Images of tourism brochures and guidebooks are apparently realistic and yet inherently selective depictions of tourism landscapes. They do not only depict material reality, but also capture culture- and time-specific meanings attached to tourism destinations and their real and imagined inhabitants. In doing so, tourism images contribute to the daily reproduction of a world that consists of mutually exclusive territories at various geographical scales. This study explores the relationship between tourism images and nation-building in Finland. It uses examples and case studies to discuss the role of those images in the reproduction of Finnish national identity and the consolidation of the symbolic foundation of Finnish nation-state. The study reveals a variety of visual means which have been used to adjust national symbols and landscape elements to suit changing social, political, and cultural circumstances. National symbols have remained persistent in Finnish tourism imagery, indicating their powerful role in shaping understanding of the world and Finland’s place within it.
Tourism, Geography and Nation-Building
The Identity-Political Role of Finnish Tourism Images

SALLA JOKELA

ACADEMIC DISSERTATION
To be presented, with the permission of the Faculty of Science of the University of Helsinki, for public examination in the Auditorium XII of the Main Building of the University of Helsinki on February 22nd, 2014 at 10 o’clock.

DEPARTMENT OF GEO SCIENCES AND GEOGRAPHY A 24 / HELSINKI 2014
Abstract

This dissertation examines the role of tourism images in the construction of Finnish national identity. The study is informed by the notion that identity construction manifests itself in places and landscapes which are invested with meanings through mundane practices and representations. Tourism images are apparently realistic and yet inherently selective depictions of tourist landscapes. Therefore, they play an important role in the selective (re)production and promotion of distinctive cultural and socio-spatial identities and the simultaneous exclusion of alternative identity conceptualizations.

The dissertation positions itself at the intersection of critical political geography, tourism studies, and visual culture. It also draws upon the study of nationalism to acknowledge that identity construction takes place at various and interconnected geographical scales. The geographical scale of the research engages Finland and its capital city Helsinki – a gateway to the country and a showcase of Finnishness.

The examined images were collected from Finnish tourism brochures and guidebooks used in “official” tourism promotion between 1852 and 2011. The focus is on the transitional periods that followed Finland’s Civil War and World War II (the 1920s and 1950s) and on the depictions of specific themes (e.g. churches) over longer periods of time. The analysis of the images consisted of two complementary phases: content analysis and interpretative analysis, which focused on the culture- and time-specific meanings of the images.

The study shows that the ephemeral nature of tourism images has made them powerful communication tools, which have enabled tourism promoters to flexibly adjust national symbols to suit changing social, political, and cultural circumstances. This adjustment has been done through various visual means. Landscape elements have been emphasized and dissipated on the basis of how well they answered hegemonic conceptions about Finnish identity at different times. Framing and accompanying texts have enabled the selective depiction of the skyline of Helsinki and the creation of symbolic boundaries between “East” and “West.” Tourism images have also contributed to the discursive practices through which the Finnish national elite has spatialized and disseminated its ideas about the Finnish nation-state. The study shows a shift from images with national romantic undertones towards more subtle and subliminal consumer-oriented messages. National symbols have remained persistent in Finnish tourism imagery, indicating their powerful role in shaping the common-sense understanding of the world and Finland’s place within it.
Tiivistelmä

Tämä väitöskirja tarkastelee matkailukuvien roolia suomalaisen kansallisen identiteetin rakentumisessa. Se pohjautuu ajatuksen, että identiteetin rakentuminen ilmenee paikoissa ja maisemissa, joihin liitetään merkityksiä arkisten käytäntöjen ja representaatioiden kautta. Matkailukuvat ovat näennäisen realistisia, mutta luonnostaan valikoivia kuvauksia matkailumaisemisesta. Siksi niillä on tärkeä rooli kulttuuristen ja sosiospatiaalisten identiteettien valikoivassa tuotannossa ja uusintamisessa sekä vaihtoehtoisten identiteettikäsitysten torjumisessa.

Tutkimus sijoittuu kriittisen poliittisen maantieteen, matkailututkimuksen ja visuaalisen kulttuurintutkimuksen risteyskohtaan. Se ammentaa myös nationalismintutkimuksesta, jonka mukaan identiteetit rakentuvat useilla toisiinsa nivoutuvilla mittakaavatasoilla. Tutkimuksen tarkastelumittakaava ulottuu Suomesta Helsinkiin, joka on toiminut sekä porttina Suomeen että suomalaisuuden näyteikkunanä.


Acknowledgements

Writing this Ph.D. required a lot of independent work. One of the most important lessons I learned was that working independently does not mean working alone. I have been privileged to collaborate with experts and share my thoughts with many wonderful people, who have helped me to stay motivated, process my ideas and sharpen my argumentation.

I am grateful to my supervisors for their valuable comments and practical guidance. Professor Pauliina Raento has helped me to understand the processes of academic writing and publishing. Without her it would have been much more difficult for me to “finish my thoughts” and to tell which “cans of worms” are best left unopened. I also thank her for the opportunity to test my ideas in practice as a tour guide during a memorable field trip to Cuba in 2009. Professor Tommi Inkinen has offered me a perfect balance of criticism and encouragement during the finalization stage of my dissertation. His practical advice spurred me towards the completion of this thesis.

I would like to thank the preliminary examiners of my thesis, Professor Daniel Knudsen and Professor Pauline von Bonsdorff, for their valuable comments and suggestions, which helped me to improve my manuscript. I will certainly carry their remarks forward into my future work.

I am indebted to Professor John Westerholm and Professor Harry Schulman, who encouraged me to engage in the study of tourism images and supported my work at the Department of Geosciences and Geography at the University of Helsinki. The Finnish University Network for Tourism Studies has been an important source of inspiration for me. My gratitude goes especially to Professor Antti Honkanen, Professor Petri Raivo, Ulla Ritola-Pesonen, and Anne Loikkalanen for their down-to-earth support and encouragement. I would also like to thank Senior Lecturer Katarina Kosonen and Professor Taneli Eskola for helping me to formulate my original research design and to contextualize my dissertation within relevant scholarly discussions in the early stages.

Conference trips, informal meetings, and discussions with insightful researchers from different disciplines have been the highlights of my Ph.D. project. I owe thanks to Professor Emeritus Arvo Peltonen, Professor Laura Kolbe, Professor Mari Vaattovaara, Professor Raija Komppula, University Lecturer Leila Koivunen, University Lecturer Anna-Kaisa Kuusisto-Arponen, Senior Lecturer Karen Till, M.Sc. Suvi Talja, M.A. Katri Lento, M.Sc. Juulia Rääkkönen, Dr. Tuomo Hiippala, and the people of the Finnish Society for Urban Studies.


The collection and handling of my research data would not have been possible without the kind help of Taru Telén and Eeva-Liisa Leppänen from the National Library of Finland and the staff of the Helsinki City Archives, National
Archives of Finland, and Helsinki City Museum. I am also grateful to Lisa Muszynski from the University of Helsinki Language Centre and Dr. Gareth Rice for their skilled language revisions and constructive feedback. My dissertation was part of an Academy of Finland funded project “Landscape, Icons, and Images” (1123561). It has also been funded by the Kone Foundation and the City of Helsinki, both of which I thank warmly.

I am lucky to have many close friends, who have been there for me during good and bad times and helped me to keep a sense of perspective throughout my Ph.D. studies. Special thanks to Jenni Kuokka for helping me to lay out this dissertation and for engaging me in countless inspiring conversations. I also owe thanks to M.Soc.Sc. Anna Kuokkanen and M.Soc.Sc. Mervi Issakainen for sharing with me the moments of excitement and uncertainty that come with a Ph.D. project – and life in general.

I am grateful for the practical help and unconditional support I have got from my parents, relatives, and my husband’s family. I would not have started to study tourism if I had not been fascinated by the topic. I thank my parents for giving me the opportunity to see many amazing places. My dad has nurtured my interest in the history of tourism in our many excursions to the national landscape of Aavasaksa. My mom and Tuomo have taught me to appreciate the historical layers of cultural landscapes. I also want to thank Silja Nikula for her comments on the manuscript of my dissertation, Ari Nikula for our discussions about the essence of science, and Helena Ahti and Emiel Nikula for making my family’s life easier in so many ways.

Finally, I would like to thank Hannu Linkola for his incredible flexibility in his many roles as my colleague, friend, and husband. I am deeply grateful for his collegial help, support, and patience. Our conversations have been spiced up with an absurd sense of humor, which has softened many tough moments. My gratitude also goes to our daughter Inka, who has put up with both her parents working on their dissertations at the same time. Hannu and Inka have made my life more meaningful than I could have ever anticipated.

In Kannelmäki, Helsinki on January 3, 2014
Contents

Abstract .......................................................................................................................... 3
Abstract in Finnish ........................................................................................................ 5
Acknowledgements ........................................................................................................ 6
List of original publications ......................................................................................... 10

1 Introduction ............................................................................................................. 11
  1.1 Background and research approach ................................................................. 12
  1.2 Research questions and structure .................................................................. 13

2 Theoretical foundation and key concepts .............................................................. 16
  2.1 Contextualizing tourism images within critical political geography ........... 17
  2.2 Understanding the relationship between tourism images and power .......... 18
  2.3 Tourism images, territoriality and the construction of national identities ... 20
  2.4 A visual cultural approach to tourism images ............................................... 23
  2.5 Tourism images as instruments of mythical speech ........................................ 26

3 Data and methods .................................................................................................... 30
  3.1 Data .................................................................................................................. 30
  3.2 Content analysis ............................................................................................... 33
  3.3 Interpretative analysis ....................................................................................... 35

4 Summary of the results ............................................................................................ 38
  4.1 Conceptions of Finnishness in tourism images ............................................. 38
  4.2 Adapting tourism images to changing circumstances .............................. 40
  4.3 Connecting notions of Finnishness to the everyday practices and discourses of people ............................................................................................................. 42
  4.4 Tourism images and the (re)production of nationalism in Finland ............ 43

5 Conclusions ............................................................................................................. 46

References ................................................................................................................... 48

Original publications (I–V) ........................................................................................ 53
List of original publications

This thesis is based on the following publications:


Author’s contribution

In paper II, I was responsible for writing the sections about images of tourism brochures and landscape photographs. Pauliina Raento wrote the sections about postage stamps and postcards. The practical tips boxes and the sections concerning the Internet and ethical issues were co-written.

Paper III was co-authored with Hannu Linkola. The analysis was conducted by both authors, and the structure and content of the paper were jointly designed. The paper was written by me.
1 INTRODUCTION

On June 4 in 2007, *Helsingin Sanomat*, the leading Finnish newspaper, reported that Helsinki will be sold with “Russian exoticism” to foreign tourists (Huhtanen 2007). The new city brand portrayed Helsinki as “a meeting point between East and West, sort of like the Istanbul of the North.” The news cited Kari Halonen, the marketing manager of the City of Helsinki, who reasoned that Helsinki’s past in the sphere of influence of Russia and the Soviet Union should be emphasized in tourism marketing, because it is “that exotic feature that makes tourists come here.”

The news generated discussion in the “Letters to the Editor” section of the newspaper. One commentator maintained that “Helsinki is not St. Petersburg or Istanbul” (Yrjölä 2007). According to her, the city should not construct its identity on the basis of comparisons and outside expectations. Instead, it should “proudly be itself, with its own weaknesses and strengths.” Another commentator echoed this sentiment by claiming that “Helsinki should not be sold with an eastern brand,” because “the Russian influence in our city is so insignificant when compared with the whole that labeling the whole city as ‘Russian’ is falsehood” (Seppinen 2007).

This example shows that while tourism marketing materials are a seemingly trivial part of people’s everyday life, the production of tourism brands and representations evokes strong feelings. The reactions of the readers of *Helsingin Sanomat* demonstrate that tourism branding is not just about leisure; it is about issues of identity that extend well beyond the leisurely spaces of tourism. Questions of who people are, what kind of places they live in, and how they relate to others form the backbone of tourism promotion. Answering these questions helps actors in the field of tourism make destinations recognizable and add value to tourism products. Governments, private enterprises, policymakers, and other stakeholders within the tourism sector draw on place and regional identities to construct meaning out of the destinations that they intend to sell. Disputes over appropriate ways of representing tourism destinations reveal the political nature of representation that may otherwise remain hidden.

Uncovering the politics of tourism images informs this Ph.D. dissertation. It draws upon and contributes to discussions about the relationship between popular representations, power, and identity construction in Finland. Studying this relationship is important, because everyday representations influence people’s imagination and perception about places, as well as having concrete outcomes through the practices of tourism, planning, and use of space.
1.1 Background and research approach

Many researchers have noted that tourism plays an important role in nation-building (e.g. Shaffer 2001; Pretes 2003; Palmer 2005). Despite this, the role of tourism images in the construction of Finnish national identity has not been systematically studied. This Ph.D. offers a contribution to political geography and tourism studies by shedding light on the mechanisms through which tourism images have participated in the (re)construction of Finnishness. It is part of a broader trend within tourism geography which does not conceptualize tourism as an opposite of everyday life, but rather as constitutive of it. I maintain that tourism is a means of making some sense of the world and defining one’s place in it and can, therefore, offer valuable insights into the spatial aspects of identity-formation at various geographical scales. In this context, tourism images are interesting: they are idealized depictions of destinations’ landscapes, which elucidate the connection between people and their surroundings. I am particularly interested in how people use landscape features to support ideas about who they are, and how they project ideas about themselves into the world in which they live.

This study positions itself at the intersection of critical political geography, tourism studies, and visual culture. It draws upon the insights provided by political geographers to examine the social and political underpinnings of geographical knowledge mediated by Finnish tourism images. This approach directed my attention to the broader discourses in which tourism images have gained their meanings, and helped me to examine the ways in which the images have constructed, reaffirmed, and challenged conceptions about Finnishness in and through different time periods.

My examination is informed by what some have called the “textual” or “discursive” turn, which has led geographers to interpret the meanings embedded in cultural products and representations in particular ways (Dodds & Sidaway 1994; Raento et al. 2004; Paasi 2005: 668–669). I address the selective ways in which the signs and symbols of landscapes have been used to narrate stories about Finnishness (cf. Barthes 1977). Within this framework, my focus is on the special characteristics of images. Drawing upon the classification of W. J. T. Mitchell (1986: 10), I am primarily concerned with “graphic images” which include pictures, statues and designs. These material objects have symbolic meanings, which are constantly (re)produced through social and cultural practices and discourses. I also pay attention to the functions of these images; their influence on people is not only based on their “essential character,” but also on the beliefs that guide their use and interpretation (Mitchell 1986: 69).

The powerful role of photographs and realistic drawings in tourism brochures largely stems from a belief that these representations resemble the landscapes they depict (see Mitchell 1994: 357). Tourism images imply that the depicted things are there to be encountered and experienced first-hand, making many tourist sites appear as “photographs materialised in three-dimensional form” (Osborne 2000: 79).

I draw upon studies of visual culture, which examine “the social construction of the visual field,” and “the visual construction of the social field” (Mitchell 2005: 345). One strength of this approach is its ability to show that visual images should be taken seriously, because they are omnipresent in people’s everyday lives, and, thereby, have a key role in the development of “geographical imaginations” (Said 1979; Ó Tuathail 1996; Schwartz & Ryan 2003).

I follow the example of previous studies on the use of images as part of tourism practices and tourism promotion. These studies have focused
on the exploitation of local and minority cultures (Saarinen 1999, 2001; Hunter 2008); connections between tourism images and tourists’ motivations (Markwick 2001); the exploitation of the past in tourism (Palmer 2005); and the use of tourist sites and tourism images in the construction of national identities (Light 2001; Pretes 2003; Raento 2009). In addition, the tourist brochures advertising the city of Helsinki have been studied from a linguistic perspective, focusing on the interaction of language and images – a field of research known as multimodal analysis (Hiippala 2012, 2013).

The increased interest in tourism is connected to a wider shift within geography and the social sciences about the study of macro-politics towards a greater recognition of the politics of the everyday. Within this framework, tourism is comparable to the mundane practices and representations that shape people’s conceptions of the world and it also reminds them of their national and regional identities on a daily basis (Bilig 1995; Jones & Merriman 2009; Johnson & Coleman 2012). Tourism images do not constitute meanings in isolation but as part of networks of discursive practices that manifest themselves in different types of imageries. These include landscape paintings, images of landscape picture books and school books (see Lukkarinen & Waenerberg 2004; Häyrynen 2005, 2008; Lintonen 2011; Linkola 2013; Vallius 2013).

1.2 Research questions and structure

Tourist sites and their visual representations support and inform the modern system of nation-states. They illustrate narratives about the history and traditions of a nation, and make people aware of nationally important “sacred” places (Hobsbawm 1983; Smith 1991; Billig 1995). They also tie people into “imagined communities” which form the basis of a world that consists of spatially bounded and mutually exclusive national territories (Anderson 1991). I focus on tourism images of Helsinki, because as the capital city of Finland it is the nationally important tourism destination and the showcase of Finnish national identity. Tourism images have affected the meanings associated with the landscape of Helsinki by emphasizing or dissipating landscape elements on the basis of how well they have answered the prevailing conceptions about Finnish identity at different times. The images have also strengthened these conceptions by tying them to the conceptions and everyday practices of tourists. The time frame of the study extends from the publication of the first tourism image of Helsinki in 1852 until the present day. While my study focuses on Helsinki, I also touch upon other important Finnish tourism destinations, such as the Lake District and Lapland, which have also played important roles in the construction of Finnishness.

I will answer the following research questions:

1. How have different, and partly competing, conceptualizations of Finnishness manifested themselves in tourism images?
2. What are the visual means through which Finnish tourism images have been adapted to changing (geo)political, social, and cultural circumstances?
3. What kind of visual means have been used in order to tie Finnish tourism images to the everyday practices and discourses of people?
4. How have Finnish tourism images been connected to the mechanisms through which nationalism has been reproduced in Finnish society?

This dissertation consists of five papers that are ordered according to contentual emphasis and geographical scale. The first two papers introduce the theoretical context and the processes of data collection which inform the empirical studies in the last three papers. Simultaneously, the geographical focus of the research shifts from Finland to Helsinki and to the neighborhoods within Helsinki, elucidating the interscalar relations involved in the construction of Finnishness through tourism. The key points of the papers and their contributions to the dissertation are summarized below:


The paper provides a theoretical introduction to the relationship between tourism, visual images, and nationalism in Finland from the end of the nineteenth century until the present day. It is based on a literature review and empirical examples drawn from Finnish tourism brochures and guidebooks. The paper contributes to answering the first two research questions. It shows that the content and stylistic devices of tourism images have reflected hegemonic conceptions about Finnishness and that they have been adapted quickly to changes in (geo)political power relations and social and cultural circumstances. It also discusses the visual means through which Finnish tourism images have been connected to the consciousness and practices of people (question 3). Finally, the paper elucidates the role of tourism images in the mechanisms through which nationalism has been reproduced in and through Finland (question 4).


This book chapter examines the collection of data used in papers III and IV. The section on “tourism brochures” addresses the interplay between research questions and the data collection process for paper IV. The section on “landscape photographs” focuses on the challenges of the archival work related to paper III. These two sections offer background information about the ways in which carefully selected data helped me to focus on those images that had the greatest potential to reveal the connection between tourism images and the construction of Finnishness.


This paper focuses on the interconnectedness of the landscape photographs published in Finnish tourist guides and geography school books during the 1920s. It addresses all four research questions. First, it shows that in the aftermath of Finnish Civil War (1918), the photographs were adjusted to the conceptions of Finnishness defined to suit the victorious, right-wing “Whites” as opposed to the alternative conceptions held by the defeated left-wing “Reds” (questions 1
Second, the paper shows that the nearly identical contents of the examined imageries of tourist guides and geography school books helped their producers to propagate their ideas about the Finnish nation-state. The consistency of the messages concealed the selectivity of the representations and at the same time encouraged Finns to observe their surroundings in relation to a coherent nationalistic discourse (question 3). Third, the paper reveals that the photographs reinforced and spatialized ideas about Finnish nation-state and, simultaneously, connected Finnishness to an idea of a distinctive state represented by leading Finnish academics, who operated in the ‘core’ of the nation and symbolically controlled the entire national territory through their actions (question 4).


This paper is based on a data-driven study of the tourism brochure images of Helsinki published in the 1950s and early 1960s. It examines the special status of Helsinki as the “facade” of Finland during the transitional period which followed World War II. The paper shows how ideas of Finnishness were constructed and matched to the prevailing (geo)political circumstances by the means of tourism images (questions 1 & 2). It also discusses the ways in which the content and stylistic devices of the images constructed subject positions for tourists and, thereby, harnessed international tourism practices for the construction of a particular national consciousness (questions 3 & 4).


This paper examines the churches of Helsinki as tourist sights that are used as identity-political tools at various scales that range from the national to the individual. It continues the discussion started in paper IV by focusing on the ways in which images of churches reflected Helsinki’s identity as the capital of Finland and supported hegemonic ideas about Finland’s geopolitical and cultural orientation (question 1). The paper shows how different forms of visualization fluctuated according to the political, cultural, and social circumstances (question 2). It also draws on theoretical insights provided by scholars within tourism studies in order to address the ways in which images of churches have steered tourists’ experiences and ordered the tourism landscape of Helsinki. The paper suggests that the abundance and richness of the images have made them powerful tools in the everyday reproduction of nationalism and ensured that visitors to Helsinki have become aware of the key aspects of Finnish culture and history (questions 3 & 4).
This dissertation builds on earlier studies of visual aspects of tourism. Interest in the relationship between visual culture and tourism has increased considerably during the past decades (e.g. Albers & James 1988; Urry 2002; Jenkins 2003). To a large extent, this interest has stemmed from the rise of “visual culture” as an academic field of study in and of itself. Questions of power link visual culture to the field of political geography. While political geography focuses on “the themes of borders and orders, power, and resistance” (Agnew et al. 2003: 2), visual culture studies “the entities that come into being at the points of intersection of visibility and social power” (Mirzoeff 2002: 10).

Visual culture has provided theoretical and methodological insights for tourism researchers (e.g. Selwyn 1996; Crang 1999; Gilhespy & Harris 2010). As David Crouch and Nina Lübbren (2003: 3) point out, the field of visual culture “lends itself particularly well to the illumination of certain touristic practices,” which include “the visual objects of tourism” and “the larger network of links among objects and practices, expectations and the experience of real sites, ideologies and personal interventions.” Tourism researchers have, therefore, devoted considerable attention to visual tourism practices (Adler 1989; Urry 2002; Haldrup & Larsen 2003; Jenkins 2003) and visual representations, which are used in travel guidebooks (Bhattacharyya 1997), tourism brochures (Dilley 1986; Pritchard & Morgan 2001), television programs (Fürsich 2002), maps (Del Casino & Hanna 2000), and picture postcards (Markwick 2001; Milman 2011).

The convergence between the study of tourism and visual culture is connected to the “cultural turn,” which refers to social scientific debates and developments that have eroded traditional disciplinary boundaries and directed researchers’ attention to issues such as cultural meanings, ideologies, representations, identities, and power (see e.g. Daniels & Cosgrove 1993: 57; Barnett 1998: 380; Aitchison et al. 2000; Hall & Page 2002: 7). Researchers of visual culture and tourism come from various disciplinary backgrounds and draw on multiple theoretical discussions. One important strand in these discussions is the view that power relations are embedded in culturally constructed “scopic regimes” and “ways of seeing,” which manifest themselves in landscapes and visual images (Cosgrove 1998; Urry 2002; Mitchell 2005; Rose 2007: 2). For example, researchers in tourism have examined the selective construction and promotion of destination landscapes that “reaffirm long-standing patterns of social power and inequality and thus influence whose histories and identities are remembered and forgotten” (Alderman & Modlin 2008: 265).

The following sections examine tourism images through the twin lenses of critical political geography and visual culture. These approaches direct attention to the spatiality and power of the visual in the field of tourism. Following Crouch and Lübbren (2003: 6), they highlight that tourism “is visually represented as significantly physical, involving space, visiting particular ‘concrete’ places” and, simultaneously, as constitutive of “ideas and desires of the experience of tourism, and of particular imagined places.” At first, I contextualize the tourism images within critical political geography in order to highlight the mechanisms through which they are connected to the social construction of space and power. Then I focus on the role of tourism images in the construction of national identities. Finally,
I examine the ways in which tourism images make meanings by drawing on those areas of visual culture and semiotic theory which are most relevant to my study. Together, these approaches lay the theoretical foundation for the study of tourism images and the (re)production of nationalism in Finland.

2.1 Contextualizing tourism images within critical political geography

Tourism is an inherently spatial phenomenon (Hall & Page 2002). Tourism images mediate ideas about places, and contribute to the social construction of space and spatial identities. Geographers have been interested in the spatial dimensions of identity formation especially since the emergence of “critical political geography” from the 1980s onwards. As a result of critical approaches, this development has been connected to the broadening of the definition of “politics,” which geographers have adopted from social and political theory (Painter 2008: 61). As John Agnew and Luca Muscarà (2012: 1) point out, the object of study of political geography has shifted from “how politics is informed by geography” to “how geography is informed by politics.” Politics has come to refer not only to the exercise of power by state actors, but also to the discourses, practices, and representations through which struggles over meaning and identity are played out (Billig 1995; Cox et al. 2008). Subsequently, geographers have dedicated much of their research effort to the study of issues like political movements, identity and memory politics, critical geopolitics, and politics of the body (e.g. Dwyer 2000; Dodds 2005; Till 2005; Kallio 2007).

From the perspective of critical political geography, tourism images always involve “abstraction, interpretation and representation” (cf. Campbell 2007: 379). They do not portray the world “as it is,” but are rather selective depictions that make statements about the world (see Pritchard & Morgan 2001; Saarinen 2001; Mitchell 2005). In doing so, tourism images reflect people’s geographical imagination and contribute to the making of “imaginative geographies,” which refer to generally held ideas about particular places and regions (Said 1979; Anderson & Gale 1992; Ó Tuathail 1996; Morgan & Pritchard 1998; Saarinen 2001: 39; Schwartz & Ryan 2003).

Imaginative geographies and their concrete political and spatial consequences have been among the chief interests of “critical geopolitics,” which examines the “cultural mythologies of the state” and the constitution of states “by their performances in relation to an outside against which they define themselves” (Ó Tuathail & Dalby 1998: 4). Many geographers and other social scientists have drawn on these approaches to make sense of conceptualizations of “us” and “them” in popular texts and representations and contributed to a research tradition known as “popular geopolitics” (e.g. Dodds 2005; Dittmer 2007). Tourism images are good illustrations of the workings of popular geopolitics, not least because they construct and mediate ideas about the role of countries and nations as parts of a larger world system. For example, Duncan Light (2001) shows that Romania has used tourism promotion as a means of reinforcing post-socialist identities, which help Romanians to perceive the country as part of Western Europe. Similarly Derek Bryce (2007: 184) demonstrates how an “Orientalist” discourse operates through British tourism representations of Egypt and Turkey, distinguishing “western modernity” from “Eastern mystery.”

In addition to reflecting and reinforcing ideas about world politics and international relations, tourism and tourism images contribute to the formation of imaginative geographies and
spatial identities at national (Pretes 2003; Palmer 2005), regional (Pritchard & Morgan 2001), and local (De Bres & Davis 2001) scales. These scales are interconnected in many ways (see Herb & Kaplan 1999; Johnson & Coleman 2012). For example, nationally important sites often promote international values and contextualize nations within desirable geopolitical reference groups (Light 2001). Furthermore, as Annette Pritchard and Nigel Morgan (2001) show, the construction of regions as “imagined tourism spaces” is often best understood as part of wider nation-building endeavors and the corresponding differentiation of regions within the country (cf. Johnson & Coleman 2012; Lehtola 1997). Finally, the architecture of capital cities usually embodies and showcases national values and achievements, thus offering tourists an opportunity to engage with elements of national identities at the local level (van der Wusten 2000).

Regardless of scale, studies on the relationship between tourism and identity formation start off from an understanding that people construct their identities through interactions with their surroundings (Casey 2001; Tilley 2006; Anderson 2010: 40–41). On the one hand, surroundings contribute to people’s sense of who they are, resulting in the formation of place and regional, national, and international/geopolitical identities (Paasi 1986, 1996). On the other hand, the customs, practices, and ideas associated with cultural identities influence the identities of those places and regions – that is, commonly held images based on the characteristics that distinguish places and regions from other places and regions (Lynch 1960; Paasi 1986, 1996).

Because of the spatial nature of identity construction, struggles over identities often manifest themselves in landscapes and places, which are not only material but also meaningful, “lived” entities (Knudsen et al. 2012). These struggles are expressions of identity politics, which refer to the creation and promotion of distinctive cultural and socio-spatial identities and the simultaneous exclusion or disapproval of alternative identity conceptualizations (Bondi 1993; Huxley 2008: 127–128; Dittmer 2010: 73). There is a large body of geographical literature on landscapes and “namescapes” as arenas of identity politics and commemoration (e.g. DeLyser 1999; Dwyer 2000; Kearns & Berg 2002; Till 2005). These studies have been concerned with “who has the power to define the meanings that are to be read into and out of the landscape” (Mitchell 2008: 43; see also Azaryahu 2012: 388). Tourism promotion plays a significant role in the mechanisms and processes through which landscapes are invested with meanings. In order to understand the political nature of the visual images used in tourism promotion, I will now turn to the relationship between tourism images and power.

### 2.2 Understanding the relationship between tourism images and power

Discussions on the relationship between power and identity within political geography have been heavily influenced by poststructuralist approaches, particularly by theorization about the interconnectedness of power and knowledge. According to Michel Foucault (1980), “power/knowledge” manifests itself in so called “régimes of truth,” which make some beliefs and understandings appear as more “correct” than others. In his own words, “[e]ach society has its régime of truth, its ‘general politics’ of truth: that is the types of discourse which it accepts and makes function as true” (Foucault 1980: 131). Following Foucault’s reasoning, tourism images are comparable to other texts and cultural products. They are sites through which discourses – “ways of talking and thinking about a subject” (Dittmer 2010: 10) – operate...
and through which individuals and groups make claims about reality in order promote their own meanings and identity conceptualizations as the generally accepted “truth” (Hollinshead 1999).

Foucault’s ideas about power resemble the ideas of Antonio Gramsci (1971), who maintains that the dominant position of a ruling class is not based only on coercion, but also on more subtle means of power. Gramsci’s famous notion is that dominant groups can achieve “hegemony” by persuading subordinate groups to voluntarily give their consent to its own ideology and goals. In Gramsci’s (1971: 12) own words, hegemony refers to “the ‘spontaneous’ consent given by the great masses of the population to the general direction imposed on social life by the dominant fundamental group.” It differs from “direct domination” which “legally’ enforces discipline on those groups who do not ‘consent’” (Gramsci 1971: 12).

Both Gramsci and Foucault examine techniques of persuasion. Their views, however, differ in that for Gramsci persuasion is based on misrepresentations of “reality” which make a subordinate group view “its interests as coinciding with those of the elites,” whereas Foucault maintains that all representations are essentially power-laden and selective (Dittmer 2010: 30; see also Olssen 1999: 89–92). Foucault’s understanding of representations corresponds with that of Mitchell’s (1986: 92–94), the renowned visual culture researcher, who claims that images are inherently imperfect and that these imperfections should be considered when working with images. Despite these differences, both Gramsci and Foucault have provided important insights into the mechanisms through which power is exercised in the field of tourism and their ideas are often considered complementary to one other rather than mutually exclusive (see e.g. Morgan & Pritchard 1998; Ateljevic 2000; Ateljevic & Doorne 2002).

In the context of the study of tourism images, one of the most significant legacies of Foucault is the understanding that power is fluid and embedded in everyday practices and representations. This notion directs attention to the partiality of tourism images and supports examinations on “how the representations of tourism so frequently essentialise and historicise the subjects of tourism” (Hollinshead 1999: 10). The ideas of Gramsci, on the other hand, have led researchers to examine the production and consumption of tourism images as processes of negotiation in which producers of images gain knowledge about their audiences’ needs in order to “convince them that a particular scheme of imagery is worthy of [further] consideration” (Ateljevic & Doorne 2002: 651; see also Ateljevic 2000). The perspectives offered by Foucault and Gramsci also justify the need to study tourism images, because they highlight that power is exercised and reproduced through subtle everyday practices.

However, as John Allen (2003: 179) remarks, “to say that we are all more or less immersed in arrangements of power does not mean that it is ever present or that the durable architecture of power is all around us waiting to up us in our place.” According to him, power is exercised and experienced in the geographical confines of specific “modalities,” which include inter alia domination, authority, seduction, coercion, and manipulation (Allen 2003). These modalities operate differently in terms of proximity and reach. For example, coercion is characterized by relations of proximity because it is based on the threat of force that is effective only on the condition that people are constantly aware of it (Allen 2003: 10). In contrast, seduction is efficient across long distances, because it is a “modest form of power,” which “leaves open the possibility for people to reject or remain indifferent to its pervasive exercise” (Allen 2003: 10, 31).
From this perspective, tourism images are sites of seductive power. Following Allen’s (2003: 31) reasoning, they are comparable to advertising, which “may seek to influence by making veiled suggestions about its promotions or selectively restricting what is known about them.” However, this “process works on choices, on curiosity, not on an unwitting audience” (Allen 203: 31). Notions about seductive power highlight the multiplicity of responses that the consumers of tourism images may exhibit (cf. Knudsen et al. 2007; Jones & Merriman 2009). Some individuals may choose to resist messages conveyed by images, others may use them as tools of daydreaming, and still others may be influenced by them to the point where “images seem to come alive and want things” (Mitchell 2005: 9). It is also important to remember that, while some people may indulge in the fantasy promoted by tourism images, they are not necessarily unaware of the ideological aspects of such images. According to Slavoj Žižek (1989: 32), people “know very well how things are, but still they are doing it as if they did not know.”

The power that is exercised through tourism images is thus bound up with subtle, and possibly partly unconscious choices, made in the different phases of a “circle of representation” in which tourism images are produced and consumed (see Hall 1997: 1; Jenkins 2003: 308). While tourism promotion is a meaning-making exercise, it is not a linear process where producers of tourism representations use their power over consumers. Rather, both producers and consumers participate in the “construction of common sense understanding,” which forms the basis of tourism promotion and makes it effective (Ateljevic 2000: 376). Producers of tourism representations adapt their messages to consumers’ desires and practices, whereas consumers translate the “supposedly seductive messages to [suit] their own aspirations and interests” (Hollinshead & Hou 2013: 247) and, simultaneously, influence the cultural context in which new representations are produced (Jenkins 2003).

2.3 Tourism images, territoriality, and the construction of national identities

Tourism images are instruments of “banal” or “everyday nationalism” (Billig 1995; Jones & Merriman 2009). This conceptualization directs attention to the mundane practices and representations through which nationalism is (re)produced within everyday contexts. Tourism images promote symbols and narratives that form a basis for “imagined communities,” that is groups of people who do not necessarily know each other in person but, nevertheless, share a common identity (Anderson 1991). Tourism images become more meaningful in relation to other mundane national representations, which include school books (Paasi 1996; Herb 2004), postage stamps (Raento & Brunn 2005; Raento 2009), coins and banknotes (Raento et al. 2004; Penrose 2011), material landscapes and landscape elements (DeLyser 1999; Till 2005; Hännikäinen 2010), landscape images (Häyrynen 2005, 2008; Lintonen 2011; Linkola 2013; Vallius 2013), and maps (Herb 2004; Kosonen 2008). All of these items express abstract ideas of nations and help people to engage with the key aspects of their national identities. As the abundant literature on national representations shows, these items also function as interfaces through which researchers can gain knowledge about the otherwise invisible and abstract conceptualizations of identity (Dwyer 2000: 660; Henderson 2001: 220).

Tourism images participate in the construction of national identities especially through the production and reproduction of territoriality. According to Robert Sack (1986:
territoriality is connected to social power that manifests itself in attempts of people to control other people or things by dominating a geographical area. Nationalism is one of the expressions of territoriality (Paasi 1996: 68). Nationalism refers to the various mechanisms and processes through which nations and nation-states come into existence, become established, and are maintained (see e.g. Gellner 1983; Hobbsawm 1990; Smith 1991; Billig 1995; Paasi 1996). More specifically, nationalism is “an ideology that places the nation at the centre of its concerns and seeks to promote its well-being” through measures that enhance “national autonomy, national unity and national identity” (Smith 2010: 9). The development of national autonomy, unity, and identity are connected to what Paasi (1996) terms “social spatialization” and “spatial socialization,” by which he means the processes through which territorially bounded geographical units come into being and though which citizens are indoctrinated into accepting these units as the basis of their worldview. 

Guntram Herb (2004) examines the territorial strategies used in the construction of national identities. According to him, these strategies have three components. Firstly, “territorial differentiation” refers to the establishment of symbolic borders between countries and nations (see also Paasi 1996: 57). Secondly, “territorial bonding” links nations into their territory and creates an “emotional bond that makes the ‘belonging’ tangible” (Herb 2004: 144). Thirdly, a “territorial script” is a broader narrative that explains and justifies the existence of the nation and its territory. Herb’s (2004) investigation into the establishment of two German states in the post-World War II period shows that the components of territorial strategies can be adapted to changing (geo)political, social, and cultural circumstances. The adaptability of territorial strategies thus supports the existence of nations as “fluid objects,” which are “always transforming, yet flexibly enduring” (Häkli 2008: 14).

Tourism images often support wider territorial strategies, because they reflect common sense understandings that are coupled with an idea of territorially bounded and mutually exclusive nation-states. Furthermore, a large proportion of tourism images are produced by state-affiliated organizations, who endeavor to promote clearly defined national territories. In line with Herb’s (2004) territorial strategies, tourism images are used as part of image building and destination branding campaigns, which aim at improving people’s perceptions of destinations and at positioning them in consumers’ minds (Morgan et al. 2002a: 337; Gartner 2013: 296). The concept ‘destination branding,’ in use since the 1970s (Hanna 2008: 63), refers to ‘a unique combination of product characteristics and added values’ (Morgan & Pritchard 1998: 140; Morgan et al. 2002b: 12). Emphasizing those attributes that are considered somehow unique or characteristic of the destination that is being sold is a popular way of adding value to a tourism product and improving the image of a destination.

Elfriede Fürsich (2002: 217–218) notes that while references to “authentic” and “out-of-the-ordinary” aspects of destinations may rouse the curiosity of tourists, they can also result in the “exoticization” and “othering” of places and regions. In other words, the definition of some people and places as “strange” and “exotic” “tacitly confirms the opposite as normal and common sense” (Fürsich 2002: 221). Thus, the promotion of distinctive landscapes, monuments, and other cultural features supports territorial differentiation by emphasizing differences between places and countries (see Johnson 1995; Herb 2004: 159). Several tourism researchers have, for example, shown that geographically
dominant western countries are usually depicted as modern and civilized, whereas peripheral countries and regions are represented as exotic and primitive spaces inhabited by ethnic minorities, regardless of how modern they actually are (e.g. Morgan & Pritchard 1998: 233–235; Tresidder 1999: 138; Saarinen 2001: 41). However, even wealthy developed countries are often depicted using unusual features and landscape elements (Fürsich 2002: 217).

In addition to reinforcing territorial differentiation, tourism images support territorial bonding, because they are connected to “practices through which people are made to engage with the landscape and establish an attachment to it” (Herb 2004: 159). There are plenty of examples of nationally important places and landscapes that are also important tourist sites (see e.g. Edensor 1998; Sears 1998; Shaffer 2001; Palmer 2005). Tourism has also been efficiently harnessed for nationally-oriented geography education, which has sought to create emotive ties between people and the territory that they inhabit (see Paasi 1996; Driver 2001; Herb 2004). Fieldtrips to nationally significant sites are an important part of geography curricula in many countries, because first-hand experiences of heritage are generally thought to yield in-depth understanding about culture and history. In Finland the national curriculum in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries was connected to the prevailing National Romanticist Movement. As a result, school children were taken into the field to observe signs of Finnishness, and geography school books were used to promote domestic tourism (see e.g. Soininen & Kaila 1921: 1; Tuomaala 2006: 263–266). Nationalistically oriented trips exemplify how nationalism is inscribed in social practices as an ideology. These trips are important, because “[i]deology is not primarily a matter of ‘ideas’: it is a structure which imposes itself upon us without necessarily having to pass through consciousness at all” (Eagleton 1991: 148; see also Žižek 1989: 39; Althusser 2008: 39–44).

Finally, nationally important tourist sites and their visual representations gain their meanings in relation to wider “territorial scripts,” which, according to Herb (2004: 156), explain “why a given territory belongs rightfully to the nation, how the nation arrived at the present territorial situation, and which territory would fulfill the destiny.” By way of example, Michael Pretes (2003: 137–139) shows how the Rapid City Dinosaur Park in South Dakota draws on and contributes to the myth of the dinosaur as a particularly “American animal” and uses dinosaurs to glorify the achievements of early American settlers: “[t]hough not contemporary with human beings, dinosaurs help validate the claim that American wilderness was more terrible and dangerous than it really was, a belief that lends greater glow to the achievements of pioneers and settlers.” In a similar manner, the war history sites associated with the “Battle of Raate Road” near Finland’s eastern border acquaint tourists with a territorial script that presents Finland as a contested territory between East and West, which has been defended by resilient Finnish soldiers (see Raivo 2002).

These examples point to the ways in which tourism images are used in support of the construction of national identities and related endeavors to control geographical areas, or at least how they are perceived and by whom. This does not mean, however, that tourism images are designed primarily for this purpose. In fact, the main objective of tourism promoters is often to generate income as part of demand-led business. As ubiquitous geographically bound representations, tourism images nevertheless play an important role in the processes through which imagined communities receive and
maintain their territorial and symbolic shape (Paasi 1986). Next, I will turn to the field of visual culture to better explain the mechanisms through which tourism images make meanings in practice.

2.4 A visual cultural approach to tourism images

The emergence of “visual culture” as an academic field of study during the past few decades has been tied to what Mitchell (1994: 11–34) calls “the pictorial turn”: the proliferation of images in western society and the related endeavors of scholars to understand the visual aspects of culture by combining different disciplinary approaches (see also Mirzoeff 1999: 1–4). Researchers of visual culture come from, and draw upon several fields of study, which include art history, semiotics, feminist studies, architecture and film studies. In a broad sense, visual culture concerns “all those items of culture, whose visual appearance is an important feature of their being or their purpose” (Jenks 1995: 16). In addition to studying these items, researchers of visual culture have dedicated a lot of effort to discussing what images actually are and how they differ from words (e.g. Mitchell 1986, 1994, 2005; Mikkonen 2005).

Within this interdisciplinary framework, researchers of visual culture have applied old theories and ideas to new contexts and questioned traditional cultural categories, such as the division between fine art and popular culture (Mirzoeff 1999; Sturken & Cartwright 2001; Tormey 2013: 80). Visual culture research has also offered fresh perspectives to geographical research and tourism studies. The most popular approaches include iconology and semiotics, which have influenced studies concerning meanings of images and other cultural objects (see Bhattacharyya 1997; van Leeuwen 2001; Rose 2007; Linkola 2013). As Tutta Palin (1998: 125) notes, however, contemporary researchers rarely consider themselves as pure “iconologists” or “semioticians,” but rather have modified these approaches for the purposes of individual studies.

The three-layer iconological framework developed by the art historian Erwin Panofsky (1967), has contributed much to the study of visual culture. It holds that the meanings of visual objects and images are inextricably tied to their contexts of production and circulation (van Leeuwen 2001: 100–101; Rose 2007: 150–151). Iconology supports the study of discourses, because it pays attention to the intertextuality of images and seeks to understand how time- and culture-specific ways of understanding the world operate in and through them (see Palin 1998: 120; Rose 2007: 135–163; Linkola 2013). It also bears some resemblance to semiotics, which is commonly referred as a science or the study of signs (Barthes 1972: 111; Mirzoeff 1999: 13; Mitchell 2005: 9; Rose 2007: 75).

The basic idea of semiotics claims that words, images, and cultural objects are meaningful, because they refer to ideas that exist outside of the items themselves (Bal & Bryson 1991: 174; Fiske 2011: 39). These ideas may have literal, personal and/or culturally-specific meanings, which are often referred to as denotations and connotations (Barthes 1977; Fiske 2011). While iconology emphasizes that the meanings of an image are always relative to the historical context in which the image was produced, semiotics directs attention to the mechanisms through which the elements of individual images are chosen and made meaningful in particular cultural and social contexts (Palin 1998: 127; Mirzoeff 1999: 14; van Leeuwen 2001: 92).

The pioneers of semiotics were Ferdinand de Saussure and Charles Sanders Peirce. Saussure suggested that a linguistic sign is made up of two components: the signifier, which is the physical
appearance of the sign, and the *signified*, which is the intangible idea that the signifier refers to (Saussure 1983: 65–69; Rose 2007: 79–80). Peirce’s model of signification consisted of three parts: a *sign* (also known as a *representamen*), an *object*, and an *interpretant* (Peirce 1998; Knudsen et al. 2007; Metro-Roland 2009: 272–275). His sign is a rough equivalent to Saussure’s signifier. It refers to an *object* that lies outside of the physical appearance of the sign. The *interpretant* is an idea that the sign determines in a person’s mind (Peirce 1998: 482). In John Fiske’s (2011: 40) words, it is “the effect” or “the mental concept produced both by the sign and by the user’s experience of the object.”

Daniel Knudsen (2008) and Michelle Metro-Roland (2009) point out that Peirce’s semiotic theory is particularly fruitful for the study of tourism and tourism images. While Saussure focuses on the arbitrary relationship between words and their signifieds, Peirce expands the semiotic theory towards “signs outside of texts and language, things which tourists are interested in, like landscapes and buildings” (Metro-Roland 2009: 271). Another advantage of Peirce’s model is that it takes into account the “collateral observation” or “collateral information” by which he refers to the “previous acquaintance with what the Sign denotes” (Peirce 1998: 494).

Collateral observation is crucial in visual communication, because an image never portrays the “whole object,” but rather focuses on its “[most] critical aspects” (Kress & van Leeuwen 1996: 6; see also Barthes 1977: 43). This holds that the making of an image is a selection process during which the producer of the image draws on her/his previous knowledge in order to decide what aspects are representative of the object she/he wants to depict (Kress & van Leeuwen 1996: 6–7). Selectivity is inherent even in apparently objective images, such as photographs and maps, because their making involves many subjective choices, which range from the selection of motifs or map symbols to the framing of images (Harley 1989; Sturken & Cartwright 2001: 16; Schwartz & Ryan 2003: 3–5). For example, the use of photographs in media stems largely from their function as metonymies, which depict a fraction of reality that stands for the whole (see Campbell 2007; Fiske 2011: 89)

Similarly, the meanings of images are guided by viewers’ previous experiences and knowledge, which are intertwined with the biological foundation of human perception (see Alasuutari 2004: 61). Interpretations of images are inherently subjective due to people’s different experiences and backgrounds. There is, however, also an intersubjective aspect to these interpretations: effective communication relies on “common sense knowledge,” which is based on negotiation between the producers and consumers of images, and on earlier texts that are circulated in a society (see Ateljevic 2000; Shurmer-Smith 2002: 127).

Semiotic theory has been important to the constructionist methodological approach which informs my study. Firstly, it has enabled researchers to understand culturally-specific ways in which people categorize and name their experiences (see Alasuutari 2004: 60–61). Secondly, the idea of language as a closed system has made scholars aware of the active role of texts in constructing human reality and directed attention to the making of meanings in various kinds of texts and representations (see Barnes & Duncan 1992; Echtner 1999: 49; Seppä 2012: 130–131). More specifically, semiotics has significantly influenced our understanding of how “the touristic process is constituted through signs that communicate meaning” (Bhattacharyya 1997: 374–375; see also Culler 1981; Echtner 1999; MacCannell 1999; Knudsen et al. 2007; Knudsen 2008; Metro-Roland 2009).
The covers of tourism brochures depicting Helsinki and Finland exemplify the ways in which understanding about visual culture and, more specifically semiotics can help to explain the (re)making of meanings in tourism images (figure 1). Like all tourism destinations, Helsinki and Finland are too large and diverse to be depicted in their entirety. Because of this, tourism promoters have been selective and made conscious decisions about what elements and aspects are the most representative of Helsinki and Finland. These elements are usually highlighted in brochure covers, which function as a shorthand for understanding the “essence” of the promoted destinations (cf. Tormey 2013: 80).
Following the example provided by Günther Kress and Theo van Leeuwen (1996: 7), the making of the brochure covers entails the constitution of metonymies: Helsinki is (most like) the Lutheran Cathedral of Helsinki and Finland is (most like) Helsinki. The Lutheran Cathedral represents Helsinki, because it is a visible and centrally located landmark, which is connected to the history and culture of the city. From the 1960s to the 1980s it was frequently associated with the epithet “Daughter of the Baltic,” which was the title of the 1920’s book by Maila Talvio, adopted by the Helsinki City Tourist Office in 1963 (Salokorpi 2000: 12). Helsinki, on the other hand, is representative of the entire country due to its capital city status and role as the ‘facade’ of, and gateway to, Finland. As Metro-Roland (2009: 275) points out, tourism marketing materials offer collateral information, which aids tourists in the interpretation of tourist sites. Thus, when tourists are exposed to images that build associative links between Helsinki, Finland, and the Lutheran Cathedral of Helsinki, they acquire knowledge that may lead them to interpret the cathedral as a site that represents Helsinki and “Finnishness.”

2.5 Tourism images as instruments of mythical speech

The writings of the semiotician Roland Barthes provide terminology that is useful for the study of tourism images. Barthes (1972, 1977) draws on Saussure’s idea about signifiers and signifieds in order to discuss the organization and operation of “language,” which may consist of visual or linguistic signs. In his famous essay “Myth today,” originally published in 1957, he shows that visual signs operate at two levels (Barthes 1972: 109–159) (figure 2). At the first level, there are the literal meanings of the signs, which Barthes (1977) later terms “denoted” signs or “messages without a code.” At the second level, these denoted signs are transformed into signifiers, which are accompanied by their own signifieds.

![Figure 2. Barthes' (1972: 115) model of signification](image-url)
Second level signifiers resemble the signifiers of denoted signs, but instead of representing the literal meanings of the depicted objects, these second level signifiers refer to wider concepts or ideas, which are ideological in nature. In his much cited essay “Rhetoric of the image,” Barthes (1977) calls these second level signs “connoted” messages. In his own words, “knowing that a system which takes over the signs of another system in order to make them its signifiers is a system of connotation, we may say immediately that the literal image is denoted and the symbolic image connoted” (Barthes 1977: 37, emphasis in the original). In this process, denoted signs become raw material for a myth, which, according to Barthes (1972: 114) is a “second-order semiological system.”

Linguistic messages are important to the creation of both denoted and connoted messages. Captions, labels, and other contextualizing texts function as “an anchorage,” which helps users of images to “fix the floating chain of signifieds” typical of visual signs (Barthes 1977: 39). A text eases the identification of the depicted objects and “directs the reader through the signifieds of the image, causing him [sic] to avoid some and receive others” (Barthes 1977: 40, italics in the original).

The media scholar Fiske has become famous for popularizing semiotic theory. Following Barthes’ (1972) ideas, he divides the meanings of photographs into denotations and connotations. In his words, “[d]enotation is the mechanical reproduction on film of the object at which the camera is pointed,” whereas “[c]onnotation is the human part of the process: it is the selection of what to include in the frame, of focus, aperture, camera angle, quality of film, and so on” (Fiske 2011: 81). He notes that people have a tendency to depict things so that the connotations of the resulting images match prevailing myths, which he defines as stories “by which a culture explains or understands some aspect of reality or nature” (Fiske 2011: 82).

Conventional ways of visualization support myths, because denoted signs are capable of naturalizing connoted signs (Barthes 1972: 129, 1977: 37). This is especially true of photographs, which make the depicted scene appear as true, because they draw on “the myth of photographic ‘naturalness’: the scene is there, captured mechanically, not humanly” (Barthes 1977: 44, emphasis in the original; see also Mitchell 1986: 69, 1994: 357). In this way, images become instruments of what Barthes (1972: 110–111) calls “mythical speech”.

I exemplify Barthes’ (1972, 1977) ideas with the three covers of tourism brochures of Helsinki published in 1957, 1990, and 2011 (figure 3). There are three types of messages in each cover: (1) denoted messages (the literal meanings of the depicted items); (2) connoted messages (the cultural meanings of the depicted items); and (3) linguistic messages (headings) (Barthes 1977: 33–37). The denoted messages consist of signifiers which are relatively easy to identify. All three brochure covers show part of Helsinki's city center and people in motion. In the first cover, a well-dressed couple are casually strolling along a street in the South Harbor. In the second cover, there is an image of two golfers embedded in an image of a yacht club pavilion. The third cover depicts a young couple riding a bike across the Senate Square. An overarching theme in all three covers is the place of the Lutheran Cathedral of Helsinki, which dominates the monumental Empire-style city center.
Figure 3. Covers of tourism brochures of Helsinki published in 1957 (a), 1990 (b), and 2011 (c) (Sport and Excursion Office of Helsinki 1957; Helsinki City Tourist Office 1990; Helsinki City Tourist & Convention Bureau 2011).
The denoted messages of these images function as signifiers of connoted messages. At the level of connotation, the denoted messages are accompanied by their own signifieds, which are cultural ideas associated with the depicted elements. For example, the image of the strolling couple refers to an elegant city and an upscale tourism destination. In the second cover, the golfers and yachts evoke ideas about wealth and prosperity associated with the “yuppie culture.” In the third cover, the young couple on a bicycle hints that Helsinki is a hip, fun, and easy-going place. The linguistic messages in all three brochure covers fix the meanings of the images by showing that the depicted place is not any city, but Helsinki. As Barthes (1977: 39–40) shows, texts may direct the identification of denoted messages and the interpretation of connoted messages. At the level of denoted messages, the word “Helsinki” and its Swedish version “Helsingfors,” give readers of the brochures grounds for believing that the depicted scenes actually exist in Helsinki. At the level of connoted messages, the same words, together with utterances like “Urlaub” and “visitor,” steer viewers’ interpretations towards ideas like “Helsinki is a place, where you can spend quality time and express yourself.”

It is noteworthy that in different times there have been different signifiers for the same ideas (see Barthes 1957/1972: 120). While the scene of activities has remained the same (the monumental center of Helsinki), the depicted activities have changed. These changes mirror changes in wider myths to which the connoted messages are connected, as well as in the consumption, lifestyle, and strategic planning choices through which people have enacted these myths in their daily lives. The myths that underlie the images are cultural ways of understanding the essence of things like healthiness, well-being, prosperity, happiness, quality of life, and urban tourism. The focus is on western myths, partly because Finland was promoted as a “western” country, and partly because the brochures were targeted primarily to tourists with a western cultural background. This process of reorientation away from Russia was wrought with a series of tensions and challenges.

For example, the “proper” looks of the couple in the brochure from 1957 reflect a notion of well-being that prevailed in the West during the post-World War II period. This notion was associated with a decorous lifestyle and family model characterized by traditional gender roles, which were popular before a distinctive youth culture gained in significance from the 1960s onwards. By contrast the couple in the brochure from 2011 are intelligible as part of the recent trend in urban development and tourism, which has seen tourism promoters and urban planners to advance creativity and innovativeness in order to support individuals’ personal development and to improve the overall quality of life (Landry 2000; Richards & Wilson 2006). From this perspective, the old monumental center of Helsinki appears as a flexible public space, which “helps develop creativity because it allows people to go beyond their own circle of family, professional and social relations” (Landry 2000: 119). A bicycle has become one of the cultural icons of creative consumption of space, because it enables tourists to move flexibly across urban space in search of “mobile” cultural products through which tourists themselves can participate in the making of new meanings and values (see Richards & Wilson 2006: 1215).
3 DATA AND METHODS

The empirical part of this research involved the analysis of the meanings of tourism images of Helsinki and Finland in relation to the wider cultural and historical context in which these images were produced and consumed. While there are many possible ways of approaching these images, I focused on those aspects that were relevant “in the view of the theoretical framework and the particular questions asked” (Alasuutari 1995: 13). This means that the design of the individual case studies was driven by the theoretical notions provided by earlier studies about the relationship between tourism and identity-building (e.g. Light 2001; Shaffer 2001; Pretes 2003; Palmer 2005).

The analysis of the images consisted of two complementary phases. Firstly, the denoted meanings of images were studied by adhering to the basic principles of content analysis. Subsequently, the connoted meanings of the images were analyzed by combining elements of semiotic and discourse analyses. This two-phase research design has been popular in studies on tourism representations, because it has helped scholars to investigate large sets of data systematically without losing sight of the connotations of the representations (e.g. Bhattacharyya 1997; Finn et al. 2000; Pritchard & Morgan 2001). In this dissertation, it helped me to “explore the richness of human efforts to build social worlds in and through place, and to make general observations about how and why these processes occur as they do” (Herbert 2010: 79).

3.1 Data

The data for the case studies presented here was collected from several archives. These included the Ephemera Collection of the National Library of Finland, National Archives of Finland, Helsinki City Archives, and the Archives of the Helsinki City Museum. In addition, data was obtained from antiquarian bookshops and private collections. Each case study involved decisions about how to limit the amount of data into a manageable, yet analytically interesting sample. This was necessary in order to develop an in-depth understanding of the ways in which tourism images have been used to construct conceptions about Finnishness as part of the wider mechanisms of power. As Steve Herbert (2010: 75) points out, “[a]s sample sizes increase, so does the difficulty of in-depth understandings of meaning and process.” The analyzed samples were thus chosen carefully with the general goal of capturing the richness of the data.

There were three basic ways to limit the number of images. The first of these was to use images as examples in order to build theoretical ideas about tourism and nation-building in general, and the role of tourism images in the construction of Finnishness in particular (paper I). The second way was to limit the temporal scope of the case study (papers III and IV). Focusing on relatively short but critical periods in Finland’s history enabled the collection of clearly defined samples which were analytically fruitful. The third way to limit the number of images was to focus on depictions of a specific theme during a relatively long period of time (paper V). In this case, the images were analytically interesting, because they contributed to a specific thematic discussion (the use of churches as tourism attractions) and enabled a systematic investigation of continuities and breaks in visualization used throughout the years. The temporal and thematic limitations
of the case studies prevented me from making generalizations about the content of the tourism imagery of Finland as a whole. The case studies nevertheless represent the ways in which the meanings of tourism images are created and connected to wider mechanisms through which notions of Finnishness have been created and reproduced (see Alapuro 1995: 27).

The criteria for data selection were determined by the design and research questions of the case studies and the nature of data available (see paper II). For example, the images analyzed in papers III and IV were collected from distinct sets of publications. The samples analyzed in these studies included all images that filled the predefined criteria set out at the beginning of the studies (e.g. paper III focused on landscape images). Also repeatedly used images were considered, because it was assumed that every time an image was published in a new context, it was actively chosen to represent the depicted phenomenon anew. By contrast, the case study presented in paper V was based on a sample of images collected from an large and diverse set of tourism brochures issued over a period of nearly 150 years. In this study, each repeatedly used image was considered only once. This was done because the number of nearly identical brochures was enormous. Thus, it was practically impossible to know whether some images had been used repeatedly, because they were considered particularly “good” or “representative,” or whether the publishers had simply issued the same brochure again after making small changes to the layout for practical reasons.

The sampling methods determined the “populations” or phenomena that the examined images represent. Paying attention to the representativeness of the data was important, because I wanted to adhere to the principles of content analysis, which include representative and significant sampling strategies (Rose 2007: 63). For example, the images analyzed in paper IV represent the imagery of an entire series of brochures published by the Sport and Excursion Office of Helsinki in the post-World War II period. In contrast, the images analyzed in paper V represent a pool of images featuring churches used in the promotion of Helsinki and Finland throughout nearly 150 years of history. In addition to images, written data was used to analyze the meanings of the images. The written data included the texts that accompanied the images (e.g. captions) and written archival documents about the operation of those tourism organizations that were responsible for the production of the examined images. The written documents were collected from the National Archives of Finland, which hosts the collections of the Finnish Tourism Association, and from the Helsinki City Archives, which stores documents produced by the Helsinki City Tourism Office. Detailed information about the data is listed in table 1.
Table 1. The data samples analyzed in the papers, the populations or phenomena represented by the samples, and supporting data sources used in the papers

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Paper</th>
<th>Analyzed data sample/examples</th>
<th>Population/phenomenon represented by the samples</th>
<th>Supporting data</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I</td>
<td>Exemplary images produced during distinctive periods in the history of Finland</td>
<td>Theoretical notions of tourism and nation-building presented in earlier scholarly discussions on nationalism and the history of Finland</td>
<td>Written archival documents and a web page produced by the Finnish Tourism Association (also known as the Tourist Society in Finland)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>II</td>
<td>Lessons learned during the data collection processes related to papers III and IV</td>
<td>Challenges related to the collection of visual data from secondary sources for the purposes of tourism research</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>III</td>
<td>899 landscape photographs published in 24 Finnish tourist guides and 11 geography school books during the 1920s</td>
<td>Popular landscape images, which Finnish academics and other prominent individuals considered representative of Finland during the transitional period that followed Finland’s independence (1917) and Civil War (1918)</td>
<td>Written archival documents and texts, which revealed the societal commitments and worldviews of the producers of the images</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IV</td>
<td>127 tourism images published in ten tourism brochures produced by the Sport and Excursion Office of Helsinki during the 1950s and early 1960s</td>
<td>“Official” tourism imagery used in a series of brochures of Helsinki used as part of a promotional campaign after World War II</td>
<td>Written documents about the operation of the Sport and Excursion Office of Helsinki</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>V</td>
<td>366 tourism images of ecclesiastical architecture in Helsinki used in tourism brochures of Helsinki and Finland between 1852 and 2000</td>
<td>Images of the churchscape of Helsinki used to promote Helsinki and Finland before the proliferation of Internet-based marketing</td>
<td>Written archival documents about tourism promotion in Helsinki</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

There is scarcely available data about the selection processes behind the examined tourism images. During the research process I found only some clues which helped me to draw inferences about the ways in which the images were actually understood by those individuals who produced and consumed them (see Alapuro 1995: 39). One of these clues was a memo from a meeting, which was held in 1989 between the staffs of the Helsinki City Tourist Office and the advertising agency “Mainos-Wiking” in order to “discuss the visual motifs and draft” of the tourism brochure “Urlaub in Helsinki 1990” (see figure 3b) (Helsinki City Tourist Office 1989). The Tourist Office had acquired images from two independent photographers. The task of Mainos-Wiking was to plan the layout of the brochure. According to the memo, the representatives of Mainos-Wiking came up with an idea of using small images of people embedded in larger images of Helsinki. They suggested that these people could include, for example, “a family, but not a very ‘foreign-looking’ tourist family, because the brochure is aimed also at Finnish people” (Helsinki City Tourist Office 1989). The representatives of Mainos-Wiking did not specify what they meant by a “foreign looking family.” Neither did they explain why a “foreign-looking family” was not suitable for promoting Helsinki to Finnish audiences. Their wishes
were nevertheless realized. When the brochure was issued in 1990, all depicted people were white and western-looking like the majority of Finns. The producers of the brochure may have thought that Finns would find the images appealing only if they would be able to identify themselves with the depicted human figures.

This example shows that the producers of tourism images produced connotations through “a modification of the reality itself, of, that is, the denoted message” (Barthes 1977: 21). The selection of signifiers (e.g. the appearance of the depicted people) was a way of creating desirable connoted messages (e.g. Finland as a “western” destination). However, the vagueness of the language used in the memo to describe the “appropriate” looks of the depicted people suggests that these “connotation procedures” (Barthes 1997: 20) were most likely nonverbal and based on routinized common sense understanding rather than on rational and explicitly voiced ideas about the desirable meanings of the images (see Alasuutari 1995: 15; Ateljevic 2000: 376).

The same probably goes for the consumers of the images. I found few clues about the ways in which contemporaries received and interpreted the messages of the images in real-life situations. When the images were analyzed, the focus was on their denoted messages. This was likely because the deep meanings of the images were concealed by what Barthes (1977: 21) calls “the ‘objective’ mask of denotation,” and, therefore, processed partly unconsciously or nonverbally, drawing upon the same “common sense” knowledge that the producers of the images relied on (see also Mitchell 1986: 43; Tormey 2013: 64).

For example, in 1988 the Finnish Aviation Administration requested that the Helsinki City Tourist Office provide an explanation about the origin and publication of an aerial photograph, which appeared in a tourism brochure of Helsinki (Salovaara 1988). This photo showed fuel storage tanks, which, according to the Finnish Aviation Administration, were not allowed to be photographed without permission for security reasons. The Helsinki City Tourist Office responded to the letter by promising that the photograph would be removed from the brochure (Lidman 1988). This example does not tell much about the effects of tourism promotion on people’s conceptions about Helsinki or Finland, but it shows that the images of tourism brochures were studied carefully and taken seriously.

### 3.2 Content analysis

According to Gillian Rose (2007: 61–62), content analysis is “based on counting the frequency of certain visual elements in a clearly defined sample of images and then analysing those frequencies.” Counting the frequency of visual elements involves the development of coding categories, which, according to Rose (2007: 65), should be “exhaustive, exclusive, and enlightening.” The way in which these criteria are understood in practice largely depends on the theoretical framework and research questions of the study and the nature of the data to be analyzed.

Developing “exhaustive” coding categories involves decisions about which aspects of images are relevant in the context of a given theoretical framework and dataset (see Krippendorf 2004). This is because the richness of visual data makes it practically impossible to consider “everything” that images encompass. In paper III, for example, the focus was on the role of landscape photographs in regional differentiation within Finland during the 1920s. The theoretical framework of this study was based on earlier studies about the cultural meanings and spatialization of urban,
agricultural, and wilderness landscapes (Short 1991; Cosgrove 1993). Because of this, these landscape types were considered as separate categories. In addition to considering theory, however, attention was paid to the data samples in order to make sure that the coding categories covered all important landscape types portrayed in the data. For example, tourism and leisure was included in the research as a separate coding category because it appeared as an important and distinctive visual motif.

“Exclusiveness” means that the coding categories grouped under a single variable – that is, an analytically interesting aspect of images – should not overlap (Rose 2007: 65; see Bell 2001: 13). I noticed that this rule was difficult to adhere to in more fine-grained analyses, which aimed at capturing the diversity of signifiers in any given image. For example, in paper IV, I wanted to count the frequency of children and tourists in the images. In practice, some human figures could be classified as both children and tourists. I was nevertheless able to take the overlap into account when I analyzed the results of the classification. In this case, the results were analytically interesting, because they directed my attention to the ways in which the images addressed the emergence of so called “baby boomers” as a distinctive tourist segment.

Mutually exclusive categories were more useful when the analysis was conducted at a macro-scale. For example, in paper III, we were interested in three variables (landscape type depicted, publication forum, and geographical location of the photograph), each of which was divided into several mutually exclusive categories (e.g. seven distinctive types of landscapes). Each photograph was classified using only three main categories, whose boundaries did not overlap. The boundaries of the coding categories were carefully defined in order to make sure that the analyses were replicable and reliable (see Bell 2001: 21–22).

In order to be “enlightening,” coding categories should be connected to the research questions asked and come to “depend on a theorized connection between the image and the broader cultural context in which its meaning is made” (Rose 2007: 65). For example, in paper III, we were interested in the relationships between landscape photographs and regional differentiation in the 1920s’ Finland. Earlier studies have shown that indigenous people with simple lifestyles have often been associated with early stages of “development” (e.g. Jackson 1989: 132–154; Lutz & Collins 1993). Hegemonic groups have frequently emphasized the “primitiveness” of these people in order to justify their colonization and “civilization.” In our study, we wanted to find out how landscape photographs have participated in the spatialization of difference within the national territory of Finland. We therefore designed one of our coding categories (primary production, human–landscape interaction) to map out the spatial distribution of images that showed people and/or their livelihoods in their “natural” surroundings. This coding category was analytically interesting, because it helped us to show that the northeastern periphery of Finland was depicted through these types of images much more frequently than the south-western core.

Content analysis is a suitable method for quantifying the denotations of visual images (Fiske 2011: 129). In practice, however, the boundaries between denotations and connotations are somewhat blurred. To go back to my earlier example, it would have been impossible for me to identify a human figure as a tourist if I had not had some cultural knowledge about practices of tourism and conventional ways of depicting tourism. It is nevertheless likely that other people would have understood “tourism” in slightly different ways.
These conceptual differences could have caused differences in classifications.

Earlier content analytical studies have shown that it is easier to develop unambiguous coding categories and achieve reliable results when content analysis is designed and conducted by two or more people (see e.g. Pritchard & Morgan 2001; Raento & Brunn 2005). This is why the study presented in paper III was carried out by two coders. Hannu Linkola and I coded the images independently before revising the categories to make them as clear-cut as possible. Our cooperation was fruitful, because sharing ideas about the principles of classification helped us to become more aware of the ways in which our own backgrounds steered our perceptions and choices.

The richness of visual information may also cause problems for a content analyst. As Rose (2007: 65–67) points out, it may be difficult to make sure that coding categories cover all relevant aspects of the images. In fact, a content analysis always highlights some aspects of images at the expense of others. Breaking visual information down into categories also has the tendency to lose some information, such as the spatial organization of visual elements. While content analysis has traditionally been considered as an objective method, which reveals the “true essence” of images, in reality it entails many subjective phases.

Despite these problems, content analysis has proven to be a good way of analyzing large sets of data (see e.g. Dilley 1986; Lutz & Collins 1993; Raento & Brunn 2005). One of its strengths is that it obliges a researcher to consider each image systematically according to the same criteria. To me, content analysis was a good way of developing a thorough understanding of the nature of visual information in general and of the images included in my data in particular. Simultaneously, systematic coding of the images enabled me to test the extent to which my initial observations of the images were right. As Philip Bell (2001: 13) points out, analytically interesting content analyses are often designed to test comparative hypotheses. In my dissertation, one hypothesis concerned the relative frequencies of depictions of the Lutheran and Orthodox Cathedrals of Helsinki in Finnish tourism imagery. I wanted to find out whether the frequencies of depictions of these two cathedrals reflected wider notions about the role of Lutheran and Orthodox religions in Finnish society and the underlying ideas about Finland’s geopolitical position between Protestant Christian West and Orthodox East (papers IV and V). Content analysis was a suitable method for testing this hypothesis, because it gave numerical support to my initial and partly intuitive impressions.

3.3 Interpretative analysis

While content analysis was an effective method for going through the images in a systematic way, interpretative analysis was needed in order to understand the deeper cultural meanings which underlay the observable surface of the images. As Sara MacKian (2010: 363–364) notes, “coding” and “categorizing” may reveal recurrent themes in texts, but they tell little about the significance of these themes. Because of this, I analyzed the images by combining elements of semiotic and discourse analyses. The basic principles of semiotic analysis were applied in order to investigate the connotations of the images and the wider cultural myths to which these connotations were connected (see Barthes 1972, 1977). As van Leeuwen (2001: 97) points out, connotation “can come about either through the cultural associations which cling to the represented people, places and things, or through specific ‘connotators’, specific aspects of the ways in which they are represented, for
example specific photographic techniques.” Identifying the connotations of the examined images thus entailed acquiring knowledge about the cultural meanings of the depicted objects, and a thorough analysis of the ways in which those objects were depicted. For example, in addition to considering the national symbolism of the depicted buildings, attention was paid to the perspective from which these buildings were shown. It was noted, for instance, that a “frog perspective” – looking up from a low angle – was used in order to emphasize the grandeur of cultural institutions (Seppä 2012: 39; see paper IV). The connotations created through these choices were connected to wider myths: Finland as a sovereign and authoritative nation-state with a distinctive culture.

There were different aspects in the connotations and myths associated with the images. The statue of the runner Paavo Nurmi was generally associated with connotations of heroism and success, but also understood in relation to the myth of Finland as a small but resilient country (see paper IV). Similarly, the whiteness of the Lutheran Cathedral of Helsinki had western connotations of purity and cleanliness. In the Finnish context, especially during the decades after the Finnish Civil War, it was nevertheless also associated with the hegemony of the “Whites” and wider ideas about the purity of the Finnish nation (see paper IV).

Semiotic analysis was accompanied by elements of discourse analysis, which “pays attention to the notion of discourse as articulated through various kinds of visual images and verbal texts” (Rose 2007: 146). The strength of discourse analysis is that it focuses on the ways in which images make claims about reality as part of wider structures of signification or “ways of thinking” embedded in language and visual representations (see Dittmer 2010: 10). As Pritchard and Morgan (2001: 172) note, “[p]articularly relevant to discourse analysis, is its tendency to not discuss cultural texts in isolation but rather to locate them within an analysis which refers to external social relations.” Rose (2007: 142) calls this “intertextuality,” by which she means “the way that the meanings of any one discursive image or text depend not only on that one text or image, but also on the meanings carried by other images and texts.” Intertextuality connects discourse analysis to iconology which pays special attention to the context in which the images are produced (Panofsky 1967; Rose 2007: 150–151).

In the case studies included in this dissertation, archival materials and earlier studies on the representations of Finnishness and history of Finland were used in order to find out how the images related to other texts and images. In the papers, this procedure is referred to as a “cross-check” (Echtner & Prasad 2003: 663; Raento 2009). Cross-checking meant that the meanings and “truth claims” made by the images were considered in relation to similar articulations in other texts and images. I drew upon information about the social relations and institutional practices that underlay the images, as well as on earlier studies about representations and conceptualizations of Finnishness (e.g. Paasi 1996; Lehtola 1997; Raivo 1997; Lähteenkorva & Pekkarinen 2004; Raento & Brunn 2005; Moisio 2008). The strengths of a discourse analytic approach are best represented by paper III, which focuses on the intertextuality of two separate samples of images – the photographs of Finnish geography school books and tourist guides – and shows how underlying institutional practices and power relations connect these two imageries with one another (cf. Rose 2007).

Cross-checks improved the quality of the research, because they helped me to consider the “collateral information” held by tourists during different time periods and to identify time- and
culture-specific ways of conceptualizing the depicted themes (Peirce 1998: 494; Knudsen et al. 2007; Metro-Roland 2009). While it was impossible for me to reproduce the ways in which individual tourists have interpreted the examined images, this procedure nevertheless helped me to ensure that my interpretations were representative of more than just my own subjective ways of looking at the images. The cross-checks also revealed visual absences, silences, and omissions, which were important to the operation of discourses (see Pritchard & Morgan 2001; Echtner & Prasad 2003; Raento & Brunn 2005; Hunter 2008).

Interpreting the cultural meanings of the images and analyzing the mechanisms through which these meanings were connected to wider social phenomena required me to rely on my own cultural knowledge as a Finn. In Mel Evans’ (1988: 199) terms, I used myself as “methodological tool,” acknowledging that “we are all, as members of society, able to participate in the social phenomena we observe and thereby learn the underlying meanings.” This methodological approach is justified, because observations on culture can never be “carried out in a value-free vacuum” (Evans 1988: 198).

Participatory research must, however, be accompanied by “critical self-positioning” (Raento 2009). I therefore reflected on my own role as a subject of my research, as well as on the ways in which my own experiences might have affected my interpretations. Owing to my Finnish background, it was easy for me to access archival materials and literary sources and to interpret the cultural meanings associated with the images. I was able to read Finnish and Swedish documents and recognize conventional and nationally charged ways of depicting particular landscapes and sites. As a member of Finnish society, I also acknowledged the risk of “over-identification” with the phenomena I studied (Evans 1988). For example, when I delved on the meanings of places and landscapes that were personally significant to me, I was careful to maintain an analytic distance from the data by examining my initial interpretations critically vis-à-vis contemporary sources and earlier studies, which revealed how other people had interpreted those same places.
4 SUMMARY OF THE RESULTS

4.1 Conceptions of Finnishness in tourism images

My first research question concerned the manifestations of different, and partly competing, conceptualizations of Finnishness in tourism images. The analysis revealed that Finnish tourism images have mirrored and contributed to hegemonic conceptualizations of Finnishness. In the early days of tourism development, traveling was considered a valuable instrument in citizenship education and nation-building. For example, when Finland was an autonomous part of Russia, in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, tourism was closely connected to the Finnish National Romantic Movement, which was led by the cultural and intellectual elite, who were inspired by similar movements in other European countries. The leaders of the movement expected Finnish people to familiarize themselves with nationally important sites and landscapes, which were popularized through tourism, school books, landscape painting, and early landscape photography.

As papers I and III show, tourism images frequently depicted distinguished national sites and contained intertextual references to ideas mediated through other media. Tourism brochures and guidebooks introduced these sites primarily to upper class people, who had the resources to travel. However, tourism images were also of importance to people from lower social strata, because they could be used as instruments of imaginary journeys into the “fatherland.” Because of this, early tourism images were educational and focused on romantic notions of the territory of Finland as an organic and well-functioning entity.

Tourism images supported the institutionalization of regions within Finland as part of the wider nation-building endeavour (see Paasi 1986, 1996; Johnson & Coleman 2012). Paper III shows that after Finland’s independence (1917) tourism images were constitutive of the symbolic and institutional shape of Finland (see Paasi 1986). The producers of tourist guidebooks emphasized differences within the territory of Finland in order to make those differences more comprehensible and to portray the regional diversity as a source of national pride. Each part of the nation-state was depicted as being culturally unique and yet adhering to the values of a powerful and ubiquitous “state.” The presence of hierarchically organized state institutions in all parts of the national territory was highlighted in order to depict Finland as a clearly demarcated cultural and political entity.

It is worth noting that in the 1920s there were very few references to diverging conceptualizations of Finnishness within Finnish society, even though Finland was recovering from the traumatic Civil War of 1918. Tourism images celebrated and consolidated the victory of the conservative, government-led “Whites,” whereas the former revolutionary “Reds” were implicitly positioned as a subordinate group, who had an important but largely invisible role in the “state apparatus” (see e.g. figure 1 in paper III). For example, factory milieus, which were the everyday environment of the working-class Reds, were usually depicted as desolate arenas of secondary production without any references to lively working-class culture. In contrast, rural workers, many of whom had also belonged to the defeated “Reds,” were fused into a myth of a hard-working and humble Finnish peasant, which was consistent with the values of the “Whites.”

In addition to taking a stance on the internal affairs of Finland, tourism images
conceptualized Finnishness in relation to other nations and nation-states. Papers I, IV, and V demonstrate that these conceptualizations varied from openly political ideas to more subtle messages depending on the prevailing (geo)political situation and the social position of the producers of the images in relation to other social groups. In the beginning of the twentieth century, for example, there were explicit references to anti-Russian sentiments, because the producers of tourism marketing materials had close connections to a wider identity-political movement that advocated Finland’s independence from Russia (see paper I, figure 3). The conceptualization of Finland as an innocent country oppressed by Russia was connected to derogatory notions of former “Reds,” because Russians were accused of starting the Civil War by lending military help to the revolutionaries in Finland. This example underscores the claim made in paper V that ideas about who or what qualified as “Finnish” were constructed at multiple and interrelated geographical scales using particular historical narratives.

During World War II, the Soviet Union defeated Finland in military conflicts known as the Winter War (1939–1940) and the Continuation War (1941–1944). As a consequence, Finns were obliged to adopt a more neutral attitude toward their “eastern neighbour” and to comply with the requests of the Soviet Union. This situation—often referred to as “Finlandisation”—was characteristic of the Cold War period (Moisio 2008). In practice, however, the attitudes of Finnish people toward the Soviet Union remained ambivalent and tourism images were used as a subtle means of countering the somewhat unfavorable mental images influenced by “Finlandisation.” This becomes evident in the empirical examples discussed in paper IV, which shows how the selective depiction of the landscape of Helsinki during the 1950s and 1960s helped tourism promoters to depict Finland as a modern and sovereign country more comparable to its Scandinavian neighbors than to Russia.

Towards the end of the twentieth century, and during the post-Cold War period in particular, tourism came to be characterized by increasing individualization. Papers I and V argue that, in this context, traditional elements of Finnishness were “packaged” into new types of commodities, which supported the narration of individual self-identities and reflected the taste and lifestyle choices of distinctive target groups. This shift was accompanied by changes in the structure of tourism brochures after the introduction of desktop publishing software in the mid-1980s: long verbal descriptions gave way to a fragmented structure, which distributed the content into small, easily understandable pieces (Hiippala 2013).

Signs of Finnishness were often accompanied by signs that referred to the tourism practices and lifestyles familiar to the most important tourist segments visiting Helsinki and Finland. Tourism promoters acknowledged that Finnishness could mean slightly different things for different people. “Bohemian” tourists, for example, were attracted to what appeared to be a laid-back destination with a touch of Slavic exoticism (paper I, figure 5). While this image emphasized the versatility of Helsinki and Finland, it was designed primarily for trend-conscious westerners, who were familiar with “hipster” aesthetics, or—more specifically—with notions of “Slavic melancholy” associated with the movies of the renowned Finnish director Aki Kaurismäki (Partanen 2004). This example shows that despite the apparent versatility of tourism images, Finnishness continued to be defined through the lens of western consumers.
4.2 Adapting tourism images to changing circumstances

The second research question asked, what are the visual means through which Finnish tourism images have been adapted to changing (geo-)political, (s)ocial, and cultural circumstances? Based on the empirical studies introduced in this dissertation, it is possible to distinguish six types of visual means that were used to adapt the examined images to their wider environment. In Barthes’ (1977) terms, these visual means have affected the connotations of the images and, thereby, connected the images to time- and culture-specific myths.

Firstly, the content of the images was chosen to match the prevailing circumstances. The ephemeral nature of tourism brochures and guides enabled tourism promoters to respond quickly to changes in the surrounding world. As paper III shows, this was evident during the 1920s, when the depicted sites were chosen so that they matched the newly redefined territory of Finland. During the twentieth century, some sites gained in popularity, while the prominence of others diminished as “new” sites were constructed or (re)invented. For example, the Lutheran Cathedral of Helsinki was transformed into a “must-see-sight” with symbolic qualities (paper V). It retained its popularity throughout the twentieth century, because it was an iconic landmark that could be flexibly adjusted to changing conceptualizations of Finnishness. In the post-World War II period, images of the Lutheran Cathedral were often accompanied by depictions of brand new Finnish architecture, such as the newly built administrative buildings in the center of Helsinki and the modern residential areas, which mediated ideas of Finland as a modern country with a distinctive culture (paper IV). Sometimes new themes replaced old ones. For example, the Temppeliaukio Church, completed in 1969, became a popular motif at the end of the twentieth century. At the same time the Kallio Church waned in popularity (paper V). While both churches epitomized romanticized ideas of Finnishness, the Temppeliaukio church was favored due to its unique design, which represented the modern movement that characterized Finnish architecture at that time.

Secondly, Finnish tourism images have been adapted to better suit changing circumstances through framing, as discussed in papers I, III, IV, and V. The power of framing lies in its ability to produce visual silences and absences, which are connected to the symbolic annihilation of some identities or identity conceptualizations (see Alderman & Modlin 2008; Hunter 2008). The identity-political aspect of framing is evident in the relative frequencies of depiction of the Lutheran Cathedral of Helsinki and the Orthodox Uspenski Cathedral, which are the two main landmarks in the iconic skyline of Helsinki’s Empire-style city center. The content analyses conducted for papers IV and V show that, tourism promoters had a tendency to frame images so that the Lutheran Cathedral was placed in the center of images, whereas its Orthodox counterpart was excluded from the images or assigned a marginal role at the edge of the picture frames. The dismissal of the Uspenski Cathedral was especially evident before World War II, when there was a social and political need to emphasize Finland’s connections to the Protestant Christian West in order to legitimize Finland’s cultural and political sovereignty in relation to the Orthodox East and, most importantly to Russia and the Soviet Union (paper V). However, tourism promoters gave preference to the Lutheran Cathedral also after World War II as part of a wider endeavor to depict Helsinki as the capital city of an independent and inherently western country, which had overcome the destruction of the war and the dominion of its eastern neighbor (paper IV).
Thirdly, the depiction of transient visual elements along with more permanent structures enabled tourism promoters to steer the mental ideas evoked by the images or, in Peirce’s (1998: 482) terms, the “interpretants” of the images. For example, people dressed in fashionable clothes or engaged in trendy activities brought old cultural sites up to date. The juxtaposition of visual elements also enabled tourism promoters to transform meanings from one element to another (papers IV and V). Consider Finland’s period under Russian rule (1809–1917) and the imprint that it left on the urban image of Helsinki. In the twentieth century, the “Russian” landscape elements contradicted ideas about Finland as a sovereign, modern, and western country. In this context, tourism promoters placed established signs of Finnishness adjacent to the Russian-era architecture of Helsinki in order to appropriate the city center as Finnish heritage. This practice also contributed to the development of the monumental center of Helsinki into a Finnish “national landscape.” Tourism images, thus, had an important role to play in the material and symbolic reconstruction of Helsinki, which aimed to transform the urban landscape so that it would better match the hegemonic conceptualization of Finnishness.

Fourthly, using specific angles of view and compositions has been an efficient means of adapting images to time-specific conceptualizations of tourism and photography. For example, apparently neutral and static landscape photographs were popular during the 1920s (paper III). Landscapes were often shown from a bird’s eye view in order to efficiently capture vast areas of land (see paper III, figure 5). This way of visualization was consistent with prevalent ideas of photography as a value-free medium of communication and seeing as a shortcut to knowing, which was the ultimate objective of the educational tourism in the newly independent Finland. The landscape images invited tourists to adopt the detached viewpoint of the leading geographers, who had selected the images, and to learn what they already knew.

As discussed in paper IV, the democratization of tourism in the 1950s and 1960s was accompanied by the emergence of the “baby-boomers” or “large age groups” as a new group of tourists. In contrast to the landscape photographs of the 1920s, the tourism images produced after World War II were thus aimed at the masses and, specifically, to families with children. The use of a “frog perspective” emphasized the small size of children in relation to tall structures, which represented all-powerful actors, such as the nation-state and, thereby emphasized the role of children as obedient and loyal citizens operating under the authority of the state of Finland (see paper IV, figure 3).

Fifthly, texts were used as part of the visual messages of tourism images. In some cases, their function was comparable to framing, because they drew viewers’ attention to some visual elements at the expense of others. By way of example, in the 1950s and 1960s, captions emphasized elements of mainstream Lutheranism in contrast to Orthodox culture, which played a more marginal role in Finnish society (paper IV, figure 2). Texts were also used to support the messages communicated through other visual means. For example, from the 1930s to the 1960s, images of Helsinki were accompanied by a slogan “the White City or the North” (papers IV & V). In the interwar years, this slogan was placed adjacent to the white Lutheran Cathedral and ship bows in order to create an image which was consistent with the prevailing ideas of Finland as a “pure” Christian nation that was ruled according to the values of former “Whites” (paper V, figure 4). In both cases, texts functioned as “an anchorage,” and helped viewers to choose one of many possible
ways of interpreting the same image (Barthes 1977: 39).

Sixthly, various stylistic devices were used to influence the general “atmosphere” of the images. For example, night-time images of urban scenes were popular in the 1950s and 1960s (paper IV). Neon lights and brightly lit office houses were depicted, because they were important components of the prevailing ethos of modernity. Similarly, the combination of darkness and snow inscribed Helsinki and Finland with notions of adventurous winter tourism, which was an asset at the turn of the millenium, when individual tourist experiences were emphasized (paper V, figure 3). Also specific drawing techniques were used to reduce the essence of the depicted destinations into easily recognizable “logos,” the use of which was consistent with the principles of destination branding and image building in the late twentieth century (paper V).

4.3 Connecting notions of Finnishness to the everyday practices and discourses of people

The third research question concerned the visual means through which Finnish tourism images have been connected to the everyday practices and discourses of people. As Allen (2003: 10, 31) points out, images are sites of seductive power. In practice, this means that tourism promoters seek to adapt their images to people’s everyday practices and discourses to encourage potential tourists to voluntarily give their consent to the messages communicated through these images (see Gramsci 1971; Ateljevic 2000; Ateljevic & Doorne 2002). My dissertation shows that, in the context of Finland and Helsinki, tourism promoters personalized their images to match the needs, desires, and lived experiences of their target groups.

As established in paper III, the production of tourism images during the 1920s was connected to the pedagogic ideals that prevailed in Finland at that time. These ideals were based on an empiricist paradigm, which emphasized the value of first-hand observation and systematic ordering of reality. Because of this, tourism images created an impression that the key elements of Finnishness were somewhat equally distributed across the populous parts of the national territory. While celebrating the beauty and sublimity of well-known “national landscapes,” the images implied that practically anyone could experience regional variations of these landscapes within the vicinity of their homes. Tourists were also encouraged to classify landscapes, people, and other “natural” phenomena on the basis of their visual appearance (see e.g. paper III, figure 6). In this way, tourism images reinforced the discourses and practices through which people were accustomed to observe their surroundings in their everyday lives. The interconnectedness of the imageries of tourist guides and geography school books also encouraged Finns to observe their surroundings through the same conceptual framework regardless of their role in the society. Tourism images were thus made intelligible as part of wider discourses that operated through various kinds of representations.

Tourism promoters also paid attention to the previous knowledge held by their target groups (see Peirce 1998: 494; Metro-Roland 2009). Paper IV shows that in the 1950s and 1960s, when a new middle class emerged as an important group of affluent consumers, tourism images often depicted basic tourism practices. Images of people sightseeing, camping, and taking photographs suggested possible ways of consuming the destination’s landscape and, simultaneously, introduced international tourism trends to those people who had little experience.
of traveling. Teaching people “appropriate” ways of behaving as tourists supported the transformation of national monuments into tourist sights and ensured that these sights were noticed, photographed, and integrated into tourists’ “lived” experiences.

Papers I and V show that in the late twentieth and early twenty-first centuries, tourism images of Helsinki highlighted bodily and individualistic activities, which were valued among western tourists. Images of people doing sports, eating, and walking in a nice weather emphasized the freedom of tourists to spend their time in ways that best served their lifestyles, as well as their social and self-identities. Distinctive landscape elements were often depicted as backdrops for physical activities. These images integrated notions of local and national identities into the individual and social identities of increasingly cosmopolitan tourists. Tourists were encouraged to explore Helsinki spontaneously, but, at the same time, they were constantly reminded of the important role of the iconic elements of Finnishness in the landscape of Helsinki.

Finally, the producers of tourism images made use of both national and universal symbolism in order to make the depicted landscapes and sites accessible to both domestic and international audiences. For example, fashionable people who were engaged in international tourism practices made local and national tourist sights comparable with similar sights elsewhere (e.g. paper IV, figure 4). As pointed out in papers I and IV, the depicted signs of Finnishness were intelligible to foreigners, because they were usually chosen according to international standards. Because of this, international audiences were most likely able to interpret these signs by paralleling them to similar signs from their own national cultures and more general experience of tourism. These ways of visualization implicitly positioned Finland as an independent country among other western countries and made Finnish tourism images appear as representations with a certain degree of familiarity even to those tourists, who were not previously familiar with Finland.

4.4 Tourism images and the (re)production of nationalism in Finland

The fourth research question was, how have Finnish tourism images been connected to the mechanisms through which nationalism has been reproduced in Finnish society? As discussed in earlier sections, the examined tourism images have reflected, mediated, and reinforced ideas of Finnish national identity. In doing so, the images have contributed to what Herb (2004) calls “territorial strategies” in the construction of national identities. Selective depictions of the skyline of Helsinki, for example, have supported “territorial differentiation” by creating symbolic boundaries between “East,” and “West,” which have been represented by Russian Orthodoxy and Finnish Lutheranism, respectively. Emphasizing the importance of the Lutheran Cathedral to Helsinki’s urban image in particular, and to Finnish culture in general, has symbolically positioned Finland in a more Western light. At the same time, the Orthodox Uspenski Cathedral has been tacitly assigned a role as the representative of Eastern “otherness,” which has had a subordinate or even marginal role as opposed to mainstream Finnishness.

While creating symbolic demarcations between Finland and its “eastern neighbor,” tourism images have also supported “territorial bonding” (Herb 2004). They have helped Finns to appropriate the formerly Russian center of Helsinki as Finnish heritage and created emotional links between Finnish people and their capital city, which has been portrayed as a showcase of Finnishness and a gateway to the national territory. The connotations of the
images have matched and strengthened broader “territorial scripts,” which have explained and justified the existence of Finnish nation and its right to a clearly defined national territory (Herb 2004). For example, emphasizing traces of western influences in the landscape of Helsinki supported a notion that, despite its borderland position, Finland was an inherently ‘western nation-state,’ deserving of a place among other sovereign western countries. This “territorial script” is comparable to what Barthes (1972) refers to as “myth,” a cultural way of understanding the essence of a given phenomenon or aspect of life.

The everydayness of identity construction, which has been appropriated by tourism images, highlights the relevance of Billig’s (1995) ideas of “banal nationalism” (see paper I). Billig was the one of the first scholars to note that inconspicuous practices and representations play a key role in the reconstruction of nationalism. In order to make his claim, he drew examples from the everyday life in the United States of America. Later, many scholars have continued discussion about banal nationalism by investigating different types of objects and representations using and contesting Billig’s framework (e.g. Raento et al. 2004; Raento & Brunn 2005; Jones & Merriman 2009; Leib 2011). The strength of these studies is that they have shown that nationalism operates through mundane and apparently innocent objects and visualizations, which have previously been largely overlooked in academic research.

The discussion about banal nationalism is important for understanding the relationship between tourism images and nationalism, because it shows that representations can have concrete effects on people’s perceptions even if they are not studied in detail or taken entirely ‘seriously.’ The routinized consumption of tourism images reminds people of who they are and what their role is in a wider and nationalistic world order. In doing so, it efficiently supports the existence of national “imagined communities” (Anderson 1991).

However, recent discussions about banal nationalism have highlighted that it is impossible to make generalizations about how tourism images are consumed in real life situations (see paper III). Jones and Merriman (2009), for example, demonstrate the difficulty of differentiating tools of “banal” nationalism from other types of nationalistic objects and representations, because the same item can be used and interpreted in multiple ways depending on the context. They propose that the term “banal nationalism” is replaced by “everyday nationalism,” which entails all types of nationalistically charged representations and practices relevant to everyday life.

This idea is consistent with Allen’s (2003: 31) notions about the workings of seductive power through advertising. He points out that advertisers do not try to exercise direct control over their audiences, but rather suggest possible ways of thinking and acting. Because of this, individuals can choose to ignore or contest the messages of advertisements. Knudsen et al. (2007) follow the same line of reasoning in noting that, in the context of tourism, collateral information carried by individual tourists significantly affects the ways in which particular sites and landscapes are interpreted.

Papers III and V are informed by this discussion. They examine Finnish tourism images within the framework of “everyday nationalism” in order to highlight that, while the images of tourism brochures and guidebooks have carried nationalistic connotations, their meanings ultimately depend upon the social contexts in which they have been produced and consumed. Paper III situates tourism images in the everyday spaces and social networks in
which their content was made meaningful. It draws on Jan Penrose’s (2011) notions about the social constitution of “stateness” to show that, in the Finland of the 1920s, the production of tourism images was connected to the production of nearly identical images for geography school books. These images depicted the material base of Finnishness through the lens of the prominent individuals, whose geographical imagination was bound up with their own social position as “representatives of the state.” These individuals used visual means to position themselves in the cultural and political core of the nation-state. This position helped these prominent individuals to control the national territory and legitimized the assimilation of subordinate groups into their own value system.

Paper V highlights the complexity of visual messages embedded in tourism images. It shows that individual images have entailed multiple identity markers and references to different geographical scales. Especially in the late twentieth century, tourists were increasingly seduced to identify themselves with those scenes and sites that were important to Finnish national identity. It appears that the producers of the images were aware that “each visitor to a particular cultural landscape may arrive at a different interpretant, because each viewer brings to that landscape different collateral information” (Knudsen et al. 2007: 229). Sacred national monuments were therefore left open to multiple interpretations and uses, but they were persistently depicted in the images to remind people of their existence and centrality to experiences of Helsinki and Finland more generally.
5 CONCLUSIONS

This research contributes to existing knowledge about the relationship between tourism and nation-building by focusing on the case of Finland. Finland is a relatively young country, which has followed international examples to create its own distinctive national identity amid the national and global turmoil of the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. Because of this, the Finnish case elucidates the strategies through which tourism promoters have adapted their messages to the changing social, political, and cultural circumstances. Prominent landscape elements have been depicted persistently, but the ways of visualization have evolved according to global changes and political shifts. This confirms Jouni Häkli’s (2008) observation that national identities are fluid entities, which may change in time and yet, at the same time, maintain their essence, because they are grounded on stable core elements. Tourism images have played an important role in maintaining the symbolic core of Finnishness, because their ephemeral nature has enabled the flexible reproduction of national landscapes and landscape elements in new contexts.

This research also shows the applicability of recent discussions on the formation of national identities to the study of tourism and images (e.g. Jones & Merriman 2009; Penrose 2011). Tourism promotion does not happen separately from other means of communication. Earlier studies about the relationship between nationalism and everyday representations have focused mainly on “official” and distinguished tools of citizenship education, such as school books and landscape paintings (Paasi 1996; Herb 2004; Lukkarinen & Waenerberg 2004). Tourism images have largely been overlooked despite their importance to the popular conceptualizations of national identities in general and of Finnishness in particular. This study demonstrates the interconnectedness of various types of media by examining the mechanisms through which the images of tourist guides and geography school books became interwoven (paper III).

The study of tourism images supports understanding of the ways in which people make sense of particular national landscape elements, because tourism images attach meanings to real-world objects and are often read vis-à-vis physical landscapes (see MacCannell 1999). If we accept the claim of Knudsen (2008: 133) and his co-authors, that “[t]ourism is the act of deciphering the identity of a place from its landscape,” then it follows that tourism images can lend support to studies that investigate the evolution of meanings of cultural landscapes. This study sheds light especially on the landscape of Helsinki as an arena awash with identities through which ideas about Finnishness have been managed and made visible.

Furthermore, this study is valuable in that it highlights the “cultural unconscious,” which consists of “the routinized and taken-for-granted aspects of our thought and behavior,” and the “tacit assumptions upon which our routines are based” (Alasuutari 1995: 15). The cultural unconscious plays an important role in the production and consumption of tourism images, because these images are often conceptualized as somewhat banal marketing tools. For example, the framing of images has probably been guided partly by tacit knowledge about what are generally thought of as “[v]isually and socially undesirable sights” (Hunter 2008: 361). This is evident in the depictions of the skyline of Helsinki, which have had the tendency to emphasize the Lutheran Cathedral at the expense of the Orthodox Uspenski Cathedral. The omission of the Uspenski Cathedral from the images relates to its role as a symbol of “eastern
otherness” in the predominantly Lutheran Finland (see Raivo 1997; papers I, IV, and V). This dissertation suggests that the strength of the content-analytical studies lies in their ability to reveal repeated patterns in framing and other ways of visualization. Analyzing these patterns critically in relation to the original contexts of production and consumption of the analyzed images makes it possible to understand the workings of the cultural unconscious.

This research offers practical implications for producers of tourism marketing materials and specifically tourism images. As William Hunter (2008: 363–364) points out, tourism studies have been driven by two, sometimes conflicting interests: the search for “concrete and practical solutions to the problem of maximizing the economic benefits of tourism,” and the search for “solutions to the social risks that accompany the development of tourism.” As tourists’ awareness of sustainability issues and ethical aspects of tourism increase, it is becoming ever more difficult for tourism promoters to focus on maximizing profit without thinking about issues of power in relation to the concrete choices that they make. This study raises awareness about the historical palimpsest of meanings embedded in tourism landscapes and tourism images. In doing so, it encourages tourism promoters to consider the ways in which the cultural unconscious manifests itself in the tourism images and marketing materials, and to become more aware of the political nature of their own decisions.

Finally, this research raises some questions for future research. First, there is still room for new content-analytical studies on Finnish tourism images. For example, the ways in which national identity politics are played out through regional and local tourism images remain largely unexplored. Case studies on the tourism images of regional centers and smaller towns in Finland could enhance understanding of how tourism promotion at regional and local scales is, and has been, connected to wider nation-building endeavors. These investigations could also help researchers to achieve a more nuanced picture of the relationship between tourism promotion and regional differentiation within the nation-state.

Second, the richness of the visual knowledge embedded in tourism images calls for new studies on the stylistic devices used in these images. Studies could involve, for example, systematic analyses of the use of different angles of view, an issue which was only briefly touched upon in this study. Exploring stylistic devices would be interesting, because the cultural ideas and tacit assumptions that underlay tourism images often manifest themselves in subtle choices, which dictate how specific themes are depicted.

Third, the production and consumption of tourism images deserves more attention. There are studies about the different phases of the “circle of representation” in which tourism images are produced and consumed (e.g. Jenkins 2003). However, more case studies are needed about the institutional and social contexts within which tourism images are produced, the selection processes that go into the making of these images, and the ways in which tourism images are, and have been, interpreted in real-life situations. These case studies could reveal new things about the relationship between tourism imagery and people’s geographical imagination.

Finally, while it is often difficult to find written documents about past interpretations of tourism images, there are new tools that allow researchers to efficiently collect data from the contemporary users of tourism images. By way of example, new Internet-based services allow people to post their own stories and comments concerning historical and present-day images (e.g. Historypin 2013). These kinds of services
could potentially help researchers to gain new insights on the visual information embedded in tourism images, as well as on the ways in which people actually look at and interpret these images. The comments and stories generated by the public could also complement traditional research methods and lead to new interesting research questions concerning the production and reception of visual information.

**References**


Paper I

Territorially bounded representations of national and ethnic groups are popular in tourism promotion. They add to the appeal of tourist destinations and help tourists structure their spatial experiences. Simultaneously, they are used to define and present a nation in order to increase its social cohesion and distinctiveness. This study focuses on explaining how ideas of Finnishness have manifested themselves in tourism imagery on national and local scales. The examination is based on a literature review that illuminates the interrelationship between tourism and nationalism. Images and text extracts from tourism marketing materials exemplify the development of nationally charged meanings that have embodied and reinforced tourism practices from the end of the 1800s until the present day. The study shows a shift from openly nationalist messages towards more subtle identity-political and consumer-oriented messages. Despite these changes, national symbols are persistent in the Finnish tourism imagery, indicating their powerful role in the common-sense understanding of the world.

Salla Jokela, Department of Geosciences and Geography, P. O. Box 64, FI-00014 University of Helsinki, Finland. E-mail: <salla.jokela@helsinki.fi>


Teoreettisit näkökulmia nationalismiin ja matkailuun


Nationalismin tutkijoita on luokiteltu sen mukaan, pitävätkö se kansallisuus- ja suhteellisen tuoreena, yleensä 1700-luvulla syntynneenä ilmiönä, vai määrittelevätkö se ihmisen syntyperäiseksi taipumukseksi sitoutua tiettyyn kansakuntaan tai isännämaahan (Guibernau & Hutchinson 2001; Pakkasvirta & Saukkonen 2005). Näiden modernistien ja primordialistien välinen asetus vaihtelee nationalismissa toimivien etnisten ryhmien muodostelmien ja niiden sisäisten symbolien merkitystä kannalta. Nationalismin käsitteeseen on soveltuva etninen, yleensä 1700-luvun ja nykyajan aikuisena vaiheena, yleensä 1700-luvun aikaisena, yleensä nykyaikaan ja nykyään vastaavaa historiallista ja laajaavuutta omaan kulttuurihistorialliseen tutkimukseen.


Kaikki matkailun markkinoinmiseksi tuotetut kuvat eivät ole nacionalistisesti värityneitä, mutta monesti näennäisen neutralaalitkin maisemakuvat vahvistavat kuluttajien käsityksiä territorioihin kytkeytyvien kansallisten ja etnisten ryhmien erityispiirteistä. Samalla kuvat vahvistavat näiden erityispiirteiden asemaa ihmisten sosiospatiaalissessa tietoisuudessa esimerkiksi ”ekosoiomalta” matkakohteita (Fürsch 2002: 217; ks. Paasi 1996). Erityisen näkyvästi kansallista symbolikaa hyödynnetään pääkaupunkien markkinoinnis-
sa, sillä monet niiden tärkeimmistä nähtävyysisät kuvastavat valtion valtaa ja historiaa (ks. van der Wusten 2001).


Banaalin nationalismin esiintymisumoista kuvattessaan Billig (1995: 40) erottaa toisistaan *lihetetut (waved)* ja *liehuttamatottomat (unwaved)* liipit. Havainnollistan niiden eroa kuvalta, joka on ilmestynyt Helsingin matkailu- ja kongressitoimiston suomalaiselle ja kansainväliselle yleisölle suunnattu matkaesiiteessä (kuva 1). Siinä nuo-

ri mies seiso kädessään liehutettu lippu, johon hän suhtautuu tunteellisesti. Esitteeseen painettu
kaava toimii kuitenkin liehutamattomana lippu­na, sillä se mielletään ariskeksi ja sivatuetaan il­man juhlallisuuksia. Tallaisilla lähes huomamat­
tomilla, nationalistisesti latautuneilla representa­
tioilla on Billigin mukaan tärkeä rooli kansallis­valtioiden ylläpitäjänä ja uusijatina. Ne muistut­
tavat ihmisiä heidän kansallisista sidoksistaan. Ul­komaalaisetkin pystyvät usein tulkitsemaan kan­
sallista merkistöstä rinnastamalla sen omaa identi­
teettä edustaviin kansallisiiin symboleihin.

Matkailun edistäminen institutionalisoituu

Matkailun edistäminen järjestäytyi Suomessa 1800-luvun lopputahtoon. Tuolloin matkailun edel­
lyykset kohenevat länsimaisissa suurten yhteis­
kunnallisten muutosten, kuten kaupungistumisen, teollistumisen ja liikenneteknologian edistyksen
seurauksena (Kostiainen ym. 2004: 95–171; Anders­
lähtien Suomen Matkailuliitto eli SML) toiminta
matkailun edistämiseksi kytkeytyi vahvasti kanso­jen ja kansallisuuksien juuria etiivän ja vaalivaan


SMY:n johtohahmot olivat aikaansa seuraavia tiedemiehiä ja politikkoja, jotka toimivat valtion
vallalla ja perustelivat toimintaansa kansalliselle edullta (Hrn & Markkanen 1987). Kansalliso­
ravitellun liikkeen traditiohahmon kaikuja välttivät muun

Matkailun edistämisen perusteluissa ilmenee talou­
dellisten etujen korostamisen ohella länsimaisen
epistemologian mukainen ajatus "omini silmin" nä­
kemisestä ja kokemisesta syvällisen tuntemisen
edellytysenä (Cosgrove 1984: 8–9; Hrn & Mark­
itten tutustumaan isänmaahansa ennen muun mai­hin matkustamista (vrt. Shaffer 2001). SMY:n asia­
kirjoissa keskitytään Suomen rajon sisäpuolella
tapaukseen ja sinne suuntautuvien matkailuun, mikä osoittaa osaltaan matkailun edistämisen ol­leen kansallisesti painottuvan. Suomalaisia kan­

Suomessa on hyvä esimerkki matkailun ja

Katkelma osoittaa, että matkailun ajateltiin vaikut­
tavan ulkomaalaisten Suomea koskeviin mieli­


Figure 2. This image of the Imatra Rapids was published in the guidebook *Karjala* of the Tourist Society in Finland in 1925. It was positioned in the nineteenth-century landscape painting tradition that supported the development of the rapids as a national tourist sight and affected practices of tourism (see Hirn & Markkanen 1987: 38–41; 63–68). The Imatra Rapids appeared as an organic part of the national territory, because they were contextualized as part of the outlet of “the thousands of lakes” (*Karjala* 1925: 17, 47).


**Matkailu, kuva ja nationalismi muuttuvassa suomalaisessa yhteiskunnassa**

Matkailun edistämiseksi tuotetut representaatiot on sopeutettu joustavasti muuttuviin yhteiskunnallisiin ja poliittisiin tilanteisiin (vrt. Paasi 1996: 137–166; Ateljevic & Doorne 2002; Häyrynen 2004; Raento & Brunn 2005; Kosonen 2008; Raen-

Figure 3. The statue Shipwrecks on Tähtitorninnäkä Hill in Helsinki symbolized in the beginning of the twentieth century the Finns’ battle against the oppression by Russia. In that way it reflected the politicized national sentiments that emerged after “the years of oppression”. The image published in a brochure of the Tourist Society in Finland exemplifies how tourist sights, and the images produced to promote them, were used to mediate hegemonic ideas about Finland’s national identity and geopolitical positioning (A guide to Helsinki 1910).


Tämä näkyy muun muassa siinä, kuinka Helsinki keskustaa kuvattui Helsingin kaupungin urheilu- ja retkeilytoimiston 1950–60-luvuilla julkaisemissa esitteissä, jotka ilmestivät saman


Figure 4. Tourism offered a subtle way to emphasize Finland’s ties to the West during the cold war, when Finland was tightly in the sphere of influence of the Soviet Union. In the cover of a brochure published in 1954 a bow of a ship creates associations of “maritimeness” and good traffic connections. At the same time it steers the reader’s gaze towards the Lutheran Great Church in the middle of the image, symbolically connecting Helsinki to protestant Western Europe. The Russian Orthodox Uspenski Cathedral on the eastern side of the Great Church is excluded from the image (Helsinki, Helsingfors 1954). Reproduced with permission of the City of Helsinki Sports Department.
Matkailukuvaston kansalliset merkit postmodernissa yhteiskunnassa


Matkailukuvaston kansalliset merkit postmodernissa yhteiskunnassa


Salla Jokela Kuvitetutta matkoja isänmaahan… 13

Figure 5. During the past decades, increasing individuality has integrated national symbols in a broader imagery, designed to appeal to carefully defined target groups. In the brochure "Bohemian Nordic Oddity", published by the Helsinki City Tourist & Convention Bureau, signs of Finnishness (sauna) are combined with references to easy-going lifestyle (long male hair), sexuality (naked upper body, a beer bottle as a metaphor of an erection), and relaxed leisure (shopping in an antiquarian bookshop). Of these elements, the tourists can pick the ones they want as the raw material of their own experiences (Bohemian Nordic Oddity 2005). Reproduced with permission of the Helsinki City Tourist & Convention Bureau.

näkyy Helsingin kaupungin matkailu- ja kongressitoimiston tavassa sitoa boheemiin elämäntapaan viittaavat kansainvälisten ja paikallistason merkit kansallisen tason symboliin (kuva 5). Rentoutuessaan saunomalla ja nauttimaalla olutta esitteissä kuvatttu mieshenkilö ilmentää ja vaalii suomalaisia lauantai-illan perinnettä. Samaan aikaan hän kuivistaa ja ruokkii mielikuvia esimerkiksi slaavilaisen rouheasta mielenlaadusta sekä pohjoismaisesta mutkattomuudesta ja luonnonläheisyydestä.


Kansainvälisyyneesissä maailmassa ja alueiden Euroopassa on yksittäisen kansallisen ja kansallisen identiteetin kannalta yhä tärkeämpää korostaa oman maan tuntemista ja sen luonnon ja kulttuurin kokemista. Tämän saavuttamiseksi tarvitaan vastuullista, ihmisen ja ympäristön arvot huomioon ottavaa matkailua (Suomen Matkailijayhdistyksen kotisivu 2009).


Johtopäätökset

Matkailun edistämiseksi tuotetut kuvat syntyvät muiden matkailullisten representaatioiden tavoin
tuottajan, tuotteen ja kuluttajan välisessä vuorovaikutuksessa. Visuaalisen todistusvoimana toimii kyseisiä symbolia, jotka ovat edelleen tunnettuja ja tunnistettavia jopa avioliitoksessa, vaikka heidän maailmastaan ei ole tullut yhtä hypoteettistä kymmenestä symbolista. Aikuiset ovat kuitenkin sujuvasti kunnioittaneet kyseisiä symbolia, mutta yleisö osaa heidän merkityksenään ainoastaan eroavansa heidän olemuksiltaan.

Kuvien merkityksen syvällinen ymmärtäminen edellyttää paitsi kuvattavien symbolien ymmärtämistä, myös ku­vi­en tuottajan ymmärtämistä. Hyvää esimerkkiä tästä on olemassa nuoria filosofia­aineita ymmärtämistä, joka korostaa kansojen ja nii­den asutamisen territorioita ja maailmaa. Tämä katse ulottuu kuvattavien matkakohteiden (tuote) ohella matkailijoihin (ku­luttajat).


Karjala (1925). Suomen Matkailijayhdistyksen mukai­luoppaat XI. 167 s.


Suomen Matkailijayhdistyksen kirjeenvaihtoaa (1909). *Suomen Matkailuliiton arkisto Ha 2 1909–1922, Kansallisarkisto*.


Paper II

4 Collecting visual materials from secondary sources

Salla Jokela and Pauliina Raento

Introduction

A growing portion of the information steering tourists’ decision-making and behaviour is in visual form. Promotional images decorate brochures, websites, and postcards. These media offer valuable secondary sources for research purposes, because they shed light on the values and desires of tourism promoters and tourists. These sources are called “secondary,” because those who created them are not involved in the research process.

In this chapter, we will discuss themes related to the collection of visual materials from secondary sources. The examples will illustrate how to choose and access secondary sources that fit a particular research purpose and how to justify the choice of material by contextualizing it in previous research and society. We will also address saturation and representativeness of data and ways of ordering the data collection process and the collected material.

Five examples

Secondary source materials can be collected from multiple media at various times and places. The goal is to reach a manageable, reliable, and representative sample that fits the purpose in question. But where to start and how much material is needed? The agony is that there are no simple answers that would serve all projects. Instead, new questions emerge as the project proceeds. They need careful attention, for a solid process of data collection is a necessary prerequisite for success in the rest of the research project, discussed in the other chapters of this book.

We will exemplify the collection of visual materials from secondary sources with five types of data, which are accessible and inexpensive because they are mass-produced: (1) destination brochures; (2) postcards; (3) postage stamps; (4) the Internet; and (5) historical landscape photographs. These are a staple part of tourists’ daily routines, and therefore global in character. Yet these data tell unique stories, for each place, country, or company within the universal framework of tourism and destination marketing has its own “personality.” Connections to multiple scales and processes relevant to society and the
tourism industry make these source materials suitable for several purposes. The amount of material can be adjusted to serve a show-and-tell, a term paper, a thesis, and a full scholarly research project with ambitious publishing goals. These five types of data are student- and teacher-friendly, but their collection demands rigour to make the abundance manageable.

Another characteristic that these secondary source materials share is a connection to broad social issues, ideologies, and to the ways these work. In the case of commonly used visual materials, relevant contexts include the promotion, marketing, and image-making of places; representation of destinations and lifestyles, national or other ideologies and shared values; and the basic mechanisms of propaganda and persuasion, which include both political messages and marketing talk. These frameworks have been applied previously in interdisciplinary tourism studies to the same or similar materials. Photographs have been studied extensively (e.g. Osborne 2000; Jenkins 2003), and some research exists on destination brochures and postcards (e.g. Edwards 1996; Buzinde et al. 2006). The Internet is attracting attention, as tourism advertisement and booking of trips have moved online (e.g. Hashim et al. 2007; Kim and Fesenmaier 2008). In turn, very little has been said in tourism research about postage stamps, even if their pictures have depicted tourism-related themes for over 100 years (Raento 2009a). Knowing what kind of studies exist about similar materials is necessary, for previous research always supports new projects. What others have written helps in defining the foci of a new project, by steering research questions or solutions to particular dilemmas. Each data set is nevertheless unique so that a scholar must answer specific questions and make defensible, informed choices about that material. The material itself often helps in developing the project so that the process moves simultaneously in multiple directions. All projects are learning processes, but good preparation can eliminate unnecessary errors.

We will ask questions that are typical of the data collection process. We use our own research and therefore Finland as an example, but what we say is broadly applicable to other types of materials, sources, and places. Our work—and these guidelines—is supported by a research philosophy that can be summarized in four points. First, we believe that what people do in their daily life matters for serious scholarly work. We therefore swear by the value of everyday “stuff” in teasing out the best potential of case studies and producing new, abstract knowledge about human societies. Second, we believe that research is, and should be, fun. Everyday “stuff” tends to meet this criterion because it often leads to brain-stimulating revelations (“Oh, I never thought about that, even if it’s been under my nose all this time!”). Third, we believe that new ideas should be treated with intellectual curiosity and be given the opportunity to show their worth. We therefore deem important the overcoming of any remaining scholarly resistance against exploring this mundane “stuff.” And fourth, we believe in the value of interdisciplinarity. Curiosity that ignores disciplinary boundaries often rewards by broadening insights and saves efforts by combining them (Raento 2009b).
We now turn to the five examples that illustrate the collection of visual materials from secondary sources. Tourism brochure images show how solid contextualization justifies the collection and definition of data. Postcards instruct how to create a representative sample from a seemingly infinite range of options. Postage stamps exemplify one way to collect a comprehensive sample that covers everything there is. Online sources highlight source criticism and suggest that the most convenient source may not be the most suitable one. Finally, landscape photographs address archival work, including issues about access, recording of information, and the interplay between research questions and data collection.

**Images in tourism brochures**

Tourists like brochures, for they are inexpensive (free), accessible, and easy to carry around. Their images inform about a destination at one glance. They also reinforce place-bound stereotypes and identities and tell about the values and ideologies of their producers and consumers. Pictures in brochures shape the ways in which tourists behave in, and look at, a destination’s landscape. Brochures may also function as souvenirs that distribute ideas and images of a destination to the tourist’s home community. To understand these mechanisms students of tourism brochures must ask, already at the data collection stage, who produced their images, why this was done, and in what context all this happened.

**Practical Tips 4.1**

**GET THE BIG PICTURE**

Comprehensive groundwork that supports the entire study process starts at the early stages of data collection. The following three “commands” have made us perform better:

- **Read!** Reading broadly helps in understanding the data. Start by identifying the most relevant sources in order to manage the flood of information. Think creatively about keywords and learn to use library and research databases to discover what is out there. Many books can be previewed online.

- **Look around!** Good knowledge about cultural visual references – popular or otherwise – aids in comprehending the multiple messages embedded in images and in creating solid data sets. Learn about symbols, motifs, and the meanings of stylistic devices.

- **Listen!** Valuable background information about the data can be available in oral form. Many producers of visual materials are willing to discuss their goals and world views. Ask politely for some time to chat and you may be rewarded with new insights.
A study about the tourism brochure images of Finland’s capital city Helsinki shows how data collection is tied to data analysis and how preparation is needed before collecting can begin. The project started from a general interest in tourism, political landscape studies, visual methodologies, and the history of Finland. Studies about these topics elsewhere showed that tourism promotion was frequently used as an identity-political tool during historical transition periods (e.g. Morgan and Pritchard 1998; Ateljevic and Doorne 2002). Further contextualization—inquiries into Finland’s complex political history between East (Russia) and West (Sweden)—raised a question of how tourism promotion was used in this country and what would explain its particular applications. The focus settled on Helsinki, because its tourism imagery was little studied despite the capital city’s historical role as the “façade for Finland” (Jokela 2011). What kind of source materials would best illustrate these processes in this case?

An overview of promotional publications of Helsinki was available at the National Library of Finland, which houses a large collection of tourism brochures, itineraries, guidebooks, and catalogues. This abundance of data encouraged the limitation of the study to a manageable, yet analytically interesting sample of brochures. The data selection process concluded with ten brochures (with a total of 127 images), published by the Excursion Section of the Sport and Excursion Office of the City of Helsinki. The selection was data-driven and relied on grounding the project in previous research. Consultation of previous research thus supported sound choices in data collection.

A scholar should be able to defend a particular data collection process and to explain the choices so that the exercise can be evaluated. This imagery of ten brochures was deemed suitable for the investigation of tourism promotion in changing political and cultural circumstances for four key reasons. The brochures were published in the 1950s and 1960s, when Finland was recovering from World War II. In the context of the Cold War, Finland adjusted to a new geopolitical situation and established close relations with the Soviet Union, the former enemy. A need to nurture Finnish national identity and to create a distinct, internationally attractive image for Helsinki followed the political change. The globally booming tourism industry facilitated the promotion of Helsinki as a thriving destination especially for Western tourists.

Second, the Sport and Excursion Office was the leading producer of Helsinki tourism brochures after the war. Third, publications of the City of Helsinki offered valuable contextualizing information about the operation of the Office and the circulation and language selection of the brochures. By way of example, these supporting materials revealed that the Office was the first agency designated to specifically attend to the needs of tourists. This confirmed that the material indeed represented the official tourism promotion of Helsinki. Statistics about the edition size, and the multiple languages used in the brochures, led to the assumption that these images represented what tourists encountered when they searched for information about Helsinki.
Fourth, these brochures comprised the first coherent and extensively illustrated brochure series of the city.

The example shows how early and comprehensive contextualization of data in research and society supports its collection, because this helps to decide what should be included in, and what excluded from, the study. Once the choice of material is justified, a representative sample can be collected efficiently and defended at all stages of the study.

**Postcards**

Postcards are a staple part of global tourism. Tourists send them to family and friends despite the possibilities of electronic communication. Tourism promoters and place marketers in every destination therefore produce postcards that illustrate the place and cater to a variety of tastes. The imagery on postcards reflects the techniques its producers use in place-promotion—and the preferences and perceptions of their consumers. The often massive number of choices challenges a student of postcards to collect a representative sample. Going beyond a random or hastily collected “convenience sample” requires thinking about, and making, defendable choices about the data collection process. One goal is to manage time, money, and effort.

Three basic questions—*when*, *where*, and *how*—gave order to the data collection process in an inquiry into the representation and marketing of Helsinki in postcard imagery. As an answer to the first question, the collection was scheduled to take place at the height of the local tourism season and before a major international tourism event in central Helsinki—the World Championships in Track and Field Athletics at the Olympic Stadium in the summer of 2005. The reasoning went that at that time the broadest possible selection of postcards would be available for a tourist touring the city. Statistics about typical visitation length to Helsinki defended the collection period of a few days (which also made things convenient for the collector)—this was the expected time a foreign tourist would spend in town. The selection would be at its widest because the postcard dealers would stock up in anticipation of peak sales during a season when visitation was generally high. Informal chats with the postcard vendors during data collection confirmed that this assumption was correct.

The question *where* pointed to kiosks, souvenir shops, and book stores. What locations would best support the collection of a representative sample? The process started with thinking about where tourists go to buy postcards. Statistics about visitation to individual sites and first-hand long-term observations about what tourists do in Helsinki helped in choosing locations. Chats with friends about where one would guide tourists to buy postcards in central Helsinki confirmed the choices. Types of tourists and travel budgets were factored in loosely so that there was variation in the pricing of postcards and style of vendors. Based on these factors six initial collection points were selected: a historic market hall in a neighbourhood with bohemian-
professional, student-alternative, and recent immigrant flavours; the main post office and an upscale bookstore in the core of the city; a souvenir store complex next to several popular sites off the immediate Downtown area; a UNESCO world heritage outdoors destination, with multiple little shops and kiosks of various characters; and a busy kiosk at the central railway station.

The guiding principles of how were representation and saturation. The goal was to create an exhaustive sample of those Helsinki-depicting postcards that were available at the moment of visitation in these locations. This sample would represent the maximum selection available to the tourist during an average-length visit. The available images would only be counted in (and purchased) once, but notes were taken about repeated appearance. The idea of saturation meant that the sample could be considered representative when new locations no longer significantly added to the sample. Therefore adding locations was an option, if the six places would not suffice. But this did not happen, for the last two collection points had very few new images. At this point of saturation the collection included some 300 postcards, which was a reasonable number for analysis and within the budget. It helped that the managers of those stores where the largest purchases were made were willing to negotiate a bulk price in support of scholarly work. During the time-consuming scanning of the available imagery, the vendors discussed the production and distribution of tourism postcards in Helsinki. This was valuable background information at the stage of data analysis.

Postage stamps

The sending of a postcard requires a postage stamp, which is one overlooked but powerful data source in visual tourism studies. Stamps are official documents of the issuing state and therefore their images reflect the sources of national pride in that country. Because stamps communicate to international audiences via global mail, their pictures can promote places and impressions. What makes stamps particularly useful for examining national representations and promotional campaigns is that they form spatially and temporally comprehensive, easily accessible, and comparable samples. In other words, everything that there is, and has ever been, can be included and then split into smaller data sets for specific purposes. The typical number of stamps per country ranges from one to three thousand. From these wholes smaller comparable samples can be created by limiting time or theme.

So how does one gather a complete set of stamps without going bankrupt at the collector store? A search on the Internet, and a chat at the post office and at a collector’s store, will confirm that information about a country’s postage stamps is easy to find. National postal services have stamp-issuing programs, under which dozens of new stamps are issued every year. Selling them to collectors is good business for the issuing country and private entrepreneurs, so both postal services and major philatelic dealers publish yearbooks and catalogues about what is available. They typically include a
Collecting visual materials

colour image and information of each and every stamp issued in a country or region in a given time. For scholarly purposes an official (or widely used and trusted commercial) catalogue suffices, especially if its contents are checked against the collection of originals at the postal museum. Additional information can be found through the websites and publications of national postal services (e.g. www.posti.fi and the free Stamp Info in Finland) and of collectors (e.g. www.filatelia.net and Suomen Postimerkkilehti, a magazine by Finnish philatelists). A selection of original stamps can be purchased for a closer look and illustration purposes once the study proceeds. In terms of access to complete sets of source material, stamps resemble travel magazines, the full volumes of which are easy to gather (see Lutz and Collins 1993, about a study of photographs in National Geographic).

A study about tourism and nationalism on Finnish stamps relied on the above-described sources (Raento 2009a). The data was collected from the annual commercial Finnish stamp catalogue LAPE, but cross-checked against the originals at the Postal Museum in Helsinki. The collection process zoomed in toward the final sample at two phases. The first phase formed part of a broader study about visual methodologies and political geography, for which a systematic sample of Finnish stamps was collected (see Raento and Brunn 2005). The first task was to determine where to start and end the collection, for Finland’s stamp history dates back to 1856 and new stamps are issued every year. Because of the complex political history of Finnish stamps, a decision was made to ignore all stamps issued before independence and to start from the first markka-valued issue of independent Finland in 1917. The change of currency from the national markka to the euro in the European Union in 2002 provided a convenient end year. The focus on state-wide public access helped in justifying the exclusion of all those stamps that had been issued for special purposes (e.g. type of cargo) or regions (e.g. autonomy, occupied territory). Because the focus was on the images, philatelic details were ignored (e.g. multiple issues with the same picture but different watermarks or perforation). The first phase of data collection thus included all markka-valued stamps of independent continental Finland that depicted different images: 1,501 stamps from 1917 to the end of 2001.

In the second phase the sample was narrowed down to study images about tourism, leisure, and recreation. The stamps were selected by determining the primary theme in each image. Because many images carry multiple messages, this challenge required the cross-checking of multiple supporting sources, including official information about the purpose of each issue. The guiding principle was that each decision to include or exclude an image would have to be defendable and in line with the other decisions about the selection. One tough decision was to exclude all bird stamps despite the popularity of bird-watching and the known value of these stamps as bird-watchers’ souvenirs and collectables. The argument was that these stamps were primarily zoological and these birds were not exclusive to Finland (even if typical of its fauna), so that one would not have to travel to Finland to see them.
Some decisions about what to include and what to exclude from a set of visual material are more obvious than others. A Finnish postage stamp, issued in 1947, exemplifies why broad background knowledge about the society surrounding the data is necessary in the collection of visual materials from secondary sources (see Figure 4.1). Knowing that Koli, the place named on the stamp, is a nationally important landscape and tourism destination in Finland, connects the lake view to the tourism industry and to Finnish nation-building. The Finnish- and Swedish-language text reveals that the stamp celebrates an anniversary of the Tourist Society in Finland. Text often accompanies images and adds to their message. Sometimes access to a foreign language may be needed to get the full picture. This image of a natural landscape was included in a study about Finnish tourism, nation-building, and postage stamps because of its multiple connections to tourism (Raento 2009a).

Through this reasoning, the data gradually fell under seven categories that simultaneously supported the ordering of the data collection. They covered times of leisure and recreation (e.g. holidays); sites in cities and rural areas; wilderness; and various activities related to outdoors and relaxation. Explicit promotions of tourism were also included, and so was philately (including international stamp exhibitions). The second phase resulted in a total of 381 stamps, the data for the study about tourism and nationalism on Finnish postage stamps (Raento 2009a).

**Online materials**

The Internet has shaken up the world of tourism by facilitating immediate, easy distribution of information across the globe and by creating virtual leisure
options and communities. Many “traditional” source materials suitable for visual analysis are now online: tourism brochures, advertisements, electronic postcards, and illustrated travel blogs are among the examples.

One important challenge in the collection of online materials is to decide how to choose from a zillion hits on Google. Here geographical scale can help. In a project that examined how Finland is being promoted online, the data had to concern the entire country (national scale) and be produced by national tourism authorities (official image). Behind this focus was our interest in the role of tourism in state-led place-promotion and image-making. Following this reasoning the *Visit Finland* Internet site, by the Finnish Tourist Board, was chosen for closer inspection, as it is the most important site for “official” state-led tourism promotion in Finland (www.visitfinland.com).

That the Internet is a “democratic” forum where anyone can have a voice can both help and burden an online data collector. On the one hand, online source materials offer access to the study of those meanings that users attach to tourism destinations and their visual representations. For example, users of *Visit Finland* can share their experiences online and download photos of Finland. On the other hand, everything might not be what it first seems, and verifying who is behind a particular site can be difficult. The source can be biased and abundance can complicate reliable comparisons. Therefore determining what (or whom) the material represents can be difficult. Site administrators choose what is published on a site and emphasised in its layout. Many users of tourism-related sites are affluent individuals, who keep pace with technological change and can afford to travel, and therefore represent only a fraction of all people touched by this medium. Furthermore, Internet access is uneven, as some countries impose restrictions on their citizens’ online activities or censor certain sites. These issues of bias and representativeness are reasons why online materials underscore the need for source criticism already at the data collection stage.

Caution is needed also because of the immediate nature of the Internet, where things seem to happen *now* in one big global space. Things constantly change online. This “instability” poses a data storage challenge to the collector of online source materials. Web page contents change or sites disappear altogether, which complicates finding the same materials even shortly after their initial collection. This means that the data collector must preserve all data in the version that was available at the moment of collection. Internet sites can be stored in multiple ways. One way is to print the pages, which may ease their comparison but is wasteful—and many sites contain multimedia and flash shows that do not print well. In our examination of the *Visit Finland* site, these visualizations were stored by taking snapshots of the screen (using the Print Screen key). The pictures were then pasted onto a photo-editing program and saved for further use. This guaranteed that the entire data set stayed unchanged and represented “the big picture” in a given, concentrated moment of data collection.
Taking snapshots of the screen is a practical way to record Internet pages without losing visual information (see Figure 4.2). Snapshots reproduce the organization of visual elements in the original material. This is one way to meet the scholar’s responsibility of storing the data in its original form.

The short history of the Internet, together with its changing nature, highlights the present time. This means that studies based on online sources typically examine what happens “now” or otherwise cover a very limited time period, even though some old web pages can be accessed through an online archive (www.archive.org/index.php). This means that the Internet may not be suitable as a data source for projects that involve a historical perspective or require an in-depth understanding of long-term change. Even if the Internet is accessible
Collecting visual materials 63

Practical Tips 4.2
WHAT IS REPRESENTATIVE ANYWAY?

What makes data representative, and how much data is enough, are difficult questions. At one extreme the postage stamps can cover everything there is with a reasonable amount of work. At the other extreme, the Internet offers infinite options.

How much data is needed for credible representativeness depends on multiple factors. These may include access issues, purpose of study, and research questions. An in-depth content analysis of tourism-promotional imagery for methodological purposes is a different project from an empirical study of a destination’s image. Answers are always case-specific.

The following questions aid in determining the limits and limitations of a data set:

• What is the data supposed to represent?
• What can this particular data be used for?
• What answers can this data give?
• What kind of conclusions can this data support?

These questions must be asked (and often answered) already at the data collection stage, because they steer both methods and results.

at home or in the nearest library, and is very convenient to use, it may not be the right data source for all projects. Matching a secondary source to a project is therefore a crucial part of planning the data collection process.

As a relatively new medium the Internet also highlights changes in ways scholars think about source materials and their collection. Generation and technological savvy are important factors in this regard. For today’s teenagers the logic of the Internet is often readily more legible than to their grandparents. In any case, one challenge that needs to be considered in the gathering of online sources is to figure out how a website is structured and how a typical Internet user navigates on it. The procedure is typically non-linear so that the users concentrate on searching for specific information or click spontaneously on icons and links that please them. This fragmentation highlights the importance of well-formulated research questions that support the data collection: What is it that one is supposed to find out, and look for, in this particular project?

Our aim was to understand in a general way the use, functions, and mutual relationships of visual elements on a national country-promoting website. We first proceeded to find out that Visit Finland has a multi-centred and
hierarchical order, like most Internet sites, which greatly helped in comprehending the whole. A site map linked to the front page explained the structure. The main titles indicated what themes the tourism promoters responsible for the site considered to be central, while secondary issues were listed underneath. In order to harvest all relevant information from the site in a given moment, we saved the content of all these pages in a systematic way, making sure that our storage system preserved the individual pages’ mutual order, hierarchies, and layout.

**Landscape photographs**

*Gatekeepers* sometimes control access to secondary sources of visual materials. These people between scholars and the data include archivists whose job is to preserve rare and valuable materials. These people decide the conditions for using an archival collection, and control documentation and information flows. To guarantee successful collaboration the scholar wanting to use an archive must obey its rules and behave in a respectful manner. Good planning is of paramount importance, for one may have to explain in plain language why access to particular source materials is needed or what kind of material one hopes to find in the collection.

Archival work was necessary to carry out a study about the role of historical landscape photographs in Finnish tourism promotion (Jokela and Linkola 2009). The project explored how photos were used to enhance national solidarity and consciousness in a newly independent country which, before 1917, had belonged to Imperial Russia. After an inspection of virtual and manual databases supplied by various archives, a closer look was taken at the collections of the National Archives of Finland. These housed an extensive set of printed papers of the Tourist Society in Finland. Research literature about the history of tourism in Finland had confirmed that this society was the most important national tourism promoter during the examined time period, so this source appeared to be the most logical choice. Of particular interest was a series of eleven guidebooks from the 1920s, which comprised the first systematic and extensive body of illustrated promotional publications about Finland.

Sorting through the archive was easy, because the folders containing the source materials were brought to a reading room at a few hours advance notice and they could be handled without mandatory supervision of an archivist. However, patience and creative thinking were needed to figure out the ordering logic of the old collections and to gather the desired material. It turned out that the material was catalogued under the year in which the archive had received it, rather than per year of publication or per theme. Accordingly, the guidebook material was split between several somewhat randomly ordered folders and buried under other items that had no relevance to this project. The rules of the archive obliged the visitors to keep all materials in their original order, which meant that there was no fast way out (such as rearranging the contents of some folders).
The first task, therefore, was to record in detail the contents of each folder to facilitate the data collection. Permission to use a digital camera and a laptop for record-keeping were obtained from the staff. This technology had several advantages in book-keeping. One was its speed, another was the low cost of photographing compared to photocopying. It also felt like an ethically sound choice, for both the camera and the laptop saved plenty of paper (that would eventually turn into waste). Avoiding the copy machine also protected the delicate old documents from bending, which made the archivist happy. In order to avoid the trouble of returning to the archive to patch up the data set, every item was recorded at this stage of data collection. It is typical of data processing that certain details seem insignificant at first, but turn out to be valuable later. This thoroughness is even more important if the archive is far away or in a cultural setting where the understanding of meaningful details may require additional background work.

In the end, the laborious logic of the archival collection turned out to be a blessing in disguise. Browsing through various publications offered information that was necessary in the data collection process. For example, the Yearbooks of the Tourist Society in Finland contained details about the production of the examined guidebook series. These publications confirmed that all relevant materials had indeed been collected. Very importantly, unexpected encounters helped in developing and focusing the original research question about the use of touristic photos in civic education for national unity. For example, a 1920 issue of the Finnish-language *Tourist Magazine* (*Matkailulehti*) included a contribution by a prominent Finnish geographer

---

**Practical Tips 4.3**

**GOOD RECORD-KEEPING PAYS OFF**

Good record-keeping at data collection stage saves time, money, and nerves. The following guidelines have helped in our projects:

- Creative adjustment to circumstances is cost-efficient. A pencil holds better on paper than a pen in cold climes. A (cell phone) camera can be faster and environmentally sounder than the copy machine.
- What now seems obvious may be hard to figure out later. File data systematically and go back patiently if you change or forget something. Notes about how the material was organized will help finding it later.
- It is easier to delete unnecessary notes than to keep going back to the source to double-check things. Pay attention to detail and record them. Match individual data items, locations, and times of collection.
- Leaving records hanging guarantees a loss of valuable information. Write out and organize all notes immediately after each assignment.
Ragnar Numelin, who stated that “tourism should work for geography’s favor, or vice versa.” Implying a close and early link between the goals of tourism promotion and academic geography in Finland, this finding demanded a more-detailed-than-anticipated look at the connections between the landscape imageries used in Finnish tourism guidebooks and popular-geographical publications in the 1920s.

The example shows why it is important to accept that an archive’s logic may not match that of the scholar, but valuable new knowledge may reward patience and curiosity. Small clues that reflect the spirit of an age and past ways of thinking may add value to the collected material or complement it. These past ways may have been self-evident for the contemporaries who produced the scholar’s source materials, but a scholar who lives in the present time may have to work hard to understand them. This “big picture” typically comes together piece by piece. Intuition, empathy, and imagination are therefore valuable assets in systematic data collection from secondary sources.

**Ethical issues**

No data exists in a vacuum, for someone produces it. In the case of secondary data sources, choices of themes, layout, and media are embedded in the data in multiple layers—from the production decisions of these materials to the scholar who collects, examines, and interprets them. These processes take place in particular times, spaces, and societies, to which they need to be connected and against which they must be interpreted. The requirement to think critically about connections also applies to the scholars themselves, because choices are always subjective. The cultural, political, and socio-economic background and past experiences of individuals condition their decisions and ways to see the world. This possibility of bias—or the ability to see (or not see) something—must be addressed in data collection.

The reliability of the process can be strengthened by performing what tourism researchers Echtner and Prasad (2003) have called “cross-checks.” In these check-ups different sources of information are placed in dialogue with one another to cross-examine each other’s credibility. This is particularly necessary in the case of visual data research, where under examination are representations of culture, gender, and ethnicity; perceptions and prejudices of hosts and visitors; and power relations and their consequences. One way to control the inherent subjectivity of one’s mind is to collaborate with other researchers, perhaps across cultural, national, and disciplinary boundaries, and openly discuss the possibility of bias. In a study about postage stamps a comparative critical discussion between two scholars opened new insights at every stage of the research process (Raento and Brunn 2005). The participants came from the same academic field and professional backgrounds of similar international experience, but were of different nationality, gender, and generation. An explicit acknowledgement and thinking through of the impact of
differently conditioned perspectives greatly increased the credibility of the project and its results.

Another way to perform “cross-checks” is to employ a broad range of background materials in support of the data collection process. The discussed examples show how first-hand knowledge of the study environment was combined with information gathered through discussion, statistics, and online and other searches. Previous scholarly work helped in making decisions about data collection by offering possible, tested solutions to particular problems. A successful and responsible collection process thus relies on the power of *intertextuality*—on the explicit, critical discourse between multiple sources, which includes the researcher’s understanding of his/her subjective self.

One’s behaviour is another ethical issue. It requires finding out about, and obeying, rules in archives and similarly respectful conduct in other data collection sites, be they corner kiosks, souvenir stores, or administrative offices. Considerate behaviour includes civil and culturally appropriate treatment of people, and the making of fair deals with vendors. Success of the collection of secondary source materials often depends on common sense and sensitivity to changing situations. Friendliness, politeness, and cultural caution are readily accessible assets of all scholars—whose responsibility it is to employ them.

Appropriate conduct requires attention from the first steps of data collection, for access to data is rarely free from ethical considerations. Tough questions follow: how many free brochures can one just go and grab? Should one, in a given situation, reveal scholarly interests or pretend to be an information-hungry tourist? What, if any, is the impact of these choices on the data set and expected results of the study? How to access private, personal, or unpublished materials behind permissions, recommendations, or transfers of money? What does one do with an organizational culture that is suspicious of nosy outsiders or prone to avoid the (perceived) extra work? What can one comfortably accept and adjust to, and under what circumstances, to gain access to particular data? Should one focus on building social trust or using hard currency (or neither)—and where is the line of exploitation? How valuable or irreplaceable is a particular set of data? Why so? What are the costs and benefits of a chosen route for each involved party?

Situations and answers vary, but knowledge about cultural codes and social sensitivity support ethically sustainable choices that hold under critical scrutiny. Talking with colleagues about their experiences may be of great help.

**CHAPTER SUMMARY**

Our key message about collecting visual materials from secondary sources is summarized by the following points:

- Choices in data collection are inherently subjective and must be defensible. Smooth progress requires careful planning and critical thinking. Rigour, patience, and source criticism will be rewarded.
• Data collection is connected to previous scholarly tradition and society. Earlier studies help in clarifying research questions and data collection choices. These often evolve as the collection project proceeds.

• Saturation, representativeness, and comprehensiveness are common dilemmas of each data collection process. Solutions are often data and case specific and demand creative thinking, for each set of visual research material is unique.

• Many visual materials are free of charge and openly accessible, but the most convenient choice may not be the best one. Negotiating access—like all steps of data collection—requires thinking about ethical issues and one’s own research philosophy.

Annotated further reading

This article highlights the value of looking at both visual images and text, from the perspective of their mutually enhancing interaction. The case study illustrates how to examine destination guide books for scholarly purposes.

Three globally distributed travel program series on the US-based Travel Channel serve as research data for this insightful study about the political and cultural dimensions of visual communication and entertainment.

The complex relationship between tourist maps, spaces, and identities is examined in the chapters of this edited volume. The contributions show the value of cartography as data, as a research tool, and as a result.

This book, by an anthropologist and a sociologist, addresses popular representations of the so-called Third World cultures. The critical study exemplifies how careful definition and sampling of visual data, and constant sensitivity to research objectives, aid in collecting a valid sample.

This interdisciplinary and very popular book has its roots in human geography. The author outlines clearly and concisely the principles of data collection specific to various visual research methods. These range from semiology to discourse analysis.

References


Paper III

‘State idea’ in the photographs of geography and tourism in Finland in the 1920s

Salla Jokela* and Hannu Linkola

Department of Geosciences and Geography, University of Helsinki, Helsinki, Finland

This article examines the landscape photographs of Finnish geography school books and tourist guides published during the 1920s. The photographs participated in the everyday reproduction of nationalism by integrating the ‘state idea’ of Finnish academics into the spatial order of Finland. The content of the photographs reflects the core-periphery relationship embedded in the thinking of Finnish academics who conceptualised themselves as part of the authoritative ‘state’ that controlled the entire national territory. The study shows that landscape photographs had an integral role in the processes through which the academic elite negotiated its power in Finnish society.

Keywords: nation building; state; landscape; photographs; Finland

Introduction

Regions are social constructs that exist at multiple, interrelated geographical scales (Paasi, 1996, 2008). They become institutionalised through several interacting stages that include the formation of their territorial, institutional, and conceptual shape (Paasi, 1986). Lately, the need to study the mechanisms that connect various scales of identity-formation with each other and to broader issues of power has been recognised (Paasi, 2009, p. 146). For example, the connections between nation-building and the institutionalisation of regions within national boundaries have received increased attention (Johnson & Coleman, 2012).

Finland is an illustrative example of the interconnectedness of nationalism and the formation of a regional system within a nation-state. As Anssi Paasi (1986, pp. 127–128; 2009, pp. 142–143) remarks, the institutionalisation of Finland in the nineteenth century was intertwined with the emergence of Finnish provinces. The construction of national and regional boundaries was supported by what Guntram Herb (2004, p. 144) calls ‘territorial bonding’, a process that ‘fuses the national population to the land and creates an emotional bond that makes a sense of “belonging” tangible’. Visual representations of landscapes were important tools in this process, because they concretised the interrelationship between people and land. The essence of national landscapes was captured by Finnish painters, but also by geographers, who specialised in producing visual images as manifestations of their authoritative vision and who played key roles in the school system, tourism organisations and other national institutions through which these images were distributed (Häyrynen, 2004, 2008; Paasi, 1996, pp. 143–151, 2008; see Rose, 2003).

*Corresponding author. Email: salla.jokela@helsinki.fi

© 2013 Taylor & Francis
We contribute to this discussion by analysing the landscape photographs of Finnish geography school books and tourist guides published in the 1920s. These books were written by a small group of influential geographers and geography teachers, who were active in the young country’s academic, cultural, and political life. We argue that the examined photographs were part of broader mechanisms through which the leading Finnish academics constituted and spatialised an idea of Finnish nation-state and established an authoritative position in its institutions. Our approach is based on ‘alternative conceptions of the state’ that take into account the social relations in which ‘stateness’ is constituted (Penrose, 2011; see also Jones & Merriman, 2009). We show that the power of the academics was tied to a spatial idea of the state, which was negotiated in and through landscape photographs. The photographs helped the academics to achieve their aspirations in three ways. First, the photographs enabled them to consolidate an idea of a distinct state by representing it on equal terms with symbols of nationhood. Second, the photographs helped the academics to position themselves as part of the state apparatus by representing the ‘core’ of the nation that extended its power over the national ‘periphery’ (cf. Johnson & Coleman, 2012). Third, the photographs emphasised the unity of the hierarchical state apparatus and the political territory of Finland.

The 1920s is an especially interesting decade in Finland’s history, because it was a transitional period characterised by major political and societal changes. Independence from Russia in 1917 had redefined Finland’s national boundaries and geopolitical orientation (Häkli, 2008). In 1918, a violent civil war had divided the nation into bourgeois, right-wing ‘Whites’ and working-class, left-wing ‘Reds’. The constitutional, conservative Whites won the war and consolidated their hegemony over the discourses and representation of Finnishness (Alapuro, 1988, pp. 197–208). The Red narratives were excluded from these discourses and representations, and thus, conceptions of Finnish state administration were polarised. Overcoming the social division was however needed for social order. The ruling Whites therefore sought to bind together individuals beyond class and personal networks. Landscape photographs published by the traditionally White academics were integral in this process, because their ritualised consumption in school education and tourism engaged Finns through the everyday reproduction of their national community and territory (see Dittmer, 2011, p. 74; Jones & Merriman, 2009; Paasi, 1996).

We begin by discussing recent theoretical insights on the constitution of the state and the everyday reproduction of nationalism. To contextualise our data as part of those processes through which the Finnish academics negotiated their power, we then introduce the data and methods of the study and explore the institutional and intellectual setting in which the examined landscape photographs were produced. After that, we analyse the regional structure conveyed by the photographs and explain how this structure helped the academics to negotiate a position as representatives of the state. Finally, we conclude by reflecting upon the potential of studies of landscape photographs and academic societies to elucidate larger processes through which individuals disseminate their worldview and consolidate their societal power as ‘representatives of the state’.
Landscape photographs, state idea, and ‘regional othering’

Recent reconceptualisations of the state emphasise that the state is indivisible from the society (Jones & Merriman, 2009; Penrose, 2011). The state does not exist ‘above’ or ‘beyond’ the society. Rather, it is ‘a peopled organisation and, being such, is reproduced and contested from within as a result of the everyday micro-politics that take place within its organisations and throughout its territories’ (Jones & Merriman, 2009, p. 169). This approach has challenged earlier presumptions about the key role of the state in advancing ‘banal nationalism’ through instruments that are hardly noticed, but nevertheless remind people of their national identity and strengthen their connections to an ‘imagined community’ and its territory (Anderson, 1991; Billig, 1995; Herb, 2004).

Jan Penrose’s (2011) study about the Bank of Scotland reveals that state control over the production of banknotes and other tools of banal nationalism may be of lesser importance than researchers have assumed. According to her, tools of banal nationalism emerge through a set of social relations in which some individuals can gain ‘the capacity to act like a state and/or to produce outcomes that reify the state’s existence’ (Penrose, 2011, p. 434). The state is, thus, not a tangible entity which exercises power over individuals, but rather an ‘idea’ that is constituted and maintained through what Penrose (2011) calls ‘state effects.’ These include banknotes, stamps, and other similar items that disseminate national iconography to wide audiences, but also ‘institutions, actors, and practices’ that reinforce an illusion of the existence of a discrete state (Penrose, 2011, p. 438; see also Raento & Brunn, 2005, 2008).

Rhys Jones and Peter Merriman (2009) present a similar approach in their study about Welsh road signs. They show that governments do not dictate the meanings and uses of nationally charged representations and artefacts. Instead, the meanings and uses of these items are context-specific and often contradictory. The same representation can function as a banal reminder of nationhood or as an openly nationalistic expression, but its message can also be resisted altogether. Because of this, Jones and Merriman (2009, p. 172) propose that the term ‘banal nationalism’ is replaced with the concept of ‘everyday nationalism’, which ‘highlights the multiplicity of nationalist discourses and practices affecting, and affected by, individuals and groups within particular places at specific times’.

This paper combines the insights offered by these studies with the conceptual approach provided by studies on regional differentiation and the construction of national identities (Herb, 2004; Johnson & Coleman, 2012; Paasi, 1986, 1996, 2008). We conceptualise our landscape photographs as ‘emotive descriptions of the regional geography’ that were produced in order to strengthen the bond between people and their country (Herb, 2004, p. 153). We nevertheless acknowledge that the state was not a discrete entity which authorised ‘national representatives’ to produce representations and use power over Finnish citizens. Instead, we examine the landscape photographs as ‘state effects’ that constructed, spatialised, and ossified an idea of a distinctive Finnish state and, in doing so, helped Finnish academics to appear as representatives of that state (cf. Penrose, 2011, p. 434). The academics nurtured the conception of the state that they were affiliated to, because this idea helped them to naturalise an authoritative position in the society and disseminate their ideas about Finnishness through it. Their search for power was thus inseparable
from their other objectives, such as the advancement citizenship education and ‘love’ for their country.

Our study complements earlier studies about the representations of Finnishness by contextualising landscape photographs within the social networks, practices, and discourses that underlay the processes through which Finnish nation-state became institutionalised (see Häyrinen, 2004, 2008; Paasi, 1986, 1996, 2008; Raento & Brunn, 2005, 2008). We specifically focus on two state-affiliated organisations that the academics used to promote and distribute their idea of the state: The Tourist Society in Finland (TSF), established in 1887 as part of a wider national romantic movement in order to nurture Finnish citizens’ affection for their ‘fatherland’ (Hirn & Markkanen, 1987, p. 151), and the Geographical Society of Finland (GSF), established in 1921 when two geographical societies with nineteenth-century origins were united. These organisations steered the content and foci of the examined school books and tourist guides. Thus, they are useful for elucidating the institutional and intellectual framework in which the photographs were produced and disseminated and help us examine the larger social structures that underlay, and were reinforced by, the messages embedded in those photographs.

The content of the examined photographs reveals the interrelationship between Finnish national identity and regional differentiation within Finland. We draw on Corey Johnson’s and Amanda Coleman’s (2012) examination of ‘regional othering’ in order to analyse the photographs as constituents of a discourse through which a specific spatial order was constructed within Finnish national boundaries. We also contribute to their study by connecting the notion of regional othering with the notion of the social production of ‘stateness’ (Penrose, 2011). We show that, in addition to spatialising difference in Finland, the content of the photographs also integrated an idea of a distinctive Finnish state to this spatial order. Finnish academics attained a position as the representatives of the state by placing themselves in the ‘core’ of the nation-state in contrast to other regions that appeared as ‘repositories for backwardness and […] home to impediments to national progress’ (Johnson & Coleman, 2012, p. 865).

Data and methods

Our data consist of 899 photographs published in tourist guides and geography school books during the 1920s. Fifty-four percent of these were published in a series of 24 domestic tourist guides produced by the TSF and recorded at the National Archives of Finland. They comprise the first illustrated series of books produced by a state-affiliated organisation that attempted to depict the diverse Finnish territory systematically from a tourist’s point of view. Therefore, these photographs form a comprehensive and representative sample of the visualisations used in official tourism promotion in the 1920s.

The tourist guides were aimed at Finns. They were published first in Swedish and subsequently in Finnish, because the administrative, academic, and culture elites consisted mainly of the Swedish-speaking Finns, who lived in the urbanised coastal areas. Swedish was thus the primary language of the TSF. We considered both Finnish and Swedish language guides, because their imageries were different. Judging by the content and stylistic devices of the photographs, these differences were
haphazard and had no relation to the language or cultural background of their target audiences.

Forty-six percent of the photographs appeared in 11 geography school books. The data included the first edition of every geography school book published in the 1920s. The books were published in Finnish, which points to the importance of this language within the national school system. The national school administration approved the thematic emphasis of geography education, but the textbook authors designed the content and structure of the books relatively freely (Rikkinen, 1982). These authors consisted of academic geographers, geography teachers, and civic educators.

Our content analysis started with an overview of the photographs. Together with other authors’ observations on the development of the Finnish national landscape imagery, this helped us to identify the most important thematic categories in the data (Häyrynen, 2004, 2008; Lukkarinen & Waenerberg, 2004; Raento & Brunn, 2005, 2008; Raivo, 1997). Our aim was to ‘apply a rigorous and structured analysis to what are difficult, contentious and usually subjective cultural objects’ (Pritchard & Morgan, 2001, p. 172). To do this, we settled on seven mutually exclusive and exhaustive categories that covered all main features and uses of the landscapes depicted in the photographs (Rose, 2007, p. 65). These included (1) public buildings, historical sites, monuments, and religious sites (18%); (2) tourism, leisure, travelling, and accommodation (21%); (3) urban panoramas (9%); (4) villages and agricultural landscapes (10%); (5) secondary production and industry (4%); (6) primary production, human–landscape interaction (11%); and (7) water and nature dominated landscapes (27%). We then classified the photographs independent of each other and revised our classifying principles to make them as explicit and unambiguous as possible (cf. Pritchard & Morgan, 2001; Raento & Brunn, 2005). We also tabulated the publication forum and geographical location of each photograph.

The symbolic meanings identified from the depicted themes tied them to the political, social, and cultural context of the 1920s’ Finland (Figure 1). They also helped us to analyse the leading geographers’ conceptions of the state and to relate these conceptions to the spatial structure that the photographs promoted. We recognised that the photographs were not ‘rigid and fixed things – beginning and ending at their frames’ (Lister & Wells, 2001, p. 64). Instead, they point to things and ideas that lie outside their physical appearance and their meanings relative to their contexts of production and use (Dittmer, 2011; Jones & Merriman, 2009; Rose, 2007). While a photograph may signify different things for different viewers, we assumed that there were similarities in the interpretations made by people with the same cultural background and interpretative framework. To limit the number of possible interpretations, we therefore considered the contexts in which the photographs were produced and used.

Very little information was available about choice-making processes behind the selection, so we used literature on Finnish history and supporting archive material about the societal commitments of the members of the GSF and the TSF to relate the photographs to ‘competing representations and ideologies put forward by rival social groups’ (see Häkli, 2008; Paasi, 1996, p. 158). This contextual information also helped us to identify the ‘visual absences and silences’ that reveal the power of framing and exclusion in the construction of visual narratives (Echtner & Prasad, 2003; Jokela, 2011; Raento & Brunn, 2005). We – two Finns born and raised in
groups’ (see Ha¨kli, 2008; Paasi, 1996, p. 158). This contextual information also helps us to relate the societal commitments of the members of the GSF and the TSF to the selection of photographs. We used literature on Finnish history and supporting archive material to create graphs that were produced and used.

While a photograph may signify different things for different viewers, we assumed that there were similarities in the interpretations made by people with the same cultural background and interpretative framework. To limit the number of possible interpretations, we therefore considered the contexts in which the photographs were taken. This included the contexts of production and use (Dittmer, 2011; Jones & Merriman, 2009; Rose, 2007). While a photograph may signify different things for different viewers, we assumed that there were similarities in the interpretations made by people with the same cultural background and interpretative framework. To limit the number of possible interpretations, we therefore considered the contexts in which the photographs were taken. 

Historical sites, monuments, and religious sites (18%); (2) tourism, leisure, travelling, and accommodation (21%); (3) urban panoramas (9%); (4) villages and agricultural landscapes (10%); (5) secondary production and industry (4%); (6) primary production, human/C1 land use (2%); and (7) water and nature landscape interaction (11%).

The symbolic meanings identified from the depicted themes tied them to the historical processes through which the meanings of the depicted landscapes had been constructed. These included (1) public buildings, historical sites, monuments, and religious sites (18%); (2) tourism, leisure, travelling, and accommodation (21%); (3) urban panoramas (9%); (4) villages and agricultural landscapes (10%); (5) secondary production and industry (4%); (6) primary production, human/C1 land use (2%); and (7) water and nature landscape interaction (11%).

The symbolic meanings identified from the depicted themes tied them to the historical processes through which the meanings of the depicted landscapes had been constructed. These included (1) public buildings, historical sites, monuments, and religious sites (18%); (2) tourism, leisure, travelling, and accommodation (21%); (3) urban panoramas (9%); (4) villages and agricultural landscapes (10%); (5) secondary production and industry (4%); (6) primary production, human/C1 land use (2%); and (7) water and nature landscape interaction (11%).

The symbolic meanings identified from the depicted themes tied them to the historical processes through which the meanings of the depicted landscapes had been constructed. These included (1) public buildings, historical sites, monuments, and religious sites (18%); (2) tourism, leisure, travelling, and accommodation (21%); (3) urban panoramas (9%); (4) villages and agricultural landscapes (10%); (5) secondary production and industry (4%); (6) primary production, human/C1 land use (2%); and (7) water and nature landscape interaction (11%).

The symbolic meanings identified from the depicted themes tied them to the historical processes through which the meanings of the depicted landscapes had been constructed. These included (1) public buildings, historical sites, monuments, and religious sites (18%); (2) tourism, leisure, travelling, and accommodation (21%); (3) urban panoramas (9%); (4) villages and agricultural landscapes (10%); (5) secondary production and industry (4%); (6) primary production, human/C1 land use (2%); and (7) water and nature landscape interaction (11%).

The symbolic meanings identified from the depicted themes tied them to the historical processes through which the meanings of the depicted landscapes had been constructed. These included (1) public buildings, historical sites, monuments, and religious sites (18%); (2) tourism, leisure, travelling, and accommodation (21%); (3) urban panoramas (9%); (4) villages and agricultural landscapes (10%); (5) secondary production and industry (4%); (6) primary production, human/C1 land use (2%); and (7) water and nature landscape interaction (11%).

The symbolic meanings identified from the depicted themes tied them to the historical processes through which the meanings of the depicted landscapes had been constructed. These included (1) public buildings, historical sites, monuments, and religious sites (18%); (2) tourism, leisure, travelling, and accommodation (21%); (3) urban panoramas (9%); (4) villages and agricultural landscapes (10%); (5) secondary production and industry (4%); (6) primary production, human/C1 land use (2%); and (7) water and nature landscape interaction (11%).

The symbolic meanings identified from the depicted themes tied them to the historical processes through which the meanings of the depicted landscapes had been constructed. These included (1) public buildings, historical sites, monuments, and religious sites (18%); (2) tourism, leisure, travelling, and accommodation (21%); (3) urban panoramas (9%); (4) villages and agricultural landscapes (10%); (5) secondary production and industry (4%); (6) primary production, human/C1 land use (2%); and (7) water and nature landscape interaction (11%).

Our content analysis started with an overview of the photographs. Together with other authors' observations on the development of the Finnish national landscape and educators, we also noted that our cultural proximity to the topic compensated for our temporal distance from the 1920s' society. For example, our fluency in Finnish and Swedish gave us access to archive materials and information that contextualised the meanings that were embedded in the photographs. As 'products' of Finnish national public education system, we also found it easy to recognise persistent conventions in depicting Finland and to understand the culture-specific knowledge(s) attached to them. We acknowledged the possibility of bias caused by 'cultural blindness' that arises from closeness to the research topic. We protected ourselves from this bias by evaluating our interpretations critically vis-à-vis the historical processes through which the meanings of the depicted landscapes had been constructed.

The institutional framework of the production of landscape photographs
The emergence of organised geography and tourism was part of a larger process in which Finland became institutionalised. Tourist Society in Finland (TSF) and the
early predecessors of the 1920s’ Geographical Society of Finland (GSF) were founded when Finland was an autonomous part of Russia. Finland’s special status and national institutions under Russian rule supported the emergence of a distinctive Finnish identity and the establishment of its territorial shape (see Häkli, 2008; Paasi, 1986, 1996). The TSF and the GSF were not ‘official’ state institutions, but they nevertheless formed part of the institutional basis of the state and had an important role to play in the production of nationalistically oriented publications that supported ‘territorial bonding’ within Finland (see Herb, 2004). Many of their members were involved in politics or had otherwise personal connections to political decision-makers (cf. Alapuro, 1988, p. 198). For example, in the 1920s half of the eight presidents of the GSF were involved in politics, and Jalmar Castrén (1873–1946), the president of the TSF in 1923–1943, also served as the minister of communications and public works.

From an individual academic’s point of view, operation in the GSF or the TSF was a way of negotiating and consolidating a position in social networks through which an idea of the Finnish nation-state was constituted and spatialised. It helped the academics to conceptualise themselves as ‘representatives of the state’ and, thereby, to have authority over the representations of Finnishness. In his study about the institutionalisation of geography in Finland, Olavi Granö (1981, p. 26) notes that ‘[g]eographers were expected to disseminate knowledge which corresponded to the pragmatic views held by those decision-makers whose efforts had led to the establishment of geography as a discipline’. Similarly, the operation of the GSF and the TSF was based on reciprocity between the organisation leaders and those decision-makers who supported their operation. For example, the GSF provided statements about the goals of geography education for the purposes of the national school administration. Simultaneously, the leaders of the GSF and the TSF got an opportunity to steer the content and structure of geography education and to disseminate their worldview to others.

The leaders of the GSF and the TSF advanced their cause by targeting public speeches and writings to the government and other decision-makers as well as to laymen in order to motivate them to support, and participate in, the operation of the GSF and the TSF. These writings and speeches were accompanied by symbols of Finnishness and frequent references to ‘our’ territory and ‘our’ common cause. For example, in 1928, members of the TSF petitioned the parliament to reserve three million Finnish marks, from the budget of 1929, for the purposes of promoting tourism, because ‘the conditions of our hotels and hostels do not reach the level that the touristic value and reputation of our country would presume’ (Tuomioja et al., 1928). The establishment of the GSF and the TSF was thus ‘linked with the increasing employment of the name and other territorial symbols and signs’ of Finland (Paasi, 1986, p. 126).

The publications and the composition of the GSF and the TSF show that tourism and geography were closely connected in the 1920s’ society. The most important gatekeeper steering the composition of the publications of the GSF and the TSF was Johan Evert Rosberg (1864–1932), who became the first professor of geography in Finland in 1912, the vice president of the TSF in 1919, and the president of the GSF in 1922. He wrote many geographical non-fiction books, co-authored a geography school book with entomologist Johan Emil Aro (1874–1928), and wrote tourist guides with Ragnar Numelin (1890–1972), who was an eminent geographer,
sociologist, and diplomat. Most importantly, Rosberg's position gave him a considerable say in the pedagogy of geography, because almost all authors of geography school books in the 1920s were members of the GSF (Rikkinen, 1982, pp. 355–357). The prevailing ideas about the union between tourism and geography are evident in Numelin's (1920, p. 14) statement in Matkailulehti [Tourism Magazine] published by the TSF:

The journeys should not be just leisurely trips to the nearest cities, but they should become significant instruments for an individual's general education, allowing him to build up a personal understanding of his country and nation. From that point of view, no tract of our fatherland should be too harsh or inconspicuous to be left aside. In other words, travelling would work for geography's favour, or vice versa, if we want to put it that way.

Geographers' writings and social networks elucidate the mechanisms through which the leaders of the GSF and the TSF gained power over the production of national symbols. The organisation leaders promoted visual encounters with the national reality and supported the nationalistic agenda of geography education, because they shared a firm belief that this would serve a greater 'national good' (see Rosberg, 1913, p. 268). In order to do this, they conceptualised themselves as part of the state of Finland and, thereby, strengthened their own power in society.

‘State idea’ and the regional structure of the landscape photographs

Visualising Finland at multiple scales

Photographs are used in the examined geography school books and tourist guides alongside with texts and maps in order to ‘put life into the empty space of the nation-state’ (Paasi, 1996, p. 145). They portray the regional structure and nationally significant landscapes of Finland in the 1920s and reflect the empiricist idea of seeing as the most important tool of gathering geographical knowledge (Figure 2). The capital city Helsinki is the most depicted site. Other frequently shown landscapes include the most important and versatile regional centres (e.g. Vyborg, Turku, Tampere, Kuopio, Oulu, Maarianhamina), and some smaller towns (e.g. Lahti, Iisalmi, Jyväskylä, Rauma). The sparsely populated areas in northern Finland and around the watershed of Suomenselkä are excluded from the selection, whereas remarkable scenes of nature and other sights are recurring motifs. For example, important waterways are depicted because of their vital role in tourism, industry, and export (e.g. Oulu River). The scenic Valamo Island in Lake Ladoga is also a popular motif, because in the 1920s its old Orthodox monastery attracted tourists who wanted to experience ‘otherness’ in a dominantly Lutheran country (see Raivo, 1997, p. 335).

Many of the depicted nature landscapes had become prominent in the national landscape imagery already during the nineteenth century because of their aesthetic qualities (e.g. Punkaharju Esker, Aavasaksa Hill) and depiction in National Romantic landscape painting, poetry, and photography (e.g. Koli Hill, Imatra) (see Häyrynen, 2008). These landscapes were considered to represent the entire country and its national character. Our examination of the photographs by province and by theme confirms Maunu Häyrynen’s (2004, p. 31) discovery that, in Finland regional
Figure 2. Location of the analysed photographs within the 1920s boundaries. The depicted landscapes reproduce the contours of the national territory and mirror the regional structure of Finland.
landscape imageries ‘replicate the structure of national landscape in miniature’ (Figure 3). Each province is portrayed as entailing the key aspects of the Finnish territory as a whole, ‘creating associative links between the local, the regional, and the hallowed national sites’ (Häyrynen, 2008, p. 505). For example, the visualisation of regionally important sites resembles that of the most iconic national landscapes. Lake views are typically taken from the top of a hill, which makes them suggestive of the depiction of the most famous national landscapes such as the Koli hill. Furthermore, regional cities are portrayed as gateways to the provinces in the same way as Helsinki is the entrance to the entire country.

Photographs of nature, villages, and urban landscapes are accompanied by photographs of public buildings and monuments that represent the state of Finland at various and interrelated territorial scales. Elementary schools and town halls appear as local equivalents of nationally and regionally important state buildings,
such as the University and the County Administrative Board (Figure 4). Many of these photographs resemble each other, creating an impression that the pictures could have been taken ‘anywhere.’ For example, the architectonic style of many public buildings and monuments is the same regardless of their location. Contextualising information nevertheless reveals that these photographs are place-bound and implies that the uniform presence of the state could be felt in every part of the national territory.

The relatively equal distribution and versatile content of the photographs shows that they were aimed at creating an impression of ubiquitous symbolism that concretised an idea of Finnish nation-state. The photographs ‘mapped’ the territory and essence of an imagined national community and tied them to a ‘state idea’ invented by the leading Finnish academics and other influential individuals. Simultaneously, the photographs naturalised the existence of the state by demonstrating that it was an integral part of the landscapes that tied Finnish people to the land that they inhabited (see Herb, 2004, p. 153). The photographs thus helped to ensure that Finns learned to conceptualise themselves as citizens of the state and to observe the signs of their nationhood in the immediate vicinity of their homes, even if they did not have resources to travel to see the most famous national landscapes (see Häyrynen, 2008, p. 485).

The foci of geography and tourism photographs differ in two main respects (Figure 3). First, tourism, leisure, travelling, and accommodation are more popular motifs in the tourist guides than in the school books. Photographs of hotels, boarding houses, upscale travellers, and various forms of transportation vivify detailed descriptions of travel connections, help tourists to find their way across the country, and emphasise the quality of the national tourism landscapes and infrastructure. Second, the prominence of photographs about industrial production in the school books contrasts their marginal role in the tourist guides. Prosperous paper and saw mills refer to a national success story that was based on forests, the country’s ‘precious treasure’ (Favorin, 1927, p. 12). Simultaneously, photographs of industrial production portray Finland as an economically autonomous network of

![Figure 4](image-url)  
Figure 4. The national education system is an example of an organisation that operates at various levels of the state hierarchy. The peripheral country schools are portrayed as subordinate representatives of the same state-led organisation as the University of Helsinki. A notion of accessibility helped the nation’s leaders to renew their position, because it gave school children a promise of social mobility on the condition that they accepted the dominant social order (Sources: Favorin, 1927, p. 23; Hänninen, 1927, p. 7).
producers. School children had an important role in this network, because many of them belonged to families that provided lumber for the wood processing industries. The foci reveal that the producers of the geography school books and tourist guides considered the practices and discourses through which the photographs were made meaningful to their target audiences (cf. Dittmer, 2011). As Häyrynen (2008, p. 504) remarks in his study on the Finnish national landscape imagery, ‘the sites represented were an actual part of the everyday environment, which lent verisimilitude to the ideological notions linked with them’.

Urban sophistication versus exotic otherness

Despite the thematic inclusiveness of the provincial photographs, Finland’s regions are depicted in different ways, reflecting a historical division between south-western core area and northern and eastern peripheries. The south-western parts of Finland established religious and trade connections with the West as part of the Swedish empire during the late Middle Ages (Alapuro, 1988, pp. 55–57; Paasi, 1996, p. 84). These connections triggered the evolution of the state institutions that later formed the basis for the emergence of Finland as a political-territorial entity (Häkli, 2008, pp. 8–14). Consequently, the Swedish-speaking national elite established its position in this region that became the home for the most important urban centres in Finland. Karelia in the east and Lapland in the north were annexed to Finland in the beginning of the nineteenth century, when Finland became an autonomous Grand Duchy of Russia (Paasi, 1996, p. 85). Along with the formation of the national boundaries Helsinki became the capital city in 1812.

The old division between the south-western and north-eastern parts of Finland is clearly visible in our data. Urban panoramas, public buildings, historical sites, monuments, religious sites, and industrial production are emphasised in the photographs of the south-west, whereas water- and nature-dominated landscapes, primary production, and interaction between people and nature are more frequent in the photographs about the northern and eastern parts of Finland. This juxtaposition can be summarised in several binary oppositions: core/periphery, urban/rural, old age/youth, domesticated/wild, industrialised/agricultural, and civilised/primitive. The differences are especially evident in the depiction of the provinces of Uusimaa (the capital city region) and Oulu (Lapland and Northern Ostrobothnia), which have distinctive regional identities grounded on notions of urban sophistication versus exotic otherness, respectively.

Despite its historical and material basis, the juxtaposition of the south-western core with the north-eastern periphery was perpetuated by a discourse that renewed and reinforced an idea of a ‘modern’ south and ‘backward’ north. This corresponds with the findings of Johnson and Coleman (2012) about regional othering in Germany and Italy. They note that, in the process of nation-building, the blame for the ‘ills of the nation’ that ‘stand in the way of progress, unity, cohesion, and so on’ is usually assigned to a relatively weak region ruled by the state (Johnson & Coleman, 2012, pp. 865, 869). Finland resembles ‘Germany and Italy, which are latecomers to national identity formation in Europe and also not as heavily engaged in the colonial enterprise’ (Johnson & Coleman, 2012, p. 869). In these countries, ‘othered regions’ emerged inside the national boundaries, in contrast to the superpowers that positioned the unwanted traits in overseas colonies. For example, Veli-Pekka Lehtola
(1997, p. 57) shows that in the 1920s the Sámi people in northern Finland were conceptualised as ‘inferior’ when compared with mainstream Finns. This image served the national identity project of the western-minded national leaders by supporting the claim that Finns should not be confused with the Sámi, who were thought to be genetically close to ‘inferior’ Mongolian and Eastern European ‘races’ (also Harle & Moisio, 2000, pp. 123–125).

The discourse in which otherness was ‘mapped’ on the periphery of Finland was perpetuated by the geographers who controlled and steered the production of the examined landscape photographs (see Johnson & Coleman, 2012, p. 865). Helsinki is customarily depicted in opening sections, which highlights its role as the ‘facade’ of, and the gateway to, the nation (see Jokela, 2011). Individual academics, politicians, and other influential citizens are absent in these images. The institutions in which they operated were nevertheless depicted through monumental buildings. The stability of these buildings transforms the capital city into a ‘paternal landscape’ that stands in stark contrast to the less commanding landscapes of the north-eastern parts of Finland.

The form of visualisation changes gradually, as one ‘moves’ away from the south-western core (Figure 5). Countryside is both spatially and metaphorically located between core and periphery. It is a domesticated ‘middle landscape’, representing a ‘fleeting youthful wonder between childhood innocence and cynical age’ that are typically associated with wilderness and cities, respectively (Cosgrove, 1993, p. 297). Especially fertile river banks in the province of Vaasa on the west coast of Finland function as an intermediate landscape that can be encountered on the way to the northern wilderness. These landscapes are often populated by workers that reflect an ideal of the ‘modest’ and ‘resilient’ Finnish peasant whose roots percolate deep into the soil of the national territory. This notion reflects the relatively short urban history in Finland and the key role of rustic countryside that underlies the shared sense of national identity. Simultaneously, it draws from an age-old Western myth that conceptualises countryside as an arena of harmonious co-existence between nature and people, whose daily struggle is elevated to the level of moral virtue (Cosgrove, 1993, p. 296; Short, 1991, pp. 30–35).

The northernmost parts of Finland are mainly depicted in a natural state. Wilderness landscapes create an impression of a ‘no man’s land’ that can be freely exploited and enjoyed by industries and tourists (see Cosgrove, 1993, p. 297). The peripheral nature of northern Finland is also depicted through people. The most pictured group, the Sámi, is usually classified on the basis of ethnological customs. The geographers showed them as being ‘close to nature’, with the dwellings and livelihoods. A typical photograph shows the Sámi with reindeer in a wilderness landscape, contributing to a visual tradition in banal nationalist media that persisted throughout the twentieth century (see Raento & Brunn, 2005, p. 158).

The depiction of the Karelians, the people of the easternmost part of Finland, partly corresponds with that of the Sámi, but also emphasises a romanticised idea of a strong cultural connection between Karelians and Finns (see Harle & Moisio, 2000, pp. 105–117; Häyrynen, 2004) (Figure 6). Photographs of folk culture, poets, and wailing women contribute to the invention of Finnish traditions by romanticising Karelian culture that was thought to entail the essence of Finnishness (see Hobsbawm, 1983). This conception had its roots in a Karelianist movement that gained strength after the publication of Finnish national epic Kalevala in 1835.
1997, p. 57) shows that in the 1920s the Sa´mi people in northern Finland were conceptualised as 'inferior' when compared with mainstream Finns. This image served the national identity project of the western-minded national leaders by supporting the claim that Finns should not be confused with the Sa´mi, who were thought to be genetically close to 'inferior' Mongolian and Eastern European 'races' (also Harle & Moisio, 2000, pp. 123/125).

The discourse in which otherness was 'mapped' on the periphery of Finland was perpetuated by the geographers who controlled and steered the production of the examined landscape photographs (see Johnson & Coleman, 2012, p. 865). Helsinki is customarily depicted in opening sections, which highlights its role as the 'facade' of, and the gateway to, the nation (see Jokela, 2011). Individual academics, politicians, and other influential citizens are absent in these images. The institutions in which they operated were nevertheless depicted through monumental buildings. The stability of these buildings transforms the capital city into a 'paternal landscape' that stands in stark contrast to the less commanding landscapes of the north-eastern parts of Finland.

The form of visualisation changes gradually, as one 'moves' away from the south-western core (Figure 5). Countryside is both spatially and metaphorically located between core and periphery. It is a domesticated 'middle landscape', representing a 'fleeting youthful wonder between childhood innocence and cynical age' that are typically associated with wilderness and cities, respectively (Cosgrove, 1993, p. 297). Especially fertile river banks in the province of Vaasa on the west coast of Finland function as an intermediate landscape that can be encountered on the way to the northern wilderness. These landscapes are often populated by workers that reflect an ideal of the 'modest' and 'resilient' Finnish peasant whose roots percolate deep into the soil of the national territory. This notion reflects the relatively short urban history in Finland and the key role of rustic countryside that underlies the shared sense of national identity. Simultaneously, it draws from an age-old Western myth that conceptualises countryside as an arena of harmonious co-existence between nature and people, whose daily struggle is elevated to the level of moral virtue (Cosgrove, 1993, p. 296; Short, 1991, pp. 30/35).

The northernmost parts of Finland are mainly depicted in a natural state. Wilderness landscapes create an impression of a 'no man's land' that can be freely exploited and enjoyed by industries and tourists (see Cosgrove, 1993, p. 297). The peripheral nature of northern Finland is also depicted through people. The most pictured group, the Sa´mi, is usually classified on the basis of ethnological customs. The geographers showed them as being 'close to nature', with the dwellings and livelihoods. A typical photograph shows the Sa´mi with reindeer in a wilderness landscape, contributing to a visual tradition in banal nationalist media that persisted throughout the twentieth century (see Raento & Brunn, 2005, p. 158).

The depiction of the Karelians, the people of the easternmost part of Finland, partly corresponds with that of the Sa´mi, but also emphasises a romanticised idea of a strong cultural connection between Karelians and Finns (see Harle & Moisio, 2000, pp. 105/117; Ha¨yrynen, 2004) (Figure 6). Photographs of folk culture, poets, and wailing women contribute to the invention of Finnish traditions by romanticising Karelian culture that was thought to entail the essence of Finnishness (see Hobsbawm, 1983). This conception had its roots in a Karelianist movement that gained strength after the publication of Finnish national epic Kalevala in 1835.
Despite their glorified nature, Karelians are portrayed as primitive compared with the mainstream Finnish population. This shows the ambivalent ways in which the people from national peripheries are depicted. On the one hand, they are portrayed as child-like objects that are exposed to ‘scientific’ scrutiny and labelling in the same way as any natural phenomena. On the other hand, their bond to the national soil and old customs associates them with a romanticised myth of the ‘national past’.

The contrast between the capital city and the northern and eastern Finland is reinforced by photographs of traffic infrastructure that juxtapose the main railway station of Helsinki with less advanced landscapes of mobility in the north and east. These photographs draw from the tradition of constructing and depicting traffic routes as part of the colonisation and modernisation of distant lands (see Cosgrove, 2008, p. 54; Said, 1979, p. 92). The monumental appearance and the National-Romantic architectural style of the Helsinki Railway Station point to the role of the capital city as the ‘hearth’ of the nation. The station ‘feeds’ the new and modern railway bridges and inland water canals that are depicted as the ‘arteries’ that diffuse state power into the national periphery. This form of visualisation mirrors the organicist metaphorical thinking that was characteristic of European and Finnish geographers in the early twentieth century (see Buttimer, 1982; Numelin, 1929).

The spatial structure and content of the photographs reveal that the state idea nurtured by the leading Finnish geographers had also spatial implications that were connected to the regional differentiation associated with nation-building. The geographers shared the tendency of ‘[h]uman beings, individually or in groups, [...]
to perceive the world with “self” as the center’ (Tuan, 1974, p. 30). They conceptualised their own surroundings in the south-west as ‘core’ in contrast to the north-eastern ‘periphery’, a physically distant sphere of distinct culture and naturalised this spatial hierarchy. In doing so, they participated in the (re)production of ‘imaginative geography that dramatizes distance and difference between what is close and what is far away’ (Said, 1979, p. 55; see also Paasi 1996, p. 13).

While cultural differences were emphasised, they also jeopardised the shared national identity and an idea of the centralised power of the Finnish state that was needed to bind together the nation and to justify the exercise of power by the leading academics and other national leaders of the day. The geographers who produced the examined geography school books and tourist guides, therefore, endeavoured ‘to annex the home-lands of others in their identity myths’ (Daniels, 1993, p. 5). Landscape photographs had a key role in appropriating and ‘taming’ differences. Emphasising the ‘naturalness’ of national peripheries was a subtle way of justifying the ‘domestication’ and civilization of these regions by the power users of the core. At the same time, it helped the geographers to establish their state idea and to portray the modern landscapes and way of life in the core as an example for the entire nation to follow.

The geographers visually concealed their individuality and conceptualised themselves as part of an abstract ‘state apparatus’, hiding the fact that the state was actually constituted by individuals (see Penrose, 2011). The photographs gave a visible and apparently objective form to the ways in which these differences were interpreted by the geographers, and spread these interpretations to the national ‘periphery’ as an indisputable ‘truth’. Through these mechanisms, the geographers naturalised their own worldview and consolidated the hierarchical structure of the Finnish nation-state, making south-western Finland appear as the hearth of legitimate knowledge and power (see Cosgrove, 1984/1998).

Conclusions

Four main findings emerge from our study. First, the case of 1920s’ Finland supports Penrose’s (2011) claim that the state does not necessarily control its own representations. Rather, these representations emerge as a result of the actions of those individuals, who conceptualise themselves as ‘representatives of the state’ and advance this image through their actions. Our study shows that landscape photographs reinforced the conception of a distinctive state of Finland by making Finnish citizens aware of its concrete manifestations in different parts of the country. This conception served Finnish academics who sought to establish and consolidate their position as part of the ‘state’. The explicitly voiced goal of the geographers was to educate Finns about their home country. However, they simultaneously strengthened and naturalised their own authoritative position by depicting themselves as omnipotent observers who had the power to make inferences of others without exposing themselves to visual or conceptual scrutiny.

Second, our study shows the important role of academic societies in the constitution of the ‘state idea’ (Penrose, 2011). The structure and operation of the GSF and the TSF elucidates the mechanisms through which the leading Finnish geographers and other influential individuals gained the capacity to ‘represent’ the state and to produce ‘state effects’ that seemed to concretise the existence of the state.
This encourages researchers to investigate the role of academic societies in the processes through which certain individuals and groups legitimise their worldview and secure their power position in the society.

Third, the Finnish case shows that powerful individuals sought to establish their ‘elite’ position on several fronts (see also Granö, 1996, pp. 23–24). The imageries of the examined tourist guides and geography school books were nearly identical, because their selection was controlled and steered by a small group of geographers, who were also active in the field of tourism. Finns were thus exposed to a coherent message regardless of their role in the society. This shows that the apparent objectivity of the photographs was reinforced by their thematic consistency that added to the credibility of their producers.

Finally, the Finnish case highlights the value of content-analytical studies of landscape images in the study of the constitution of ‘stateness’. Content-analytical studies have been criticised for being based on simplistic assumption that there is a state that exists separately from the society and assigns tasks to its representatives, who in turn mediate the state’s messages to highly responsive audiences (Dittmer, 2011; Penrose, 2011). Our study nevertheless demonstrates that the content of landscape photographs provides valuable information about how tools of ‘everyday nationalism’ actually serve people who appear as representatives of the state (see Jones & Merriman, 2009). In the case of Finland, the photographs of geography school books and tourist guides did not merely remind people of their national identity and its spatial manifestations, but also helped the leading geographers and other influential individuals to tie their ‘state idea’ to the spatial order of the nation (Johnson & Coleman, 2012; Penrose, 2011). We therefore maintain that landscape photographs are a rich source of data that contains spatial information in a condensed form. Examining this information as part of the processes and mechanisms through which power is constituted and renewed in the society offers valuable insights into the spatial implications of nation building and state formation.

Acknowledgements
We would like to thank Pauliina Raento, Suvi Talja, Gareth Rice, and two anonymous reviewers for their helpful comments on earlier drafts of this article. We are also grateful to the Finnish Cultural Foundation and the Kone Foundation for supporting our research.

Notes on contributors
Salla Jokela and Hannu Linkola are PhD. Candidates in the Department of Geosciences and Geography at the University of Helsinki. This article is part of a research project ‘Landscape, Icons, and Images (1123561) funded by the Academy of Finland.

References


Paper IV

BUILDING A FACADE FOR FINLAND: HELSINKI IN TOURISM IMAGERY*

SALLA JOKELA

ABSTRACT. Tourist destination promoters compose visual images and arrange them in bro- chures in order to communicate a coherent and attractive story. In a changing socioeco- nomic and political context, the city officials of Helsinki recognized a need for systematic promotion in the 1950s. In this article I examine 127 images published in ten tourism bro- chures produced by the Excursion Section of the Sport and Excursion Office of Helsinki between 1954 and 1963. The data-driven, content-analytical study shows how the images served a political identity project aimed at creating a sense of national solidarity among the Finns and to show international audiences that Finland is a modern nation. As a means of gaining acceptance in the West, support of citizenship education included emphasis on national sym- bols and signs of well-being and visualization of urban tourism. Keywords: Finland, nation building, tourism brochures, visual representations.

Images in tourism brochures are powerful forms of communication. They usually appear to be somewhat accurate depictions of the destinations because of their realistic style and tendency to imitate the way in which tourists see the world (Tuan 1974, 63–66; Osborne 2000, 85). Because the brochure producers choose the angle of view, the depictions of destinations reveal only a fraction of the reality they seem to represent. The images emphasize the textual and ideological character of the landscape by treating its elements as signs that can be placed in a new context in order to compose an attractive and coherent story of the destination (Duncan and Duncan 1988; Markwick 2001, 419–420; Jenkins 2003, 306–307). At the same time they steer the gaze and experiences of tourists by highlighting certain elements of the land- scape while neglecting others, further affecting the ways in which the destination and its inhabitants are perceived, approached, and pictured (Mellinger 1994; Jenkins 2003; Caton and Santos 2008).

The social formation and the selectivity of tourism images are receiving increased attention among tourism researchers. This development is connected to the “crisis of representation” and the emergence of a new critical approach in the social sciences. This has stressed the role of tourism images as cultural products or “texts” that circulate power and knowledge and thus elucidate certain aspects of the wider cultural, political, and social context in which they are produced and consumed (Morgan and Pritchard 1998, 35–40; Ateljevic and Doorne 2002, 650–652; Jenkins 2003, 306–307). Studies have focused on the use of tourism images as political tools and on the ethnic stereotypes embedded in the images (Mellinger 1994; Edwards 1996; Bhattacharyya 1997; Morgan and Pritchard 1998; Ateljevic and Doorne 2002).

* I would like to thank Pauliina Raento, Paul Kaldjian, and the three anonymous referees for helpful comments, and the City of Helsinki for supporting my research. This article is part of the Academy of Finland research project #123561, "Landscape, Icons, and Images."

Ms. JOKELA is a doctoral student in and an instructor of geography at the University of Helsinki, 00014 Helsinki, Finland; [salla.jokela@helsinki.fi].

Copyright © 2011 by the American Geographical Society of New York
They have also examined the connections between visual messages and the motivations, desires, and experiences of tourists (Edwards 1996; Henderson 2001; Markwick 2001).

Images are popular in tourism promotion for several reasons. First of all, vacations cannot be tested beforehand, so tourism promoters use various forms of communication to appeal to the desires of potential tourists and to offer them a way to acquaint themselves with the sights and activities of the destination before they actually see and experience them (Dann 1996a, 79; Morgan and Pritchard 1998, 45; Osborne 2000, 84). Along with other interpretive tools, such as types of written and audio media, images affect tourist decision making and behavior (Dann 1996a, 141–210; Palmer 2005, 14).

Second, tourism images anticipate the visual nature of tourist experiences that are often based on sightseeing, collecting visual impressions, and gaining place-specific knowledge by seeing the destination with one’s “own eyes” (Urry 1999, 2002; Osborne 2000; Shaffer 2001). The images depict sights that please tourists’ eyes by being somehow out of the ordinary or characteristic of the destination (Urry 1995, 2002).

Third and—in the context of my study—most important, tourism images create and maintain “imagined communities,” which are central in the formation of nation-states (Anderson 1991). The political and ideological power of tourism images is especially pronounced during transitional periods, when images are actively used to enhance national identities and images of countries (Morgan and Pritchard 1998, 147–148; Ateljevic and Doorne 2002). As Joan Henderson put it, “the brochure is much more than a sales and marketing tool and should be read from these other perspectives in order to fully appreciate its significance” (2001, 79).

Michael Pretes paralleled “archaeological” tourism sights with censuses, maps, and museums that are essential institutions in the creation and domination of imagined communities (2003). These sights “popularize a hegemonic nationalist message of inclusion” and communicate “guiding fictions,” which are “commonly held beliefs that shape people’s attachment to the nation” (pp. 127–128). Images of these sights are circulated to support “pilgrimage” tourism and to mediate ideological notions about the history of the nation to wide audiences both at home and abroad (Pretes 2003, 127; Raento and Brunn 2005, 146). In this context tourism images function in the same way as other visual representations, such as landscape images and photographs (Lutz and Collins 1993; Schwartz and Ryan 2003; Häyrynen 2004), postcards (Mellinger 1994; Markwick 2001), postage stamps (Raento and Brunn 2005; Raento 2009), and maps (Kosonen 2008).

In this article I examine the images of the tourism brochures of Helsinki, the capital of Finland, published between 1954 and 1963 as a part of a major promotional campaign launched by the Excursion Section of the Sport and Excursion Office of Helsinki. I draw on the above-mentioned studies, applying them as appropriate in this temporal and spatial context. I scrutinize the visualization of the elements of Helsinki’s landscape, considering also the inherent selectivity and
“significant silences” of the images (Echtner and Prasad 2003, 671; see also Markwick 2001; Raento and Brunn 2005; Raento 2009). Publication of the brochures in identical formats but in different languages indicates that they are aimed at both domestic and international audiences.

Anssi Paasi noted that, in Finland, “the construction of an identity on a national scale did not take place independently of the production on other territorial scales” (1996, 138). The tourism images of Helsinki reinforced its identity on a local scale. At the same time, the symbolism associated with its status as the capital city made Helsinki representative of the national territory as a whole and connected it to a wider international framework in which signs of nationhood were defined and produced (Billig 1995, 86; van der Wusten 2001). The selection and depiction of landscape elements thus offered tourism promoters an opportunity to link Helsinki to a desired territorial context and to reinforce its status in the sociospatial consciousness of citizens (Paasi 1996; Pretes 2003, 131).

I chose this period because the images constitute a clearly defined set of data that sheds light on the growing recognition of tourism promotion as a tool of identity politics and revaluation of “Finnishness” in the changing socioeconomic and political situation after World War II (Paasi 1996, 120–123; Morgan and Pritchard 1998, 147–157; Pretes 2003). Finland is a particularly powerful example because of the country’s historical borderland status between East and West. The location invites addressing the way in which the images have mirrored and have been used to define the geopolitical position of Finland, illuminating the links between national identities and popular imageries.

Historical Context

The defeat by the Soviet Union in World War II affected the ideological atmosphere, political discourses, and self-understanding of the citizens in postwar Finland. The conditions of the Paris Peace Treaty in 1947 obliged Finland to pay war reparations to the Soviet Union for the damage incurred during the war, to regulate the armed forces, and to cede parts of its territory to the victor (Klinge [1977] 2000, 135). The redefinition of Finland’s national boundaries created the need to rebuild the national identity. The postwar division of Europe into Eastern and Western blocs emphasized Finland’s position between the socialist and capitalist spheres (Paasi 1996, 120–123). Finland aimed at gaining geopolitical acceptance in the West as a way of maintaining cultural and economic relationships with the rest of Europe and at establishing Finland’s position as a sovereign state in international organizations (Klinge [1977] 2000, 147–149). Nevertheless, relations with the Soviet Union grew closer, partly because it was in the interests of Finnish politicians to secure a “peaceful coexistence” with the powerful neighbor and partly because the political, military, and economic cooperation with the Soviet Union brought practical benefits (Klinge [1977] 2000, 144, 146; Paasi 1996, 132).

From the point of view of tourism, the period after World War II resembles the one that followed Finland’s declaration of independence, in 1917, and the subse-
quent civil war, in 1918. Both periods witnessed a growing tendency to use tourism to communicate hegemonic ideas about Finnishness to increasingly mobile Finnish and international audiences (Hirn and Markkanen 1987). However, during the first half of the twentieth century tourism promotion was more openly political than it was in the 1950s and 1960s. This reflected the “regime of truth” defined by the bourgeois “Whites,” who won the civil war against the “Reds,” who consisted mainly of a rural landless people and an urban proletariat (Klinge [1977] 2000; Morgan and Pritchard 1998, 35–40; Tagg 1988, 61).

After World War II travel and tourism boomed, more Finns had enough resources to travel, and the number of international visitors to Finland grew quickly. Economic growth, increasing affluence, and improvements in transportation technology fostered these developments. The postwar reconstruction was a collective endeavor that helped to unify the nation divided by the civil war. As a consequence, tourism promotion became more delicate, mirroring Finland’s policy of neutrality that was emphasized in a new, sensitive geopolitical situation. Considered to have several benefits, traveling strengthened the image of the nation, supported citizenship education, brought economic benefits, and enhanced mutual understanding among Finns and foreigners (Hirn and Markkanen 1987, 332; Kolbe 2002, 107–108).

In Helsinki, the Summer Olympics of 1952 crystallized the optimistic spirit of the age, which coincided with the completion of the payment of war reparations and thus signified the beginning of a new era. The Olympics were an important event in the city of fewer than 400,000 inhabitants. Tourism facilities and infrastructure were improved, and Helsinki was consciously developed to represent Finland to the world and to serve as a gateway to the interior regions of the country (Hirn and Markkanen 1987, 334).

With the Olympic Games, Helsinki opened itself up for large-scale tourism, which provided new ways for promoting the rebuilt landscape of the capital city and for reinforcing the iconic significance of its national landmarks (see van der Wusten 2001). During the period examined in this article, the number of tourists staying in the hotels and boarding houses of Helsinki varied from 250,000 to 280,000 annually. Of this number, the proportion of foreign tourists nearly doubled, from 11 percent to more than 20 percent (HKTV 1955, 1961). The unprecedented increase of tourism called for more conscious and systematic tourism promotional efforts than had been made before. In this context, designated to answer the needs of tourists, the Excursion Section of the Sport and Excursion Office of Helsinki provided “program[s], provisioning and above all guidance” (КНКК 1958, 236–237). In addition to informing citizens and sending promotional materials to various publishers in Finland and abroad, the Excursion Office began to publish illustrated brochures.

Data and Methods

My analysis is based on 127 images published in ten tourism brochures between 1954 and 1963. I collected my data from the Ephemera Collection of the National Library of Finland by systematically choosing all images of the illustrated brochures.
published by the Excursion Section of the Sport and Excursion Office of Helsinki. The availability of brochures in archives steered the selection of images. The Sport and Excursion Office was the most important agency that produced tourism brochures during the examined time period, which makes the images representative of the tourism promotion and the “official” views of the City of Helsinki at that time.

The time frame of my research extends to 1963, when the Sport and Excursion Office handed its functions over to the newly founded Helsinki City Tourist Office. During the examined time period between 37,000 and 68,000 copies of each brochure were circulated, and the selection of languages increased from four to six: French and Russian were added to Finnish, Swedish, English, and German (1957, 202; 1958, 203; 1965, 246). The content was the same regardless of the language and the target group. It is unclear whether the images were aimed primarily at Finnish audiences or international ones, but, as my study shows, they consisted of elements that had the potential to appeal to both. The overall number of images circulating during this period was relatively small, which stresses the importance of the examined images in the Finnish national-identity project and image making (compare Raento 2009). Together, these notions suggest that a high proportion of those tourists who sought informative material to guide their visit in Helsinki was exposed to these images.

I analyzed the images quantitatively and qualitatively, drawing on the basic methodological literature (Barthes 1972, 1990, 1997; Fiske 1990; Hansen and others 1998; Krippendorf 2004; Rose 2007). I also followed the example of earlier content-analytical, discursive, and semiotic studies of images when they were applicable in the context of 1950s and 1960s Finland (for example, Lutz and Collins 1993; Mellinger 1994; Dann 1996b; Bhattacharyya 1997; Morgan and Pritchard 1998; Henderson 2001; Jenkins 2003; Raento and Brunn 2005; Buzinde, Santos, and Smith 2006; Raento 2009).

Through content analysis I determined the incidences of the central themes and signs in the images. Paying attention to the criteria that Gillian Rose established, I asked every image what it depicted and wrote down the signs of the images to arrive at a comprehensive idea of their content (compare Dann 1996b; Raento and others 2004; Rose 2007, 65). I also considered the captions, because they help viewers interpret the images and guide their attention to visual elements that may otherwise be ignored (Barthes 1990, 39; Morgan and Pritchard 1998, 171). To support further analysis, I then classified the themes and signs into seven analytically interesting categories: general features and location; repeated angles of view, human figures, statues and monuments, special places, buildings, transportation, and other repeated signs (compare Buzinde, Santos, and Smith 2006). I divided every main category into subcategories, the number of which ranged from two (repeated angles of view) to twenty-one (buildings).

I classified each image into several categories without separating primary and secondary motifs, because defining their order of importance would have been ambiguous (Raento and Brunn 2005). For instance, if an image contained human
figures, I placed it first in the human-figures category and subsequently in one or more subcategories (compare Bhattacharyya 1997, 382; Buzinde, Santos, and Smith 2006, 714). These subcategories included children, bystanders, sight-like human figures that were part of the visual focus of the images, and tourists, whom I categorized on the basis of touristic signs, such as cameras, tents, or maps.

My main reason for using content analysis was to identify and count the “denotative meanings” of the visual signs (Barthes 1990, 16–20). Most important, it helped to make sure that any subtle patterns in the images did not go unnoticed and that my own presumptions did not steer my gaze (Lutz and Collins 1993, 89). The significance of visual motifs cannot be deduced directly from their incidences, however, so I complemented the content analysis with a qualitative analysis that aimed at revealing some of the deeper meanings embedded in the images (Barthes 1972, 109–159; Häyrynen 2004, 26; Rose 2007, 72). First, I relied on the “good eye” to determine the composition and use of visual effects in each image (Rose 2007, 35–58). I then contextualized the images historically to examine their role in time- and place-specific social, cultural and political discourses (Lutz and Collins 1993; Fürsich 2002; Raento and others 2004; Raento and Brunn 2005; Raento 2009). This helped me examine the “connotations” of the images and to consider their role as instruments of “mythical speech” that connects them to wider ideological systems and their structures of signification (Barthes 1990, 20–25; 1972, 109–159).

Categorizing and verbalizing visual information are challenging and inherently subjective procedures, because visual signs are often ambiguous and the meanings of images are multiple and contradictory (Barthes 1972, 110; Bhattacharyya 1997, 372; Jenkins 2003, 306). Interpretation of images thus entails several decisions that are affected by the researcher’s (inter)personal, academic, institutional, and other contexts (Mauthner and Doucet 2003, 421; Krippendorf 2004, 22–23; Raento and Brunn 2005; Rose 2007; Raento 2009). However, as Pauliina Raento noted in 2009, the reliability of subjective interpretations can be strengthened by “critical self-positioning” and “cross-checks” (Echtner and Prasad 2003, 663).

Being a Finn living in Helsinki, I was able to use myself as a “methodological tool” in my research (Evans 1988, 199; Raento 2009). I am familiar with the landscape of Helsinki and had easy access to informants and literary sources, which helped me interpret elements depicted in the images. My examination was founded on the assumption that visual communication is based on a spatiotemporally specific “common sense hegemonic understanding” (Ateljevic and Doorne 2002, 651). It is constructed in the context created by the producers and the consumers of the images. Lack of written data on the production and consumption of the images limited my research, but I compensated for this by following Raento’s 2009 example and cross-checking my findings with previous research on the history of Finland and Helsinki (Mårtenson 1950; Raivo 1997; Saarikangas 1999; Roivainen 2001; Kervanto Nevanlinna 2002; Kolbe 2002), as well as with previous studies of the imageries and promotion of Helsinki (Lähteenkorva and Pekkarinen 2004; Raento and Brunn 2005; Raento 2009).
Interpreting images is challenging because “pictures . . . are more imperative than writing, they impose meaning at one stroke, without analysing or diluting it” (Barthes 1972, 110). However, even written text and speech are not transparent passages to “social reality” or “subjectivity and lived experiences” (Richardson 2003, 508; Mauthner and Doucet 2003, 423; see also Barthes 1972, 109–159). Interpreting cultural artifacts always implies adding new layers of meanings to them in order to make them answer “empirical questions we care about” (Wagner 2007, 28). My reading of the images does not represent the only “truth” or exclude other interpretations, but it does allow me to “know ‘something’ without claiming to know everything” (Richardson 2003, 508).

**The Facade of Finland in Tourism Imagery: Framing the Old Monumental Center**

Based on my analysis of 127 images, I examined four distinctive areas of Helsinki to exemplify the way in which tourism imagery used signs and symbols of landscape. The prime core area in the images was the old nineteenth-century center of Helsinki (Figure 1). It was built when Finland was a part of the Russian Empire, whose power is expressed in neoclassical architecture. The area hosts some of the most important capital-city symbols, such as the National Lutheran Cathedral and the main buildings of the University of Helsinki (compare van der Wusten 2001). Declaring it “the old town of Helsinki” preserved the core in 1952 (Kolbe 2002, 211).

One-third of the analyzed images depict the old monumental center. The best-known view of the area portrays it from the south as a panorama dominated by the Lutheran cathedral (Figure 2). This view was among the first landscapes used to promote Helsinki to tourists, and by the 1950s it had become an iconic view of the city (Erben 1852; Kervanto Nevanlinna 2002). Five brochure covers are of this view, which emphasizes its importance. Some of the images point to the marine nature of Helsinki by imitating the perception of a tourist, who arrives in Helsinki by the sea. Others portray the monumental center from a slightly different angle of view, emphasizing the harbor or the Market Square.

According to Roland Barthes, the attractiveness of panoramic views lies in their ability to decipher landscapes through their identifiable landmarks that call for imagining history (1997, 10–14). The marine panorama of Helsinki refers to the “foundation myth” and history of Finland, creating a cultural tension that emphasizes Finland’s historical position between East and West (Preites 2003, 127; see also Paasi 1996, 123–127). This tension crystallizes in the two state-affiliated church buildings that stand out from the city’s skyline: the National Lutheran Cathedral and the Russian Orthodox Cathedral.

The Lutheran cathedral is the symbolic marker of Helsinki (see Barthes 1997, 3). It is depicted in every seventh image, often as a monumental landmark that can be seen behind other administrative buildings. Surprisingly, the images usually exclude the Orthodox cathedral even though it functions as a picturesque landmark and is the
main building of the Orthodox Church of Finland. This observation supports Petri Raivo’s notion that, in Finland, Orthodox culture was treated as the eastern “Other” and perceived to be an intruder in the dominant Lutheran culture (Raivo 1997; see also Lähteenkorva and Pekkarinen 2004, 294). The exclusion of the Orthodox cathedral reflects hegemonic ideological notions of Finland’s geopolitical and cultural orientation toward the Protestant Christian West (Paasi 1996, 123–127). It also corresponds with Pauliina Raento and Stanley Brunn’s discovery that postage stamps did not portray religious diversity in Finland until 1973, when the stamps included the Orthodox cathedral in a view of downtown Helsinki (2005, 158; see also Raento 2009, 133).

The reconstruction of Helsinki after World War II was followed by new construction work that served as a concrete manifestation of increasing well-being and the beginning of a prosperous era. In a few images the old monumental center is symbolically tied to the contemporary period by, for instance, juxtaposing the sky-
line with a modern harbor building that was constructed to welcome Olympic guests to Finland. The mixing of old and new elements illustrates a story of a future-oriented nation and stresses “the continuity of the past into the present” (Markwick 2001, 427). This shows that the tourism images have adjusted themselves to the changing historical situations in the same way as Finnish national landscape imagery and press cartography have (Häyrynen 2004; Kosonen 2008).

**Contrasting Modern Finnishness with the Stable Values of the Past**

Northwest of the nineteenth-century monumental center lies what I call the “new center” of Helsinki (see Figure 1). One-fourth of the examined images represent this area. In them signs of modernity are contrasted with the established landscape even more visibly than in the old monumental center. The ethos of modernity is expressed through various visual motifs and stylistic devices. For example, the efficiency of the modern lifestyle is embodied in the bustling traffic and busy crowds of people that are depicted in one-fourth of the images that represent the new center. Nighttime images reflect the modern ideal of a pulsating, brightly illuminated city and draw an analogy between Helsinki and other metropolises.

![An iconic view of the old monumental center of Helsinki emphasizes its marine nature and most imposing landmarks, above all the National Lutheran Cathedral (1). The image depicts the skyline behind a yacht-club pavilion. The Russian Orthodox Cathedral (2), to the right of the Lutheran cathedral, is usually framed out of images in order to symbolically connect Finland to the Protestant Christian West. This is one of three images in the entire sample of 127 pictures in which the Orthodox cathedral can be seen. However, even in this image the original caption (“The ‘white city of the North.’ The Great Church dominates the skyline.”) drew attention to the Lutheran cathedral that was known in the 1950s and 1960s as the “Great Church.” Source: seoh 1960. (Reproduced by permission of the City of Helsinki Sports Department)](image-url)
Most of the images depict the administrative and business buildings that were constructed after Finland’s independence in 1917 to meet the new administrative responsibilities and the requirements of the booming economy (Kervanto Nevanlinna 2002, 140–143). The new center of Helsinki was planned to function as a showcase of national symbolism that was created to enhance national unity and inspire awe in foreign visitors (compare van der Wusten 2001; see also Mårtenson 1950; Raivo 2004). The national-romantic and functionalistic buildings were a mixture of universal and particular features, representing national variations of international
architectonic trends that were used to construct a distinguishable Finnish identity (see Billig 1995, 83).

Human figures are depicted in order to attach meanings to the landscape of Helsinki. For instance, an image of the National Museum of Finland shows two children holding a map or a brochure and gazing at the building (Figure 3). The museum exhibits artifacts from the prehistoric times to the present, constructing a coherent narrative of Finnishness and disseminating “a hegemonic discourse of national identity and imagined community” (Pretes 2003, 126). The national-romantic style and the function of the museum suggest that the image was probably aimed primarily at Finns.

The image is built on two binary oppositions: youth/old age and tallness/small size (Tuan 1974, 27–29; Echtner and Prasad 2003, 671). In the historical context of the 1950s the children are “baby boomers”—people born after World War II. The image emphasizes the consumption potential of this important target group and offers a concrete example of international tourism practices, paving the way for the emerging domestic tourism of 1950s’ Finland (see Morgan and Pritchard 1998, 119–120). For instance, the printed document that the children are carrying stresses the role of maps and brochures as “markers” that give information about specific sites and advise tourists on how to look at the landscape (MacCannell 1999, 109–133).

The children, as signs of the future, mirror the optimistic cultural climate that prevailed in Finland in the 1950s. They are contrasted with the national museum, whose collections connote old age and are associated with the dignified past and stable values of the state. While looking at the museum displays as tourists, the children learn what Finland is, create “imaginative links with [their] ancestors,” and guarantee that the national values will be carried into the future (Palmer 2005, 15). Following Yi-Fu Tuan’s interpretation, the vertical dimension of the museum symbolizes a “sense of striving” and “skyward spirituality” that—along with the monumentality of the building—make it appear to be a “father figure” that highlights the small size of the children operating under its authority (Tuan 1974, 28; Pretes 2003, 134). Although this image most likely appealed primarily to Finns, its universal symbolism was accessible also to foreign visitors, who were probably capable of relating to the scene “without feeling it necessarily represents their identity” (Palmer 2005, 18).

National Success Stories in the Olympic Landscape

The Olympic landscape north of the new center forms the third core area of touristic Helsinki (see Figure 1). It is depicted in a small proportion—5 percent—of the examined images, but the relatively large size of the images adds to the area’s significance. One image, which appeared in brochures for four consecutive years, shows a woman photographing the statue of Paavo Nurmi, the national athlete of Finland, in front of the Olympic Stadium (Figure 4). Nurmi is a mythical figure to the Finns, because he won several Olympic medals during the 1920s as a runner and
thus showed that a small and young country like Finland could compete internationally.

Like other static elements of the landscape, the stadium and the statue are suitable objects for tourist consumption, because they can give visitors a satisfactory feeling of reaching and capturing the objects they have seen in the brochures. This interpretation is supported by the female figure, who emphasizes the role of the statue as a tourist sight, introducing and reinforcing international ideas of tourist photography, which, according to Peter Osborne, is often “quotation” and “more a process of confirmation than of discovery” (2000, 79). The image works in the same way that the picture of the national museum does: It gives people something to relate to, teaches them how to be a tourist, and highlights certain elements of the landscape to ensure that these will be noticed and reproduced by being photographed.

The elements in Figure 4 refer to the moments of national success and evoke nationalistic feelings that were crucial in the 1950s, because the material and mental construction of the state required a strong sense of national solidarity and cooperation in working to attain common goals. Like the functionalistic and national-romantic buildings of the new center, these signs are simultaneously universal and national, emphasizing the sovereignty of Finland and helping it pass what Michael Billig called the “international test of nationhood” (1995, 85).

**Notions of Well–Being and a Nostalgic Past**

One-fourth of the images represent residential and recreation areas outside central Helsinki (see Figure 1). These images draw attention to the fun aspects of the city and promote a modern lifestyle that emphasizes family values and functionalistic separation of housing, work, and leisure. The rapid urbanization of the 1950s and 1960s manifests itself in the newly built residential areas that are depicted on the back covers of four out of ten brochures. These images stand out in the brochures, because they are relatively large and printed in color. Their positioning contrasts with that of the front covers, which are used to depict the center of Helsinki and, thus, symbolically distinguish the “official” facade that welcomes the tourists to the city from the everyday landscapes of the locals.

Placed adjacent to each other in this group of images, visual elements transfer meanings from one element to another (Dann 1996a, 48; Morgan and Pritchard 1998, 32; Ateljevic and Doorne 2002, 656). For instance, picturing joyful children in front of brand-new apartment buildings labels residential areas with romanticizing notions of optimism, well-being, and health (Figure 5). In addition to referring to the sociocultural situation of the postwar period, the children reflect international pictorial conventions. Catherine Lutz and Jane Collins’s study of the imagery of *National Geographic*, for example, revealed that children were popular motifs in the imagery of the 1950s and 1960s (1993, 107, 169–171).

Sunshine is an essential element in these images. According to Graham Dann, it is “the most used visual cliché” in the language of tourism (1996a, 195). The sunshine can be interpreted in multiple ways, but, according to Dann’s classification, it
falls primarily into the category of “suns which distribute warmth (well-being, freedom, pleasure, nudity)” (1996a, 107–108), impregnating the images with happiness and innocence that emphasize the role of the children as dependents who are looked after by the city and the emerging Nordic welfare state.

More than one-tenth of the images depict recreational areas, many of which are populated by tourist-like figures. These people are pictured as being happy and carefree in sunny weather (Figure 6), in much the same way as are the inhabitants of residential areas. They express the emerging ideas of automobile tourism and camping as well as the desire for health and self-fulfilment (compare Shaffer 2001, 180).

One repeated theme in the images is the Seurasaari Open-Air Museum, founded in 1909 and modeled after Scandinavian exemplar. These images attach notions of rurality to the landscape of the capital city by picturing old peasant buildings that were moved to the island from distant Finnish provinces. Building on mythical notions of a simple, peaceful, and unchanging countryside, they reflect the need of
Children at a playground in the Helsinki suburb of Lauttasaari. The rationality and healthiness of this new residential area are associated with children, who symbolize the increasing social welfare and its beneficial influence on the future of the nation (see Roivainen 2001, 139). Source: SEOH 1955. (Reproduced by permission of the City of Helsinki Sports Department)

the increasingly urban population to access nostalgic experiences of their own past (Short 1991, 31, 81; Mellinger 1994, 764–765; Pretes 1995). Following Marion Markwick’s 2001 interpretation, the references to the past also satisfy tourists’ quest for authentic experiences. The images “reduce the complexities of history to a kind of easily digestible shorthand” (Palmer 2005, 16). Simultaneously, they contribute to the mythical “simple Finnish life” that corresponds with the taste of the national cultural elite (Saarikangas 1999).

Three Ways of Making Meaning

My examination has shown that the tourism images of Helsinki in the 1950s and 1960s were not only used to sell the city to tourists but also to create illustrated stories of Helsinki and Finnishness. This was done in three main ways. First, the inherent selectivity of the images allowed the producers to emphasize certain elements of the landscape and neglect others. For instance, the National Lutheran Cathedral was used as the iconic marker of Helsinki, whereas the Russian Orthodox Cathedral was framed out of the pictures or pushed to the background, using captions that emphasized other elements of the landscape. The Lutheran cathedral functioned as a landmark that gave Helsinki a distinguishable identity, equating it with...
The increasing availability and possession of automobiles led to a new trend, camping, which emphasized the invigorating qualities of nature and fresh air. The sunny image embodies nostalgic notions of a free and easy childhood and refers to the city of Helsinki as a caring parent who looks after its tourists (see Dann 1996a, 107–108). Source: seoh 1959. (Reproduced by permission of the City of Helsinki Sports Department)

Second, signs of Finnishness and well-being were used flexibly to show that Finland was a modern, independent state with a distinctive culture and history. For example, emphasis on Finnish architecture, national monuments, and sports heroes evoked nationalistic feelings and a sense of solidarity among Finnish tourists. Despite their national character these signs were connected to the international discourses and tourism practices that made them accessible to foreigners and helped Finns gain acceptance abroad.

Third, the messages were strengthened by using human figures that attached meanings to the landscape of Helsinki. Children were used to reflect the optimistic spirit of the age and the bright future of the nation. Locals and tourists were often depicted in sunshine to emphasize the invigorating nature of recreation and residential areas. Sunshine also emphasized the role of the city and the state as caregivers comparable to the other Nordic welfare states and cities. Furthermore, human figures served as points of identification and supported citizenship education by
suggesting ways of consuming the landscape and circulating international tourism practices to domestic audiences.

My study has shed light on the way in which identity building and tourism images on a local scale were connected to the national identity project, image making, and place promotion in Finland in the 1950s and 1960s. This relationship was especially strong in the case of Helsinki, which was intentionally represented as the facade of Finland due to its capital-city status. The links between tourism promotion of other Finnish destinations and the construction of national identity as well as the production and the interdependence between different types of imageries with parallel contents merit further consideration. These approaches and observations can be adapted internationally to serve other case studies.

References


———. 2004. Karelia Lost or Won: Materialization of a Landscape of Contested and Commemo-
Richardson, L. 2003. Writing: A Method of Inquiry. In Collecting and Interpreting Qualitative Mate-
Roivainen, I. 2001. Metsäiseen kalliomaastoon 10 000 asukkaan kaupunki (A Town of 10,000 in a
Forested, Rocky Terrain). In Nälkölmia Helsingin ympäristohistoriaan (Viewpoints on the Envi-
ronmental History of Helsinki), edited by S. Laakkonen, S. Laurila, P. Kansanen, and H. Schulman,
In Europe’s Northern Frontier: Perspectives on Finland’s Western Identity, edited by T. M. S. Lehtonen,
SEOH [Sport and Excursion Office of Helsinki]. Various dates. Helsinki—Helsingfors. Excursion Sec-
tion, Sport and Excursion Office of Helsinki, Ephemera Collection of the National Library of
Finland.
Lawrence: University Press of Kansas.
Prentice-Hall.
Van der Wusten, H. 2001. Dictators and Their Capital Cities: Moscow and Berlin in the 1930s. Geo-
Wagner, J. 2007. Observing Culture and Social Life: Documentary Photography, Fieldwork, and So-
Paper V

Tourism and identity politics in the Helsinki churchscape

Salla Emilia Jokela*

Department of Geosciences and Geography, University of Helsinki, Helsinki, Finland

(Received 14 November 2012; accepted 29 July 2013)

Religious sites are popular tourist attractions, mainly because they are place-specific landmarks that mediate conceptions about history and identity. This is evident in Helsinki, Finland, where churches are among the most popular tourist sites. A content analysis of 366 tourism brochure images covering a period from 1852 to 2000 was conducted in order to examine the identity-political underpinnings of those churches in the context of tourism. The churches of Helsinki have supported identity construction at various geographical scales that range from the (inter)national down to the individual. They have also mediated hegemonic conceptions of Finnishness between these scales. The churches have contributed to the social construction of bounded communities by conceptualizing Lutheranism as part of mainstream Finnishness in contrast to the Orthodox religion, which has been associated with Russia. At the local scale, churches have crystallized the essence of Helsinki and its neighborhoods and set the stage on which tourists’ bodily performances have taken place. Knowledge about the visualization and identity-political underpinnings of religious infrastructure elucidates the processes through which religious sites become conceived as historically and culturally important landscape elements. This knowledge enriches understanding about the transformation of religious sites into resources for tourism. The multifaceted role of religious tourist sites in the reproduction of socio-spatial identities and territories highlights the value of the concept of ‘everyday nationalism’ that combines banal and politicized cases of nationalism.

Keywords: Finland; Helsinki; religious sites; churches; landscape; churchscape; identity construction; nation-building; tourism images

Introduction

Religious sites are popular tourist attractions. They are local landmarks of national significance that reflect global belief systems (Raivo, 1997; Sidorov, 2000; Stausberg, 2011 pp. 75–88). Because of this, they have the ability to narrate ‘authentic’ identities and histories about particular regions and places (Bremer, 2004). Church towers and other prominent ecclesiastical structures form a backdrop for tourists’ experiences and help them negotiate given destination landscapes.

In this paper, I explore the churches of Helsinki, the capital of Finland. These churches have ‘historic and artistic importance,’ and they are among the most popular tourist attractions in the entire country (Nolan & Nolan, 1992 p. 69; also Busby, 2006 p. 51; Honkanen, 2002). I examine the most prominent churches of Helsinki in the context of tourism promotion, identity politics, and human geographical landscape studies as a means to continue discussion about the role of religious tourism sites qua construction of socio-spatial identities (Bremer, 2004; Busby, 2006; Nolan & Nolan, 1992; Olsen, 2006.

*Email: salla.jokela@helsinki.fi

© 2013 Taylor & Francis
I investigate how tourism promotion has supported the transformation of the churches in Helsinki into ‘must-see’ tourist sights and how tourism images have embedded a range of hierarchically organized identities in the Helsinki churchscape (Zelinsky, 2002). I place special emphasis on the Lutheran cathedral, because it has been a pervasive symbol in tourism images and in the underlying identity-political discourses through which hegemonic conceptions of Finland and Helsinki have been constructed.

Questions of identity are fundamental to tourism for three interrelated reasons. First, socio-spatial identities are used in tourism promotion in order to emphasize the positive qualities of the promoted destinations and to add value to destination brands (Morgan & Pritchard, 1998). Second, tourism is an arena of ‘everyday nationalism’ (Jones & Merriman, 2009). It reproduces national and other socio-spatial identities in everyday contexts and, thereby, fosters ‘imagined communities’ (Anderson, 1991). Third, destination identities matter to tourists, because the experience of sites and objects meaningful to identities helps tourists ‘reaffirm self-image and social status’ by adding symbolic value to their holidays (Light, 2001 p. 1054; also Desforges, 2000; Morgan & Pritchard, 2005).

In this paper, I draw on earlier geographical studies that have conceptualized religious and other cultural landscapes as ‘cultural data’ that has the potential to reveal soci(et)al phenomena, including issues of identity and power (e.g. Raivo, 1997; Sidorov, 2000; Zelinsky, 2002). These studies help me to examine how political, social, and cultural changes have influenced the meanings of the churches of Helsinki, and how these meanings have been reworked through tourism promotion. My study is informed by the notion that landscape extends beyond its material features into the values, (mental) images, practices, and processes that are associated with the landscape (e.g. Knudsen, Rickly-Boyd, & Metro-Roland, 2012). This is especially evident in tourism, because the making of tourist attractions involves the use of images, texts, and other ‘off-sight markers’ that attach meanings to the sites and objects that are exhibited to tourists (MacCannell, 1999 pp. 109–133).

My data consist of the images from Finnish tourism brochures published between 1852 and 2000. I focus on images, because tourism promotion depends largely on visual language. As Tilley (2006) notes, ‘[i]deas and feelings about identity are located in the specificities of places and landscapes in what they actually look like or perhaps more typically how they ought to appear (representations in guidebooks, postcards, tourist brochures, and so on)’ (p. 14). Because of this, images in tourism brochures elucidate issues of identity that ‘cannot be directly observed and must be inferred from its many different forms of expression’ (Henderson, 2001 p. 220). In the case of Helsinki, tourism images have been one of the most important means by which the city’s brand has been constructed. Since churches are an integral part of this brand, it is interesting to examine their role in those tourism images.

After discussing the theoretical underpinnings of my study, I examine the evolution of Helsinki’s churchscape before introducing my data and methods. The following analysis is informed by the notion that national identities are negotiated at various geographical scales (Herb & Kaplan, 1999; Paasi, 1996). I first explain how the visibility of Helsinki’s churches has been regulated in order to define Finland’s geopolitical position in the world. I then explore the role of these churches vis-à-vis the hegemonic conceptions of Finnishness. Finally, I show how churches have participated in constructing Helsinki’s identity and how this has been connected to the microscale activities and encounters through which tourists have constructed their self-identities. The conclusions address the broader significance of my findings in relation to the study of identities, religious sites, and tourism.
Identity politics, religious landscapes, and tourism images

In the growing body of literature on identity politics and cultural landscapes, geographers have analyzed the (in)visibility of landscape features in order to explore the role of landscapes as arenas of ‘selective remembrance and oblivion’ (Rose-Redwood, 2008, p. 436). They have examined memorials and monuments (Dwyer, 2000), religious landscapes (Raivo, 1997; Sidorov, 2000), commemorative street naming (Rose-Redwood, 2008), and other material-symbolic sites that have the ability to ‘disclose the otherwise invisible presence of hegemonic conceptualizations of history and identity’ (Dwyer, 2000, p. 660). Many geographers have also addressed the relationship between tourism landscapes and nationalism, especially in relation to the construction and maintenance of ‘imagined communities’ (Anderson, 1991), which are bound together by symbols and feelings of belonging (e.g. Jokela, 2011; Light, 2001; Pretes, 2003).

In this paper, I study the identity politics of a churchscape, the ‘assemblage of objects that constitute the publicly visible religious landscape’ (Zelinsky, 2002, p. 565). Churches and other religious structures have touristic value, because they offer esthetic experiences to tourists and are imbued with meanings that are grounded on notions of collective identities (Bremer, 2004; Olsen, 2012; Raivo, 1997; Sidorov, 2000). Through their symbolism in particular, many churches exemplify and embody the close relationship between religion and nationalism to the basis of imagined communities of religious adherents and national citizens alike. Churches may bring believers in contact with the core elements of their religious identities and function as instruments of ‘everyday nationalism,’ which have the potential to strengthen nationalistic sentiments (Jones & Merriman, 2009).

The boundary between ‘sacred’ and ‘secular’ forms of tourism is blurred. Many researchers have noted, for example, that ‘secular’ tourists and religious pilgrims seek similar experiences of self-discovery and self-affirmation (e.g. Bremer, 2004; Olsen, 2012; Stausberg, 2011, pp. 19–30). Non-believers may undertake ‘pilgrimages’ to sites of national importance and ‘civil religion’ in order to experience the roots of their national culture and to celebrate human accomplishments (Norman & Cusack, 2012; Pretes, 2003). The churchscape of Helsinki is a good example of a ‘pilgrimage site’ that attracts both religious and secular tourists, because it amalgamates Christian values with notions of the ‘cultural roots’ of the Finnish nation and Helsinki’s urban image.

While there is abundant research on the connections between tourism, religious sites, and identity formation (e.g. Bremer, 2004; Busby, 2006; Olsen, 2006, 2012), the role of religious sites in tourism promotion is still largely overlooked. The aim of this paper is to fill this gap by exploring the ways in which the Helsinki churchscape has been portrayed in tourism promotion, and how this portrayal has supported the construction of socio-spatial identities, image building, and destination branding. My point of departure is that tourism images of churches do not merely reflect the meanings that emerge through ‘processes of signification and sacralization’ (Olsen, 2012, p. 359). Instead, tourism images play an active role in the discourses and practices through which the meanings of churchscapes are constructed and appropriated. Following the example of human geographical landscape studies, I conceptualize the churchscape as a socially constructed ‘way of seeing’ that reflects the perceptions of powerful individuals and groups and manifests itself in and through visual images (Cosgrove, 1984). This perspective is highlighted in the field of tourism, which is largely based on a ‘system of meanings communicated by signs that are at once the product of, and the reinforcement and recreation of particular ways of seeing and interpreting the world’ (Morgan & Pritchard, 1998, p. 31). Tourism images are thus an integral part of touristic churchscapes, which are ‘fluid entities whose
meanings and usage change over time and are apt to be contested by different tourist groups’ (Edensor, 2000, p. 326).

Tourism images are often used as part of image building and destination branding campaigns. Image building aims at improving the destination image, which refers to the ‘attitude, perception, beliefs and ideas one holds about a particular geographic area in the world’ (Gartner, 2000, p. 296). A positive image is often supported by destination branding that highlights the benefits of a destination in comparison to similar products (Morgan & Pritchard, 1998, p. 140). Destination branding resembles mechanisms through which awareness of nation states and their constituents have been rooted in the consciousness of individuals throughout the modern era (Paasi, 1996). Both tourism promoters and nationalist groups exploit key markers of national identities as a means of concretizing ideas about the geographic entity that they seek to promote. In order to avoid confrontation with local communities, and to give credibility to claims of ‘authenticity,’ tourism promoters often focus on those aspects of destinations which meet the conceptions of identities that are accepted by the locals. Tourism promotion is thus affected by the identity-political discourses of potential tourists and local people alike.

Tourism promoters consciously select various visual techniques to fit their images to hegemonic identity-political discourses. First, they can focus on landscape elements that their target audiences find attractive, and exclude undesirable elements, such as buildings and monuments that represent the values of marginalized groups. Second, they may use textual messages or other symbols to guide the identification and interpretation of visual elements (Barthes, 1990, p. 39; Morgan & Pritchard, 1998, p. 27). Third, they can manipulate destination’s appearance and ‘atmosphere’ with lighting, exposure, or particular drawing techniques. Finally, they may emphasize familiarity by depicting human figures that the viewer can identify with or by choosing an angle of view that imitates the perception of a tourist. I address each of these techniques in the empirical part of this paper. Before turning to the analysis, however, I will briefly examine the evolution of Helsinki churchscape and introduce my data and methods.

The evolving churchscape of Helsinki
Helsinki has had a key role in regional formation and nation-building in Finland. It has represented the entire country and, simultaneously, been ‘superior’ to other parts of Finland (cf. Johnson & Coleman, 2012). Helsinki’s capital city status and geopolitical location between ‘East’ and ‘West’ have made it a cultural and political center that has introduced international trends to Finland and transmitted knowledge about Finland to Finnish citizens and foreigners alike (see Jokela, 2011).

The landscape of Helsinki has evolved as the result of several distinctive waves of urban planning that have left an imprint in the churchscape of Helsinki (see Kolbe, 2006; Figure 1). The history of Lutheranism in Finland stretches back to the sixteenth century, when Finland belonged to the Kingdom of Sweden. The first church of Helsinki was constructed in the 1550s, when the city was founded. The Ulrika Eleonora Church existed on the corner of Helsinki’s Great Square from 1727 to 1827. It was demolished after Sweden ceded Finland to Russia in 1809 as part of the ongoing Napoleonic wars. In 1812, the Czar of Russia designated Helsinki as the capital city of newly founded autonomous Grand Duchy of Finland. The Lutheran Church retained its special status as the ‘state church’ of Finland. The vast majority of Finns were its members, although numbers have declined during the postwar period, from 95% in 1950 to 85% in 2000. Helsinki was gradually remodeled to express the power of the new ruler. Taking their cue from
St. Petersburg, grand boulevards and empire-style buildings were realized. The most impressive architectonic entity was the monumental Senate Square that substituted the Great Square on which the Ulrika Eleonora Church had been located.

The northern end of the Senate Square was dominated by the St. Nicholas’s Church, which later became known as the Great Church and the Lutheran Cathedral of Helsinki. The original name of the cathedral referred to Saint Nicholas and Czar Nicholas I, who ruled Russia in 1852 when the construction was finished. The cathedral became an iconic landmark and an integral part of the empire city center, which today is the most popular and the most photographed tourist attraction in Helsinki.

The small population of Helsinki grew rapidly as a result of its capital city status and industrialization. The population reached 20,000 around 1850 and had grown to 100,000 in 1907. New churches were therefore built in the town. Because of the Russian influence, an Orthodox parish was founded in 1827. The most important of the new Orthodox churches was the massive Uspenski Cathedral (1868) towering above the empire city.
The most impressive architectonic entity was the monumental Senate Square that substituted the Great Square on which the Ulrika Eleonora Church had been located. The northern end of the Senate Square was dominated by the St. Nicholas’s Church, which later became known as the Great Church and the Lutheran Cathedral of Helsinki. The original name of the cathedral referred to Saint Nicholas and Czar Nicholas I, who ruled Russia in 1852 when the construction was finished. The cathedral became an iconic landmark and an integral part of the empire city center, which today is the most popular and the most photographed tourist attraction in Helsinki.

The small population of Helsinki grew rapidly as a result of its capital city status and industrialization. The population reached 20,000 around 1850 and had grown to 100,000 in 1907. New churches were therefore built in the town. Because of the Russian influence, an Orthodox parish was founded in 1827. The most important of the new Orthodox churches was the massive Uspenski Cathedral (1868) towering above the empire city center (Figure 2). It became the main cathedral of the state-affiliated Orthodox Church in Finland and, over the course of the twentieth century, one of Helsinki’s most popular tourist attractions (Honkanen, 2002). In addition, an Orthodox garrison church was built by the Russian military on the fortress island of Suomenlinna near Helsinki.

By the twentieth century, the architectonic ideals of church building had begun to reflect the Finnish nationalist sentiments instead of Russian architectural standards (Saarikangas, 1999). This national-romanticist tendency heightened in the aftermath of Finland’s independence from Russia (1917) and the subsequent Civil War (1918) that ended with the victory of the ‘White’ government troops over the revolutionary, working-class ‘Reds.’ The outcome of the war consolidated the sentiment of the ‘Whites’ that anything that was considered ‘Russian’ should be excluded from the Finnish landscape (Raivo, 1997). For example, the St. Nicholas Cathedral was renamed the Great Church, which was used until it was changed into the Cathedral of Helsinki in 1959.

There are two churches that clearly exemplify how nationalist sentiments manifested themselves in the ecclesiastical architecture of Helsinki. The Kallio Church (1912) was built according to the ideals of Art Noveau and National Romanticism. The Temppeliaukio Church (1969) represents the brand of modern Finnish architecture that thrived after World War II. The architectural design of these buildings incorporated materials and motifs from Finnish nature. For example, their granite walls referred to Finnish landscapes and the persistent ‘national character’ of Finns. The Temppeliaukio Church became one of the ‘must-see’ sights in central Helsinki soon after its consecration, and its visitor count has exceeded those of the Lutheran Cathedral of Helsinki and the Uspenski Cathedral, being approximately 400,000–550,000 annually (e.g. Helsinki City Tourist Office, 1992; Martiskainen, 1982).

**Data and methods**

This study is based on 308 illustrated brochures of Helsinki and Finland stored in the collections of the National Library, National Archives of Finland, Helsinki City Archives, and the Archives of the Museum of Helsinki. Sixty per cent of these brochures promoted Finland in its entirety and the rest focused on Helsinki. Of the 2611 images of Helsinki, one-quarter depicted one or more churches. The brochures were generic (i.e. not designed for niche markets) and they were aimed at Finns and foreigners alike. Most
of them were available in several languages, mostly in Finnish, Swedish, English, German, and French.

The selection may not be exhaustive, because it is likely that the archives have not collected everything which was published. However, the collected brochures are likely to be relatively representative of the brochures used by tourists. For example, the selection includes several complete series of brochures used in promotion campaigns by the most important public tourism organizations. These included the tourism offices of the City of Helsinki (35% of the examined images) and state-affiliated tourism organizations, such as the Finnish Tourist Association and the Finnish Tourist Board (32% of the images). Other publishers were travel agencies (10% of the images), private companies (10% of the images), and private persons (7% of the images). In 6% of the images the publisher was unknown.

The examined time period extends from the publication of the first illustrated brochure of Helsinki in 1852 to the year 2000, when the city was European Capital of Culture. This period preceded the explosion of internet-based tourism marketing and was therefore dominated by print media. The data thus represent the materials that tourists consulted when they visited Helsinki and Finland during that period. The brochures were disseminated through the offices of public tourism organizations and travel agencies, at major events, and in passenger vehicles in Finland and abroad (e.g. Lidman, 1981).

The variety of the 308 brochures was enormous. For example, different language versions of the brochures and their later incarnations were almost nearly identical, but there were nevertheless slight differences in their layouts and imageries. In order to manage this diversity, I selected images for further analysis by using the ‘saturation principle,’ which means that I went through new brochures until no new images were found (Jokela & Raento, 2012). I focused on images that showed one or more church buildings (or part of them). Most of these pictures were used in the brochures repeatedly, but I only considered the first incidence of each image, ending up with a total of 366 images. Ninety per cent of these images were photographs, most of which were taken by independent professional photographers and photo studios. The rest were paintings and drawings.

This gradual selection process revealed what kind of images had circulated in the brochures over the years. Producer- or target-group-specific differences in the content and stylistic properties of the images were not found. The same images were usually used regardless of the language choice, and differences in language structure explained the slightly different layouts. Some of the images were used by several tourism organizations, including the Helsinki City Tourist Office and the Finnish Tourist Board, which demonstrates that the public sector producers of tourism brochures formed a close network and emphasized the same landscape elements in their promotional materials. The uniformity of the messages communicated by the images suggests that the publishers did not seek to disrupt hegemonic discourses, but rather exploited and contributed to them.

The data analysis consisted of two phases, both informed by the notion that the deconstruction of tourism landscapes involves ‘both the physical crafting of space and the creation of imagery to sell places’ (Knudsen et al., 2012, p. 203). First, I conducted a content analysis and, subsequently, used archival data and literature to examine the findings in relation to the changes in the physical landscape of Helsinki qua the political and cultural climate of Finland. I started by classifying the images on the basis of several variables (see Lutz & Collins, 1993; Rose, 2007, pp. 59–73). These included the main motif of each image, church(es) shown, publisher, technique of visualization (drawing/photograph), composition (single image/collage of images), role of church(es) in the image (foreground/background), style (realistic/stylized), position within the brochure (cover/
other), and the circumstances in which the images were taken (season, time of the day). The content analysis ordered the large number of images in a systematic way and revealed repeated patterns in the depiction of the churches (cf. Lutz & Collins, 1993).

I then analyzed the images qualitatively. My emphasis was on the context – captions and other contextualizing texts and adjacent images – in which the images were published. This analysis pointed out meanings conveyed by the internal structure and stylistic devices of individual images and their ‘significant silences’ and intertextuality (see Echtner & Prasad, 2003, p. 671; Jokela, 2011; Raento, 2009; Raento & Brunn, 2005; Rose, 2007, pp. 142–143). I acknowledge that the composition of individual images may be coincidental, so I searched for persistent conventions of depiction. In order to relate my findings to wider social, political, and cultural discourses, I then ‘cross-checked’ (Echtner & Prasad, 2003, p. 663; see also Jokela, 2011; Raento, 2009) the findings with textual archival data and previous studies about the history and identity of Finland and Helsinki (e.g. Paasi, 1996; Raento & Brunn, 2005; Raivo, 1997; Saarikangas, 1999). The thorough cross-checking revealed that there were similar representational trends in different data-sets and, thus, gave me sufficient reason to assume that the examined images had been meaningful in broader identity-political discourses.

Defining the geopolitical position of Finland

Since the emergence of national consciousness in Finland during the nineteenth century, Finnish national identity has been ‘nested’ (Herb & Kaplan, 1999) in larger scale identities that reflect Finland’s historical geopolitical position between ‘East’ and ‘West.’ Being a Finn typically entailed identification with larger socio-spatial entities in the West, such as the neighboring Nordic countries or Western and Central Europe (Moisio, 2008). In contrast, the East – and most importantly Russia – was perceived in a more negative light. This was especially evident after Finland’s declaration of independence (1917) and the ‘White’ victory in the Civil War (1918), when Russians residing in the country were conceived of external enemies and accused of starting the war on the grounds of offering military help to the defeated ‘Reds.’

Churches had an important role in the negotiation of Finland’s geopolitical position during the transitional period that followed the Civil War. The Lutheran clergy belonged to the Western-minded, victorious ‘Whites,’ which strengthened the status of Lutheranism in Finnish society and heightened the antagonism of mainstream Finns to Orthodox religion (Kääriäinen, Niemelä, & Ketola, 2005, p. 57; Raento & Brunn, 2005, p. 156). As Raivo (1997) shows, Orthodox churches were actively destroyed or ‘westernized,’ because Orthodox religion was commonly associated with Russia (also Paasi, 1996, p. 128). For example, the garrison church of Suomenlinna was stripped of its symbols and converted into a Lutheran church with a ‘western’ facade (Raivo, 1997, pp. 331–332).

Tourism images participated in the identity-political work carried out through the churchscape of Helsinki. The selective portrayal of the monumental center of Helsinki supported its transformation into a ‘national landscape’ and emphasized its connections to the Protestant Christian West. The clearest example of this is the tendency of the images to favor the Lutheran Cathedral at the expense of the Uspenski Cathedral. In the data, the Lutheran Cathedral was portrayed in two-thirds of the images, which makes it almost three times as popular a motif as its Orthodox counterpart. This trend was especially evident during the decades that followed the Civil War. Between 1917 and 1949, the Lutheran Cathedral appeared in 42 images, but the Uspenski Cathedral in only 9 images, most of which showed it partly or in the background of other landscape elements.
The Lutheran Cathedral was thus actively appropriated as more ‘Finnish.’ It referred to the Finns’ Western ties that had remained unbroken even when Finland was an autonomous part of the predominantly Orthodox Russia.

After World War II, the political climate in Finland was delicate, because Finland had been defeated by the Soviet Union. Consequently, Finns had to foster neutrality and solidarity in discourses concerning their ‘Eastern neighbor’ (Bell & Hietala, 2002, pp. 216–234). Images of the Lutheran Cathedral continued to offer tourism promoters subtle means of emphasizing Finland’s Western European identity (Jokela, 2011). The frequency of appearance of the Orthodox Uspenski Cathedral nevertheless slowly increased until, from the 1970s onwards, it was depicted in nearly half as many images as the Lutheran Cathedral. This development was also evident in Finnish postage stamps that first depicted Orthodox religion in the 1970s (Raento & Brunn, 2005, p. 158), mirroring the commercialization of Karelian and Orthodox culture (Paasi, 1996, p. 128).

Despite the growing importance of Orthodox religion, tourism promoters continued to emphasize the role of Lutheranism as a key component of Finnish culture. For example, a photograph published in 2000 juxtaposed the Lutheran Cathedral with a brightly lit replica of the Ulrika Eleonora Church, which was made of snow and placed in its original location in order to celebrate Helsinki’s 450th anniversary and status as one European Capital of Culture (Helsingin Sanomat, 1999) (Figure 3). The depicted elements created a mix of sophistication and playfulness that was reinforced by a colloquial caption. The image was thus open for multiple interpretations and could potentially answer a variety of tourists’ needs. This form of visualization became increasingly popular at the end of

Figure 3. A snowy replica of the demolished Ulrika Eleonora Church concretized Finland’s history as part of the Kingdom of Sweden and fostered adventurous winter tourism. Source: Helsinki City Tourist & Convention Bureau (2000).
the twentieth century, when tourism promoters were endeavoring to succeed in an intensified competition between places (see Perkins & Thorns, 2001, p. 188).

For example, for culturally oriented tourists, the photo in Figure 3 narrated Finland’s history and geopolitical position between East and West. The upward angle of view emphasized the prestige and authority of the monumental Lutheran Cathedral, whereas the replica of the Ulrika Eleonora Church depicted Finland’s period under Sweden as being of equal importance with Finland’s period under Russian rule. For more adventurous visitors, local features appeared as resources of entertainment. The playful caption enticed these tourists to enjoy the exoticism of the wintery landscape and to have fun with the snow. Furthermore, most Finns were trained to interpret snow as a patriotic sign that referred to pure Finnish nature and the white background of the Finnish ‘blue cross flag,’ whereas foreigners probably associated snow more generally with Finland’s cold climate and northern exoticism (see Raento & Brunn, 2005, p. 152).

This example highlights that the features of tourism landscapes can have multiple interpretations depending upon the contexts in which they are placed. They function as instruments of ‘everyday nationalism,’ which means that they may simultaneously gain their meanings in relation to banal and politicized discourses (Jones & Merriman, 2009). Regardless of the context of their interpretation, place-specific tourist sites have a key role in the social construction of nation states, because they root conceptions of the distinctive national identities and territories in the popular geographical imagination (Paasi, 1996).

Finnish identity in Helsinki churchescape

Helsinki is different from the rest of Finland, because it is the hegemonic space of state power. In contrast, the alien and backward elements associated with Finnishness have been associated with the eastern and northern peripheries (Karelia and Lapland, respectively). The symbolism of Helsinki’s national monuments and administrative buildings has connected the national elite’s notions of national identity to expressions of state power, and made Helsinki appear as a modern, rational, and powerful base of national leadership (Jokela & Linkola, 2013). At the same time, more peripheral regions have been constructed as ‘repositories for backwardness’ which have ‘consequently become the spatial containers that are home to impediments to national progress’ (Johnson & Coleman, 2012, p. 865).

Churches have had an important role in these processes. As Raivo (1997) shows, the ‘limits of tolerance’ relating to the Orthodox religion as a component of Finnish national identity have varied from place to place. Between the two World Wars:

\[\text{[t]he alien nature of the landscape elements was especially emphasized in southern Finland, whereas in the borderlands of Karelia the characteristic churches, small wooden chapels, old cemeteries and mystical monasteries were seen as a part of both the physical and mental “borderland” landscape. (Raivo, 1997, pp. 336–337)}\]

The Lutheran Cathedral of Helsinki has connected nationally hegemonic notions of religion to the landscape of Helsinki. Its location at the core of the monumental center has highlighted its status as the most significant and central ecclesiastical building in Finland and positioned it among the most important state institutions in the country. The connection between Lutheran religion and the Finnish state has also been emphasized by using the cathedral as the venue of many annual state-related events, such as the celebrations of the Finnish Independence Day (December 6) and the inauguration ceremonies of the parliamentary season.
Tourism images have reflected and contributed to this discourse through connecting the churchscape of Helsinki with the hegemonic conceptions of Finnishness. For example, in the interwar years, the Lutheran Cathedral was impregnated with connotations that mirrored the values of ‘home, patria, and religion’ cherished by the White victors of the Civil War (see Raento & Brunn, 2005, p. 156). The producers of tourism images appropriated the cathedral as the prevailing ideal of a ‘pure and white’ nation by using various visual tricks (cf. Saarikangas, 1999, p. 187). For example, they emphasized the whiteness of its facade and juxtaposed it with an epithet that described Helsinki as ‘the White City of the North’ (Figure 4).

The nationalistic undertone of the Lutheran Cathedral was reinforced by portraying the tower of the Kallio Church (6% of the images) behind the cathedral. The heyday of the Kallio Church in tourism images lasted from the 1910s until the 1960s. After that, the modern Temppeliaukio Church (in 6% of the images) largely replaced it and became the third most depicted church after the Lutheran and Uspenski Cathedrals. The popularity of the churches of Kallio and Temppeliaukio stemmed from their nationally charged design that displayed the talents of Finnish architects and dissociated these churches from Helsinki’s nineteenth-century ‘Russian’ architecture (see Saarikangas, 1999). Their rough and gray granite walls contributed to an image of an enduring nation that was ‘close to nature.’ The tower of the Kallio Church appeared as a visible landmark in the churchscape of Helsinki. The Temppeliaukio Church was usually shown from the inside (two-thirds of the images) because of its unique interior design (Figure 5).

These examples show that the meanings of the depicted churches were twofold. On the one hand, the churches were what Barthes (1990, p. 36) calls ‘messages without a code,’ objects that could be ‘read’ with basic knowledge that was ‘bound up with [people’s] perception.’ On the other hand, they were ‘symbolic messages’ that depended on culture-specific knowledge (Barthes, 1990, pp. 34–37). The churches were thus probably depicted partly because they were dominant and interesting-looking structures in the landscape, but also because they represented Helsinki and tied it to ‘Finnish values.’ Simultaneously, the churches participated in identity-political discourses that helped Finns come to terms with regional variation within the national boundaries of Finland (see Paasi, 1996, p. 145). Emphasizing the uniqueness of Finnish regions encouraged tourists to acquaint themselves with different parts of the country and supported the ‘spatialization of difference’ within the national boundaries (Johnson & Coleman, 2012, p. 863).

**Constructing identities through the tourist performance**

At the local level, tourism images mediate a visual order that steers tourists’ activities. Their persuasive appeal is based on their design which is adapted to suit the changing taste of tourists. Tourism images create a stage for ‘the tourist performance,’ which refers to the physical and intellectual activities that tourists undertake during their holiday (Edensor, 2000; Perkins & Thorns, 2001). Images do not dictate tourists’ activities in a deterministic manner, but rather suggest possible roles and choreographies to be performed. In doing so, they constitute a backcloth onto which tourists can project their own needs and desires. Thus, tourism images may be contested, but they can also give impetus to tourists’ activities and help visitors take into account the expectations of others.

In the case of Helsinki, churches played a key role in ordering the ‘tourism stage’ (Edensor, 2000). My data show that the tourist performance was depicted implicitly, through ‘must-see sights’ that tourists were expected to visit, and explicitly, by showing individual tourists engaged in bodily activities. The best example of the development of
Tourism images have reflected and contributed to this discourse through connecting the churchscape of Helsinki with the hegemonic conceptions of Finnishness. For example, in the interwar years, the Lutheran Cathedral was impregnated with connotations that mirrored the values of 'home, patria, and religion' cherished by the White victors of the Civil War (see Raento & Brunn, 2005, p. 156). The producers of tourism images appropriated the cathedral as the prevailing ideal of a 'pure and white' nation by using various visual tricks (cf. Saarikangas, 1999, p. 187). For example, they emphasized the whiteness of its facade and juxtaposed it with an epithet that described Helsinki as 'the White City of the North' (Figure 4).

The nationalistic undertone of the Lutheran Cathedral was reinforced by portraying the tower of the Kallio Church (6% of the images) behind the cathedral. The heyday of the Kallio Church in tourism images lasted from the 1910s until the 1960s. After that the modern Temppeliaukio Church (in 6% of the images) largely replaced it and became the third most depicted church after the Lutheran and Uspenski Cathedrals. The popularity of the churches of Kallio and Temppeliaukio stemmed from their nationalistically charged design that displayed the talents of Finnish architects and dissociated these churches from Helsinki’s nineteenth-century ‘Russian’ architecture (see Saarikangas, 1999). Their rough and gray granite walls contributed to an image of an enduring nation that was ‘close to nature.’ The tower of the Kallio Church appeared as a visible landmark in the churchscape of Helsinki. The Temppeliaukio Church was usually shown from the inside (two-thirds of the images) because of its unique interior design (Figure 5).

These examples show that the meanings of the depicted churches were twofold. On the one hand, the churches were what Barthes (1990, p. 36) calls ‘messages without a code,’ objects that could be ‘read’ with basic knowledge that was ‘bound up with [people’s] perception.’ On the other hand, they were ‘symbolic messages’ that depended on culture-specific knowledge (Barthes, 1990, pp. 34–37). The churches were thus probably depicted partly because they were dominant and interesting-looking structures in the landscape, but also because they represented Helsinki and tied it to ‘Finnish values.’ Simultaneously, the churches participated in identity-political discourses that helped Finns come to terms with regional variation within the national boundaries of Finland (see Paasi, 1996, p. 145). Emphasizing the uniqueness of Finnish regions encouraged tourists to acquaint themselves with different parts of the country and supported the ‘spatialization of difference’ within the national boundaries (Johnson & Coleman, 2012, p. 863).

Constructing identities through the tourist performance

At the local level, tourism images mediate a visual order that steers tourists’ activities. Their persuasive appeal is based on their design which is adapted to suit the changing taste of tourists. Tourism images create a stage for ‘the tourist performance,’ which refers to the physical and intellectual activities that tourists undertake during their holiday (Edensor, 2000; Perkins & Thorns, 2001). Images do not dictate tourists’ activities in a deterministic manner, but rather suggest possible roles and choreographies to be performed. In doing so, they constitute a backcloth onto which tourists can project their own needs and desires. Thus, tourism images may be contested, but they can also give impetus to tourists’ activities and help visitors take into account the expectations of others.

In the case of Helsinki, churches played a key role in ordering the ‘tourism stage’ (Edensor, 2000). My data show that the tourist performance was depicted implicitly, through ‘must-see sights’ that tourists were expected to visit, and explicitly, by showing individual tourists engaged in bodily activities. The best example of the development of Tourism Geographies

Figure 4. The image of Helsinki as ‘the White City of the North’ was consistent with the prevailing political discourse that emphasized the hegemony of former ‘Whites.’ Source: Suomen Matkatoimisto (1931).
must-see sights is the Lutheran Cathedral which was transformed into an instantly recognizable landmark through frequent appearances that rooted it in the imagination of visitors. For example, from the 1960s until the 1980s, the Tourist Office of Helsinki depicted the cathedral in brochure covers as stylized drawings. These drawings resembled what Anderson (1991, pp. 179–182) calls ‘logo-maps,’ or simplified and easily reproducible geographical symbols that are detached from their geographic context. By the means of the drawings, the cathedral became an instantly recognizable sign and Helsinki’s modest equivalent of the Eiffel Tower, which is ‘a universal symbol of Paris’ (Barthes, 1997, p. 3).

The Lutheran Cathedral was also depicted as the symbolic center of the landscape of Helsinki. It was surrounded by local churches and other visible landmarks – such as the tower of the Olympic Stadium – that emphasized the distinctiveness of the neighborhoods and connected the unique features of local landscapes into a homogenous whole that was consistent with the hegemonic conception of Finnish national identity. Churches, thus, appeared as ubiquitous markers of location and time. Tourists could use them to find their way in urban space and to relate themselves to the narrative about the foundation and evolution of Helsinki and Finland.

Toward the end of the twentieth century, static images were increasingly accompanied by images that portrayed people in active roles alongside with churches. Between 1970 and 2000, these images made up nearly one-fifth of the data when compared with 6% from 1852 to 1969. The churches were available as part of larger landscapes that tourists could consume in creative ways. The depicted human figures were engaged with the churchscape through physical activities, such as biking, eating, or strolling on the streets, and inscribed the churchscape with various notions of enjoyment and creativity. For example, the Lutheran Cathedral was depicted in the background of cultural events on the
Senate Square. Similarly, the Uspenski Cathedral appeared in images that showed people shopping at the Market Square (Figure 6). Churches thus appeared as objects of a ‘maneuvering gaze,’ which ‘acknowledges objects but does not engage in any depth with them’ (Degen, DeSilvey, & Rose, 2008).

The active role of people in the images reflected changes in tourism practices, as was noted by Nupponen (1969), who managed the Helsinki City Tourist Office in 1963–1991:

Today’s tourist does not content him/herself with looking at mere facades, that is, only landscapes, box-like architecture and sights that are rooted to the spot. The motto of today is

Figure 6. An image of a girl at the Market Square of Helsinki. The girl’s casual clothing and taste for unprocessed ingredients refer to a down-to-earth lifestyle. The Orthodox Uspenski Cathedral in the background points to eastern exoticism which has shaped the identity of Helsinki. Together, these elements create an impression of an authentic place that reveals its essence to ‘genuine’ people. Source: Finnish Tourist Board (1984).
lifeseeking, which is utterly difficult to translate into Finnish. The concept nevertheless includes different functions from various domains of life that tourists can observe up close or in which they themselves can participate.

Nupponen eagerly advocated a campaign of initiatives that aimed to enliven the center of Helsinki. He spoke for more culture events and other services that would offer tourists multisensory experiences and enhance the quality of their stay in Helsinki. Churches had an important role in these plans. For example, the Helsinki City Tourist Office worked hard to improve the guiding services of the two main cathedrals so as to make them more accessible (Nupponen, 1989).

These changes are part of a larger shift in western societies. As many scholars have noted, in late modernity identity has become more like a ‘task’ than a permanent footing of personhood (Bauman, 2002, p. xv; Tilley, 2006, p. 10). This is because individuals do not ground their identities on traditional, taken-for-granted categories to the same extent as before. Rather, they are involved in ‘reflexive construction of self-identity,’ which refers to the narration of biographies in order to ensure the continuity of the sense of self (Desforges, 2000, pp. 931–933; Giddens, 1991, p. 85). With this change, tourism practices have come to be seen as a series of consumption choices that are used as a means of demonstrating individual taste, lifestyles, and achievements (Light, 2001, p. 1054). Collecting souvenirs, taking photos, and other similar practices support the construction of internal narratives in which tourists define their ideal selves, and serve as a way of representing these ideal selves to others (Desforges, 2000, p. 930; Morgan & Pritchard, 2005, p. 33).

These findings suggest that, toward the end of the twentieth century, the images of tourism brochures emphasized the freedom of tourists to choose whether they wanted to bypass the churches of Helsinki, with a short glance, or to more deeply dwell upon their details and meanings (see Jones & Merriman, 2009). Tourists were nevertheless persistently made aware of the presence of the churches in the urban landscape. Churches thus appeared as routinely consumed landscape elements that crystallized and mediated the ‘spirit of Helsinki’ to those who were attuned to their messages. Simultaneously, they associated Helsinki’s landscape with ideas about Finnishness in a consistent way that ‘naturalized’ hegemonic conceptions about Finnish national identity.

Conclusions
My study raises three points of discussion which support research about the relationship between religious sites, tourism, and identity politics. First, Helsinki is an illustrative example of the development in which religious sites are transformed from their original use into resources for tourism (Olsen, 2006, p. 114). The study shows that the knowledge about the identity-political discourses that influence the materiality and meanings of churchscapes enhances understanding about this development. In the case of Helsinki, the touristic use of churches has contributed to the ‘social construction of spatial demarcations and boundaries’ (Paasi, 1996, p. 7) by *inter alia* reinforcing the ‘limits of tolerance’ with regard to hegemonic conceptions of Finnish identity and the proper status and place of Lutheran and Orthodox religions in Finnish society (Raivo, 1997). Those churches that elucidate the various aspects of Finnish culture and the evolution of Helsinki have gained a special status as ‘must-see sights’ that differentiate Helsinki and Finland from other places and nation states.

Second, the study suggests that tourism images are useful tools in the study of the development in which religious sites are transformed into tourist attractions. As ‘off-sight
markers’ (MacCannell, 1999), they give valuable information about the meanings that are attached to religious sites in the context of tourism. Furthermore, tourism images are flexibly adjusted to the changing political and cultural climate of their time, and to broader social changes that manifest themselves in and through tourism practices. Because of this, they reveal continuities and breaks in the broader identity-political discourses and practices relevant to tourism and in doing so help explain tourists’ ways of consuming religious infrastructure at particular times.

Finally, this paper is testament to the potential of scholarship about religious tourist sites to enrich our understanding of the relationships between tourism and nationalism. This relationship has been examined by several scholars (e.g. Henderson, 2001; Light, 2001; Pretes, 2003; Raento, 2009). Studies about religious tourist sites have contributed to understanding about the mechanisms of nationalism by revealing the multifaceted interrelationship between religious sites and issues of identity (e.g. Bremer, 2004; Busby, 2006). Nevertheless, there is still room for research that further draws upon the perspectives of more recent theoretical discussions. My study suggests that religious tourist sites function as tools of ‘everyday nationalism’ which support the reproduction of national and other socio-spatial identities at the local scale (Jones & Merriman, 2009). They are open for multiple uses and interpretations that depend upon the cultural background and motives of their producers and consumers. These context-specific uses and interpretations merit further exploration, not least because they reveal the mechanisms through which nation states and their constituents are incorporated into the popular geographical imagination that underpins the nationalistic world order.

Acknowledgements
I am greatly indebted to Pauliina Raento, Daniel Knudsen, Leila Koivunen, Gareth Rice, Heli Ponto, and three anonymous reviewers for their constructive criticism that helped me to improve earlier drafts of this paper. I would also like to thank the City of Helsinki and the Kone Foundation for supporting my research and the staff of the National Library of Finland and the Helsinki City Archives for their personal help with this project.

Notes on contributor
Salla Jokela is a PhD candidate in the Department of Geosciences and Geography at the University of Helsinki, Helsinki. Her dissertation examines the use of tourism images in nation-building in Finland. This paper is part of the Academy of Finland research project ‘Landscape, Icons, and Images’ (1123561).

References


