Lion vs. Eagle
Sovereignty, a Postal Authority, and the Mails
Finland 1890-1918
Kiitos: Jon Iversen, Mikko Nykanen, Dr. Susan Smith
Grand Duchy of Finland

Alexander I adds “Old Finland” to the Grand Duchy
31 December 1811
Finland’s First Adhesives

5 & 10 Kopek Ovals, Issued in 1856

Issued in Russian currency, inscribed in Cyrillic and Latin. Shown here, 5 Kopek, Type I, small pearls, with pen cancelation.
Finnish Postal Authority Seal 1872

Hybrid of the Romanov Eagle with the Lion coat-of-arms
“We hope peace for all people,
We desire good for the whole world,
But first this world must become Russian –
Yes, thoroughly Russian.”

F. Dostoevsky
Russification

- Autocrat, Orthodoxy, Slavism
- Culture, society, administrative
- "stans", "little Russia", Baltics
- Nationalists

Resistance

- Liberal, democratic, European
- Legal, societal, bureaucratic
- Late, solitary
- Constitutionalists
Postal Manifesto
1890

Integrate FPA under Interior Ministry (IM) into Imperial Post-Telegraph Main Administration (PTMA)

IM to replace rates/regulations
IM provide directives on work duties
PTMA to inspect Finland’s post offices
Postmaster General named by Tsar
Command of the Russian language in city post offices
Budget audited by PTMA
Postal Manifesto

Finnish Postal circular announces the postage

In kopeck and the

Ring-type Stamp issue
Governmental Organization
1892

Skeletonized version
Omits 8 Boards and 36 Authorities
Beginning of Russian Control 1889 - 1899

1889 Tri-lingual issues with Russian text for country name and currency – 8 values

1891 Russian language and currency (kopeks & rubles) Ring stamps introduced for mail to Russia

1894 Tri-lingual cancels replace Finnish-Swedish language town and railroad postmarks

These postmarks remained in use until 1918 when Finland’s independence was secured.

13 values from 1 kopek to 7 rubles
Ring-type Stationery
Resistance
Upper: Postal card with Russian text obliterated
Lower: Postal card to the Empire/Moscow with postage due markings and trilingual canceller.
Finland’s Doomsday: Imperial Cabal

Planners:
Tsar Nicholas II
Tutor Pohjedonostov
Minister of War Kuropatkin
Minister of Interior Plehve
Governor Bobrikov
Underground Press

“Fria Ord” most prominent of the underground resistance press printed as a weekly in Stockholm and smuggled into Finland.

This edition reported the city by city signators to the 1900 Great Address and a follow on petition addressed to the Finnish Senate in 1901.
Resistance at the Ready

With the pending ban on the Lion coat of arms stamps, the coat of arms is the central design feature on this envelope mailed in March 1900.
Resistance in Action

With the Lion Coat of Arms stamps now banned both for domestic and international use, the sender has the Coat of Arms and no Imperial designed postage mailed April 1901. Hence the postage due boxed T.
Resistance Moves On

Here both the Coat of Arms stamps and images of the Coat of Arms are banned. The Firm cover with Finland in its return address uses an inverted 20p 1901 temporary issue to obscure the Coat of Arms image on this September 1905 mailing. But it is a reminder.
Resistance Day One

Top cover. Mailed 15 August 1900 immediately after the ban on the international use of the Coat of Arms stamp has the prescribed “= 0” and is postage due (Losen)

Bottom Cover. A last day of use for the Lion Coat of Arms stamp on an envelope with the Lion Coat of Arms, itself a powerful emblem of the struggle of West versus East.
The Mourning Stamp

The Mourning Stamp was commissioned by Wentzel Hagelstam and designed by Alexis Gallen-Kallela specifically as tool for resistance. Proceeds were used for “patriotic causes”. Its use was quickly prohibited, but as this envelope mailed in August 1902 shows the resistance continued. The Hagelstam Firm cover includes the “Grand Duché De Finlande” in its return address as well as five inverted stamps with the Romanov Eagle.
Remembrance Postcard

Postcard memorializes LDU 25p blue abroad 15 August 1900 and LDU of the Lion Coat-of-Arms 14 January 1901 with banners of blue and white and of red and gold.
Resistance Label

This label or “Cinderella” was produced by P. Sidorow and used on a registered cover to England in October 1901. There is no postage on the reverse. This cover required a willing postal accomplice. Image courtesy of Jon Iversen.
A Darker Take on Finland’s Fate.

This label used in place of postage has the image of a Lion pelt to resemble the map of Finland. mailed October 1903.
Two post cards mailed in 1902 each with an obliterated Lion Coat of Arms symbol. The Governor General’s requirement is met. But resistance remains.
Grand Duchy

Three Firm covers each including Grand Duchy in its return address to reflect Finland’s special status.

Storfurstendomet in Swedish

Grand Duchy of Finland in English

Grand Duché de Finlande in French

Suuriruhtinaskunta in Finnish
This envelope incorporates “Suomen Suuriruhtinaskunta” on a map of Finland into its design; here with a Helsinki-St. Petersburg TPO December 1901. There is also a Swedish language version.
Resistance
Firm Covers

Firm covers incorporating Finland, Suomi, or both in their return address.

The bulk of these covers were used within Finland where the country address was redundant or resistant.
Firm Cover use by year

Blue: Covers with Finland, Suomi, or both.
Orange: Covers with Grand-Duchy in any language
The New Conscription Act

The separate Finnish Army was ended. Conscription to serve in the Imperial Army took its place. Resistance to conscription ended this plan. Here remembrance and resistance are combined on these two post cards. At top, a label “Suomen Kaarti” (Finnish Guard)1829-1905” and below an allegorical Finland with her Coat of Arms bids farewell to a Finnish soldier.
Great Strike of 1905 Helsinki

Postcard mailed from Helsinki December 1905
Card prepared by Axel Eliassons Stockholm
False Dawn 1906

The “Maid of Finland” so-called for a resemblance in outline to the map of Finland celebrates the new dawn with a “national flag”. Both card were mailed in 1906 when the Tsar had lifted the ban on images. The colored card mailed from US was likely of US manufacture, The other is a Finnish product.
Resistance celebrated

Two powerful images of resistance. In the first Finland in white and blue holds her book of law while the Romanov Eagle retreats. In the second Finland celebrates with a national banner and the Coat of Arms. Note the reddish blotch (more clearly blood on other versions of the card) and the broken shackles! Also 1906.
Hero or Terrorist

Eugen Schauman

Assasin of Governor Bobrikov is shown on this post card mailed in Finland in 1906.
New Recruits
“Our Brave Boys”

A second phase of the “Period of Oppression” begins. Here a more “militant” resistance theme with a prominent display of blue and white.
A penalty for resistance

Letter to Einar Wikberg, Judge in the Viipuri Court of Appeals imprisoned in Kresty Prison for 3 years
Press Censorship

“Press Ombudsmann” censor markings.

The upper newspaper wrapper from England was examined by censors in Viipuri in 1897.

The lower printed matter (Tryksacker) from Copenhagen has Turku(Abo) censor stamp from 1905 near the end of this type of censorship.
Censors at work

Three censored letters.

Top: A domestic letter with an obliterated lines of writing

Middle: A letter to Switzerland with Tornio trilingual censor tape and personalized Cyrillic censor stamp on the envelope. And the stamp applied to the contents as well.

Bottom: From the same correspondence, this letter has Helsinki trilingual and personalized Cyrillic censor stamp. In this case with a second censor number “135” and “Ransican” (French) penciled in likely reflecting language competency in French. Note also Allied censorship.
Romanov Trecentenary Overprint Essay
First proposed denominated in penni/markka
Essay prepared by Finnish Postal Authority
One of four “Co-runners”
Language Resistance

The Russian language was not part of the Finnish Postal Authorities operations.

Here are examples of typical bilingual products. Top is an official Finnish Post Office envelope mailed in 1915. The lower a Free Letter Card with the seal as illustrated on the earlier 1872 cover.
Trilingual Forms

In 1917 trilingual forms were at last in use in Finland. This Post Address card has several interesting additional elements. It has a mixed franking with the 50p Model 1917 Saarinen Lion Coat-of-Arms and a 40p Romanov Eagle cancelled with a trilingual canceller. The card was mailed on 26 January at Pori in independent Finland. The receiving canceller on 3 May had its Cyrillic removed, 97 days, 490 km, and a Civil War!
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<td>1900</td>
<td>FM</td>
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<td>1905</td>
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- Lion CoA constitutionalists
- Penni Period of Oppression I
- Pressombudsman ends Period of Oppression 2
- Lion returns Autonomy
- Independence
New Shadows

Russification was thwarted by independence. But autonomy was perilous. The upper envelope mailed on 3 August 1918 has a Finnish trilingual censor stamp. German replaces Russian. On the lower post card mailed the same month, the freedom fighters see a new shadow on their future, the Pickelhaube of Imperial Germany.

“When a German shadow appeared in Finnish minds”
International Recognition

Two unused post cards celebrating the 1912 Stockholm Olympic Games. Finland was allowed a national team by the IOC. Russia would not allow a Finnish national flag. Note the handling of the flag in the upper card and the absence of a flag at the head of the team on the lower card.
Supporting Active Resistance