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Conference Paper proposal

Borders In Flux and Border Temporalities In and Beyond Europe
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(B) order-making, cross border transactions, and environment at the Russian-Finnish Border (early twentieth – early twenty first century).

Despite current securitization practices at Northwestern European borders as a response to resurgence of Russian neo-imperialism, they are still being challenged by human resourcefulness denying strict state regulations on border crossings. This makes the Russian-Finnish border an important subject for a historical study. While entanglements between environment, mobility infrastructures, and transborder controls have received ample scholarly attention, little research is focused on the Northern European transborder space and transborder infrastructure as a Soviet, and later Russian securitization object, and its actual reception by the local residents and the transborder travelers. Using documentary collections from the Leningrad Oblast State Archive, (LOGAV), the National Archives of the Republic of Karelia, recent press, interviews, and official sources, the paper compares (b) order- making patterns in early Soviet border controls, including smuggling, refugees and intelligence trafficking at the Soviet-Finnish border with the recent developments at the beginning of the twenty first century. While so much has changed in terms of border controls, mobility infrastructures, and border-crossing regulations, even now human resourcefulness, targeted against increasing state regulations in border crossings, plays out on the ground. Recently, as it happened in the 1920s, the Gulf of Finland Coast Guard District still uncovers organized criminal groups engaged in an international human trafficking as well as liqueur *smuggling* as it happened in the 1920s and early 1930s. Currently the border crossing points of the Russian- Finnish border, such as *Torfyanovka* (Leningrad region), and *Vyartsilya* (Republic of Karelia) are actively used for mass border crossings by the means of using forged medical doctors' appointments; yet again widespread networks assisting unauthorized border crossings have sprung. The major (but not only) difference is that environmental possibilities, so actively used by the smugglers and border crossers of various kinds a century earlier, are being replaced by forging documents for crossings through the official transborder channels.

I earned a Master's and then a Ph.D. degree in History of Central and Eastern Europe from Central European University (Budapest, Hungary), with the dissertation topic related to the case-study in social history of the Soviet Gulag in a North-Western Russian borderland (the Republic of Karelia). The research was supported by Gerda Henkel Stiftung program for young researchers and CEU overseas grant for Stanford University. Later I taught in several Russian and international higher education institutions, including Central European University, Hungary, National Research University Higher School of Economics, and Petrozavodsk State University.

In the course of the years 2020-2021 I've been enrolled as a research fellow at the Institute for Advanced Studies, New College Europe, Bucharest, Romania (<https://nec.ro/fellowships/current-fellows/>), and as a Global Digital Fellow, Council for European Studies (Columbia University), World Society Foundation (<https://councilforeuropeanstudies.org/wsf-writing-labs/>)

