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VOLUNTARY ASSOCIATIONS IN ESTONIA AND IN FINLAND FROM THE NINETEENTH CENTURY TO THE PRESENT TIME

I. Preface

During the last few years, international interest in Baltic studies, in comparative perspective, has been growing rapidly. The increasing number of publications and workshops dealing with the Baltic states as well as more frequent visits of foreign researchers to the Baltic countries are evidence of this interest.

There are special grounds for comparisons between Nordic and Baltic countries, as interesting similarities and differences could be found in the histories of both regions. These concern the dimension of national dominance vs. subordination in these regions in the 19th century (and later), the impact of the capitalist-class factors on social movements and on organizing ethnic and language divisions, and interrelations of civil society and political society (state).

Investigation of the voluntary associations as key structures of the civil society was regarded unimportant in the social sciences of Soviet Estonia. The research of the civil society of the independent period (1918—1940) was in disfavour, while it was surveys of the hobby and art societies of the socialist period that were ideologically patronized. In Finland, on the academical level, there was much more freedom for the investigation of the civil society and voluntary associations than there was in Estonia. This also explains the contemporary situation in research, where a comprehensive picture of the historical development of the voluntary associations in Estonia is incomplete. The material from the 19th century is comparatively more complete; yet the first decades of the 20th century have been examined somewhat less thoroughly, whereas the tendencies and development in the period between 1920 and 1940 has not found generalization until now.

It is actually surprising that only very few comparative sociological studies of both Estonia and Finland have appeared so far. This article is our first attempt at making comparisons between the development of voluntary associations in Estonia and Finland beginning with the 19th century up to the present. It is based on national research carried out in both countries. Later, this research will be incorporated into a larger research project on the respective formation of the nations as a totality of social processes and development of civil societies.

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II. What are voluntary associations and why is their comparative study necessary?

In Finnish and in Estonian, as well as in most other languages, there are several concepts for non-obligatory joining of more than two people (e. g. voluntary associations or organizations, societies, clubs, etc.). Furthermore, there are a number of words describing even less formal social groupings (group, gang, bunch, etc.). In this article, we undertook to concentrate on groupings of the first type known most generally as voluntary associations (*yhdistys, ühendus/selts, Verein, förening*, etc.). A voluntary association can be defined as a formation of three or more persons the objective of which is to advance some common interest of its members. In principle, a voluntary association is independent of the state; it is founded on a voluntary basis, and is economically non-profiteering. Thus, the concept of an association is tied to the concept of some interest, and is described by a more or less rational content.¹

As we know after Durkheim and other classics of sociology, voluntariness of social action is a complicated matter. The same holds true for its definition. It can be easily shown that most voluntary associations, for instance in the Nordic countries, are dependent in one way or another on the state, or that making money is an important element in many associations. Nonetheless, it is well grounded to say that voluntary associations of the kind of the above definition are one of the most important factors in the development of bourgeois democracies and nation states. On the other hand, they are among the first institutions to be destroyed or minimized under totalitarian rule as the case of Estonia, among many others, demonstrates.

Voluntary associations are social forms through which the relationships between individual citizens and a political system are organized and balanced. As voluntary associations are one of the core institutions of civil society, the relations between state (public sphere) and civil society (private sphere) can be conceptualized through examining the development of the system of voluntary associations. The borderline between state and civil society cannot be defined abstractly to cover all cases: it is conditioned and historically variably running within voluntary associations. Thus, the same association can be at one moment a part of private civil society and at another a part of state apparatus (e. g. state socialism or liberal corporatism).² Ambivalency of private anti-Soviet resistant idealism and of actively state-controlled voluntary association had been reality not only in Soviet Estonia.

The comparative study of the system of voluntary associations in neighbouring countries gives new objectives to the research. Estonians and Finns are kindred peoples who are related through the resemblance of languages and closeness of cultural development as well as through many other common features of their historical background. The role of the social movements and society activities in the development of both countries gives numerous examples of historical parallels as well as fosters more generic theoretical conclusions. Foreign rulers played an important part in shaping the economic and political life in both countries

¹ Siisiäinen, M. Four studies on voluntary associations. — Publications of the Department of Sociology, University of Jyväskylä, 1989, 44; Sills, D. Voluntary associations: sociological aspects. — In: Sills, D. (ed.). The International Encyclopedia of the Social Sciences, 16. The Free Press, New York, 363—379; Weber, M. Geschäftsbericht. — In: Verhandlungen des ersten deutschen Soziologentages vom 19.—22. Oktober. Tübingen, 1911.

² Siisiäinen, M. Intressit, yhdistyslaitos ja poliittisen järjestelmän vakaisuus. — Jyväskylä Studies in Education, Psychology and Social Research, 57. Jyväskylä, 1986.

under consideration. This is clearly reflected in the similarity of the earliest phases of the voluntary associations movement in Finland and in Estonia, which gave birth to the national consolidation in forming their own national states as opposed to the alien rule. Up to 1940, voluntary associations in these neighbouring countries developed on comparatively similar lines, with Estonia being somewhat slower and more one-sided in the process. But after WWII, and after the setting up of the Stalinistic totalitarian regime in annexed Estonia, vital differences arose in the logic behind the development of voluntary associations in Finland and in Estonia. Of course, the "mark" of the neighbourhood of the USSR and of Cold War was imposed on the existence of the Finnish societies, too, but it had not such tragic consequences as it had for Estonia where the very existence of the civil society was questionable. Yet, in those days the voluntary associations in Estonia did not entirely cease to exist, unlike in the majority of the other Soviet republics as well as in many of the East-European countries.³ However, the totalitarian state did attempt to take full command of the privately initiated activities. Only after the mid-1980s the social activities taken up by Estonians started getting back, step by step, some of the commensurability with the civil society in Finland, although certain special trends remained provisionally different.

III. Specific features in the development of voluntary associations in Estonia and in Finland

Although Estonian territory had factually been joined to the Russian Empire in 1710, there was the so-called Baltic special rule in power, and a deep nation-estate split existed between the nobility of Baltic-Germans and enserfed Estonian peasantry. This situation was practically reflected in a cardinal difference between voluntary societies established in Estonia by Baltic-Germans and their counterparts established by ethnic Estonians. In Estonia the start of the voluntary associations movement coincides in time (second half of the 18th century) with the similar processes in Northern and Central Europe; only in the Baltic the bearers of that mandate had been enlightenment-minded Baltic Germans. As to ethnic Estonians, among them the very beginning of this movement was less typical; the reasons were the following:

- 1) in serfdom, free initiative of Estonians was highly restricted, and thus their experience in the field of co-operative actions was rather limited;
- 2) the voluntary associations movement in Estonia had begun at a very early stage of social differentiation processes among Estonians, and it involved more active and more broad-minded men from the lower and lower middle classes at the time when no higher middle class of the Estonian society or the elite of the nation had emerged yet;
- 3) the coming into being of the voluntary associations movement had been accompanied in ethnic Estonians by a wish to copy a better (Baltic-German, in some sense Finnish) life style; but very soon this alien form had been filled with new content corresponding to Estonians' own necessities: voluntary associations movement became a breeding ground for national intelligentsia as well as an influential incentive for nation-building.

In the theories of civil society, starting with those of Marx, voluntary associations are considered to be antipodes of the state and, at the same

³ Introduction. — In: *Keane, J.* (ed.). *Civil Society and the State. New European Perspective.* Verso, London; New York, 1988, 2—3.

time, a complementary structure for state power.⁴ But in the case of Estonia there have been about thirteen decades of society movements, and only twenty plus one years of Estonian own state. This means that most of the time the system of voluntary associations of native Estonians has functioned separately from the states that existed on their territory. Society activities of Estonians had arisen before their class or political consciousness had taken shape, being strongly bound to the processes of nation-building and cultural resistance to foreign rulers. If ordinarily the setting up of the processes of nation- and state-building are synchronized and closely related to forming a system of voluntary associations, then in Estonia society activities were about half a century ahead of the establishing of the independent national state, and they continued to function even half a century after this state had been destroyed by the Soviet totalitarian regime. Maybe among the nations who had to live quite a long time under alien rule, Estonia is the case where the society activities became a substitute for the state ruling mechanisms inside the repressed nation. Such nations have a double-ruling system — on the one hand there are foreign authorities hated by indigenous population, and on the other hand there are heads of nation-wide social movements and associations, who are favoured as national leaders. In such cases the system of voluntary associations transforms its priorities to uphold national identity against the chauvinistic undertakings of foreign rulers. It was inside the voluntary associations system that the main national values serving as mechanisms conducive to endurance in historically uncertain circumstances could be found. This is one of the reasons why society activities and leaders of voluntary societies used to be so highly respected amongst Estonians.

Restrained by alien state authorities, nation-related ideals were carried out through the major society activities. This explains the expansive though one-sided dispositions involving mainly cultural orientation, as well as the profound anti-state attitudes of the Estonian intelligentsia, who formed the leadership in these society activities. The opposition between the state and the voluntary associations movement diminished significantly during the period of Estonian independence (1919—1940), when the demand for complementarity came into the foreground. Through voluntary associations the young Estonian state tried to develop such fields of social life for which it itself lacked resources. After the authoritarian take-over in 1934, the state endeavoured to achieve ideological control over voluntary associations: political plurality was abandoned, and even weak participation of societies had stopped. Following the occupation of Estonia in 1940, the local voluntary associations attempted to stick to openly anti-Soviet attitudes and to preserve national ideals, but those attitudes were quickly and ruthlessly suppressed. The new entirely totalitarian regime broke down all the organizational and material bases of previous voluntary associations, gradually creating a new strictly state-subordinated “voluntary” associations system, where there was no place for anything private and which actually consisted of quasi-voluntary counterparts to former associations.

From the early 1960s, the voluntary associations movement in Estonia began to gain strength, and it gradually picked up the position of the defender of national identity against the Soviets. The split between state-controlled (Soviet-minded) and private-initiated (Estonian-minded) associations became evident. The carrying ground for the Singing Revol-

⁴ *Bobbio, N.* Gramsci and the concept of civil society. — In: *Keane, J.* (ed.). *Civil Society and the State. New European Perspective.* Verso, London; New York, 1988, 81.

tion in Estonia in 1988—89 had mostly been laid out by the nation-orientated society activities. It was then that the new boom of voluntary associations movement started, becoming immediately connected with the restoring of civil society.

The impact of the capitalist-class structure on the organizing of people's interests into voluntary associations had been a major distinctive feature in Estonia, contrary to the situation in Finland. In Estonia, capitalist structures were still underdeveloped at the period of National Awakening (1860—1880) and, to a considerable extent in 1919—1940 as well. Then the ensuing Soviet period distorted the process, preventing the accomplishment of capitalism. It is a peculiarity of Estonia even today that a large majority of both industrial proletariat and managerial strata consist of non-Estonians, mostly Russians. This is the background why no proper movement of working-class voluntary associations and their corresponding organizational subculture developed in Estonia. Those organizations which were connected with the Communist Party and were officially presented as 'working-class organizations' fall outside the category of voluntary associations.

In Finland, the situation was quite different. Class factors have played a most central role from the turn of the 20th century on. Such was the case up to the 1970s; and there are still remnants of the organizational subculture of the working class to be found at the beginning of the 1990s. In contrast to Estonia, in Finland the adoption of international influences was also more strongly conditioned by inner class-based social structures.

Another important difference, particularly after the annexation of Estonia by the Soviet Union, has been the relationship between civil society/associations and the state. In Finland the development of welfare state has been speeded up by social protest movements and also by initiatives from voluntary associations. On the other hand, influential social movements and interest organizations have usually been incorporated in integral state through various processes of co-optation. In Finland, as well as in other Nordic countries, co-optation on the part of associations has been voluntary: associations have been given an accurately defined share in the division of power in return for their services in fulfilling certain tasks essential for the state. In contrast to this model of liberal corporatism, Estonian relationship between voluntary associations and the state has followed the principles of authoritarian corporatism. In Estonia, the exchange between state and voluntary associations has been dictated from above and ruthlessly enforced on associations.

There were some factors which facilitated the spreading of voluntary associations in Finland during the 19th century. Despite Finland being a part of Sweden up to 1809, and continuing to be under a foreign — Russian — rule from 1809 to 1917, conditions for forming associations had still been more favourable, as no serfdom had ever developed in Finland, and there was a certain freedom of action among the peasantry. People had also some experience in participating in elementary forms of government on a local level and in churches. Till the latter half of the 19th century, Finnish voluntary associations were led by national elite and intelligentsia. Relations between the interests of the national elite and Russia mediated also the ideological development of voluntary associations. Around the mid-19th century Finnish-speaking associations started to advance more rapidly than the Swedish-speaking ones functioning in the language of ruling classes. At the end of the 19th century, the repression by the Russian state started to threaten the interests of the Finnish bourgeoisie and dominant groups, which made the support from the common people necessary to the national project. Finnish national movements

and the voluntary associations resulting from them were state-oriented from the very beginning. This fact was accentuated by the central role of state-oriented intelligentsia in the associations. Likewise, this feature prevailed in independent Finland after 1917, for now the demands for social reforms were, in general, addressed to the state.

Around the Great Strike in 1905, workers' associations got rid of their bourgeois leadership, and formed their own system of associations. From 1905 to 1917, a rich system of voluntary associations developed in Finland, dividing toward the Civil War of 1918 into bourgeois and socialist organizational subcultures. Thus, it could be said that in Finland class tensions and interests had been reflected in the formation of voluntary associations before the Civil War. After the rightist political period, from the Civil War to the end of World War II, this development could go on. From 1944 to the sixties, all potentialities of Finnish class structure were utilized to form new associations. This is probably the most important difference as compared to Estonia, where the formation of opposition associations had been precluded by the state. In Finland, freedom of associations made it possible to create hegemonic projects based on the leadership in civil society and not on political forces as it was in Estonia. This makes still, in the 1990s, a great difference between Finland and Estonia: in Finland there are about 60,000—70,000 voluntary associations functioning as the basis of the democratic political system. In Estonia, these associations have to be partly founded yet, and the traditions making a democratic system have to be revived.

IV. Comparative periodization of the development of voluntary associations in Estonia and in Finland

The common factors of the political development of Finland and Estonia gave birth to certain similarities of the historical development of voluntary associations (see Table 1). Both countries have been incorporated by other states. In both countries the upper strata consisted of aliens. It is a typical fate of small borderline nations, who are always the objects of continuous economic, political, and ideological redivision between greater neighbours. Finns and Estonians were the only ones among the Balto-Finnic peoples who had had their own independent states. In the long path of historical development the privately-initiated voluntary associations as stable social structures played a noteworthy role.

ESTONIA

1918—1940

The waves of revolutionary events, interventions and strengthening of the free Republic of Estonia after the War of Independence brought along significant changes in voluntary associations movement in Estonia. Under Czarist Russia, the local authorities of the central government had absolute rights to allow or to forbid any social activities of native Estonians, while under the self-governing state there appeared an urgency to develop democratic legislation pertaining to voluntary associations. Parallel with fixing the rights and the duties of voluntary associations, their registration became obligatory, this made the dynamics of their existence publicly observable. In the independent Republic of Estonia voluntary associations remained a province of private initiative conducive

Comparative periodization of the development of voluntary associations
in Finland and Estonia

Period/Time	Finland	Estonia
Establishment of enlightened societies for high-class (Baltic-German, Swedish-speaking) intellectuals	Second part of the 18th century until the mid-19th century	
Establishment of romantic nation-centred societies and movements during Estonian/Finnish so-called Awakening Period	First half of the 19th century until 1880	1860—1880
Enlargement of the spectrum of voluntary associations as a reaction to the Russian Empire's Russification policy	1880—1905 strong	weak
The beginning of class struggle and the impact of the First Russian Revolution on the development of voluntary associations in the borderlands of Russia	1905—(1917)1918 strong	weak
Formation of new relationships between voluntary associations and independent national state	(1917)1918—1939	1918—1940
Voluntary associations during WWII	1939—1944	1941—1944
The impact of the supremacy of the Soviet Union as the winner of the War over society activities of the loser states	1945—1946 weak	1940—1941 and 1944—1988 strong
Complete realization of the potential of society activities under democratization	1945—1964	} 1988—1992
Continuous modernization and internationalization of the system of voluntary associations	1965—1992	

to satisfying citizens' special interests and needs. More often than not voluntary associations remained a province of private initiative conducive the necessary resources, e. g. local library societies, local choir and drama groups, vocational and adult education, charity, temperance, home defence, etc.; later, step by step, the Estonian state took over some of their functions. As a most distinguishing peculiarity of the young nation state, a comparatively strong patriotic bias of the societies should be pointed out. At the beginning of the '20s, youth organizations, along with student corporations, started their activities, followed by numerous women's and local cultural and educational societies, which all stressed the importance of working for homeland. At that time a number of (smaller) political parties came into being, yet this did not bring along substantial participation of the voluntary association movement. Besides, there developed quite a notably trade-union movement as well as workers' educational organizations, theatres, sports-clubs, etc. The cultural autonomy of the minorities in Estonia found its realization in more than 800 societies. The peak for society-making in Estonia was 1925—1933, when about 5,000 voluntary societies were simultaneously active. The establishment of all-

Estonian organizations' central bodies and their involvement in international associations fell to the same period. After the authoritarian takeover in 1934, the relationships between the state and voluntary associations cooled down, because after parties had been forbidden there was only place for rightist-nationalistic ideology even in societies. Only the daughter-organizations of the single allowed party *Isamaaliit* (Homeland League) were supported. Contradiction between authoritarian and democratic, the state and the voluntary associations grew considerably in the second half of the '30s.

1940—1956

Occupation and annexation of Estonia by the USSR in June 1940 was followed by a deeply authoritarian power. First of all totalitarian regime was interested in erasing the diversity of society as well as the people's historical memory. The state tended to command the whole private sphere. The systematic destruction of voluntary associations in Estonia began soon after the Soviet rule had been established:

— All military and defence organizations were shut down, the 1940/41 wave of repressions struck their membership very hard. Instead, the Union for Voluntary Subsidizing of the Army, the Air Forces and the Navy and the Committee for Peace Defence were established;

— All youth and student organizations were closed and forcibly substituted by all-Union unitary organizations — Young Pioneers, the Young Communist League — which actually fully succeeded in Estonia only after about 1950;

— Local cultural and educational societies (about 2,200) were closed and their property was nationalized. In wartime some houses of previous community and society centres were destroyed; now the remaining part of them was used to develop the Soviet-type state-ideological clubs system with political propaganda and amateur art activities prevailing;

— Most of the church-related societies were closed, their property was taken over, many clergymen were persecuted. Lutheran and Orthodox communities that survived lead a miserable life;

— Instead of previous professional societies and trade-union movements now an all-Union professional trade-union system was created, its first task was not to secure the rights of employees but to see to the sick-funds. Very limited tourism (also abroad) was co-ordinated and promoted through them, too;

— All charity societies were closed in 1940; instead of these local offices for all-Union Red Cross and also the Society of the Deaf and the Society of the Blind were founded;

— To stress the "scientific" nature of socialism, all three learned societies in Estonia remained untouched as organizations;

— All pre-war sports-clubs were abolished, and instead of these local structures of all-Union mass sport organizations were founded under Russian names (*Spartak*, *Dünamo*, *Kolhoosnik*, *Urožai*, *Lokomotiv*).

Yet, some components of the former voluntary associations movement (e. g. local cultural activities) survived throughout Stalinistic era, though they were submitted to the full control of the state (the so-called "controlled publicity"). Former traditions of Estonian spirit were also carried on by the national sport society *Kalev* founded in 1944.

Although a one-party communist system was established, in those years there was still some possibility for people to decide on which side they would stand — with the Communist Party or outside it. Not to belong to the party was a quiet but influential form of Estonians' protest

against occupiers. Gradually all permitted organizations (children's, youth's, women's, etc.) were absorbed by party sub-structures. Only some old fellows of student corporations, of old boys' and old girls' societies, pupils' ideal-groups, etc. gathered secretly, continuing to struggle against the Soviets.

1956—early 1970s

The rigidity of ideological supervision decreased with the softening of totalitarianism; so, under Russian "thaw" a kind of increase in citizens' initiative could be noted. When in the previous period the structure of voluntary associations in Estonia was operating mostly according to all-Union canons, according to the principle from up to down, then now voluntary associations were established mostly in two ways.

Firstly, social or professional groups interested in copying the all-Union structures under local names (e.g. the Union of Estonian Film-Makers) were formed, or just Estonian branches of already existing all-Union societies (e.g. Tallinn Department of the Society of Soviet Veterans of War) were founded. Twenty local branches of the All-Union Association of the Scientific-Technical Unions, as well as the same number of physicians' societies and units of the Society for Inventors and Rationalizers belonged to this groups. Often participation in these associations was really voluntary, as they had a non-political flavour.

Secondly, new voluntary associations not bound to the administration of Moscow were established (e.g. Commission for the Research of Estonian Native Places, 1958; Estonian Society for Conservation of Nature, 1966; Estonian Society of Hunters, 1967; etc.). Associations of this type formed the seeds for future developments. Together with the Society of Mother Tongue (1924) and the Estonian Horticultural and Apicultural Society (1949) they represented a kernel for preserving national identity.

Those years were very ambiguous for Estonia as well as for her voluntary associations movement. As the consequence of the end of Stalinistic class-struggle period coupled with some kind of democratization and a substantial increase in the standard of living, part of the Estonian population adopted the socialist world outlook. At the same time certain opportunities could be found to strengthen the anti-Soviet pro-nation moods inside the structures that kept formally apolitical views. Soviet power patronized education and culture as the tools of Soviet ideology, and in Estonia this situation and governmental endowments were used for saving national culture and national identity. Numerous elements of a civil society remained alive, though in a minimized form, in amateur art activities, adult and cultural education courses, hobby societies and those for protecting national landscapes and studying native places, academic societies and so on and so forth. Autochthonously developed voluntary associations dealt with the preservation of Estonian's historical memory, highly appraising the national territory and its landscapes, defending mother tongue, i.e. all that was in danger under the totalitarian regime. Estonian Song Festivals, that became the central point in demonstrating the nation's identity, were carried out by voluntary associations of national folk dance, choir music, and brass-band music. After the centenary anniversary festival in 1968 (the first festival of this kind had been held in Tartu in 1868), the events became openly anti-Soviet mass-demonstrations of Estonians despite all the official interpretations of these as appraisals of Soviet power.

Early 1970s—1988

These were the years of deepening stagnation and of serious attempts at the Russification in Estonia. Estonians' indifference to the Communist Party was even greater than previously; there were no longer doubts about whether to join it or not, to believe in communist ideals or not. The question was whether joining the Party could be supportive to one's career or profession (there were very strict rules as to who could and who could not be a member, with preference for working-class people). The supervising power of the party had seemingly increased, yet the ideal of the society lay in the full apolitization. Via voluntary association movement, this found reflection in the growing number of hobby clubs. There the politicized propaganda ceased to be effective, and the events transformed into occasions and get-togethers for families and youth. Only the paper-work and the accounts of these events written by the heads of these clubs, meant for the authorities, had pro-communist flavour. Folk and country music bands prevailed in the clubs. Typically, rather exclusive societies gathered in informal groups. For example, sometimes people who had visited a foreign country together, gathered for several times later on. Often people's homes or saunas, as private and closed locations, became places for informal society activities. As a reaction to the strengthening attacks from the central power as well as from the all-Union monopoly, several dissident groups were established (extensive public resonance had been received by those who wrote the so-called "Letter of the Forty" in 1980). The authorities endeavoured to suppress this kind of activity at all costs. The creation of new all-Union branches as well as locally initiated voluntary associations continued. As a new trend, some Moscow-established societies transformed themselves into Estonia-centred ones (e. g. The Estonian Book Society).

1988—1992⁵

A rapid increase of voluntary associations as well as mass movements was part of the culmination of Estonian freedom-fighting in 1988.

The activities of re-established student corporations as well as voluntary associations aiming at regaining historical memory — the nation's will to restore Estonian statehood — revived national ideals. It was the time when popular movements emerged parallel to the clear polarization amongst the supporters of democratic development and those against it (Popular Front of Estonia versus Intermovement). Soon voluntary associations for protecting the interests of demographic groups or professions came into being; the church and charity got back their places in society, and the national minorities got the ground for their aspirations for cultural autonomy. The restoration of civil society in Estonia had a firm basis but insufficient subjectivization; personification of the society coupled with the existent social differentiation caused relative one-sidedness in the development. Desovietization of previously-established voluntary associations took place in 1990—91: centralized mass sport organizations, the adult education system, etc. controlled by Tallinn split up and transformed into local sports, health, etc. clubs. All-Estonia formations began to give place to smaller and more concrete local ones. Organizations of children, youth and women patronized by the Communist Party desovietized in two steps: first, there were attempts to save the old structures by just giving them new names (e. g. the Estonian Children's Organization instead of Young Pioneer Organization); and then, contrary to the former, societies that had existed before WWII were re-established (e. g. Scouts organization).

⁵ *Aarelaid, A.* Seltsiliikumisest Eestis 1990-ndate aastate vahetusel. — In: *Eesti Kroonika* 1991. Estintel, Tallinn, in press.

Significant features of the restoration period of unions and societies, especially religious ones, dating back to the period before 1940, were their demands to get back the confiscated buildings and property that formerly belonged to the organizations to be restored; yet this involved redividing and privatizing that property, so the problem is still open.

The process of connecting Estonian voluntary associations with well-known international organizations of the same kind, from which they expected informative as well as material help, has been very stormy. It should be pointed out that in Estonia the ex-communist *nomenklatura* took the lead in forming these local analogues of international organizations (Lions Clubs, Zonta International, Round Table, etc.) while there actually was no class basis for their development.

Up to the announcement of the first elections of the State Assembly (Parliament) of Estonia in spring 1992, there were no signs of participation of the Estonian societies; however, during the pre-election campaign, several societies joined the election coalitions. The most serious reason against the participation of Estonian voluntary associations had been the obscure role of numerous little parties (with 100–200 members) in the transitional Estonian society where the class-based influential parties were in embryo yet and existing parties were just clubs of politicians.

The main tendencies of the development of voluntary associations and their number in Estonia in recent years are presented in Table 2.

Table 2

Voluntary associations in Estonia,
December 1991

Type of association	Number
Culture & education	377
Religion	280
Sport	152
Demographic group interests	151
Professionals	134
Hobby	130
Political movements & clubs	57
Health & charity	53
Foundations for developing Estonia	38
Defence	22
Total	1394

FINLAND

Before 1918

Even though some choirs of university and gymnasium students were already founded earlier, the first voluntary (or actually quasi-voluntary) associations in Finland were formed during the second half of the 18th century.⁶ At first, these associations were secret in character and “delimited to a narrow circle of people of social rank.”⁷ At the end of the 18th and at the beginning of the 19th centuries, some reading and music societies, also economic organizations were formed. From 1809 to 1830, at the beginning of Russian rule, quite a number of Bible and Evangelical societies were established. Their function was intended to be serving as civilizing and mediating semi-official agencies.⁸ During the period between 1831 and 1860, first corner-stones of a basis for a new bourgeois civil society in a nationalist spirit were set. First nationalist cultural organizations were

⁶ Klinge, M. *Ylioppilaskunnan historia* 1–4. — Helsingin yliopiston ylioppilaskunta ja Gaudeamus. Helsinki, 1978; Stenius, H. *Frivilligt, jämlikt, samfällt*. Föreningsväsendets utveckling i Finland fram till 1900-talets början med speciell hänsyn till mass-organisationsprincipens genombrott. — Skrifter utgivna av Svenska Literatursällskapet i Finland, 454. Ekenäs, 1987.

⁷ Stenius, H. *Frivilligt, jämlikt, samfällt*, 375.

⁸ Stenius, H. *Frivilligt, jämlikt, samfällt*, 376–377; Siisiäinen, M. Four studies on voluntary associations.

Registration of different types of voluntary associations in Finland 1919—1989*

Type of association	1919—1944		1945—1964		1965—1979		1980—1989		1919—1989	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Political	5,965	21	11,535	26	9,120	27	2,920	13	29,540	23
Economic & profess.	8,955	31	13,575	31	9,465	28	4,860	22	36,855	29
Social welfare	1,475	5	2,060	5	2,140	6	156	7	7,242	6
Culture & education	1,865	7	4,235	10	3,275	10	4,070	18	13,445	10
Sports	2,395	8	3,580	8	2,685	8	3,686	16	12,346	10
Other hobbies	2,830	10	4,360	10	4,255	12	3,233	14	14,678	11
Religion & conviction	1,055	4	845	2	660	2	499	2	3,059	2
War & peace	2,695	9	1,060	2	1,330	4	344	2	5,429	4
International	30	0.1	900	2	360	1	454	2	1,744	1
Other	1,415	5	1,670	4	1,045	3	799	3	4,929	4
Total	28,680	100	4,382	100	34,335	100	22,432	100	129,267	100
Associations/year	1,103		2,200		2,300		2,243		1,821	

* The data used here consist of a unique statistics of the Finnish Official Register of Associations. This register has information on all registered associations since the Act on Associations from 1919.

founded, and this was related to the intensification of the language strife between Finnish and Swedish nationalist movements in the 1860s and 1870s. The period 1881—1905 was dominated by the so-called Fennoman Nationalist Movement, and this was a time of a break-through for mass-based organizations in Finland. This was the first time when the economic and political interests of the Finnish bourgeoisie were really endangered by Russian imperialistic tendencies. The support from the masses could be obtained only through raising the level of their national consciousness. Therefore, new media connecting separate parts and social groups in a sparsely inhabited country were needed. Of course, the formation of new interest associations had to have a basis in the social problems faced by the growing working class in towns and in the countryside, and by the farmers. Different combinations of these three factors (class structure and conflicts, international relations and hegemonic projects of the ruling groups) are the main dimensions in an analysis of the reasons for deep changes in the system of Finnish associations.

During this period, foundations for Finnish newspapers, the school system and adult education were established or advanced further from the basis formed during the previous periods, and so new means to raise national consciousness were created. The most important of them was the founding of mass-based voluntary associations by a bourgeois and intellectual leadership. They created most of the present types of mass-based voluntary associations — socialist workers' movement and trade unions, youth associations, Martta-associations (a women's organization), voluntary fire brigades, religious associations, farmers' organizations, temperance societies, sports clubs and bourgeois political organizations.⁹

At the end of this period, the system of voluntary associations began to differentiate more clearly on the basis of capitalist class structure. It was around the Great Strike that people could, in practice, quite freely found new voluntary associations even though it still was officially subject to licence. Workers' associations got rid of bourgeois dominance. After the Great Strike of 1905, this net of associations polarized according to class strata. The spreading of associations was surprisingly quick. In a country with 2.7 million people in 1900, thousands of voluntary associations were founded all over the country. In 1916 there were 1,625 active Social Democratic Party associations (with 72,691 members), 935 (in 1915) Youth Associations (48,263 members), 555 sports clubs (38,154 members), 235 Martta-associations (16,874 members). To mention some biggest organizations, temperance societies had by then about 30,000 registered members; the membership of farmers' organizations was about 55,000 and that of co-operatives about 35,000.¹⁰

During the period of independence

The development culminated in the Civil War of 1918, a couple of months after the Declaration of Independence from Russia. Both the 'Reds' and the 'Whites' recruited their military forces from voluntary civil associations: the 'Reds' from the socialist party organizations, trade unions and workers' sports clubs; the 'Whites' from bourgeois political organizations, Youth Societies, voluntary fire brigades and from farmers' economic-interest organizations.

Table 3 shows the development of the system of voluntary associations in Finland from the Civil War to the end of the 1980s.

⁹ *Siisiäinen, M.* Kansallisen kulttuurin nousu ja maaseutu. Tutkimus Pohjois-Karjalan henkisen kulttuurin organisoitumisesta vuosina 1860—1918. — Joensuun korkeakoulu, Karjalan tutkimuslaitoksen julkaisuja, 1979, 40; *Stenius, H.* Frivilligt, jämlikt, samfällt.
¹⁰ *Halila, P., Sirmeikkö, P.* Suomen Voimistelu- ja Urheiluliitto 1900—1960. SVUL, Helsinki, 1960, 260; *Haltia, M.* Marttatoiminta 1899—1949. Helsinki, 1949, 142; *Stenius, H.* Frivilligt, jämlikt, samfällt, 51; *Siisiäinen, M.* Four studies on voluntary associations, 9.

1918—1940

Years from the Civil War to 1944 were dominated by the sequel of the war and, interrelated with it, hostile relations with Russia/the Soviet Union. Organizations of the defeated were mostly abolished, and on the victorious bourgeois side on the one hand and military and defence organizations and associations specialized in social integration on the other, were important during this period. The years around the turn of the 1930s witnessed the rise of semi-fascist protest movements and associations resulting from them. These fascist tendencies coupled with the abolition of leftist associations, were a sign of a set-back in the development of democratic civil society based on consensus. During World War II, 45% of new associations could be characterized as military or defensive. Activities of many other associations were also directed towards supporting war efforts.

1945—1965

During 1945—1964, the development of civil society retarded by semi-fascist and extreme rightist tendencies, could start again. After the war, it was the turn of those associations defined as 'fascist' by the winners of the war to be abolished.¹¹ However, the members of these associations could found new ones, only excepting openly fascist organizations. In 1945—46, plenty of (extreme) leftist associations were founded to continue activities of those abolished in the 1920s and 1930s. For a little while relations of power were balanced between the forces supporting the People's Front strategies and those aiming at a political coalition based on bourgeois forces. After 1946, bourgeois forces got the upper hand, and the share of non-leftist associations started to increase. It was only during this period that the development of a 'ripe' bourgeois civil society based on the functioning of voluntary associations took shape. Thus, the development of a civil society based on voluntariness that was started during the national movement at the turn of the century could not continue in all directions until now.

1965—1979

The modern system of voluntary associations was accomplished during the period 1965—1979. Urbanization, reduction of the population working in agriculture, and an increase in the number of students were factors behind changes in the formation of associations. As Table 3 shows, this period was highly politicized. The radical protest movement was a central force in the formation of more than 9,100 new political societies. Also many new youth organizations (over 3,200 youth associations in 1970, 57% of these party political ones) were established. During this period many international currents spread more widely in Finland, such as Lions and Rotary clubs, societies for new kinds of sports, for example judo, karate, American football, etc. Also non-Christian religious movements made their invasion of Finland during this spiritually liberal period.

1980—1992

Since the 1970s, a number of important parallel changes in the development of voluntary associations has taken place. Firstly the share of political associations has rapidly decreased, which, on the one hand, is a consequence of an over-crowdedness of the party sector, on the other hand,

¹¹ In the 1920s and 1930s about 3,200 leftist associations were banned, after World War II about 2,900 rightist associations.

a symptom of a general crisis of party politics. Also the share of associations advancing economic and professional interests diminished in the 1980s. It is interesting that all of those types of associations which have increased their share have something to do with issues connected with the way of quality of life of individuals. This process has been called 'silent revolution' by Inglehart referring to the increase of 'soft' values as compared to 'hard' ones, especially among younger generation which has been brought up in prosperity.¹² This idea gets support from the development of new social movements arising from questions concerning the quality of life (conservation of nature, zero growth interests, anti-nuclear power movements, etc.) and milieu associations in Finland. Several hobby associations of importance belong more or less directly to this type: camping and sailing, fishing and hunting, sports and jogging, pet clubs and cultural associations.

In this respect the contrast with Estonian developments is striking. In Estonia as well as in other previous Soviet republics, new social movements are rising from a very different soil. Their relationship, for example, with the demand of zero growth is therefore very different. In Finland new features in the system of voluntary associations in the 1980s are, most probably, connected with the end of an industrial-national project and are anticipating the future development of a new project which, however, cannot yet be discerned. In Estonia the conditions for the development of a modern industrial-national project in the system of voluntary associations have still, to a large extent, to be created.

V. Some preliminary generalizations

Comparison of different societies is methodologically difficult, and it is hard to guarantee unambiguity of the results.¹³ Sociological-historical comparison of Estonia and Finland is complicated, especially because of the first-glance affinities emerging from the similarity of their languages and history before World War II, and it is only after scrupulous analyses that the differences emerge. Comparing the voluntary associations movement in both countries we initially looked for and found out the same trends of development and only after getting more deeply involved in the matter we could conclude that the development of statehood in our neighbouring countries is in its real context fairly unlike each other and is expressed in principally different roles of voluntary associations movement in Estonian and Finnish societies.

Political state in Estonia has had lesser meaning and has been less developed than in Finland. Accordingly, its opposite — the civic state — had more restricted ambitions. In Estonia the voluntary associations movement is less bound to the struggle for class hegemony and expresses first and foremost the cultural and educational needs of ethnic Estonians. It is explicable by the situation where under the various alien rulers and unstable statehood the civil society was primarily aimed at keeping the wholeness of the nation and the protection of the interests of certain social groups were only of secondary concern. Cultural and educational societies in Estonia were those social institutions by whom the economic

¹² *Inglehart, R.* The silent revolution in Europe: Intergenerational change in post-industrial societies. — *American Political Science Review*, 1971, 65, 4, 991—1017.

¹³ *Oyen, E.* The imperfection of comparisons. — In: *Oyen, E.* (ed.). *Comparative Methodology. Theory and Practice in International Social Research.* SAGE Publications, London; Newbury Park; New Delhi, 1990, 1—3.

and ideological hegemony was taken over from alien rulers non-violently, step by step. The restoration of civil society began in 1988 from the activity of cultural societies. This makes Estonia different from the East-European countries (in Hungary economic, in Poland socio-political and in Czechoslovakia civil rights aspirations dominated).¹⁴

In Finland the development of civil society has been less dramatical. The number of voluntary associations has increased all the time. The most important changes are the crisis of class-based organizing and the increasing importance of new cultural associations in the 1980s and 1990s.

¹⁴ *Attila, A.* The "Triange Model" of society and beyond. — In: *Katus, J., Tóth, J.* (eds.). On the Role of Voluntary Associations in the Culture. ESVA, 1990.

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SELTSILIIKUMINE EESTIS JA SOOMES 19. SAJANDIST KUNI NÜÜDISAJANI

Käesolev artikkel on esimene katse kõrvutada seltsiliikumise ajaloolisi tendentse kahe naabermaa — Eesti ja Soome — puhul. Eriti Eesti-poolse andmebaasi puudulikku tõttu on üldistused üsnagi arglikud. Põhitähelepanu on pööratud riigi ja kodanikualgatuslike liikumiste vahekordade ajaloolis-sotsioloogilisele analüüsile. Kuigi esmapilgul on Eesti ja Soome seltsiliikumise ajaloos palju ühisjooni, siis süvenemisel hakkavad domineerima erisused, mis on seletatavad eelkõige omariikluse väljakujunemise erineva tempo ja suundumusega.

Palju on ühist seltsiliikumise varastes etappides, mil mõlema maa seltside eesotsas seisev valgustusliku mõttelaadiga, vormumisjärgus rahvusintelligents oli mõjustatud üle-euroopalisest rahvusromantilisest õhustikust ja iseseisvumpürgimustest. Eesti tsiviilühiskonna nõrgem arengupotentsiaal hakkas ilmema juba eelmise sajandi lõpukümneil, mil siin domineeris kitsalt hariduslik seltsitegevus, Soomes aga etendasid seltsid juhtivat osa ühiskonna klassiteadvusliku struktuuri kujunemisel. Eesti seltsiliikumise nõrgem spurt on seletatav endise pärisorjusliku ja baltisakslaste poolt tugevalt «hooldatud» talupoegkonna vähese poliitilise eneseteadvusega. Soome vabadel talupoegadel olid samaks ajaks olemas algsed omavalitsusliku ja parlamentaarse töö kogemused.

Riikliku iseseisvuse saavutamisel 1917.—1918. aasta sündmuste järel oli seltsiliikumise roll mõlemas ühiskonnas erinev. Et Soomes olid kodanikualgatuslike liikumiste parteistumine ja tööliikumine omandanud 20. sajandi algul ulatuslikud mõõtmed, sai võimalikuks ka 1918. aasta klassisõjajärgne parempoolne reaktsioon, mis oluliselt pidurdas vasakpoolse suunitlusega seltsiliikumist ning piiras ühiskonna demokraatlikku arengut. Iseseisvunud Eestis seevastu püüdis seltsiliikumine leida võimalikult laia sotsiaalset baasi ja oli esialgu demokraatlike traditsioonide kujunemise taimelava. Tsiviilühiskonna ambitsioonide kärpimine algas meil alles 1934. aasta riigipöörde järel, kui hakkas kasvama parempoolse ja autoritaarse riigi ülevõim demokraatliku kodanikualgatusle üle.

Printsipaalselt erinevaid teid läheb kahe maa seltsiliikumine Teise maailmasõja järgsel perioodil, kui on alust rääkida totaliseeruvast eesti ühiskonnast ja süvenevast demokratiiseeruvast soome ühiskonnast. Nõukogulik nn. kontrollitud ühiskonnas oli kodanikualgatuslikkusele riigi poolt ette nähtud üksnes näilikk demokraatiat väljendav statistikoht. Tänu oma ajaloolistele seltsitraditsioonidele kasutasid eestlased need minimaalõedki võimalused maksimaalselt ära. Alates «sula» perioodist 1950-ndate lõpul algas Eestis seltsiliikumise uus tõus ning seltsidest kujunesid sovetlust taunivate eestlaste vaimse vastupanuliikumise olulised institutsioonid (Looduskaitse Selts, Aianduse ja Mesinduse Selts, kodu-uurimiskomisjonid, Eesti Muinsuskaitse Selts jt.). Samal ajal liikus Soome avatud heaoluühiskonna poole, kus kõige erinevamate vabatahtlike ühenduste rolliks oli sotsiaalse protesti väljendamine ja selle kaudu riigi juhtimine konkreetsetele sotsiaalsetele

gruppidele vastuvõetavas arengusuunas, ent samas süvenes ka alt tuleva kodanikuinitsiatiivi ja riigi omavaheline koostöö.

1960. aastate teisest poolest algas Soomes seltsitegevuse moderniseerumine ja ulatuslik rahvusvahelisse koostöövõrku lülitumine. Eestis täheldame samal perioodil liitumist uute üleliiduliste ehk ülalt loodud organisatsioonidega (mitmed professionaalseltsid, Raamatühing jms.), aga ka kohalike seltside irdumist tsentraalideoloogiseeritud nõudmistest ning omaalgatuslikkuse kasvu.

Uueks etapiks Eesti tsiviilühiskonna arengus sai laulev revolutsioon ja sellega kaasnenud seltsitegevuse hiiglaslik hoogustumine. Vähem kui kolme aastaga on seltsilikumise struktuur põhilikult muutunud, eelkõige endiste ühenduste detsentraliseerimise, okupatsioonielsete ühenduste taaselustamise ja kaasaegsete rahvusvaheliste assotsiatsioonidega liitumise kaudu. Täpsete registrite puudumise tõttu on praeguste kodanike vabatahtlike ühenduste arv Eestis umbkaudset hinnatav vähemalt 2000-le, Soomes on neid aga kuni 70 000. Proportsionaalselt elanikkonda arvestades on see näitaja Soomes kuni seitse korda suurem. Seega ei ole Eestis ühiskonna tegelikku demokratiseerituse astet näitav kodanikualgatuslike ühenduste struktuur veel kaugeltki oma arengupotentsiaali realiseerinud.

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ДОБРОВОЛЬНЫЕ ОБЩЕСТВА В ЭСТОНИИ И ФИНЛЯНДИИ (ВТОРАЯ ПОЛОВИНА XIX ВЕКА ДО НАШИХ ДНЕЙ)

В статье впервые предпринята попытка сопоставить движение добровольных обществ в двух соседних странах. Дается периодизация и сравнительное описание деятельности обществ в отдельные периоды. История возникновения и развития добровольных обществ в обеих странах на первый взгляд представляется схожей. На самом же деле логика их функционирования в корне иная. Причина кроется в совершенно разных взаимосвязях государства и гражданского общества. Слабая государственность в Эстонии и сравнительно невысокий уровень политического самосознания ее граждан предопределили и характер добровольных обществ — в основном культурно-просветительный. В Финляндии же, в стране более развитой государственности, система добровольных обществ сформирована на классово-политической основе.