

# **A National Public Sphere?**

## **Analysing the Language, Location and Form of Newspapers in Finland, 1771-1910**

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**Digital approaches towards serial publications (18th–20th centuries) conference, Brussels, 11.-12.9.2017**

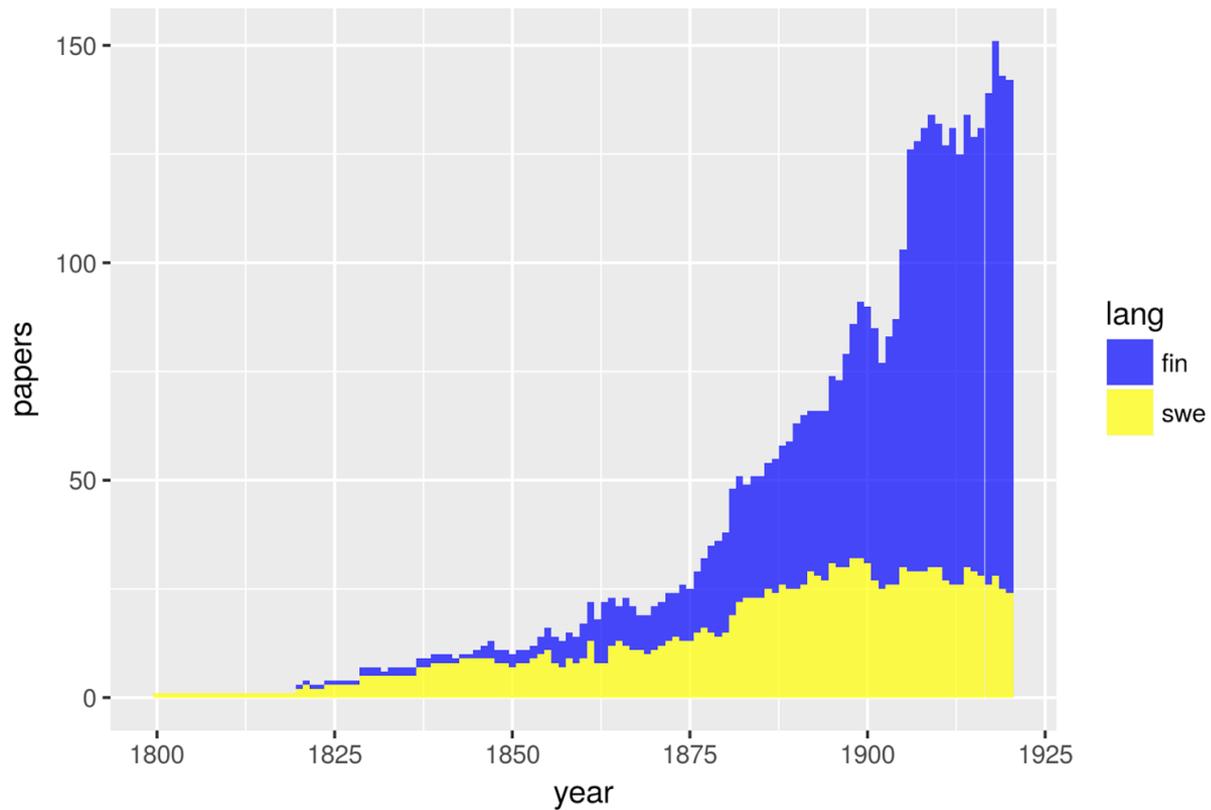
# Form, shape and size before matter

- The idea to study the totality of public discourse through access to newspaper data in any given country or region is tempting but rather naive.
- To study conceptual change in public discourse: size and shape of newspapers, publication frequency, circulation of newspapers, title counts, word counts and relative amount of publishing in different languages are crucial factors.

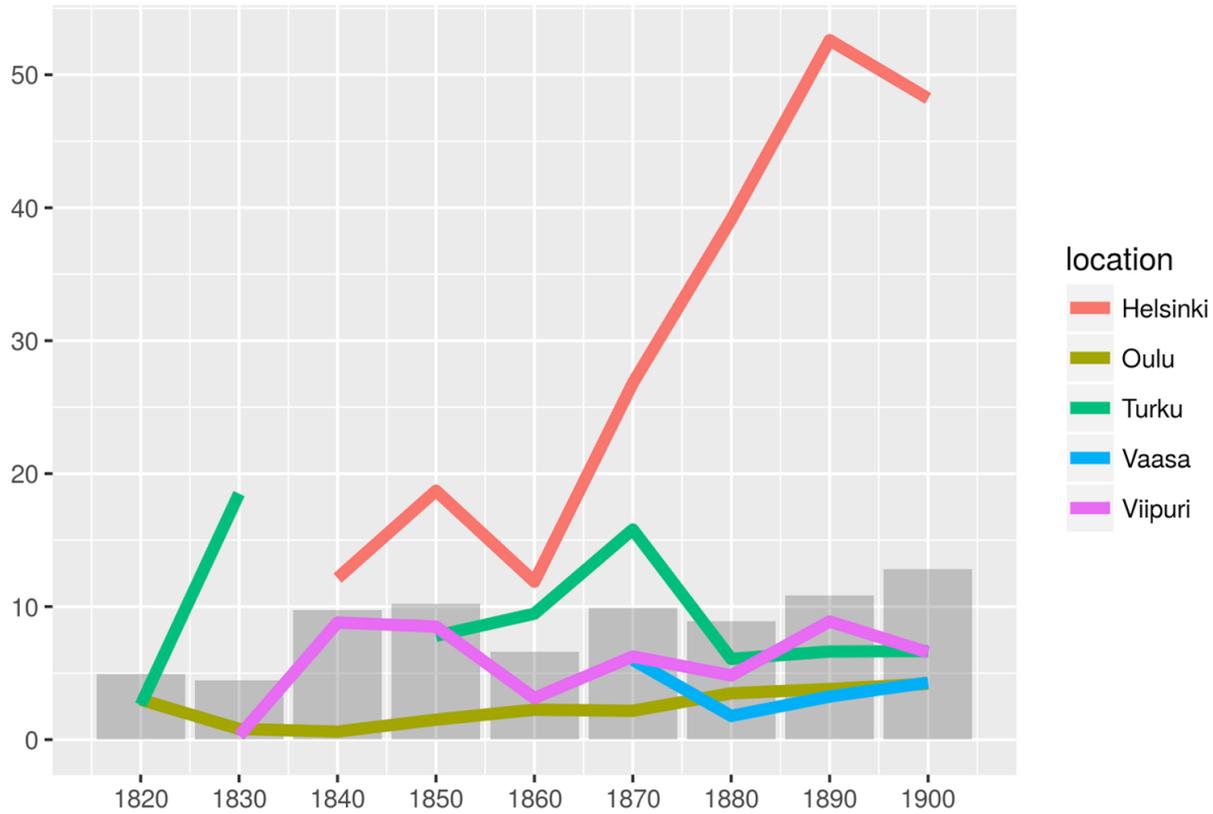
# Material and methods

- Metadata records for Finnish newspapers published digitally by the National Library of Finland. This includes full text of all newspapers and most periodicals published in Finland between 1771 and 1920.
- Meta-data contains information about publication, dates, locations, language, page counts. This information is there for almost all papers. Then there is information about circulation and page sizes which is there, but not consistently.
- We have further extracted information about columns, words counts, publication frequency AND enriching the data with population statistics and information about circulation, which allows for further analyses.

*Bird's-eye view on newspaper publishing in Finland 1771-1910*

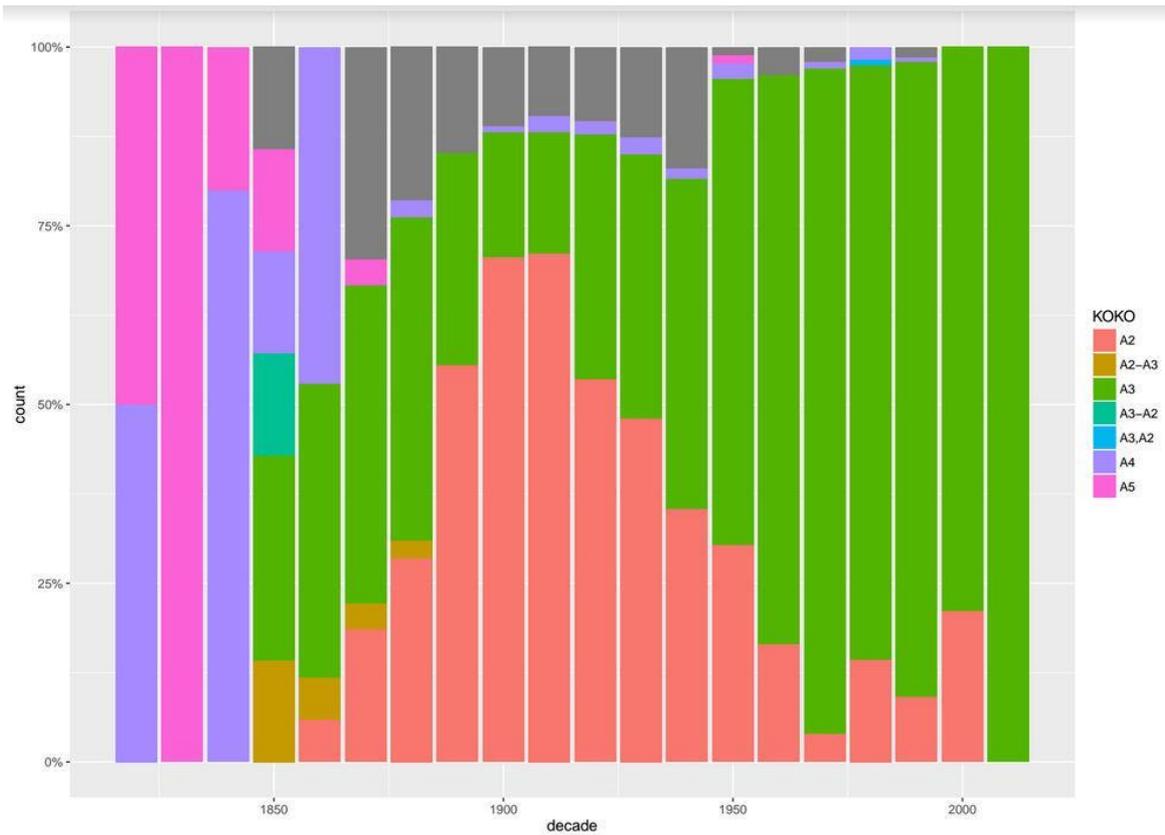


Timeline count of number of different newspapers published per year in different languages, 1800-1920

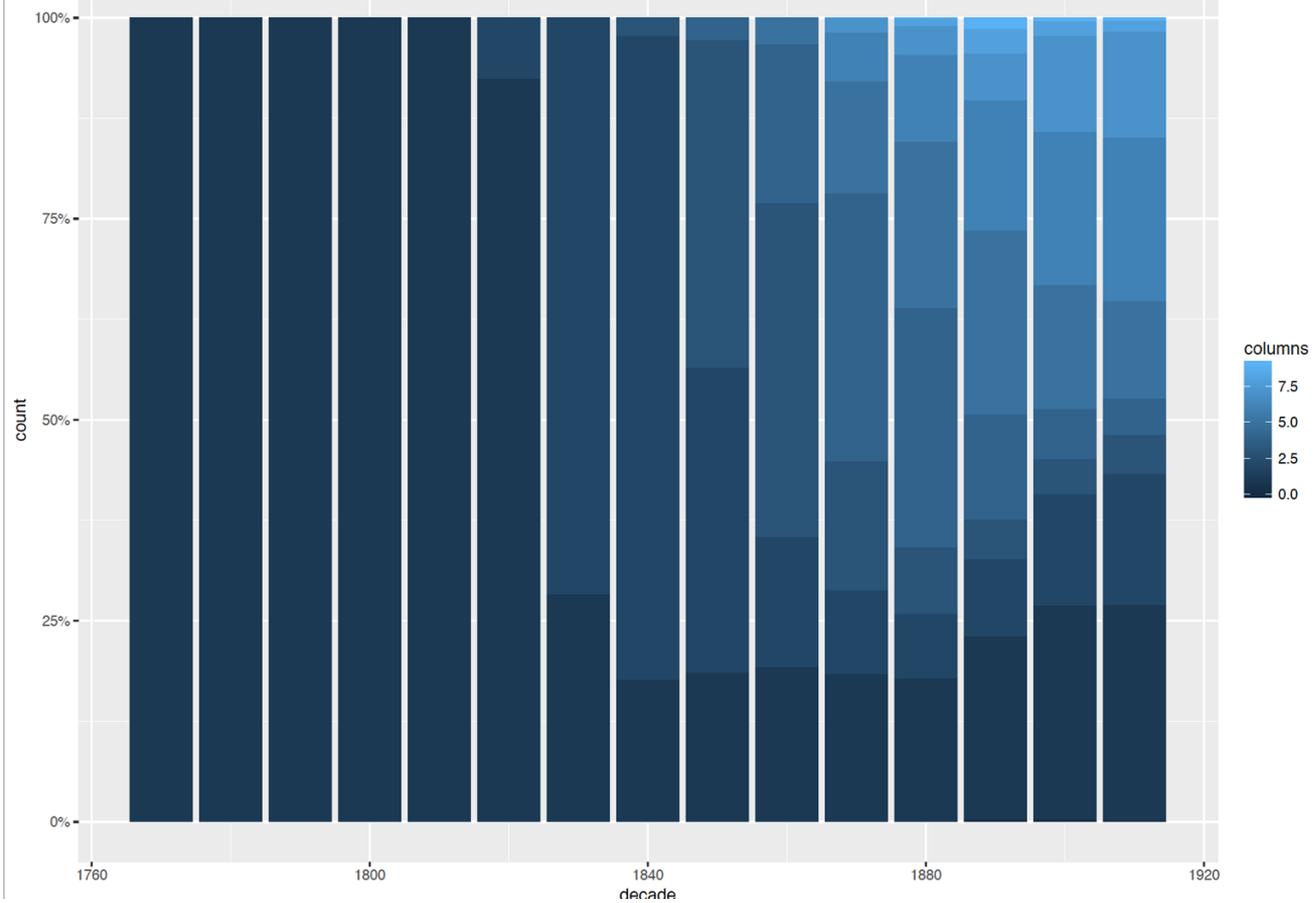


Published books / newspapers in Finnish, overall by decade and by top five cities

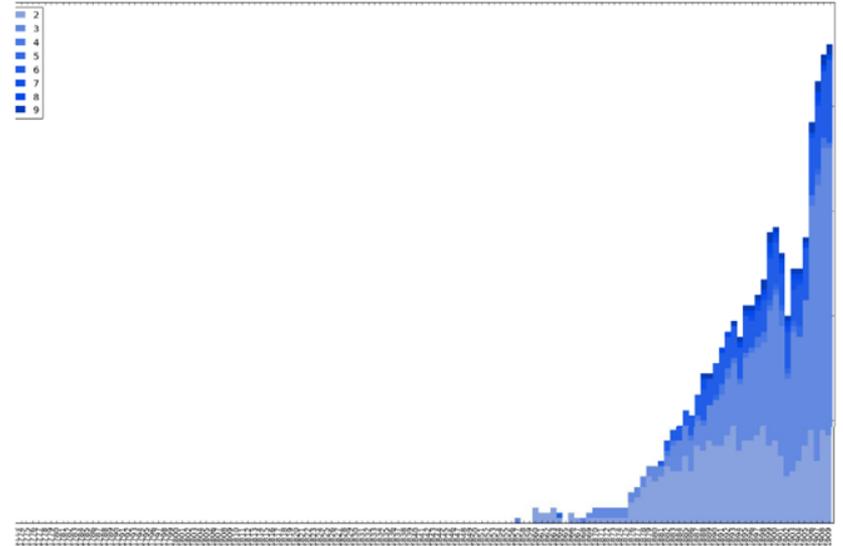
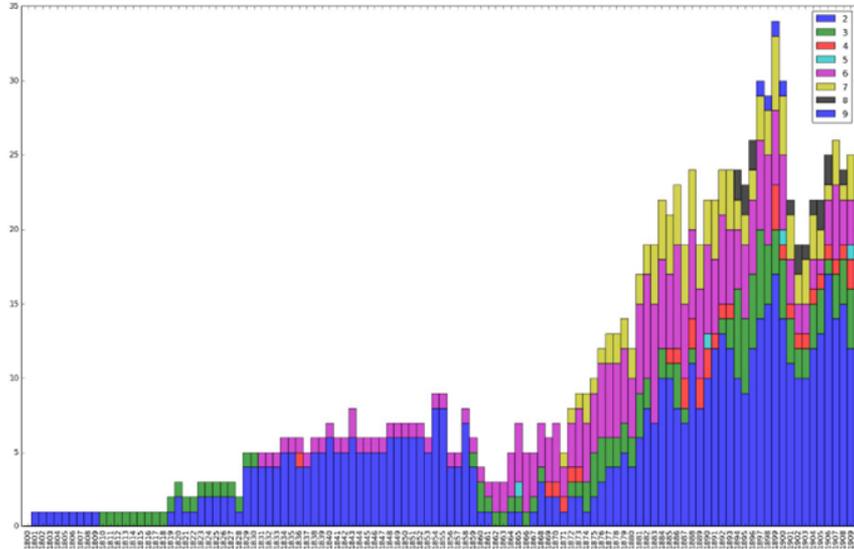
Development of newspapers as a medium and professionalization of newspapers in Finland



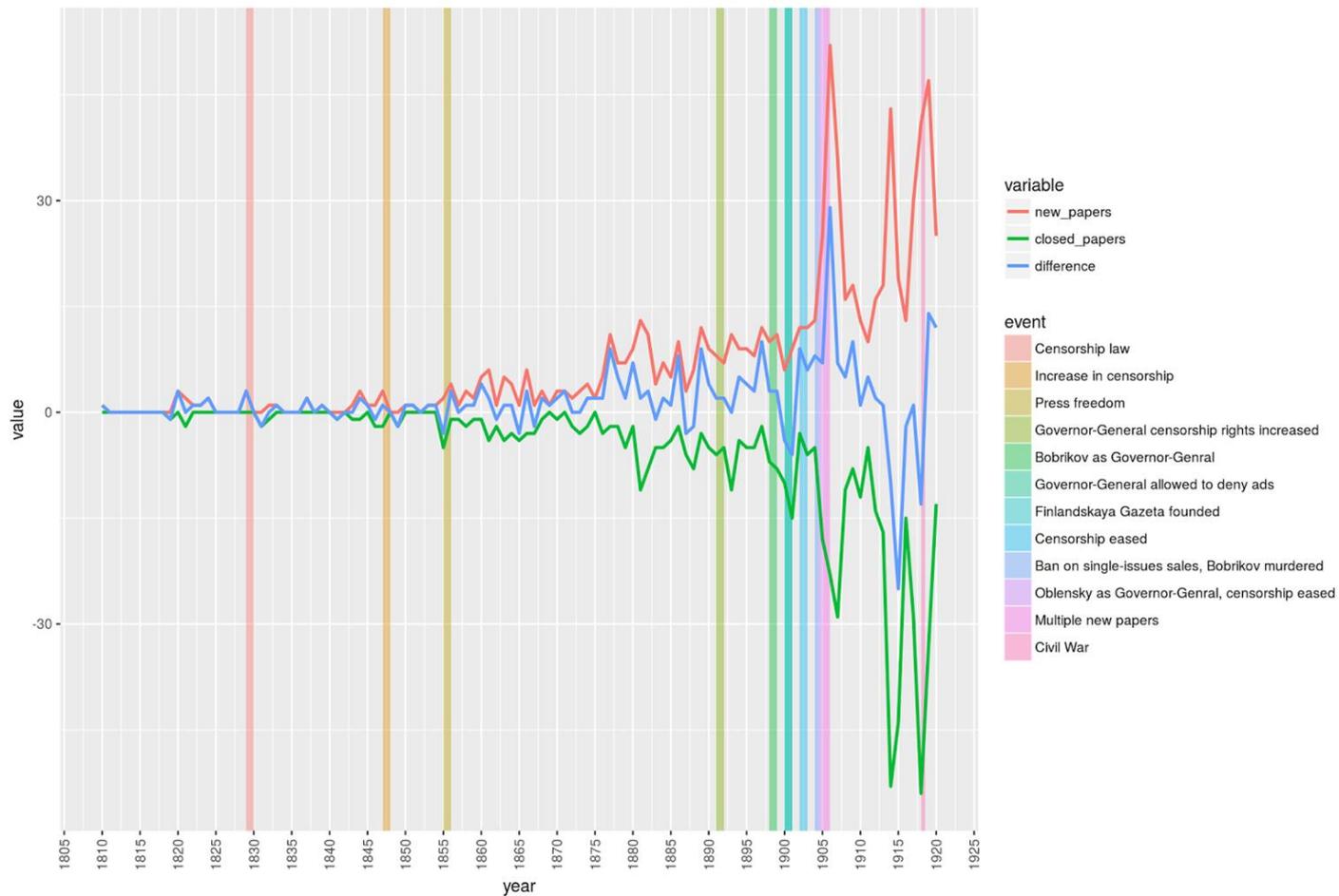
Proportions of newspaper page sizes 1800-2000



Proportion of number of columns in Finnish newspapers  
1760-1920

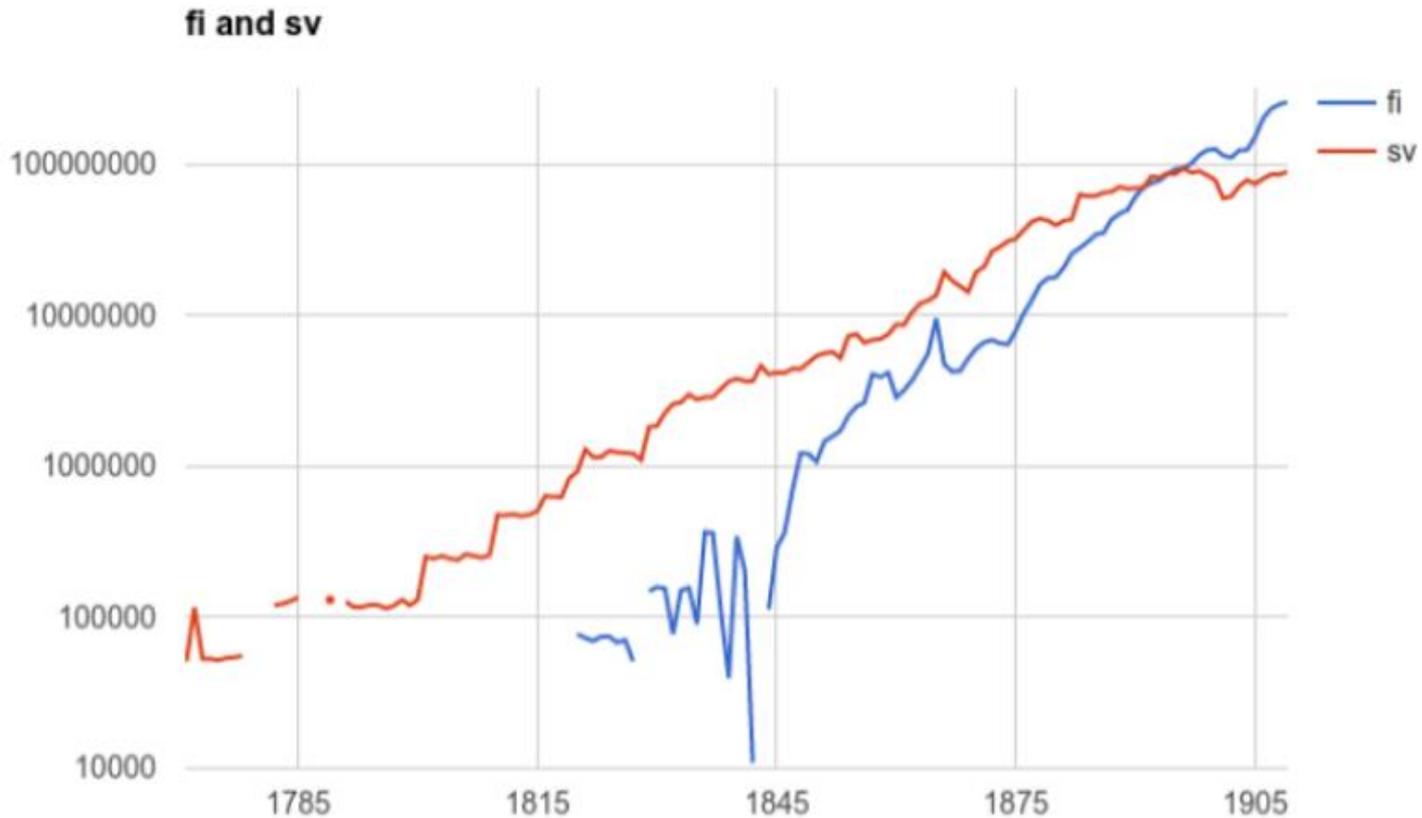


Publishing frequency in Swedish and Finnish language newspaper (papers published once or more often per week).

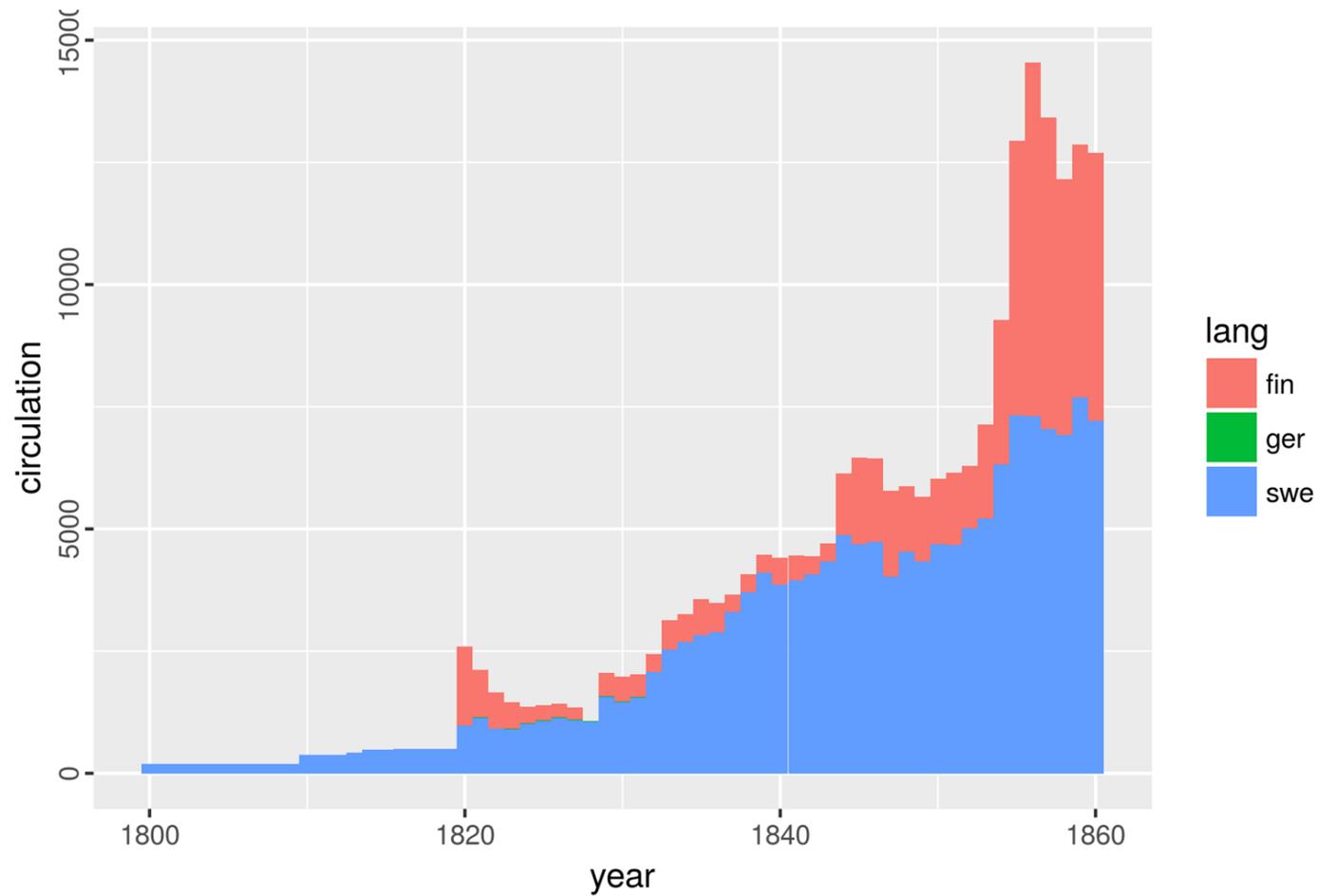


Foundation of new papers and termination of old papers 1810-1920

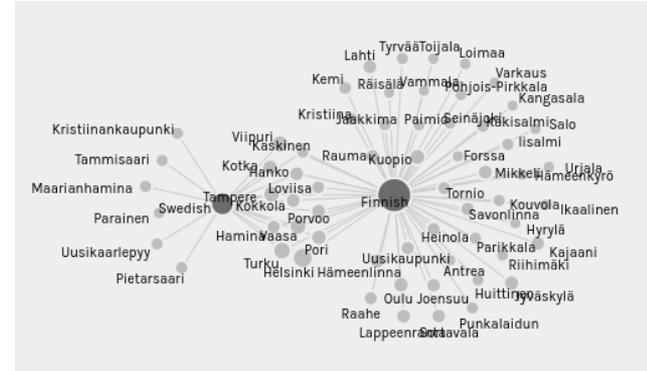
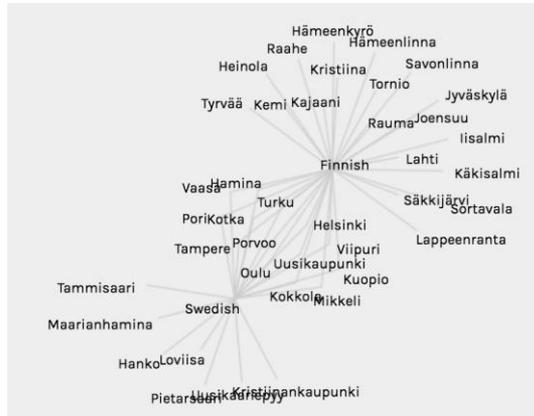
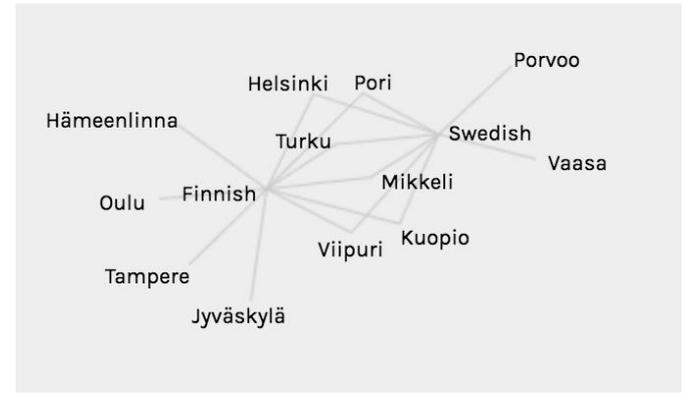
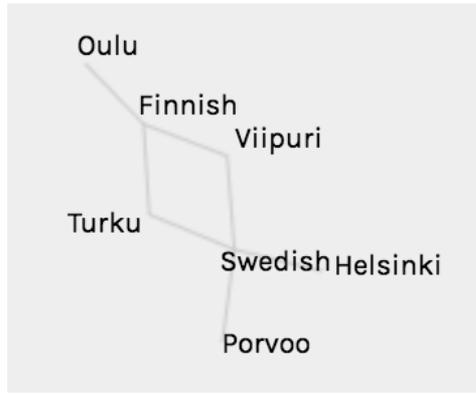
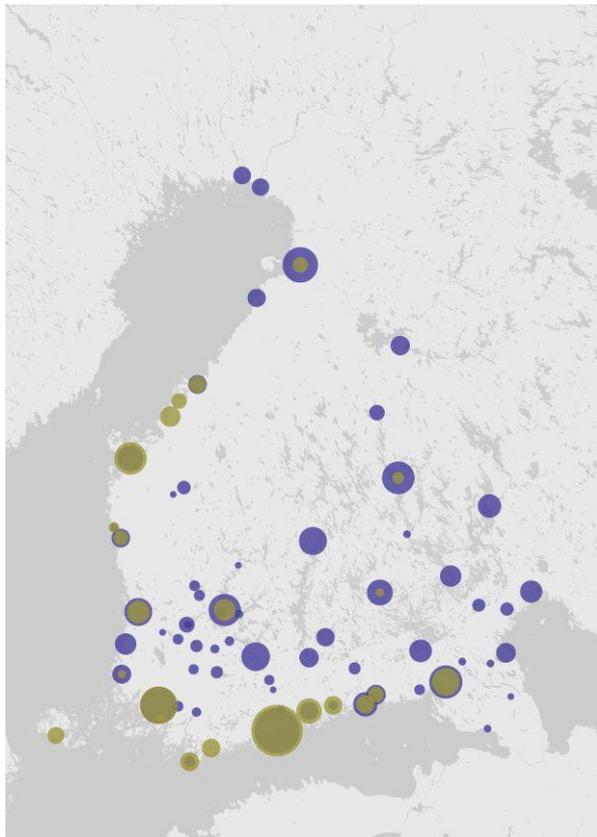
*Language relations and the birth of a Finnish-language public sphere*



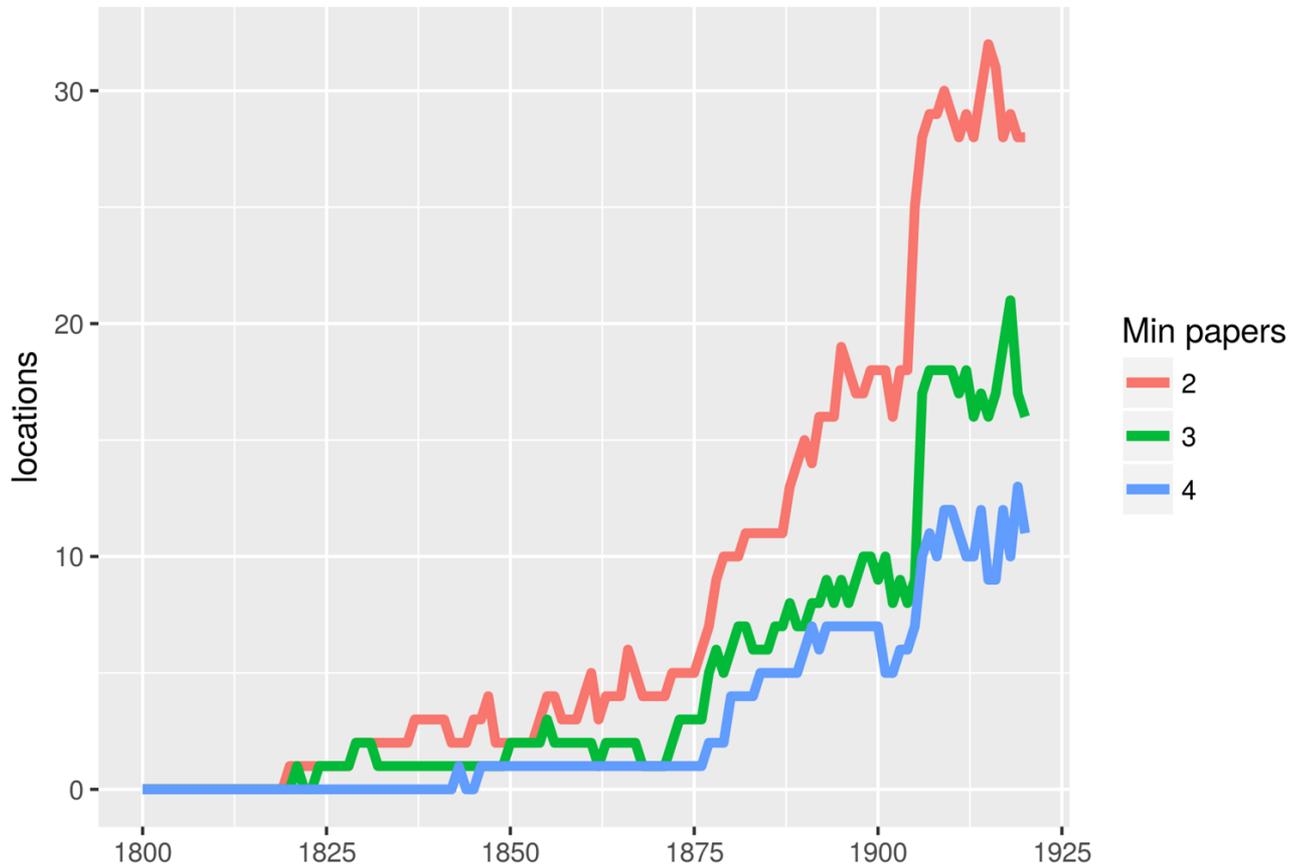
Words published in Finnish and Swedish language newspapers in Finland 1771-1905



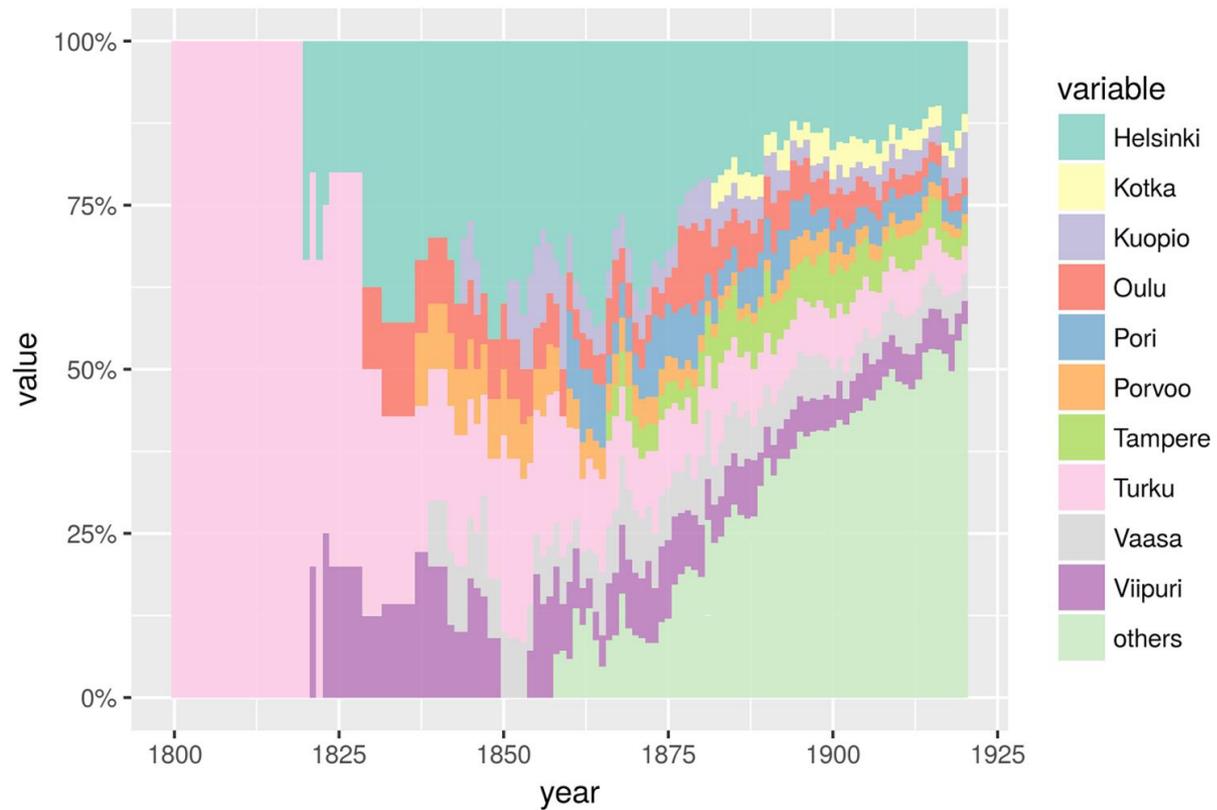
Circulation of newspapers per year according to language



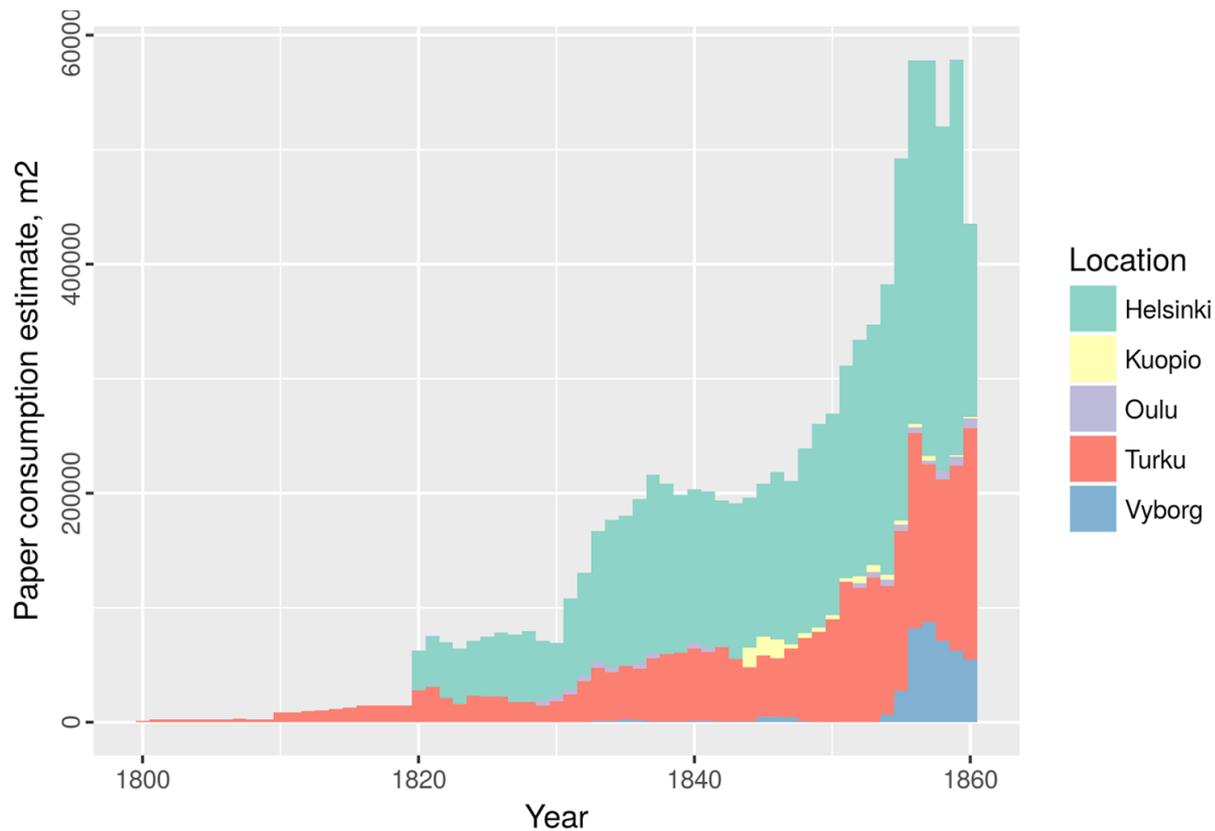
Map of newspapers published in Swedish and Finnish in 1920 & Network graphs of papers by publication place and language in 1837, 1867, 1900ish, and 1910-1920.



Number of locations in Finland with 2-4 newspaper



Share of published newspaper titles / city 1800-1920



Estimate of paper consumption in top cities 1800-1860 (based on page counts, publication frequencies and circulation data).

# Form, shape and size before matter

- Case of Finnish newspapers shows that a **partial separation of a Finnish and Swedish public sphere** took place as late as the early 1900s - before the emphasis has been particularly on the 1860s.
- The **dynamics between main publication places** matter: the dominance of Helsinki as capital and sole university town after 1828 affected the overall development of Finnish public discourse. Also the difference between book publishing and newspaper publishing makes a difference for smaller places in particular.
- **Anatomy of physical change in a newspaper**: It seems that for an individual newspaper growth followed these steps: words per page ratio grew, publishing became more frequent, paper size increased, amount of pages per issue grew (=the four-page paper was the most common newspaper for the whole period)