

## **Paper Followup Report**

TRENAK1 Finnish Institutions Research Paper  
Kristiina Tolvanen, December 2008

### **1. Why you chose the topic you did?**

My topic is very much connected to my family background, since my grandparents are mostly Karelian. Unfortunately, they passed away before I had time to discuss the past with them, so writing this paper was, in a way, my attempt to learn about my roots.

The idea came from a member of my family, who mentioned Veikko Vennamo's name, and the word 'resettlement'. Vennamo's name was familiar to me, but I did not know much about the resettlement. I did some research, and realized that the resettlement plan was actually something very interesting. I thought other people should know about it, too. I knew that writing the paper was not going to be easy because the topic was quite wide, and I did not really have previous information about it, but I decided to at least try.

### **2. A brief summary of new perspectives on the topic in your paper. What was your main research question and how did you answer it?**

My paper aims to explain objectively the resettlement of the Karelian evacuees in Finland after the Winter War and the Continuation War. The paper also discusses the aspects leading to resettlement, and the consequences of implementing such a major land reform in Finland at the time.

My main research question was: what is the resettlement, and why is it worth remembering? I answered the question by first giving preliminary information, which is necessary to know in order to understand the subject. Then I talked about the reasons and circumstances that led to a need for resettlement. After this, I explained how the resettlement of the Karelian evacuees worked out in reality, and who were the people responsible for the planning and other official tasks. Finally, I lifted up the positive and admirable aspects of the process, without failing to mention that there were negative ones as well, and thus answered the question about why people should remember the resettlement.

### **3. A brief summary of what you might do differently if you were to start again with the paper. Why, and how?**

First of all, it would be extremely useful to choose a topic quickly, and then immediately start looking for source material. Naturally, it is also a good idea to choose the topic based on how much material can be found, and how easily. I think I lost some valuable time during this phase.

It would perhaps be a good idea not to take so many other courses at the same time. Writing a paper like this is extremely time-consuming, depending of course on the chosen topic, and it is nice to have a life outside university studies to balance the situation.

I could also have made more thorough plans on paper before starting to write. It would perhaps have helped me to see everything from a larger perspective and it would have been easier to decide what should be mentioned and what could be left out.

Finding a proofreader would definitely be a great asset. No matter how good a writer you are, you become blind to your mistakes. When you start knowing your topic well, you fail to see things from an outsider's viewpoint. Revision can be avoided by keeping in mind that the target audience does not know anything about the subject. While in a hurry, I often failed to think about that.

### **4. A brief review of [possible] other aspects of Finnish Institutions which emerged during the research for your paper that might also be useful topics for the future, and why you feel they might be useful.**

There are many interesting points related to my topic that could be further looked into. One could focus on other influential characters behind the resettlement process: Johannes Virolainen or Juho Kusti Paasikivi, for example. The evacuations of Karelians as such, or the legal aspects of the resettlement could also be interesting topics.

One of the things I mention in my paper is the difficulty of acquiring land for resettlement from the Swedish-speaking areas in Finland. This difficulty raised heated discussions and debates with the authorities. Naturally, I was unable to focus on this in my paper, but someone else could find out more about the subject, and answer questions such as: Was the language difference the only reason why the Swedish-speakers were against giving land? Were all the Swedish-speakers against the resettlement plans? What kind of reasons did the different parties have to justify their cause, and what was the end result?