions. The Finnish middle class was more prosperous and it had more leisure time than ever before. The travel connections — railways, roads and shipping — around the country had developed. Hiking, fishing, bathing and exploring new regions were not confined to the upper class but were also available to the middle class. The idea of a healthy outdoor life, which was a popular lifestyle in Germany and Britain, also came to Finland. Outdoor life was supposed to increase both physical and moral strength.<sup>7</sup>

In addition, the idea behind developing tourism in the new borderlands was to strengthen the new borders. Tourism was supposed to increase knowledge of the regions of Eastern Karelia and Pechenga and also increase the motivation of Finnish people to provide military defence in these areas. The idea was also to encourage

---

<sup>4</sup> Chiara Brambilla, "Exploring the Critical Potential of the Borderscapes Concept" *Geopolitics* 20: 1 (2015): 14–34.

<sup>5</sup> Harri Siiskonen, "Matkaoppaiden Karjala maailmansotien välillä," in Antero Heikkinen, Tapio Hämynen & Hannes Sihvo (eds) *Kahden Karjalan välillä, kahden Riikin riitamaalla* (Joensuu: University of Joensuu, 1994), 123–134.

<sup>6</sup> Petri J. Raivo, "Karjalan kasvot. Näkökulmia Karjalan maisemaan," in Pekka Nevalainen & Hannes Sihvo (eds) *Karjala. Historia, kansa, kulttuuri* (Helsinki: SKS, 1998), 23.

<sup>7</sup> "Rajaseudun" *matkailunumero* (Helsinki: Suomen rajaseutuyhdistys, 1930), 81, see also Jukka Ikonen, "Nuorisoi isänmaata kiertämässä. Matkailu ja retkeily kasvatuksen palveluksessa 1920- ja 1930-luvuilla Suomessa," MA thesis (University of Jyväskylä, 1998), <https://jyx.jyu.fi/handle/123456789/12121> (accessed December 16, 2020); John Alexander Williams, *Turning to Nature in Germany. Hiking, Nudism, and Conservation 1900–1940* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2007).

the inhabitants of these regions to identify with Finland<sup>8</sup> Tourism was also an effective way of increasing international knowledge of the new-born nation. Hence, the growing tourism in Finnish Karelia was based on the political and national aims of Finland in the eastern border. The eastern border is presented as an attractive and unique tourist resort in the brochure *Jäämerelle Karjalan kaunta!* ("To the Arctic via Carelia"). It advises tourists to explore all attractions from Lake Ladoga to Pechenga on the same trip.

However, commercialisation of tourism in Finnish Karelia between the First and Second World War was a continuation of travels by Finnish Karelianists a few decades previously. The travels by mathematician and politician August Ramsay, folklorist Samuli Paulaharju and photographer I. K. Inha, for example, were expeditions that aimed to map the region and collect ethnographic material. Their photographs, folklore collections and travel books based on the national romantic imagery of Karelia as the home of Finnish folklore and national epic.<sup>9</sup> Ramsay's *Finland Travel Guide*, which introduced travel routes and attractions in Finland, was a particularly important model for subsequent route guides and travel brochures published by the Travel Association of Finland and the Finnish Association of Border Areas.<sup>10</sup> Many of these travel routes were based on the old trade routes. Thus, the location of the old waterways and trails influenced the subsequent imagery of Karelia and its attractions.

### **The North Karelian Wilderness**

The North Karelian travel brochures from the 1920s and 1930s introduce both nature resorts and urban resorts. The photographs that concretise the North Karelian nature landscapes typically comprise high forest hills, rocks, and lake views. These landscapes are typical of Eastern Finland. In addition, the photographs of the North and Border Karelian landscape show wooded riversides and fast-flowing rapids. Marshes, which are typical landscapes of North Karelia, is not depicted in the travel brochures.

The photographs in the travel brochures depict typical sceneries such as villages, lakesides, fields and special sights. Koli Hill in Lieksa and Tolvajärvi Sandy Ridge in Korpiselkä are good examples of special attractions. Koli has been the most famous Finnish national landscape since Eero Järnefelt painted its rugged rocks and stunning view from the top of the mountain down to Lake Pielinen. In the interwar years, Koli was also a popular national park. The most important attractions in remote Tolvajärvi were the unspoilt wilderness and a beautiful sandy ridge between two lakes. However, in the interwar years, the Finnish Association of Border Areas planned that Tolvajärvi will be as popular tourist resort as Koli and invested a lot of resources for. Koli and Tolvajärvi were the most photographed locations in travel brochures of North Karelia and Border Karelia, indicating the importance and high expectations of Finnish tourism.

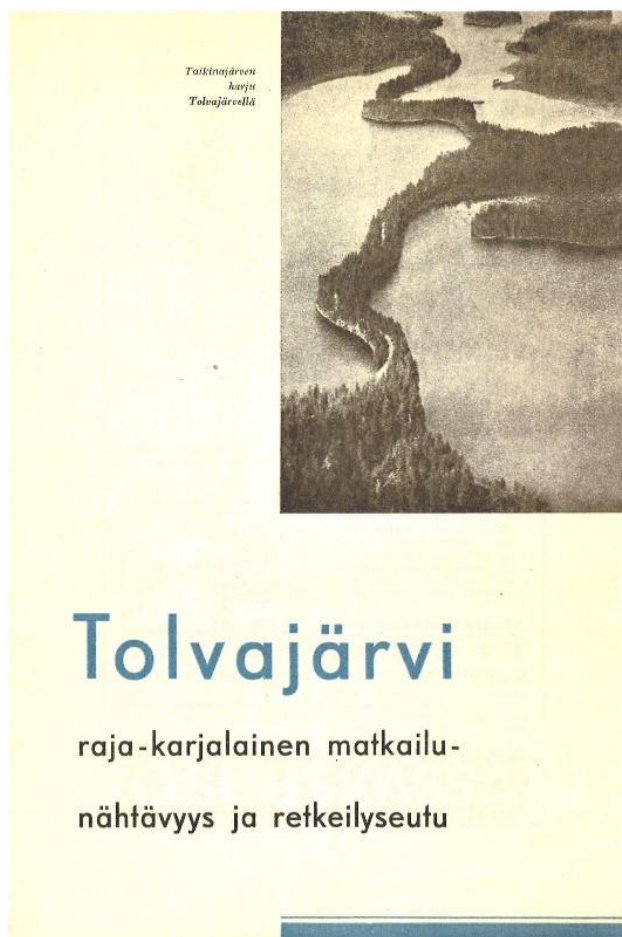
---

<sup>8</sup> "Rajaseudun" matkailunumero, 30–35, see also Raivo, "Karjalan kasvot," 23, Siiskonen, "Matkaoppaiden Karjala maailmansotien välillä," 124, 127.

<sup>9</sup> Maunu Häyrynen, *Kuivattu maa. Suomen kansallisen maisemakuoston rakentuminen* (Helsinki: SKS, 2005), 172.

<sup>10</sup> Siiskonen, "Matkaoppaiden Karjala maailmansotien välillä," 123.

The photographs not only provide information but also construct the identity of the location and direct the visitor's gaze. The photographs make articulations between the locations and previous images of them. For example, several photographs of Koli have followed the model of Eero Järnefelt's paintings of Koli: The top of the hill is depicted in the foreground of the picture and in the background are lakes and rolling hills.<sup>11</sup> The photographs of Tolvajärvi in the brochures replicate the traditional pictures of Punkaharju in Eastern Savonia, one of the first tourist attractions in Finland<sup>12</sup> introduces Tolvajärvi as being 'as good as Punkaharju.' Thus, the images and the visual representations of Punkaharju define how the tourist views this nature resort. The photographs of Tolvajärvi<sup>13</sup> emphasise the contrast between water, rocks and islands, just like typical pictures of Ladoga or Saimaa. They differ from the typical landscape ideals of North Karelia as a region of forest hills and rapids.



**Picture 1.** *Tolvajärvi. Rajakarjalainen matkailunähtävyys ja retkeilyseutu* (Helsinki: Suomen rajaseutuyhdistys, 1912–1944), cover.

The National Library of Finland. Digital Collections: <https://www.doria.fi/handle/10024/80879>

<sup>11</sup> *Karjala*, 160; *Jäämerelle Karjalan kautta!* (Joensuu: Joensuun kaupungin retkeilylautakunta, [1931]), 1, 12, <https://www.doria.fi/handle/10024/80835> (accessed December 3, 2020).

<sup>12</sup> *Karjala*, 143.

<sup>13</sup> *Tolvajärvi. Raja-karjalainen matkailunähtävyys ja retkeilyseutu* (Helsinki: Suomen rajaseutuyhdistys, [1912–1944]), <https://www.doria.fi/handle/10024/80879> (accessed December 3, 2020).

The traveller is given the impression that they may reach Karelian villages and the most important nature resorts quite easily by car or ship, or sometimes using trails. However, the remoteness and the undisturbed silence are the main attractions. According to the travel guides, the remoteness and wild nature are typical of the surroundings of the Koitajoki River. The Pamilo Rapids in Eno are mentioned as one of the most stunning resorts in North Karelia, where the visitor can experience ‘the undisturbed peace’ of nature:

*Koitajoki taas vuorostaan tunkeutuu suurenmoisen erämaaseudun läpi muodostaen juoksunsa varrella lukuisasti komeita koskia. Näistä Enon pitäjässä sijaitseva Pamilo pitäisi aina suurella tähdellä merkitä Suomen matkailukirjaan. Se on epäilemättä Karjalan valtavin putous. Sen lähiympäristöt ja rantamat ovat jylhän koskemattomia.<sup>14</sup>*

(Koitajoki River flows through a wonderful wilderness and is often transformed into wonderful rapids. The Pamilo Rapids in Eno parish should always be marked in Finnish travel guides by a big star. It is the greatest waterfall in Karelia and its riversides are rugged and untouched.)

The picture of the Pamilo Rapids allows the viewer to symbolically immerse themselves in the deep forest. The picture depicts only water, rocks and trees, thereby creating the illusion of an endless forest.

Modern technology influences the way in which the travel guide reader views the Karelian landscape, as well the natural obstacles. An aerial photograph is a popular type of picture in travel guides. Its ‘different’ perspective is often underlined in the caption, for example ‘Koli, photographed from the air.’<sup>15</sup> In contrast, lake views are often photographed from a boat. The viewer sees cliffs from the bottom to the top, which emphasises their steepness and ruggedness.

### **Karelian modernisation**

Equally important to photographs of villages and wildernesses are photographs of the modernisation and development of North Karelia and its urban regions. This is obvious, because travel brochures are not only supposed to identify the region and describe its attractions, they are also supposed to describe transport connections, accommodation and shopping opportunities. In his study of the national imagery of Finland, Maunu Häyrynen (2005) states that Karelia, particularly North Karelia, Border Karelia and Ladoga Karelia, has been described as peripheral. However, the *North Karelian Travel Guide* (1935) and *To the Arctic Via Karelia* (1931) have specifically stated that North Karelia, and its towns of Joensuu, Nurmes, Lieksa and Outokumpu, are trying to rid

<sup>14</sup> Eliel Vartiainen, *Sortavala, Pohjois-Laatokan saaristo, Raja-Karjala ja Valamo* (Sortavala: Sortavalan kaupunki, 1932), 13, <https://www.doria.fi/handle/10024/80700> (accessed December 3, 2020).

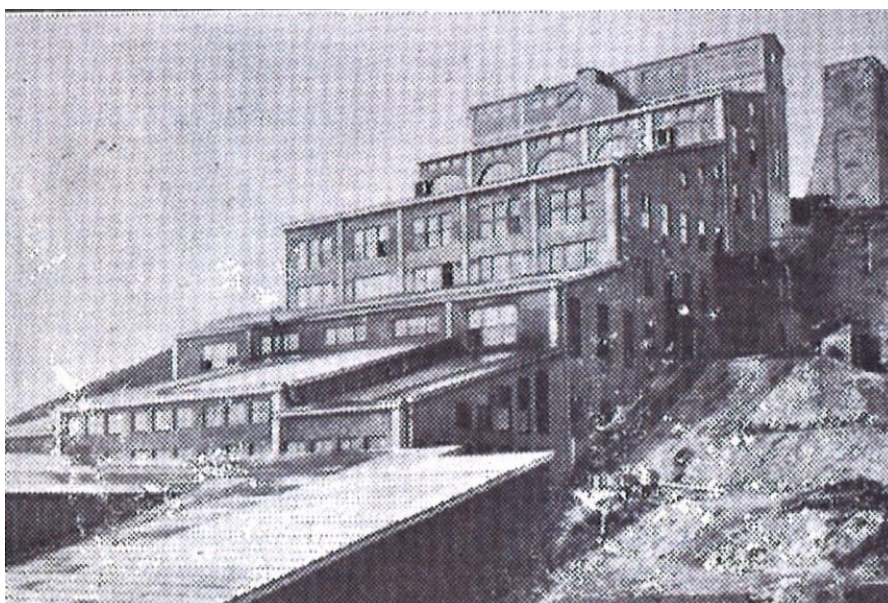
<sup>15</sup> *Pohjois-Karjalan matkailuopas*, 1.



themselves of their reputation of being peripheral by describing the diverse economic life of the region. Economic and cultural modernisation talks about prosperity. The visible modernisation discourse in the guide implies that the assumption of advertisers is that the hypothetical tourist may regard North Karelia as being a poor backcountry. The developing travel industry set for itself the task of changing this image.

A good example is how Outokumpu is introduced in the *North Karelian Travel Guide*: ‘You reach Outokumpu by bus and you will note that there is another kind of richness in North Karelia than forests and rapids.’<sup>16</sup>

In addition to ordinary ‘urban’ sights such as churches, statues and city halls, the *North Karelian Travel Guide* introduces a diverse urban environment. A photograph of the enrichment plant of a copper mine symbolises the city of Outokumpu and an aerial photograph of the industrial area (card factory) in Kaltimo shows the centre of Eno. The symbol of Nurmes is the humpbacked bridge of Mikonsalmi, which was completed in 1929 in the functional style. The aerial photograph of Joensuu city shows sawmills, as well as bridges and churches.<sup>17</sup> The *Sortavala* brochure states that the longest bridge in Finland is in Sortavala.<sup>18</sup> In the photo, the bridge is brightly lit and has been photographed at night. In the interwar years, North Karelia was developing rapidly and travel advertising emphasised this image. In addition to the forestry and paper industry, farming was an important occupation in North Karelia, although its importance was not emphasised in the photographs but in the text.



**Picture 2.** *Pohjois-Karjalan matkailuopas*

(Joensuu: Suomen matkailuyhdistyksen paikallisosasto, 1935), 17.

The National Library of Finland. Digital Collections: <https://www.doria.fi/handle/10024/80847>

<sup>16</sup> *Pohjois-Karjalan matkailuopas*, 20.

<sup>17</sup> *Ibid*, 5, 7, 10.

<sup>18</sup> Vartiainen, *Sortavala Pohjois-Laatokan saaristo, Raja-Karjala ja Valamo*, 2.

The old travel brochures describe the effects of modern industry on nature and changes in the relationship between humans and nature. Advertisers in the 1930s did not hesitate to show the impact of the forest industry in the middle of a photograph of a natural landscape. The *North Karelian Travel Guide* shows Rautavaara, a remote village on the border between North Karelia and North Savonia, as ‘backwoods covered by wide forests and marshes,’ but also mentions that the timber company and sawmill owned two thirds of the region.<sup>19</sup> The picture of Rautavaara shows lumberjacks on a floating log. Another example of the positive or neutral impact of the forest industry on nature is a photograph in the chapter on ‘Sights of North Karelia.’ The picture shows a lake landscape, although in the foreground are signs of a clear-cutting where once was a forest. In this picture of a Karelian forest after modernisation, only the tree stumps remain and logs are seen floating towards the sawmill for further processing.<sup>20</sup>

In general, tourism for commercial purposes, even if it aims to sell an ‘unspoilt wilderness’ or ‘authentic Karelian culture,’ is associated with modernisation. In the brochure *To the Arctic via Karelia*, among the photographs of wild nature are pictures of the Oravi, Joensuu, Kaltimo and Koli canals. The brochures published by the Travel Association of Finland and the Finnish Association of Border Areas advertise the possibility of enjoying modern comforts in the middle of the North Karelian wilderness. In the international brochure *Talking points on Finland*, Koli is introduced by a photograph showing Koli’s Hotel Ylämaja.<sup>21</sup> The hotel is pictured amidst forestry hills and the flag of Finland can be seen blowing in the wind. The flag underlines Koli’s significance not only as a North Karelian sight but also as a symbol of Finnishness.

### Locals and visitors

Pictures of people are important in travel brochures: they show potential visitors or local inhabitants. Visitors are typically pictured admiring some tourist sight, or spending their time fishing, hiking or boating. The cover picture in the *North Karelian Travel Guide* shows a photo of Koli, which is reminiscent of a painting. However, four tourists are seen posing in the middle of the picture as if they had appeared in a classic landscape painting. The pictures of local people show them working, or a situation associated with local folklore. It is possible to find class distinctions in these pictures: the working pictures show farmers and lumberjacks but not, for example, people in the service industry. In contrast, the pictures of visitors with cars, fine clothes and student’s caps are associated with a bourgeois lifestyle.

---

<sup>19</sup> Ibid, 12.

<sup>20</sup> Ibid, 21.

<sup>21</sup> *Talking points on Finland* (s. l.: s. n., [1912–1944]), 28, <https://www.doria.fi/handle/10024/81794> (accessed December 3, 2020).



The pictures of Border Karelia, particularly the eastern village of Ilomantsi, emphasise Orthodox Christianity and the vital tradition of folklore songs and handicrafts, which are depicted as ‘authentic’ Karelian culture. *Karjala XI* shows Karelian women performing dirges (*itkevirsi*)<sup>22</sup> and *To the Arctic Via Karelia* (1932) shows orthodox churches and chapels, graveyards and decorative architecture. According to Harri Siiskonen, in the interwar years, the Karelianist stereotype of Karelian people was used to promote tourism in the region.<sup>23</sup> Photographs and texts show Border Karelian people and culture as exotic others from the perspective of most Finnish people. As Maunu Häyrynen has mentioned, Karelians are simultaneously regarded as being Finnish and non-Finnish.<sup>24</sup> A good example is the introduction to the village of Korpiselkä in the *Sortavala* guide:

*Korpiselän kirkonkylä edustaa oivallisella tavalla raja-karjalaista vaarakylää, mitä näköaloihin tulee. Ne ovat laajoja, yhtenäisyydessään suurpürteisä ja rauhallisia. Samat maisemakuvat uusiutuvat seuraavissakin Tsokin ja Kokkarin vanhoissa runonlaulukylissä, joissa rajakarjalainen väritys alkaa olla huomattavampi. Niinpä Kokkarissa matkailijalle ensikerran esittäytyy tsasouna, rukouskappeli — samanlainen koristeellisempi on sekä Tolvajärvellä että Ägläjärvellä — ja joku aito rajakarjalaistyyppinen rakennus.*<sup>25</sup>

(The village of Korpiselkä is a good example of a Border Karelian village situated in a hilly landscape. The view is wide and peaceful. The landscape is similar to the old rune singers’ villages, where the Border Karelian local colour is more visible. Thus, the visitor will see a *tsasouna*, a village chapel, the first time — there are similar but more decorated churches in Tolvajärvi and Ägläjärvi — and some authentic buildings in the Border Karelian style.)

The phrase ‘Tsasouna, a village chapel’ includes the alienating perspective: Tsasouna is supposed to be an unfamiliar concept to the visitor, and it is therefore necessary to explain it. The distance between the object and the viewer manifests in phrases that express uncertainty. We may be sure that ‘some’ buildings are of authentic Karelian architecture — even if the building’s use is unknown. This kind of exoticising perspective is not visible in the photographs of logs floating in the Koitajoki River in Eno or the Lutheran Church of Tohmajärvi. The travel brochures construct the differences between Border Karelia and North Karelia while they relocate the image of remoteness and periphery in Border Karelia.

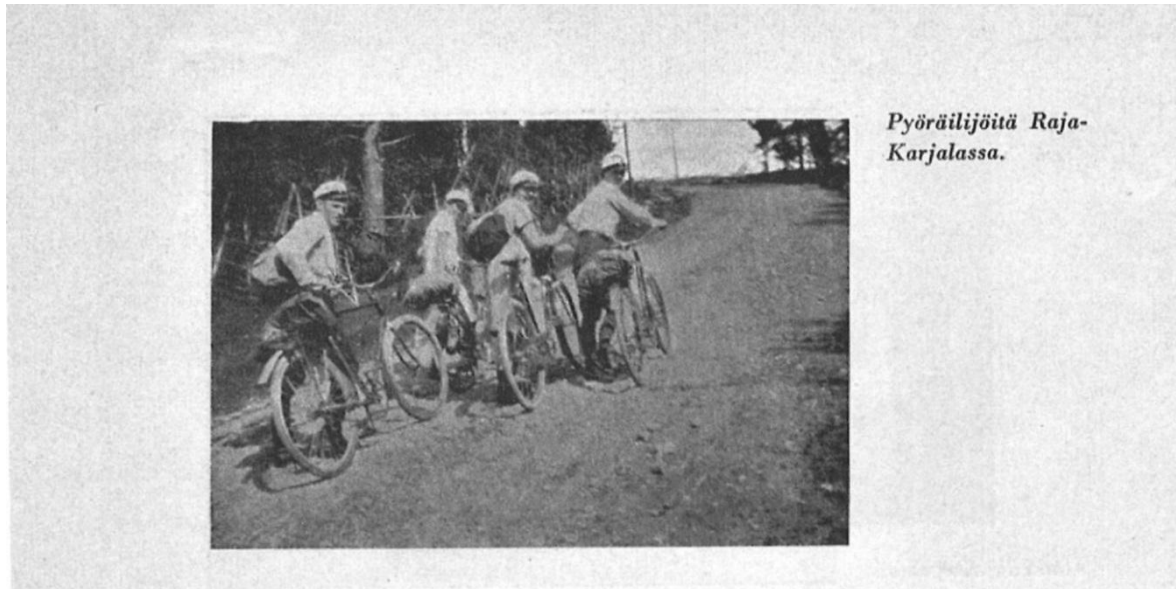
<sup>22</sup> *Karjala*, 146.

<sup>23</sup> Siiskonen, “Matkaoppaiden Karjala maailmansotien välillä,” 127.

<sup>24</sup> Häyrynen, *Kuivettu maa*, 169.

<sup>25</sup> Vartiainen, *Sortavala Pohjois-Laatokan saaristo, Raja-Karjala ja Valamo*, 13.

The brochures also underline the challenges of a journey in Border Karelia. The visitor has to take the trouble of visiting the remote villages of Ilomantsi and Korpiselkä, although their efforts are repaid by the stunning sights and exotic culture. A good example of a tough but rewarding journey is a photograph of young students (wearing their student caps) cycling up a hill. (Picture 3)



**Picture 3.** *Tohvjärvi. Rajakarjalainen matkailunähtävyys ja retkeilyseutu* (Helsinki: Suomen rajaseutuyhdistys, 1912–1944), 4.

The National Library of Finland. Digital Collections: <https://www.doria.fi/handle/10024/8087>

The photograph captures the outdoor lifestyle as a phenomenon of the 1920s and 1930s. A similar feeling is conveyed in the picture from Hautvaara in Suojoki, in which a tiny raft carries a truck and appears to be floating dangerously deep in the water.<sup>26</sup> The pictures of a tough journey contrast the image of the good connections in North Karelia, which are otherwise typical for the brochures. However, both images are also important. The pictures of a tough journey show the unique experience of travelling in Karelia, the most stunning views are not accessible to everyone. This image is supposed to attract adventurers who wants to improve their mental and physical health.

In the brochures, Karelia is depicted as being the genuine heart of Finland, and at the same time, as its other.<sup>27</sup> Karelianness is associated with authenticity and genuine folk culture, which have disappeared in Finland. Ultimately, however, Finnish travel brochures from the 1920s and 1930s imply that the most difficult border to cross was that between Finland and the Soviet Union. The brochures for North Karelia hardly mention what is on the other side of the border.

<sup>26</sup> Ibid, 17.

<sup>27</sup> Häyrynen, *Kuivattu maa*, 169.

### North Karelian Imagery 2020

If we compare the travel brochures from the 1920s and 1930s with the present VisitKarelia, the official tourist website of North Karelia, we would note that the changes in the travel imagery of North Karelia are huge. However, present-day marketing in North Karelia still utilises the approved attractions and images. North Karelia is advertised primarily by means of its nature resorts. (These days, the marshes, which travel advertising had previously rejected, are now understood as being unique nature environments.) The Finnish website states that ‘Koli is the heart of Finnishness’ and ‘Ilomantsi is the most vital Karelianness.’ The English version of the website states: ‘North Karelia is a place where the Finnish national epic, the Kalevala, was created and it continues to be a source of inspiration of many.’ The mental border between Finnish Karelia and Russian Karelia has become easier to cross: VisitKarelia also advertises a number of events and accommodation options on the Russian side of the border. On the website, Karelianness is a combination of nature, city life and old traditions. The photographs depict brightly lit bridges, as well as the attractions in Koli, Karelian food and the aesthetics of Karelian Orthodox Christianity. However, the traditional elements have been given new meanings in the present-day context.

The photographs of the Outokumpu Copper Mine and the old wooden house blocks in Joensuu, Nurmes and Juuka are good examples of a changing urban environment. Outokumpu still brands itself as a ‘unique mining town’ and the mine is the symbol of the town. In the 1930s, the picture of the mine’s enrichment plant tells us about industrialism and growing prosperity. The VisitKarelia website shows the enrichment plant as a part of artwork, light artist Kari Kola’s *Living Mine* (2012–2011). The photographs of wooden house blocks in North Karelian towns convey the image of a nostalgic little town where it is possible for the visitor to capture the atmosphere of the good old days, as well as engage in leisure activities involving culture, food and physical exercise. Pictures of the folklore band *Setakat* on the VisitKarelia website show present-day rune singing. These pictures suggest that a new identity construction process has taken place in the small industrial towns in the post-industrial age. If the photos of factories illustrated the old travel brochures, contemporary travel advertising in North Karelia constructs a positive image by means of depicting diverse cultural life and possibilities of adventure tourism.

Karelian Orthodox Christianity is a visible and established part of the North Karelian brand. After the Second World War, North Karelia adopted the role as a bearer of the Karelian Orthodox tradition. Karelian evacuees took their tradition to the new settlement areas. However, the culture sector and the tourism industry in North Karelia have also recreated Karelian culture and identity in multiple ways. The VisitKarelia website introduces the Monastery of New Valamo in Heinävesi as being the centre of Finnish

Orthodox Religion. However, the site does not make a visible connection between Karelian culture and Orthodox tradition.

On the VisitKarelia website, the word Karelianness is used to characterise the regional identity of the whole of North Karelia. However, Karelianness it is associated with Ilomantsi and Nurmes in particular. The website describes Karelian style house as being among the most important tourist attractions in both municipalities. 'Parppein Pirtti' in Ilomantsi and 'Bomba House' in Nurmes are both copies of old Karelian architecture. However, their relationship to Karelian heritage is different. VisitKarelia characterises Ilomantsi as being an 'authentic Karelian parish' and 'Rune Singer's Village.' The Ilomantsi website emphasises the vital and continuous tradition. In contrast, Nurmes and Bomba House represent 'reborn' Karelian culture. When Nurmes was annexed to Sweden in the 17th century, the Orthodox Karelian inhabitants settled in Russia. Lutherans came to Nurmes from Savo and Kuusamo. Referring to the history of the region, the *North Karelian Travel Guide* describes the revolt by local peasants against the arrendator Simon Affleck (Simo Hurtta) in the 17th century, but not the Orthodox Karelian history of the region.<sup>28</sup> However, since the 1970s, the most popular tourist attraction in Nurmes is the Bomba House, which is a copy of a house built by Jegor Bombin in 1855 in Suojärvi. The Original Bomba House had already been mentioned in the *Karjala XI* travel guide as 'the most extraordinarily decorated building in Suojärvi'.<sup>29</sup> To sum up, the Karelianness on the VisitKarelia website comprises traditional food and recognisable visual images, as well as modernised folklore and knowledge of local history. Karelianness is an image that can be moved from one place to another.

### **Conclusion**

Old travel brochures and the present-day tourist website of VisitKarelia highlight both the similarities and the differences between the depicted regions and, in doing so, present diverse Kareliannesses. In the interwar years, North Karelia was depicted as a borderland that associated tourism with defensive tasks. However, the identity of the borderland is not the only identity. In the brochures, North Karelia is also associated with 'Lake Finland,' as well with photographs and route suggestions. The old brochures underline the cultural border between North Karelia and Border Karelia. Today, Border Karelian Ilomantsi is part of North Karelia, but the difference remains visible: Ilomantsi still has the image of being at the heart of 'authentic' Karelianness.

Even if the Karelianist tradition is important in both past and present-day tourist advertising for North Karelia, they make a difference to this tradition. The brochures from the interwar years depict factories, bridges and canals, as well as Koli, Tolvajärvi and other

---

<sup>28</sup> *Pohjois-Karjalan matkailuopas*, 10.

<sup>29</sup> *Karjala*, 141.

nature resorts. VisitKarelia invites potential visitors to choose their own North Karelia from ice fishing, a Karelian pie workshop and a winery tour at the New Valamo Monastery. As highlighted in the analysis, the Karelianness created by travel brochures is movable, fluid, and changing. It is not fixed to any location in Russian or in Finnish Karelia. Rather, it is a state of mind.

## List of sources

### Primary sources

Jäämerelle Karjalan kautta! — Joensuu : Joensuun kaupungin retkeilylautakunta, [1931]. — [24] s. — The National Library of Finland. Digital Collections. — URL: <https://www.doria.fi/handle/10024/80835>. — (03.12.2020).

Karjala : (Länsi-Karjala lukuunottamatta Viipurin ja Haminan välistä seutua). — Helsinki : Suomen matkailijayhdistys, 1925. — 165 s. — (Matkailijayhdistyksen matkakäsikirja XI).

Matkailu- ja ulkoilureittejä rajaseudulla. — Helsinki : Suomen rajaseutuyhdistys, 1935. — 11 s. — The National Library of Finland. Digital Collections. — URL: <https://www.doria.fi/handle/10024/80841>. — (03.12.2020).

Pohjois-Karjalan matkailuopas. — Joensuu : Suomen matkailuyhdistyksen paikallisosasto, 1935. — 23 s. — The National Library of Finland. Digital Collections. — URL: <https://www.doria.fi/handle/10024/80847>. — (03.12.2020).

“Rajaseudun” matkailunumero. — Helsinki : Suomen rajaseutuyhdistys, 1930. — 132 s.

Rajaseutu-matkailu. — Helsinki : Suomen Rajaseutuyhdistys, [1912–1944]. — 12 s. — The National Library of Finland. Digital Collections. — URL: <https://www.doria.fi/handle/10024/80849>. — (03.12.2020).

Talking points on Finland. — s. l. : s. n., [1912–1944]. — 47 p. — The National Library of Finland. Digital Collections. — URL: <https://www.doria.fi/handle/10024/81794>. — (03.12.2020).

Tolvajärvi: Raja-karjalainen matkailunähtävyys ja retkeilyseutu. — Helsinki : Suomen rajaseutuyhdistys, [1912–1944]. — 12 s. — The National Library of Finland. Digital Collections. — URL: <https://www.doria.fi/handle/10024/80879>. — (03.12.2020).

Vartiainen, E. Sortavala, Pohjois-Laatokan saaristo, Raja-Karjala ja Valamo / E. Vartiainen. — Sortavala : Sortavalan kaupunki, 1932. — 21 s. — The National Library of Finland. Digital Collections. — URL: <https://www.doria.fi/handle/10024/80700>. — (03.12.2020).

VisitKarelia [Электронный ресурс]. — URL: <https://www.visitkarelia.fi/fi>. — (03.12.2020).

**Secondary sources**

Brambilla, C. Exploring the Critical Potential of the Borderscapes Concept / C. Brambilla // *Geopolitics*. — 2015. — Vol. 20, issue 1. — P. 14–34.

Häyrynen, M. Kuvitettu maa. Suomen kansallisen maisemakuvaston rakentuminen / M. Häyrynen. — Helsinki : SKS, 2005. — 220 s.

Ikonen, J. Nuoriso isänmaata kiertämässä : matkailu ja retkeily kasvatuksen palveluksessa 1920- ja 1930-luvuilla Suomessa / J. Ikonen : Pro gradu. — Jyväskylä : University of Jyväskylä, 1998. — 164 s. — URL: <https://jyx.jyu.fi/handle/123456789/12121>. — (16.12.2020).

Newman, D. The Lines That Continue to Separate Us / D. Newman // *Border Poetics De-limited* / Ed. by Johan Schimanski & Stephen Wolfe. — Hannover : Wehrhahn, 2007. — P. 27–57.

Raivo, P. J. Karjalan kasvot. Näkökulmia Karjalan maisemaan / P. J. Raivo // *Karjala: historia, kansa, kulttuuri* / Ed. by P. Nevalainen, H. Sihvo. — Helsinki : SKS, 1998. — S. 11–27.

Siiskonen, H. Matkaoppaiden Karjala maailmansotien välillä / H. Siiskonen // *Kahden Karjalan välillä, kahden Riikin riitamaalla* / Ed. by A. Heikkinen, T. Hämynen & H. Sihvo. — Joensuu : University of Joensuu, 1994. — S. 123–134.

Williams, J. A. Turning to Nature in Germany : Hiking, Nudism, and Conservation 1900–1940. / J. A. Williams. — Stanford : Stanford University Press, 2007. — 354 p.