

## CHAPTER 1

# Claims for Space

## Unpacking Finnish Geohistorical Imaginations of the United States

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Settler colonialism and European expansion resulted in the global remaking of spaces and the rearrangement of peoples, flora, and fauna across the world.<sup>1</sup> Numerous studies have already highlighted how cartographic framings generated knowledges that directed and depicted the socioecological dimensions of these colonial projects around the world.<sup>2</sup> Printed and manuscript geographical accounts and maps of colonized spaces produced by Europeans were the primary means of circulating and consolidating specific views of lands and peoples—in other words, shaping peoples’ mental images of the world and its spatial organization. The power of these colonial mappings rested in the claims for space that they made through their repeated arguments of corresponding with the world out there. In short, they claimed to represent the truth, as the world really was. In the colonial context, European mappings grounded the “extension of European power through space” and often functioned as tools of dispossessing Indigenous populations.<sup>3</sup> This occurred as European maps and geographical knowledge

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often presented the lands explored, surveyed, and settled by Europeans as having been previously “unknown” and uninscribed, usually bypassing Indigenous sovereignty over the lands they occupied. Consequently, Western modes of mapping have been far from “innocent” or “objective.” In fact, they were part of the broader representational practices that contributed to the construction of specific geographies, including those that served settler colonial narratives and projects.

In this chapter I examine how, why, and what types of maps and geographical knowledge were utilized to document and position Finnish settlers in the United States. I link certain geographical writings and maps published at the end of the 19th century and during the first three decades of the 20th century to the questions of settler colonialism and ideas of whiteness. Firstly, I analyze the geographical writings of Akseli Rauanheimo (originally Järnefelt, later Järnefelt-Rauanheimo and finally Rauanheimo), a journalist and author of numerous books on Finnish Americans. Rauanheimo’s works held a significant role in positioning Finns in North America and popularizing the continent to Finnish audiences.<sup>4</sup> Secondly, I examine maps that were produced in the early 1900s to showcase Finnish presence in the colony of New Sweden, established by the Swedish crown in 1638 on the banks of the Delaware River in the homelands of the Indigenous Lenapes. The maps of the Delaware colony were released to public circulation in books, magazines, and newspapers for the 1938 tercentenary celebrations of the New Sweden colony, and they served to legitimize and depict the Finnish past on the continent. Namely, they represented Finns as first-comers and pioneers in the colony. Through these two lenses I can question Finnish practices of constructing geohistorical knowledge of the North American space and how this knowledge was mobilized to naturalize Finnish presence on the continent.<sup>5</sup>

The central argument of the chapter is that the Finnish maps and the spread of Finnish (and Finnish American) geographical knowledge of North America formed part of the transnational social and material practices of settler colonialism. These materials had the potential to educate Finns about their roles as makers of the North American space and thus teach them about the meaning of European civilizing and modernizing practices in the world. While the Finnish writers mapped their place on the continent and positioned the roles of Finns in the developing American society, they produced writings that partook in

the marginalization of Native Americans, their ontologies of place and space and ideas about their territorial sovereignty.

In making these arguments I develop the concept of *geohistorical imaginations*. This concept is grounded by geographer Doreen Massey's and others conceptualization of geographical imaginations, which refers to the fact that much of "geography" is in our, and was in past people's, minds. Investigating the development of geographical imaginations includes analyzing how geographies have been portrayed and geographical knowledges circulated by different groups of people.<sup>6</sup> In the contexts of the present chapter, it is necessary to expand the concept to include a historical aspect, that is, to capture the geohistorical imaginations that emerged as Finns discussed their roles in the history of the colonization of North America and generated print materials to ground these imaginations. By theorizing the geohistorical imaginations that the maps and texts manifested, I show how representations of the historical and contemporary North American space influenced Finnish understandings of their roles in making the modern world.<sup>7</sup> Thus the concept provides me with a useful tool to combine perspectives from migration studies, settler colonial studies, and the history of geographical knowledge. By analyzing the development of Finnish and Finnish American geohistorical imaginations via specific writings and mappings in the past, then, it is possible to identify moments of Finnish colonial complicity, or, as Mai Palmberg puts it, admissions of "mental complicity with the colonial power and colonial ideology."<sup>8</sup>

This chapter shows that Finnish mappings adhered to the colonial cartographic frame as they partook in the capture of the North American space. Acknowledging its significance for the way Finns positioned themselves in America is significant as currently scholars and activists seek to decolonize the geographies, geohistories, and cartographies that European colonization generated in North America and elsewhere. They aim to decenter "colonialism as the primary pivot around which ways of knowing and being-in-the-world are conceived, imagined, and lived."<sup>9</sup> By analyzing how colonial epistemology has grounded Finnish geohistorical imaginations concerning their roles in the making of American society, I seek to add to the burgeoning field of research on how colonial relations of power have historically infiltrated the societal structures in the Nordic countries and shaped also Finns' world views and identities.<sup>10</sup> In-depth historical understanding of how Finns' geographical thought about the world and their relation-

ship with specific spaces has developed and changed over time contributes to unpacking what historian Gunlög Fur characterizes as the “immensely complex and ambiguous” legacies of colonialism in the Nordic sphere.<sup>11</sup>

## Making Finns Visible

In 1899 a sequence of geohistorical texts focusing on Finnish Americans reached the hands of the public in the Grand Duchy of Finland. Authored by Akseli Rauanheimo (at the time still Järnefelt), the texts were published as a series of ten booklets as well as a bound book, entitled *Suomalaiset Amerikassa* (Finns in America). Upon publication, Rauanheimo’s book was advertised as the first concise work concerning Finnish Americans, and Rauanheimo himself characterized it as an attempt “to shed light on the conditions of the numerous Finns” across the Atlantic.<sup>12</sup> Commentators deemed it essential reading for anyone considering moving to North America and thus public libraries were urged to acquire the book.<sup>13</sup> While the book quickly spurred discussions concerning the cultural and social life of Finnish Americans, it was also praised by subsequent visitors to North America for its accuracy.<sup>14</sup>

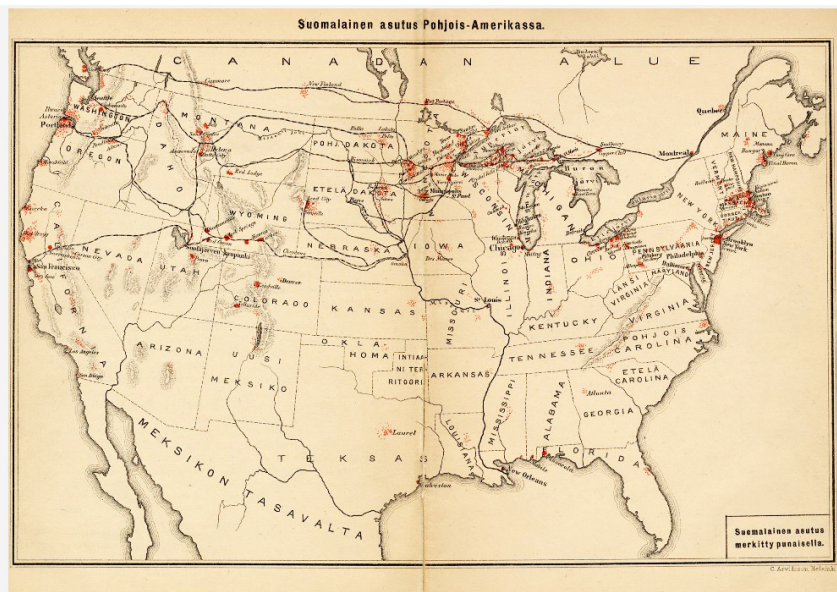
In this section I argue that *Suomalaiset Amerikassa*, as well as Rauanheimo’s other writings, participated in the legitimization of European presence on the continent and contributed to the myth of the lands available for cultivation and civilization. This occurred as they implicitly and at times explicitly leaned on the European legal instrument known as the doctrine of discovery that constituted European land rights in the New World.<sup>15</sup>

*Suomalaiset Amerikassa* was the first of the many works that Rauanheimo published concerning Finns in North America. Rauanheimo’s expertise on the topic was grounded in his work as a journalist for the Finnish American newspapers in New York in the beginning of the 1890s, granting him access to a great variety of information on the US society and Finnish settlers. After working as the editor-in-chief for several newspapers in the Finnish region, he returned to North America in 1919, first to New York, where he worked as the director of the Suomi-bureau. In 1923 he became the first Finnish consul in Montreal, continuing as the consul-in-chief until 1932, and serving as Estonia’s consul in Canada in 1927–1932. He evolved into an active commenta-

tor on Finnish migration and Finnish–American relations as well as trying to set up a seamen’s mission in Canada.<sup>16</sup> Arguably, his writings advanced public discussions of the economic and cultural geography of the continent in Finnish society. A common theme binding Rauanheimo’s writings together was his attempt to advance Finns’ visibility in American society.

In *Suomalaiset Amerikassa*, Rauanheimo described the place of Finns in the United States and Canada, starting with a historical narrative of their arrivals in the early 17th century and proceeding to explain how Finns had come to occupy their current sites of dwelling and occupations in different parts of the continent. The publication was accompanied by numerous photographs and a map (Map 1.1) that enabled grasping Finnish presence on the continent at the time of the book’s publication, 1899. Judging by the map, Finns were present in southern Canada and every state of the United States except the Indian territory.<sup>17</sup>

The territorial divisions presented on the map reflected those in force in 1899 and the main body of the text centered on describing



**Map 1.1:** Rauanheimo’s *Suomalaiset Amerikassa* included a map, “Suomalainen asutus Pohjois-Amerikassa,” that showed where Finns lived in the United States and Canada.

one territory after another. The narrative informs the reader about the main historical developments of each region, with the focus being on the transformations that European settlement and the US state had brought about. Significantly, the geography that Rauanheimo constructed positioned Finns mainly as outsiders to the processes of removal and violence that the Indigenous populations had faced at the hands of the US government and other settlers. He narrated how Finns had been among the first to arrive on the continent as part of Sweden's colonial project and stressed that this primacy granted them a share of the American continent, which "the Indians had controlled ... as their vast hunting grounds."<sup>18</sup> This characterization of Indigenous land use and the establishment of first permanent settlements referred to the legal doctrine of discovery where specific uses of land granted sovereignty over them. As Miller et al. have shown, Europeans utilized the doctrine to ground their actions in non-European countries and their domination of Indigenous populations.<sup>19</sup> In Rauanheimo's narrative, following the logic granted by the doctrine, which at the turn of the 19th century was widely accepted and known, European settlements and cultivation of lands entitled claims to sovereignty, which the Indigenous peoples' ostensibly more mobile way of life did not.

For the most part, *Suomalaiset Amerikassa* presented the later emigrants as arriving in lands ready for cultivation and free of Indigenous presence. Thus, Rauanheimo made no direct connection between the lands utilized by the Finns and the disputes concerning land or the position of the Indigenous peoples more generally. This is most striking in the description of Finns in Minnesota as Rauanheimo made no reference to the violence between the Minnesota settlers and the Dakota Sioux during the US–Dakota War in 1862.<sup>20</sup> Indeed, any acknowledgment of the conflict only surfaces in the next chapter, concentrating further west, on Finns living in the part of the Dakota Territory that entered the union in 1899 as two separate states (North and South Dakota). Even here Rauanheimo separated the era of colonial violence from the period when Finns started to settle on these lands. He wrote:

The settlers have endured many hardships in battles against the Indians, but the war in 1862 vanquished the pride of the Sioux tribe and now it is safe to live there. There are still plenty of Indians, but they rarely have the courage to harass the whites. Now Dakota is ready to open up for cultivation.<sup>21</sup>



Indeed, Rauanheimo continued by explaining how the earliest Finns had settled in the area only in 1882 and that “there are many Finns in Dakota in many places. They have taken the lands without significant fortunes, so the beginning has been difficult.”<sup>22</sup>

However, Rauanheimo also noted instances where violence had been part of the Finnish settlement process. For example, G. W. Planting from Kemijärvi, situated in the north of the Grand Duchy of Finland, made his way to Portland, Oregon, in 1877 and took up 80 acres of land 200 miles to the east of the city. However, “Indians were also living in the region, and they also wished to be the masters of the land. No wonder that skirmishes emerged.” Rauanheimo’s “skirmishes” likely refer to the Nez Perce War of 1877, and he notes that eventually the power of the army and settlers forced “the Indians to forfeit and settle for sharing their lands and back away.” Now—some twenty years later—everything was peaceful and “the old Indian fights have become sagas and adventures.”<sup>23</sup>

This narrative practice of distancing what the Finns were now doing from the past era of violence, in which they ostensibly took no active part, is key to understanding the logic of Finnish settler colonial place-making. Gunlög Fur argues that 19th-century Swedish fiction writers utilized a similar argumentation in their discussion of Native American dispossession: no direct links were made between removals and emigration. Here, Fur stresses, the main question was whether the immigrants understood that they in fact were “tools in the politics of displacement, and sometimes one of ‘ethnic cleansing’ and how they handled that.”<sup>24</sup> Rauanheimo did not comment on the matter in any way, and, like other Finns who wrote about their travels in the United States, he presented the Indian removals as cruel administrative policies that contributed to the deterioration of the Native American cultures. These authors, including Rauanheimo, did not contemplate that Finnish presence on the continent might have contributed to the dispossession of the Indigenous populations.<sup>25</sup>

Rauanheimo’s writings arguably gained a position to shape Finnish understandings about the North American continent. As the decades passed, Rauanheimo’s knowledge gained further prominence: by the beginning of the 1900s his expertise was already being used in the construction of information concerning North America for geography textbooks in Finnish schools.<sup>26</sup> Later, Rauanheimo’s influential position in constructing geographical knowledge about the United States

became visible for example via the coauthored chapter he contributed to the volume four of the popular Finnish publication on world geography entitled *Maapallo* (The Globe), edited by professor of geography Johan E. Rosberg and Viljo Tolvanen and published in 1927.<sup>27</sup>

An important theme in Rauanheimo's later writings concerned the naming of places, and in particular the visibility of Finnish toponyms on the map of the United States. For example, in 1920 Rauanheimo published an article in *Kansan henki*, a Finnish American periodical based in Duluth, Minnesota. Rauanheimo's central argument was that Finnish toponyms should be preserved in order to mark the position of Finns in the "arena of nationalities" that he considered the United States to be. According to Rauanheimo, there were already regions, such as the site of early Finnish settlement at the mouth of the Delaware River where all the signs of Finns had disappeared. He stressed that "it was important to preserve the memory of the Finnish dwellings for the sake of Finland and the settlement history of America for the next generations."<sup>28</sup>

One way to secure this was to add Finnish names on maps and thus inscribe them in the "official documents." When Finns were, according to Rauanheimo, "still the majority" in new settlements, it was logical to ensure that these sites would "acquire Finnish names on the maps."<sup>29</sup> Thereby, adding Finnish nomenclature on the US maps functioned as a means for expressing nationality in a transimperial space. According to Rauanheimo there should be absolutely no difficulty in placing Finnish names on the maps. Indeed, the maps already contained numerous toponyms deriving from the Native Americans, which Rauanheimo categorized as foreign as the Finnish toponyms:

There is no reason to fear that the American civil servant would not approve foreign toponyms. The American map is full of Indian names, most of which are so long and difficult to spell that you can hardly find more awkward names in the Finnish language.<sup>30</sup>

Naming of places is intrinsically bound with questions of identity and collective memory, and in the history of colonialism it was at the core of the social production of places and spaces for the newcomers.<sup>31</sup> In essence, Rauanheimo's arguments for the need to secure the "memories" of Finnish settlement history on official maps was one of the many material practices of settler colonialism that demonstrated the kind of



remaking of geographical spaces that European invasion caused. They indicate Rauanheimo's understanding of the power of naming and mappings in manifesting influence in the world. His desire to inscribe the North American space "officially" with Finnish nomenclature that is no "more awkward" than the Native American toponyms already present on the maps demonstrates how in his view Finns were entitled to be visible in the imagined nation of the United States on this fundamental, yet quotidian level. Rauanheimo's writings demonstrate how the discursive and material processes of knowledge production and spatial inscription contributed to the cultural politics of making claims over space. Indeed, the politics of spatial inscription is, as geographers Reuben Rose-Redwood, Derek Alderman, and Maoz Azaryahy summarize, central to the construction of "demarcated spatial identities," in this case those of Finns in North America.<sup>32</sup>

The tireless promotion of Finnish visibility in North America related closely to Rauanheimo's general endeavor of establishing a place for the Finns in the history of colonization. Indeed, the toponyms and their preservation formed part of his broader mission of raising awareness of how Finns had contributed to the development of civilization in North America. For Rauanheimo the map of the United States, as he noted in a speech given at the World's Fair in Philadelphia in 1926, testified for the different roles and contributions that each nationality had made for America.<sup>33</sup> In his thinking and writing, Rauanheimo even played with the idea that Finns had inhabited North America before the Native Americans. Indeed, he was evidently impressed by the conjectures presented by a D. A. Robertson in the *Journal of American Geographical Society of New York* in 1874 that some of the prehistoric mounds in the Mississippi valley would have been built by ancestors of the "Finnish race." Although Rauanheimo was aware that no actual historical evidence for Robertson's claims existed, he utilized the idea rhetorically when formulating his arguments that "Finns were amongst [the] first when the white race from Europe started to inhabit America."<sup>34</sup> In sum, Finnish primacy among early white settlers had generated their rights for later settlement and entitled them to visibility. As we shall see in the next section, Rauanheimo's conceptualizations of the early American space became increasingly influential in the 1930s.

## Commemorating Finnish Settlers of 1638

Akseli Rauanheimo's writings contributed to the growing public awareness of Finns' role in the history of the Delaware settlement. Indeed, the discussions concerning Finnish visibility on maps reached new heights in the context of the Delaware tercentenary in the 1930s. The position of Finns in the Swedish colony in Delaware has been historically important for the making of the Finnish American identity. In 1937 the US government invited Finland to participate in the celebrations alongside Sweden. Finns and Finnish Americans reacted enthusiastically to the invitation, not least because it enabled Finns to discard the long-circulating notions of Finns as foreigners in the United States. Moreover, for the Finns, the invitation proved that they were among the founding peoples of the United States and elevated their racial status.<sup>35</sup> Although Finns' roles in the planning or the execution of the commemoration were not as central as those of the Swedes, participating in the acts of commemoration marked the production and utilization of different types of materials ranging from stamps to monuments, books, and maps to communicate about Finnish history on the American continent.<sup>36</sup>

In this section I argue that for Finns the maps that were produced to depict the history of the Delaware settlement were important tools for inscribing the early modern space and narrating Finnish roles in the colony of New Sweden. They enabled arguing for the "discoveries" that Finns had made and legitimized Finnish claims for the transformative power they had had in the building of the settler society. Indeed, they testify how the histories of the settlements in America have had meanings well beyond American history and have been utilized, as Adam Hjorthén has argued, by many groups "in the promotion of social, political, and commercial relations across national borders."<sup>37</sup> Furthermore, as the maps advanced claims over the North American space, they also became important tools for reifying ideas about peaceful cohabitation with the Delaware Lenapes. Doing so, these maps can be regarded as further testimonials of how the developing geohistorical imaginations were rooted in colonial perceptions of space and the "norming of space" by adhering to what philosopher Charles W. Mills has conceptualized as the racial contract. Indeed, the maps demarcated between "civil" and "wild" spaces which according to Mills was central to the racialized norming of space and European epistemology and ontology.<sup>38</sup>

The maps published in both the Finnish and Finnish American newspapers ranged from copies of maps produced originally in the 17th century to those drawn in the 20th century to commemorate the first landings and the settlements that followed. The former included a map by Swedish surveyor Peter Lindström of New Sweden, and another made by the Dutch depicting New Holland.<sup>39</sup> Lindström's maps were also part of the official cartographic materials that the Swedes displayed at the Tercentenary Exhibition held in Philadelphia for three weeks in the summer of 1938.<sup>40</sup>

Finnish journalists utilized these maps as historical documentation: the readers' attention was drawn to the toponyms that could be found on the maps. For example, an article published in *Kaiku*, a small newspaper based in Oulu, northern Finland, summarized how the existence of Finnish placenames testified to Finnish cultural influence in the Delaware colony:

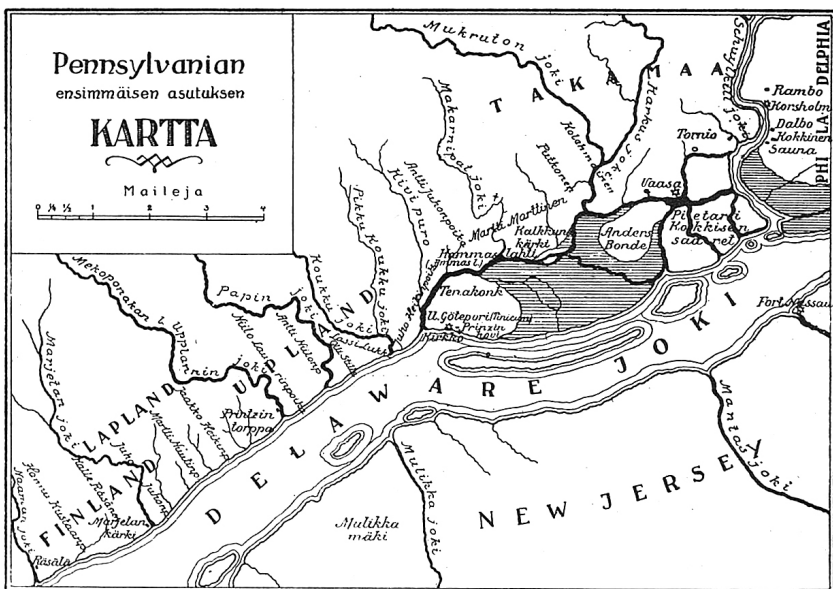
The settlers established Kristiina and two other small settlements, called Finland and Upland. In old Dutch maps, where today the metropolis of Philadelphia is, there is the word "saeno" – a small but telling evidence of the role of Finns as cultural pioneers in this area.<sup>41</sup>

At times, the maps of the Swedish and Dutch colonies were confused with each other. For example, in June 1938 *Helsingin Sanomat* published a map showing "New Netherland" and it was presented as "the map of the New Sweden colony" and the reader's attention was drawn to the familiar word "Sauno, which may well be a memory of a Finnish sauna."<sup>42</sup>

In contrast to these maps, where the signs of Finnish presence were somewhat sporadic, the historical maps made in the 1930s filled the land with Finnish toponyms and information concerning their activities. For their makers and users these maps were tools to claim the historical space for Finns. They differed from the Swedish maps, such as historian Amandus Johnson's map of the Delaware settlement that represented the space mainly as Swedish, joined by the English and Dutch, but pinpointing the dwellings at "Finland," as well as presenting some Indigenous toponyms.<sup>43</sup> One of the Finnish maps, which was published in several newspapers in Finland, was entitled "The First Settlements of Pennsylvania" and it depicts a portion of the Delaware River. It highlights the presence of Finns in the Swedish settlements.

When it appeared in an article published in 1936 in *Suomen Kuvalehti*, its author, using the pen name Yrjänä, utilized it to argue that Finns should be included in the tercentenary celebrations, which they at the time were not (see Map 1.2).<sup>44</sup> Yrjänä's thinking echoed those of Finnish Americans who had for years argued that Finns should be included in the celebrations. The official invitation to participate in the planning of the jubilee only came in 1937.<sup>45</sup> Yrjänä noted how "the place-names clearly show that Finns were in majority in the Swedish settlement." Indeed, the map was filled with placenames recognizable to the ordinary Finn: "Finland," "Lapland," "Takamaa," and "Mulikka mäki."<sup>46</sup>

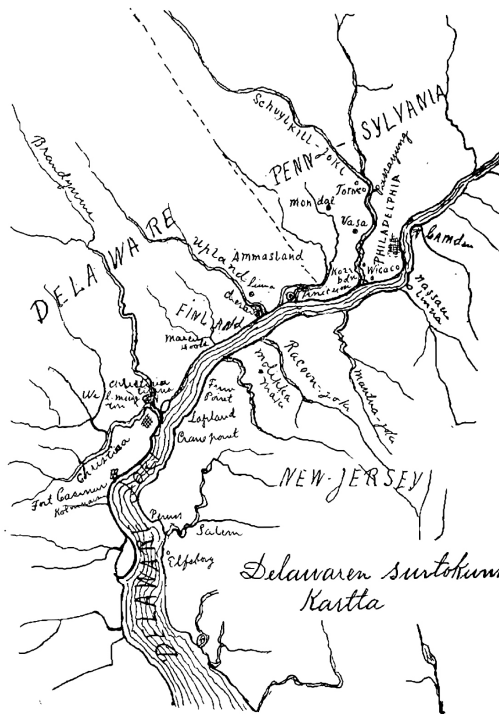
It is significant that the map in question was a copy of a map that had first been published in 1921 in Rauanheimos's historical novel *Uuteen maailmaan* (Into the New World). The toponyms derived from Rauanheimos's research on the history of Finns in the Swedish colony.<sup>47</sup> The map was likely authored by Rauanheimos himself. Rauanheimos's archive, today part of the collections of the National Library of Finland, contains manuscript sketches of the map that would accompany the novel.<sup>48</sup> By printing this, Rauanheimos's map, originally constructed



**Map 1.2:** Map showing the first settlements in Pennsylvania. *Suomen Kuvalehti*, no. 17 (1936).

for a novel alongside articles detailing the history of New Sweden, was transformed into a document and, as we have seen above, it was utilized to construct arguments about early Finnish presence in America. Furthermore, Rauanheimo's influence is visible in the contents of the articles that discussed Finnish involvement in the Swedish colony. Indeed, in addition to the novel, he published articles and other texts in Finnish in the 1920s that discussed the history of Finnish settlers in America.<sup>49</sup>

One of the maps visualizing New Sweden in the Finnish press was a copy of a map that the self-taught historian Salomon Ilmonen had published already in 1919 in his book on the history of Finnish Americans (the book had a foreword by Rauanheimo).<sup>50</sup> The black and white map (Map 1.3) is titled "The Map of the Delaware Settlement." It shows the extent of the Delaware River and places the state names of Pennsyl-



**Map 1.3:** Map by Samuel Ilmonen showing the Delaware River Valley. It was originally published in his 1919 book but reproduced in 1938 in Finnish media, for instance in the periodical *Suomen Silta*.

vania, Delaware, and New Jersey in addition to the placenames such as Finland, Lapland, and Vasa. Ilmonen's style is somewhat hazy and not all details of the lettering are legible. In fact, the map resembles a draft rather than a polished map ready for publication.<sup>51</sup>

Neither of these maps explicitly noted the presence of Indigenous populations in the area, like Amandus Johnson's map from 1911 that included some Indigenous toponyms alongside European ones. In the Finnish maps the Indigenous toponyms were present, yet they were not demarcated as such. Instead, the Indigenous populations were described in the accompanying texts and the images that were published by the Finnish press. Consequently, on these maps the North American space was emptied from its existing inhabitants and their toponyms were taken from their context in a similar fashion as colonial mappings have been noted to do in Australia and Africa, for instance.<sup>52</sup> However, when read together with the accompanying texts, two discourses emerged regarding the encounters between the Lenape, the Iroquois, and the Finns. Some articles sensationalized the Finns' voyage to the New World and noted that the rough voyage included fear of pirates and "facing the Indians."<sup>53</sup> A caricature was published in the newspaper *Pohjois-Savo* in 1938 depicting an imaginary scene of people from Rautalampi encountering the "feared" North American Indians and stating that the Finnish ancestors had come "from Rautalammi to establish the American empire."<sup>54</sup>

Some of the articles, however, stressed the amiable relations that were formed and how Finns were able to maintain a more amicable relationship, especially with the Lenape, than, for example, the English.<sup>55</sup> As Aleksi Huhta has recently summarized, the narrative of Finnish–Native American friendship coincided with that of the Swedes and had already been constructed in the earlier Delaware histories, like Ilmonen's (1919).<sup>56</sup> Such anecdotes concerning the friendly relations also appeared in Rauanheimo's early writings. In *Suomalaiset Amerikassa*, Rauanheimo narrated the beginning of Finnish settler presence in North America in 1638 through the lens of exceptionalism. He noted how the Swedish convoy that arrived on the Delaware River formed an "eternal friendship" with the Native Americans. They purchased the lands from the local inhabitants with their goods and "surveyor, lieutenant Kling made the maps and placed statues with the Queen's emblem." Significantly, he notes that the good relations with the Indigenous inhabitants continued, "which was peculiar as the

other settlements in America were almost continuously on the war-path" with them.<sup>57</sup>

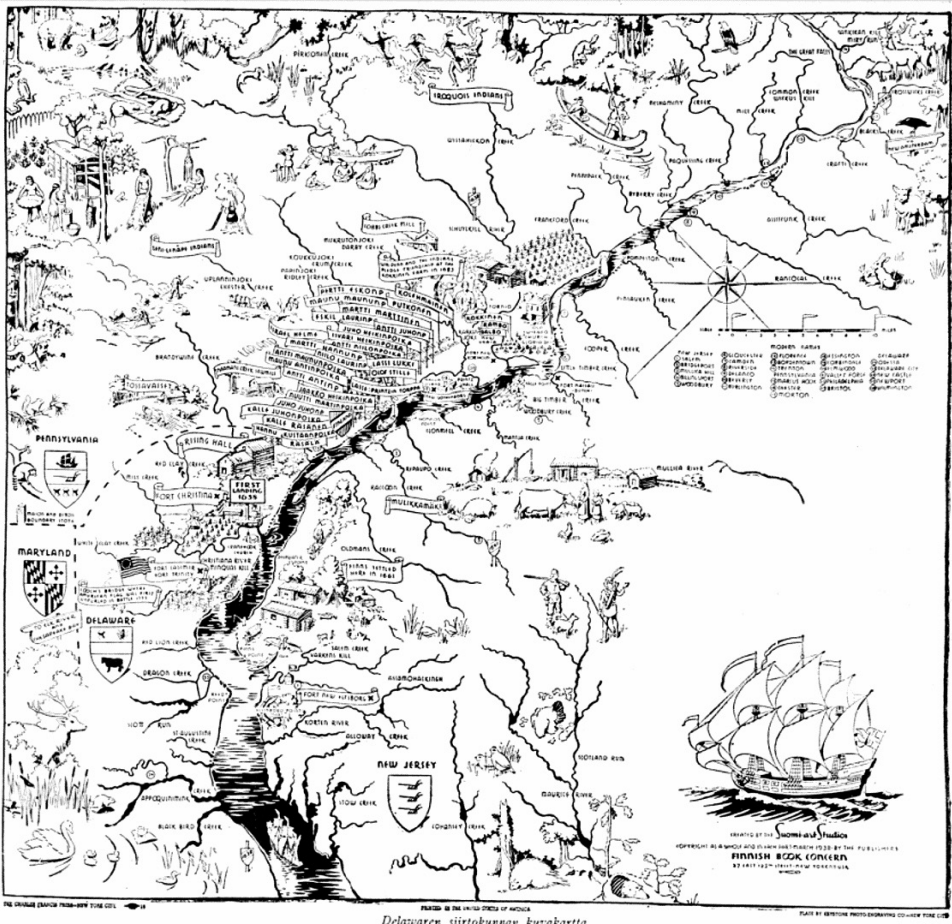
These ideas of friendship and honest deals with the Indigenous inhabitants formed the basis for Finnish notions of moral superiority and exceptionalism pertaining to their historic presence in America during the tercentenary celebrations. This contrasted with the Finnish awareness of the marginalized position of Native Americans in contemporary American society. Finnish literature and nonfiction publications included texts that noted the rights of Native Americans as the original owners of the land and their unfortunate fates in the face of European expansion.<sup>58</sup> For example, in the missionary publications disseminated in Finland by the Finnish Missionary Society, the Native Americans were positioned as the victims of the greedy non-Finnish settlers and the evils of colonialism. Native American presence was depicted on the highly popular missionary map of the world, published first in 1859, by inscribing "Indians" along the western half of North America.<sup>59</sup> Similarly, Native American marginalization was prominently documented in early 20th-century Finnish popular geography books. One of them was the already mentioned text on North America by Rauanheimo in the popular geography book *Maapallo*.<sup>60</sup> However, any empathy was countered with ideas of the Native Americans' "heathenism" and the premise of Europeans (including Finns) civilizing the "wild" lands, an argument that was also part of the doctrine of discovery.<sup>61</sup>

The often-repeated narrative of friendly beginnings between the Finnish colonists and the Indigenous inhabitants, the Lenape, distanced Finns from processes of settler colonial replacement that occurred as Europeans captured land. In fact, in Finnish American imagination the friendly beginnings transformed into an idea of peaceful cohabitation that was presented on a pictorial map produced for the tercentenary celebrations. The map (Map 1.4), entitled "Delaware siirtokunnan kuvakartta" ("Pictorial map of the Delaware settlement"), was sold at the celebration and also printed in whole or partly in Finnish newspapers in 1938.<sup>62</sup> The map exemplifies the widespread use of the frontier imagery.<sup>63</sup> It shows the Delaware valley filled with Finnish place names alongside images of the typical dwellings, animals, and people. Significantly, the map shows Native Americans in three ways. On the right side, one Native American is presented to converse with a Finn, as if they were making agreements about the uses of the land, at top



left scenes from the Lenape way of life are shown with people cooking and building. At the center top a group of Iroquois are shown dancing fiercely. Consequently, the map communicates an idea of somewhat peacefully shared land where everyone has their place. The Finns are portrayed as civilizing the land in every way and the map places information about significant dates, sites, and people.

As Huhta has argued, it was difficult for Finns to make claims for the Delaware colony as it was named New Sweden, not New Finland.<sup>64</sup>



**Map 1.4:** The pictorial map of the Delaware settlement shows the numerous Finns cultivating the lands and living in harmony with the Lenapes. *Uusi Suomi*, May 20, 1938.

However, I argue that by generating cartographic narratives of Finnish activities in the North American space, as well as by naming the site the “first settlements of Pennsylvania,” Finns were able to effectively connect themselves to the landscapes and distance the colonization project from the Swedish crown. For the Finns, the making of the maps was part of a national project; however, simultaneously they were part of the broader Western epistemological and legal project that allowed conceptualizing the land as commodity that could be rationalized, owned, and turned into property. Adhering to the “first settlements” connected the map to the legal fiction of the doctrine of discovery that bypassed Indigenous relations to land and replaced them with a capitalist model of improvement and private property.<sup>65</sup>

Arguably, the Finnish settlers participated in this project as they consented to the racialization of space as formulated by Mills: they benefitted from the power position that performing whiteness and civility obtained them. I do not claim that these processes were homogenous or that these materials would always have shaped the minds and mental images of different individuals in a similar manner. The Finnish geographical imaginations concerning North America existed in the plural as they were shaped by the individuals’ characteristics and being in the world.

Moreover, these representational practices endured and gained new lives later in another commemoration. For example, a slightly altered version of the pictorial jubilee map was utilized in the American Revolution Bicentennial in 1976. The map was now prominently entitled “The First Permanent Settlements on the Delaware.” It also included information about the birthplace of John Morton, whose role in the signing of the declaration of independence was highlighted. The right side of the map was appended with an extensive narrative of the Delaware colony, Finnish names in the area, Finnish contributions to the Americas, a discussion on the role of John Morton, and the historical events leading to the presidency of George Washington.<sup>66</sup> The continued use of the map almost 40 years later testifies to its significance as an effective material of the Finnish (American) geohistorical imaginations that were built during the first decades of the 20th century.

## Conclusion

This chapter has explored how geographical texts and maps represented the historical roots of Finns in America and made them visible on the map of the United States, in essence to map a Finnish history in settler colonial North America and to carve Finns a place on the continent. My analysis shows how Finnish geohistorical imaginations developed through an engagement with the settler colonial cartographic frame as Finnish presence entangled with questions of colonial violence and land ownership in multifaceted ways. On the one hand, identifying the long Finnish roots as part of the *first white settlements* on the continent was crucial. Finns, whose own racial position was ambiguous, desired a place alongside other white European nationalities in order to claim roles in the building of the US society and in transforming the land from empty wilderness to cultivated civilized space. The mappings that were produced to celebrate the Delaware tercentenary are especially telling about this urge to establish a role for Finns in American whiteness. They narrated how Finns had partaken in transforming the lands into productive resources and captured the processes of making the space legible. Combined with materials that Akseli Rauanheimo generated concerning Finnish migrants' contributions to contemporary America, the message became clear. Finns had transformed the lands into civilized spaces and continued to influence this process. They had a legitimate role in the building of the settler society, past and present.

Consequently, the mappings testified for Finns' claims for space in North America in a particular manner. They outsourced violence and distanced settler colonial conquest of Native American polities onto other Europeans. The Finns were innocent, and thus unlike other whites in the US. The geohistorical imaginations that were fueled by the maps and texts analyzed in this chapter presented the early settlers living in harmony with the Indigenous populations of the Delaware River and referred to the hostilities toward them mainly as horrors that other Europeans and later the American state had done. In these materials Finns were distanced from the social structures that legitimized the capture of lands and the destruction of the Indigenous cultures and being in the world, yet at the same time they presented Finns participating in the Western project of fixing the defective spaces that the Native Americans had been incapable of civilizing. Thus, I argue, the

maps and textual mappings exemplify how popular geohistories and geographies of Finns in North America consented to the spatial regime of Mills's racial contract. By placing these maps in the context of colonial practices of making ("civilizing") space, in this chapter I have demonstrated that they were not mere decoration, for they allowed Finns to map themselves onto the North American terrain and make claims for spaces of their own.

## Notes

- 1 The research for this contribution has been carried out with the generous support of the Academy of Finland, grant number 331899.
- 2 For influential studies concerning the relationship between mapping, empires, colonization, and the making of space see e.g., Edney, *Mapping an Empire*; Burnett, *Masters of All They Surveyed*; Akerman, *Imperial Map*; Banivanua Mar and Edmonds, *Making Settler Colonial Space*; Blais, Deprest, and Singaravelou, *Territoires Impériaux*; Craib, "Cartography and Decolonization."
- 3 Sluyter, "Colonialism and Landscape," 410.
- 4 For clarity, I will use the surname that Akseli settled on, that is, Rauanheimo.
- 5 Existing research on the mappings analyzed in this chapter is marginal. See e.g., Kero, *Suureen länteen*, 20.
- 6 Massey, *Samanaikainen tila*. See also Massey, *For Space*; Gregory, *Geographical Imaginations*; Gregory, "Geographical Imagination."
- 7 Currently, scholars only utilize the concept of geohistorical imaginations sporadically. For example, Craib mentions it, but does not develop it; see Craib, "Nationalist Metaphysics."
- 8 Palmberg, "Nordic Colonial Mind," 78.
- 9 Rose-Redwood et al., "Decolonizing the Map," 152.
- 10 E.g., Merivirta, Koivunen, and Särkkä, *Finnish Colonial Encounters*; Lahti and Kullaa, "Suomi ja kolonialismi (Finland and Colonialism)."
- 11 Fur, "Colonial Fantasies," 13.
- 12 "Suomalaiset Amerikassa," 12–15; Järnefelt, *Suomalaiset Amerikassa*, 4.
- 13 Leppänen, "Siirtolaisuus ja nuorisoseurat," 109.
- 14 Hjelt, "Amerikansuomalaisia tervehtimässä"; "Suomalaisten seurakunta- ja raittiusharrastuksesta Amerikassa."
- 15 For the doctrine of discovery, see Miller et al., *Discovering Indigenous Lands*.
- 16 See copy of Rauanheimo's letter to the Finnish Missionary Society, May 8, 1926.
- 17 Järnefelt, *Suomalaiset Amerikassa*. All translations from Finnish are mine.
- 18 Järnefelt, *Suomalaiset Amerikassa*, 7.
- 19 For a summary of how the definition and application of the doctrine has evolved from the 5th century, see Miller et al., *Discovering Indigenous Lands*, 3–15.
- 20 Järnefelt, *Suomalaiset Amerikassa*, 122–45.
- 21 Järnefelt, *Suomalaiset Amerikassa*, 146.
- 22 Järnefelt, *Suomalaiset Amerikassa*, 149.
- 23 Järnefelt, *Suomalaiset Amerikassa*, 220. See also Rauanheimo's description of violence during the expansion of the settlements in California in the 1840s and

- the early arrival of Finns in the 1850s, Järnefelt, *Suomalaiset Amerikassa*, 180–84. For the Nez Perce War see West, *Last Indian War*.
- 24 Fur, “Colonial Fantasies,” 24.
- 25 See, for example, Finnish feminist Alexandra Gripenberg’s comments about the position of the Indigenous population in her travel account published in Gripenberg, *Halfår i Nya Werlden*, 154.
- 26 See Favorin, *Maantieto*.
- 27 Rauanheimo et al., “Ameriikan Yhdysvallat.”
- 28 Rauanheimo, “Suomalaiset paikannimet Amerikassa,” 6–7.
- 29 Rauanheimo, “Suomalaiset paikannimet Amerikassa,” 6–7.
- 30 Rauanheimo, “Suomalaiset paikannimet Amerikassa,” 6–7.
- 31 For a classic study on colonialism and making space, see Carter, *Road to Botany Bay*. See also Lewis and Wigen, *Myth of Continents*. For the North American context, see White and Findlay, *Power and Place*.
- 32 Rose-Redwood, Alderman, and Azaryahu, “Geographies,” 454.
- 33 “Philadelphians and Guests.”
- 34 Draft papers “Dr. D. A. Robertson” and “Finns in America.” See Robertson, “Pre-historic Inhabitants of the Mississippi Valley.”
- 35 Huhta, “Claiming Roots,” 149–53. See also Kostiaainen, “Delaware Colonists.”
- 36 For the Swedish commemoration of 1938 see Hjorthén, *Cross-Border Commemorations*.
- 37 Hjorthén, *Cross-Border Commemorations*, 3.
- 38 Mills, *Racial Contract*, 18, 41–53. See also Berglund’s recent study where she develops Mills’s theory of the racial contract in the context of Norwegian migrants in the United States: Berglund, “Norwegian Migration,” 18–19.
- 39 Yrjänä, “Juhlitaan, mutta kuka juhlii?”; “Delaware 1638–1938,” *Helsingin Sanomat*, June 28, 1938.
- 40 Björkblom, *New Sweden Historical Exhibit 1638–1938*, 10, 50–53.
- 41 “Uuden Ruotsin suomalaiset: Delawaren siirtokunnan 300-vuotisjuhlan johdosta,” *Kaiku*, June 28, 1938, 5.
- 42 “Delaware 1638–1938,” *Helsingin Sanomat*, June 28, 1938, 9.
- 43 See maps in Johnson, *Swedish Settlements*, 496; Johnson, *Den Första Svenska Kolonien i Amerika*, 209.
- 44 Yrjänä, “Juhlitaan, mutta kuka juhlii?” 609. This map also circulated in other papers; see “12 retkikuntaa lähti Suomi-Ruotsista asuttamaan Delaware-joen seutua 1600-luvulla,” *Pohjois-Savo*, July 3, 1938; *Delaware-Albumi*.
- 45 For the Finnish inclusion in the celebrations, see Engman, “Dragkampen.”
- 46 Yrjänä, “Juhlitaan, mutta kuka juhlii?” 609.
- 47 Järnefelt Rauanheimo, *Uuteen maailmaan*.
- 48 Coll. 181.15, Archive of Akseli Rauanheimo (Järnefelt), National Library of Finland.
- 49 Rauanheimo, “Rautalammin lahja Amerikalle”; Järnefelt-Rauanheimo, *Suomi ja Amerika*, 9–15.
- 50 Ilmonen, *Amerikan suomalaisten historiaa I*, 16.
- 51 “Delaware 1638–1938,” *Suomen Silta*, 1938, 5. See also Oskari Nousiainen, “Delawaren suomalaiset Pietari Kalmin kuvaamina,” *Maaseudun Tulevaisuus*, July 2, 1938, 6. A further similar map of the colony of New Sweden, written in English,

- was published in Martti Kerkkonen, "Delaware-minnet och Finland," *Hufvudstadsbladet*, June 26, 1938, 3.
- 52 Ryan, *Cartographic Eye*; Etherington, *Mapping Colonial Conquest*.
- 53 "12 retkikuntaa lähti Suomi-Ruotsista," 5.
- 54 "Pohjois-Savon päivänpiirtoja n:o 747," *Pohjois-Savo*, February 22, 1938, 2.
- 55 E.g., "Uuden Ruotsin suomalaiset: Delawaren siirtokunnan 300-vuotisjuhlan johdosta," *Kaiku*, June 28, 1938, 5; Yrjö Rauanheimo, "Delaware-joella 300 vuotta sitten," *Ilta-Sanomat*, June 30, 1938.
- 56 Huhta, "Claiming Roots." For the persistence of the Swedish historical representations of the friendly relations with the Indigenous populations, see Hjorthén, *Cross-Border Commemorations*, especially Chapter 3 and 181–88.
- 57 Järnefelt, *Suomalaiset Amerikassa*, 9. See Järnefelt Rauanheimo, *Uuteen maailmaan*, 9, 180–81.
- 58 E.g. Campe, *Amerikan löytö*, 95–96, 152.
- 59 *Maailman kartta lähetys-toimesta*; Ewankelinen lähetys; *Selitys lähetys-toimen kartalle*.
- 60 Rauanheimo et al., "Ameriikan Yhdysvallat."
- 61 Miller et al., *Discovering Indigenous Lands*, 8.
- 62 See "Ikkuna 300 vuotta vanhaan menneisyyteen," *Uusi Suomi*, May 20, 1938. "Delaware-siirtokunnan historiaa kuvakartalla," *Helsingin Sanomat*, May 20, 1938. "Delaware-siirtokunnan historiaa kuvakartalla," *Uudenmaan Sanomat*, May 21, 1938; "Delaware-siirtokunnan historia kuvakarttana," *Peltomies*, May 25, 1938. "Unkarilainen suomalais-ruotsalaisen siirtolaislaivan kapteenina."
- 63 Kostiaainen, "Delaware Colonists," 33; Huhta, "Claiming Roots," 153–57.
- 64 Huhta, "Claiming Roots," 149–50.
- 65 E.g. Weaver, *Great Land Rush*; Miller et al., *Discovering Indigenous Lands*, 7.
- 66 *The First Permanent Settlements on the Delaware*, 1976, SMMA201301:69, The Maritime Museum of Finland, Kotka, Finland.

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