The central sites of Karelians and Karelian culture have always been located on the eastern and northern shores of Lake Ladoga and in the treaty of Pähkäsaari in 1323 they became the property of Novgorod. Since this first drawing of the borderline between two states Sweden and Russia Finns and Karelians, two Fenno-Ugric national groups, have been separated by a boundary. This eastern boundary of Finland has also always been borderland between eastern and western culture (Roman Catholic and Greek Orthodox).

Karelians were already then divided into both sides of the boundary. The southern part of Karelia on the Karelian Isthmus has ever since (until 1940) been a part of Finland. It also meant that these people have been living in the western sphere of culture and their religion has been first Roman Catholic and then Lutheran. Eastern Karelians became Orthodox (Greek Catholic) and they have been living in the Byzantine or Russian sphere of culture.

During the rivalry between two monarchs, the Swedish King John III and the Russian Czar Ivan, King John insisted that Finland, as a part of Swedish realm to Novgorod, which since ancient times had been a grand duchy, become a part of Swedem. In 1581 he added to his string of royal titles that of "Grand Duke of Finland and Karelia". The opposition between East and West was accentuated at the eastern border of the Swedish realm, and this situation explains the arms of divided Karelia, in which the sword represents the Western sphere and the scimitar the Eastern sphere. The "Muscovite" scimitar was originally a weapon of the Turks and Tatars, to be sure; but in Western Europe, in both Roman Catholic and Protestant circles, the Russians were branded "enemies of Christianity", and in many official Swedish documents, too, they were designated as "heathens".

During the years of the war the Karelians of Russia were tried to be subordinated to Swedish crown. The war was finally brought to a close by the Peace of Tysin in 1595. The most important result for the Finns was that the boundary of the Swedish realm went direct to the north where the Finnish population had already been for a long time. The Finnish North still remained a part of Russia.

After the Peace Treaty of Tysin there was anarchy in Russia and in the Peace of
Stolbova, in 1617, the Czar ceded to the Swedish king the province of Келкисалми as well as Ingria. The next decades were very stressing for the Greek Catholics. After the Reformation in Sweden only a short time earlier a ban had been issued against joining the Roman Catholic Church. Now the absorption of tens of thousands of new subjects who belonged to the Eastern Orthodox Church raised a challenge to the policy of religious integration. The problem had political connotations, because the Czar had also been head of the Russian church since older times; hence the inhabitants of Ingria and Келкисалми were considered to be bound to their former ruler by ties of loyalty and allegiance through the Church. Most of the Orthodox population withdrew to Russia. During the whole seventeenth Century about 50,000 Karelians left their homes. Empty Karelian houses got Lutheran peasants from Savo and Finnish Southern Karelia as new occupants.

The 21 years of war at the beginning of the eighteenth century, was a time of loss of Swedish Great Power. For Finland these years were of a major significance. In 1703 the Czar captured the minor fortress of Nevanlinna at the mouth of the River Neva. At this boggy site he began to build a harbour and a naval base, which he named St. Petersburg. Russian troops occupied Finland and the next years were followed by plundering, destruction, and the deportation of large numbers of people as slaves to Russia.

The Era of the Czar Peter the Great also had quite remarkable consequences for the future development of Eastern (Russian) Karelia. Czar Peter also founded the town of Petrozavodsk, by giving an Указ (order) that an iron and cannon foundry should be founded there. This small town was to become the Capital of Karelia. It was of major importance for the warfare of Russia during the time of wars.

The Russification of Karelia also began through the building of the new town and factories. Karelia was a place like Siberia, where criminals and opposition elements of society were expelled for hard labour even until the 1940s.

After the war in 1721, peace negotiations were resumed at Uusikaupunki, and Sweden was compelled to submit to the conditions laid down by Russia: and lost huge areas in the east. The boundary in Southeastern Finland was to be about the same as now.

During the Napoleonic Era as the general European war raged, Finland was
exposed to a constant threat of invasion. The enlightened Finnish public, which followed events in Europe, saw how the map was changing year after year and how entire countries were vanishing. Finland had been occupied by the Russians twice, and for over six decades there had been talk in one connection or another about her being seized by Russia. Against this background it is understandable that the Finnish educated classes should have become resigned to the idea that their country might become separated from Sweden.

In June, 1807, when almost the entire continent of Europe was under the thumb of either Napoleon or Alexander I (the Czar of Russia), the two emperors met at Tilsit. One of the consequences of the Treaty of Tilsit was that Finland fell into Russian hands without serious military opposition. The Czar promised the session of the Diet and certain economic advantages. The Diet met at the little episcopal town of Porvoo in March 1809, and at that session Finland was established as an autonomous state. In the Diet, the Finnish people pledged their fealty to the Russian Czar, who, in turn, ratified the religion and fundamental laws of the land, as well as the privileges and rights which each estate had in the said Grand Duchy.

The following decades as an Autonomous State under the Russian Czar were a time of vigorous growth of Finnish national consciousness. The physician Elias Linnrot, while practising medicine in the northeastern frontier region, had run across singers of folk runes among the Finnish rural population on both the Finnish and especially, the Russian side of the border. From the lips of these backwoods people, he wrote down long passages of folk poetry. By combining them and filling in gaps, he created the heroic epic *Kalevala* in 1835.

The poetry of the *Kalevala* opened quite an amazing world to the national consciousness. The Finnish people really had a living past. After the publication of the *Kalevala* there awakened enormous enthusiasm among the people of Finnish cultural life to go to see the lands of Kalevala poetry in Russian Karelia. They really travelled to the faraway Karelian villages to experience the lifestyle of people who lived like they had always done from the earliest times. The simple life had made it possible to keep these poems alive.

This so called cultural Karelianism had a great influence on Finnish culture. Gradually Karelianism gained political features. It became a political Greater Finland-program. Why could the Russian Karelian kinsmen who had saved our national epic for the coming
generations not be living as members of the Finnish nation?

The time when Finland was an autonomous part of Russia was for Orthodox Karelians of Finland a period when there was actually no boundary between Russian Karelians in the Olonets region. People went from the Finnish side of the boundary to Olonets Karelia for working there or for marketing. Also the Karelians got there wives or husbands from the Orthodox villages in Russian Karelia.

When the 19th century came to an end the diminishing of autonomous rights of Finland became more and more obvious to the Finns. When the First World War was starting in 1914 the program confirmed by the Czar for the total Russification of the grand duchy became public knowledge. For a period of ninety years, the Finns had been content with the union with Russia, and - except for quite limited circles - they had never nursed separatist aspirations. After the politics of compliance had gone bankrupt, the only alternative to national doom was complete secession from Russia.

Finnish Influence in Russian Karelia

The area that I will be examining as Russian Karelia is located east of the boundary defined by the Swedish-Russian Peace of Stolbova (1617), a boundary that was to remain more or less similar until 1940. The eastern border of independent Finland has also followed mainly the same line since 1917. When we examine the period since the Peace of Moscow (12 March 1940), the part of Karelia that Russia gained from Finland appears to be unique in world history. As its inhabitants (420 000 people) voluntarily moved into other parts of Finland, it became almost completely empty. Its new inhabitants were relocated there from other parts of Russia and they had no former ties with the region. Today none of its inhabitants speaks Karelian. The Karelian Isthmus has also been separated from Karelia: it is now administratively a part of the Leningrad oblast. The local identity of the area's inhabitants is stems mainly from the relationship between their place of living and the whole of the Russian federation.

The connections between the more peripheral Russian Karelia and the centre
became tighter after the founding of St. Petersburg, the new capital. The founding of the city of Petrozavodsk in the same year is also relevant, since a national artillery factory was founded there. Its products and the expanding use of wood served the needs of the new capital. Thus Karelia became a part of the economic region of St. Petersburg/Leningrad. Karelia also became a part of the military district of Leningrad that it still belongs to.

This early industrialization increased the number of Russian population in the area. The distant and sparsely populated Karelia was also conceived of as a suitable place for the deportation of oppositional voices criticizing the Czarist government. An interesting addition to the Russian population were the Old Believers, for whom the remote spaces of Karelia offered a place where to live and practice their religion. Thus Karelia east of Lake Onega was russified in the 19th century, as were the regions adjacent to Petrozavodsk and the Onega Peninsula.

When Finland joined Russia as a Grand Duchy, it gained an extensive autonomy. Though the culturally different eastern and western parts of Karelia were now under the same rule, customs regulations remained between the two parts. Similarly, Finland preserved its own legislation, money, educational system and its Lutheran church. The most significant change may have been the influence of St. Petersburg on Eastern Finland: strong economic ties developed between Eastern Finland and the growing metropolis. St. Petersburg was also to become, after Helsinki, the largest centre of Finnish population.

Since the late 18th century, the Academy of Sciences in St. Petersburg was active in sending scientific expeditions to Russian Karelia. The interest of the researchers were mainly on the region's natural resources and folk life. Issues of nationality were also of interest. Scholars of folk poetry were delighted upon finding a general attitude that resisted serfdom. Most of the researchers collecting information on Karelia were scholars expelled from St. Petersburg to Petrozavodsk. (Sihvo 124-248)

At the same time there arose an interest in the folk poetry of Russian Karelia in Finland too. On the basis of the poems collected beyond the eastern border of Finland, Elias L. Ñnrot edited the Kalevala, the national epic of Finland. The definition of Karelia as the object of description and study was tightly connected with the birth of "national" arts and humanities--both arts and scholarship were harnessed to serve purposes of nationalism. (Sihvo 250-251)
The national-romantic interest in Russian Karelia that arose in Finland has been labelled as Karelianism. One can distinguish between two different uses of the term: on the one hand there is cultural Karelianism, on the other there is Karelianism with a clear national ideology that developed into political views envisioning Greater Finland. This culminated in an international dispute that concerned the fate of Eastern Karelia. The birth of the idea of Greater Finland is connected with the role of nationalist movements in 19th-century Europe. The Slavic world, for example, was united in Panslavism, the Russian proponents of which were particularly interested in peripheral areas including Karelia since it was the northernmost Slavic region.

The central element in the ideology of Greater Finland was an interest in Fenno-Ugric nations living in Russia. Hence Russian Karelia was an area of interest for both panslavists and panfennists and became thus a region haunted with national-ideological quarrels. In Finland, the proponents of Greater Finland, in both political and ethnological circles, started to talk about a "natural Finland", a term with which they referred to a whole consisting of Finland, Russian Karelia, and the Kola Peninsula, a whole that they claimed to be natural by drawing from the knowledges of geography and natural history.

Finnish cultural influence in Northern Russian Karelia increased towards the end of the 19th century. First it was required that teaching at schools in entirely Finnish-speaking areas is conducted in Finnish, the language of the people. This requirement sparked the interest of the Orthodox church to organize Russian-language education. Appeals to religious unity covered Russian nationalist missionary work. (Sihvo 270-275)

Russian Revolutions and Karelia

In July 1917, a few months after the Russian revolution in March 1917, a large assembly of municipalities in White Sea Karelia discussed the idea of autonomous Karelia. Soon after the October revolution (1917), the Finns were ready to publish the Declaration of Finland's Independence (6 December, 1917). The November Revolution in Russia brought the Bolsheviks to power in Russia. In Finland a civil war began between the socialist "Red Guards" and
bourgeois "White Guards" in January, 1918. The War of Liberation also became a Civil War.

During the Civil War the Finns showed their interest in Russian Karelia. Finnish voluntaries participated in fights in Russian Karelia for a couple of years after the war. Consideration of security determined the policy in regard to East Karelia, the territory across the eastern frontier, which was actually more a question of political Karelianism, Greater Finland. All the bourgeois parties of Finland were interested in annexing the territory, because Finland thereby would secure a shorter and more easily defensible border in the east. This was not, however, an issue of carrying out official Finnish foreign policy, though the idea had lots of support in influential circles.

In Finland there had been organized the Academic Karelian Society among those young men who had been fighting as volunteers for kinsmen in Russian Karelia. The AKS became quite an influential organisation among young men with academic education. They spoke very loudly about the formation of Greater Finland where all our neighbouring kinsmen could live in one state, so they could be saved for the western sphere of culture. The Finns did not show any interest in making peace with the Soviet government.

What had more and wider importance in the post-Civil War period was the increasing number of political refugees and the role they came to play in Finnish and Russian politics. The interests of Russian Bolsheviks and Finnish Reds were basically similar. The Reds, who lost the Civil War, needed a place where to hide and plan a new revolution, something that the Bolsheviks found no reason to resist, since it was very much a part of their revolutionary and national politics. The main problem of the Bolsheviks was how to organize and secure Soviet government in an area the population of which lives in remote and inaccessible and does not speak any understandable language.

Dr Edvard Gylling, one of the leading Reds, wrote a letter to the Bolshevik leader V. I. Lenin from his exile in Stockholm in which he talks about his plan to found a commune in Russian Karelia. In his view this commune would be the new home of "Finland's revolutionary proletariat." There they would able to prepare a new revolution. The commune could also function as the beginning of Red Soviet Scandinavia. Yet, without autonomy, it would not be possible to revive Karelia and its economy.
Gylling's suggestion could not have been presented at a better time. The Bolsheviks had already noticed the interest that the Finnish government had in Karelia and Karelians. In the spring of 1920, Karelia was about to be divided into two parts: Olonets (South) and the Finnish-supporting White Sea (North). The Russian Bolsheviks were also worried over the problem of spreading Bolshevism amongst the mainly illiterate Karelian rural population. It appeared that their Finnish ideological brothers would have the benefit of language when trying to root (korenisatsija) Bolshevism amongst the public. As soon as Lenin got the acceptance of the party leaders to found the Commune of the Working People of Karelia, the plan was realized in June 1920. The boundaries of the commune were more or less those within which the Karelian-speaking population lived. Edvard Gylling, a born and bred Fennoman, former Minister in the People's Council of the Finnish Reds and Docent in Economics at the University of Helsinki, became the Chairman of the Revolutionary Committee.

As an autonomous area in the Russian Federation the commune suited well the plans of the Bolsheviks. As long as the Karelians insisted on separating their area from Russia and were ready to rebel, with Finnish support, they remained a threat to the Russians. For Russia it was important to hinder border areas from withdrawing from the Federation; according to Moscow, Russian Karelia had a significant role to play in developing the economies of St. Petersburg and Moscow and also in securing the Murmansk railroad that was crucial for Russia's political and military security.

The peace negotiations between Soviet-Russia and Finland started in Tartu soon after the founding of Gylling's commune. During the negotiations Finns presented an absolute requirement that sought to secure the national autonomy of Karelians in Russia. As the commune had just been founded, the Russians were happy to agree. The appendices of the Peace Treaty included a mention of the autonomy of Russian Karelia. When Finland later brought up the case of the Karelians in the League of Nations, the Soviet Union claimed that to be an internal issue that other nations cannot intervene with. All through the interwar period the case of Karelia was an issue treated with suspicion on both sides of the border.

Finland found the Soviet Union threatening in two respects. In addition to its suspicious Bolshevik leaders, the Reds who had left Finland after the Civil War were considered
as threats to Finland's national security. It is true that the underground activities of the officially prohibited Finnish Communist party were supported through cross-border operations. Both printed materials and communist activists were imported to Finland as parts of preparing the new revolution that Gylling and his circle had been planning.

The Commune of the Working People was only a temporary and transitory solution, as the decree concerning the founding of the Autonomous Socialist Soviet Republic of Karelia was passed in July 1923. The area of the republic expanded to include Russian areas far beyond the other side of Lake Onega. Now Karelians and Vepsians became a minority in their own republic. The statistics from the beginning of 1924 show that there were 221,600 people living in the republic, 55.7 per cent of them Russians.

Upon the expansion two different views of Karelia collided, namely that of the executing committee of the Aunus government and that of revolutionary committee headed by the Finnish Gylling. Gylling's view followed that constructed in 19th-century Finnish thinking: Karelia was an area were tribal brothers lived and the borders of which had defined those of the commune. The Finnish view lost the battle to the Karelian-Russian one and Gylling accepted the annexation of the Russian areas east of Lake Onega. In his view the area was to form an economically viable whole. Thus, the Autonomous Republic to be founded was also to include the Puudoz area east of Lage Onega, a region that had before the revolution belonged to the government of Olonets. The border was, indeed, a return to the old borders of Karelia.

Gylling's Finnish (Soviet) Karelia

During the first years of the Soviet regime in Karelia there were thousands of former Finnish Reds who settled in Karelia to build a new Communistic world. For them it would be a place of new ideals. The NEP (New Economic Policy) period that started in the Soviet Union became an important phase in the development of Karelian economy. Karelia was a sparsely populated and industrially underdeveloped area where agricultural production was low and forestry an important secondary occupation for most people in the agricultural sector. Forestry, indeed, was
to replace agriculture as the central area for carrying out the NEP programme.

Karelia chose an industrial model of action, on the basis of which an economic plan was designed in the early 1920s. In April 1921, Soviet Russia granted Karelia a quite extensive economic autonomy. The central idea was that 25 per cent of exports produced in the area were given for the commune's own use. Forestry products were quite easily realizable.

The NEP policy provided Karelia with considerable economic growth. Both industrial and agricultural production increased remarkably. Karelian economy was linked to the centre via the economic area of Leningrad (i.e., the North-Western area); strategically Karelia was also linked to Leningrad as it was part of the Leningrad military district. Karelles, Karelia's own forest product trust, was founded in 1923 and its importance increased in later years (1925-1929). Almost all of its production of sawn timber and paper wood was exported. Export, indeed, was extremely valuable to Karelia because of the region's economic autonomy. Unfortunately this came to an end in 1930 when the decision-makers in Moscow converted Karelles into a national trust that was to be governed from Moscow. The decision meant that Karelian government was no longer able to govern and regulate forest industry in the republic. The loss was remarkable since in 1927 Karelles had controlled almost 70 per cent of forest industry in Karelia.

The final years of the 1920s anticipated changes to come. The original cutting plans were almost doubled when Moscow wanted to tighten its hold over the area. However, it was not unproblematic to carry out the cutting plans because their massive increase also caused a shortage of manpower. Karelia was responsible for organizing labour. Factories in the forestry sector, and sawmills in particular, also faced problems: as their capacity was insufficient, lots of wood was sold abroad unprocessed. The 1928 decision on the first five year plan was at the same time also the decision that ceased Karelian economic autonomy.

Finns Replace Karelians and Russians: The Vision of Red Greater Finland

In the field of nationality politics in early Soviet Karelia the first years witnessed the
phenomenon of "Karelianization". The term as such is a successful interpretive translation of the Moscow's term *korenisatzija* ("national rooting") coined by local Finnish leaders. The aim of Moscow was not to strengthen local national characteristics but to exploit them in order to root a Russian Soviet system in the areas of minority peoples. The publicly expressed views of Finnish leaders in Karelia, Yrjö Rovio and Edward Gylling, were in contrast with Moscow's goal.

Upon the founding of the Commune of the Working People the language of its "people" was defined as its language. According to the Commune's Finnish leaders, Finnish was a useful language of people and its status as the language of administration was to be equal to that of Russian. In their view the Karelian language was not developed enough. Since Karelian was not a literary language, it did not fulfil the requirements set for a language of a modern administration. The view of some Karelian representatives was, however, that Karelians must have a literary language of their own. The end-result of the quarrel was that Finnish linguistic imperialism won and that Finnish became the second language of the republic.

In August 1929, the Communist Party made a decision on the new direction of Karelianization: the Finnish Karelianization of Karelia was to be come Finnishization. The new step was argued to be necessary because the pace of Karelianization was considered too slow. Leading positions in administrative organs were to be filled in by recruiting officials from the local population. According of Joseph Stalin, the leader of the Communist Party, Russian Soviet Socialism gave the content to politics the form of which was to be national. In the thinking of Rovio and Gylling, however, the "national form" was primary, not secondary, to "socialist content". There was no intention to change the politics of nationality towards Russian socialism that Stalin called for.

According to Rovio, the history of the Russification of Karelia justified its Finnishization. The underdevelopment and political backwardness of the people of Karelia were results of Czarist politics. According to the interpretation of the Finnish Reds, it was their task to repair this "historical injustice" by using the authorization given to them by Lenin. Finnish became the only true literary language for the Karelians and Vepsians (another tiny Fenno-Ugric group in Karelia). In his study Markku Kangaspuro has argued that this was mainly a case of pure linguistic nationalism: in 1926, 3 out of 4 literate Karelians were able to read Russian.
While the Finns were a minority in Karelia, they dominated the republic's political and cultural life.

After "Rovio's theses" were accepted in September 1929, almost all decisions of the party concerned, in one way or the other, ways of increasing the number of Finnish-speaking educational professionals and their promotion to leading positions. All schools were to have, as their pupils, "national" students the number of which was to be at least 50 per cent. All elementary schools were expected to teach through the medium of Finnish and the teaching of reading skills was to be conducted in Finnish also in areas where Karelian was the majority language. The publishing of Finnish language materials, including textbooks, was also boosted.

By the autumn of 1929 the proportion of the "nationals" had become dominant at the highest level of Karelian administration. While 62.5 per cent of employees at the highest organs were "national", economic organizations such as Karelles were controlled by Russians. 70 per cent of employees of the executive committees of the districts were national and their number amounted to 82 per cent in the case of village councils. The leaders of Karelia thought that they managed particularly well to Finnishize schools and other educational establishments. They also attempted to strengthen the proportion of Finns employed at several central production plants. The case of the Kontupohja paper mill, the most important of its kind in the republic, is a good example: here the aim was to raise the portion of national employees to 60 per cent from the one third that they amounted to in 1929. Finnishization was rapid in popular education too. During one single year 12 out of 15 Russian primary schools were Finnishized--the project terminated only because of a lack of teachers.

By the mid-1930s the politics of nationality in Karelia entered a phase when its effects should have started to become visible in the social position of the region's basis population, the Karelians. Yet, once again, the bottleneck of the full realization of the plan was the limited number of educated local people. In the name of national equality the educational possibilities of the majority population, the Russians, were weakened considerably.

The politics of Finnishization in Karelia were directed by Gylling's vision of Finnish socialism. This kind of socialism could be realized in a state that had to be both economically and populationwise viable so that it would be able to survive. Of course, Gylling's
path was blocked by both Russian and Finnish opponents, whose views of the historical development of the republic were totally different. He had, however, attained a position in Karelia that made it possible for him to realize his bold attempt. He and his supporters did not shy away from the fact that the Finnic population was only a minority in Karelia and its leading political elite, the Finnish, just a minority of foreigners amidst a larger Finnic minority.

The language policy of the Finnish leaders in Gylling' Karelia was devastating to Karelianness. At the time of the revolution, illiteracy was common and the Karelian literary language not developed. After the Finnishization period Karelian language literature and culture remained underdeveloped and unsupported by the state.

The Liquidization of Finnishness from the Administration of Karelia

Rapidly increasing forest use, building of towns, cities, harbours and factories generated a shortage of labour from the NEP period onwards. In the 1920s the government paid attention to the role of prisoners as a source of potential labour. This vast area of sparse population and few roads that was geographically located on the border of capitalist Europe attracted military interest that was directed towards building and construction that served strategic needs. The Karelians populating the border area were considered to be tribal brothers by the Finns, who also showed an active interest in developments in the eastern neighbour. While the Finnish Reds governing Karelia did not fear Finland, the case was rather different amongst the leaders of the military districts of Moscow and Leningrad.

During 1929 and 1930, the operative plans of the Leningrad military district started to treat Finland as a definitive enemy in the future war. The new plans required a new military infrastructure the backbone of which was to be a water route from the Baltic Sea to the White Sea. The main "constructor" in the building of the canal was to be the People's Commissariat of Internal Affairs (NKVD), whose Karelian camps hosted forced labourers in great numbers (500 000 at the highest). The result of this extensive construction work known as Stalin's Canal was inaugurated with great festivities on 25 May 1933, the tenth anniversary of the Autonomous Socialist Soviet Republic of Karelia.
The multiplication of forest cuttings in Karelia required in the first five year plan demanded a remarkable import of labour. The Finnish leaders of Karelia tried to benefit from this situation and seeked to strengthen the role of the national population by recruiting labourers from populations related to the Finns living in other parts of the Soviet Union. However, the population census shows that out of 98 000 people who moved into Karelia during the period 1926-33 more than 70 000 were Russian.

Thousands of Finnish immigrants from the USA and Canada were also recruited for building that country. Thousands of Finnish workers also fled over the border in the late 1920s and early 1930s because of economic depression and highly anti-Communist attitudes in the Finnish society. The flow of Finnish defectors, however, generated serious problems for the GPU and the Finnish leadership in Karelia was under increasing surveillance from security officials. First signs of the centre's attitude of the Finns as security risks were recorded.

While the census of 1933 shows that there were slightly more than 12 000 Finns living in Karelia, the unrecorded Finnish population raised the real number so that at its highest it was approximately 20 000 in 1934 (5 per cent of the whole population), as Markku Kangaspuro has shown. When the party cleansings started all over the Soviet Union with the aim of removing representatives of national minorites from positions of power, the Finnish leadership in Karelia managed to direct the party cleansing so that in Karelia the end result contradicted the aims of Moscow altogether. In Karelia, the fight was mainly targeted against Finnish nationalism. Whatever the aims were, the proportion of Finns in the membership of the Regional Committee of Karelia almost doubled from less than 10 per cent in 1933 to 16.8 per cent.

The nationality politics of party can be seen reflected in the employees of the Regional Committee of Karelia in 1933. It employed 28 secretaries. The numbers of nationals (i.e., Finns and Karelians) and Russians were more or less equal to those of their proportion in party membership. But if one examines the number of Finns more closely, their proportion within the group of nationals is exceptionally dominating. Similarly, the nationals' hold of the secretaries of district councils was firm. There were in all 18 secretaries of which six were Finns and five Karelians, the remaining seven were Russian. The special role of the Finns can be
obviously seen in the fact that as late as the beginning of 1931 they controlled nine of the 19
districts in Karelia: Russians were in charge of eight districts and Karelians of only one. In the
approaching nationality battles Leningrad decided to pay special attention to Karelians. The main
aim of its new policy of destroying the united group of nationals was to separate Karelians from
Finns and their influence.

Leningrad also started to emphasise the role of Finland as a threat to Karelia. The
threat was felt to be even more acute because of Finnish nationalism in Karelia which was seen
to combine anti-Russian politics with the aims of Finland. Moscow claimed that Karelia is
threatened by a "nationalist conspiracy" in which Karelian Reds, who aim at their Red Greater
Finland, and would co-operate with Helsinki with the intention of removing Karelia from the
Soviet Union in order to found a Greater Finland. Moscow's point of view was based on Russian
nationalism and the country's geopolitical interests.

In 1935, this conflict led to a rapid cleansing process in which the Finns were
wiped out from Karelian leadership. The anti-Finnish agitation within the party was started by
promoting Karelian communists, amongs whom anti-Finnish attitudes were fostered. While
Karelian nationality politics had previously been based on countering Russian nationalist
oppression of Karelia, the new way of presenting the case was to argue that the Finns are an
obstacle for the development of the Karelian literary language and that they also prevent
Karelians from obtaining their own, rightful position in the republic. Soon the official language
of the republic was changed from Finnish to Karelian that was now written with a cyrillic
alphabet. However, when international politics in a few years time redefined Finnishness in
Karelia, the Karelian language was to disappear almost as soon as it had been found.

The background of Finland's participation in the Second World War is the secret
agreement between Hitler's and Stalin's Foreign Ministers on Aug. 23, 1939. The German
Minister, Ribbentrop, promised the Soviet Minister, Molotov, that Finland and the Baltic
Countries would be states in the Soviet sphere of interests. The so-called Winter War began by
the attack of Red Army on 30 November, 1939, and lasted 105 days. The Finns had to fight
alone against the great power. The Peace Treaty was signed in Moscow, and Finland had to cede
to Russia a part of Finnish Karelia. Over 400 000 Karelians from that area were all evacuated to
other parts in Finland and settled there. Immediately after the war the name of the Republic was changed to the Karelian-Finnish Socialist Republic. Its Finnishness was strengthened by relocating Finnish-speaking populations there: one example of this is the relocation of all Finns of the Murmansk area (ca. 4000) in Karelia in summer 1940. Finnish became, again, the second official language. The Finno-Ugric population was talked about as the Karelian-Finnish nation, to whom Finnish was taught. The new leader of the Republic was to be Otto Ville Kuusinen, who had overlived the cleansing in Moscow.

When Germany attacked the Soviet Union, Finland became Hitler's ally. During the war (1941-44) Finland occupied Soviet-Karelia with the intention of repossessing the areas it had ceded to the Soviet Union in the Peace of Moscow; Finland also desired Soviet Karelia. After Finland's loss in the war and withdrawal, the evacuated population of (Russian) Karelia started to return to their home region. The reconstruction of Karelia required new inhabitants. The Ingrian Finns, for example, who had been banished from their former home near Leningrad, wanted to enter Karelia. When they moved into the republic, its Finnish population increased by 30,000.

The 100th anniversary of the *Kalevala* had been extensively celebrated in 1935. The issue was also raised in 1948, when a renewed *Kalevala* was published in the name of Otto Ville Kuusinen. In the 1950s Finnish was pushed aside and Karelian-Finnish culture lived on in the performances of folk music groups organized all over the Soviet Union. This was also a more general way in which the Soviet leadership propagated its care for small non-Russian populations and their cultures. By this time Karelian Finnishness had lost most of Western Finnishness, since the new Karelian Finns had lived all their life in Russia under Russian influence.

Finland's connections with Soviet Karelia faded away until the perestroika period. The fall of the Soviet Union sparked another interest in Karelia amongst the Finns of Finland. This interest was, however, an interest basing itself on the nineteenth-century interest in Karelia. The Finns of the 20th century did not really pay attention to the fact that the language of the Karelians is a language separate from Finnish, extremely difficult for the Finns to understand. Nor did they remember that the genuine Karelian way of life in the countryside is a remarkably
archaic form of Karelianness. In Karelia too, increased urbanization has drawn most of the population to towns and cities.