

PANEL OVERVIEW ABSTRACT

For the Eight International Conference of the International Society for Third Sector Research (ISTR) and Second EMES-ISTR European Conference in Partnership with the CINEFOGO Network of Excellence

TRANSFORMATIONS OF THE NORDIC THIRD SECTOR

Organised by Anne Kovalainen & Miikka Pyykkönen

This panel aims for comparative research about the Third Sector and explores its relationship to welfare society, especially at the Nordic countries. The panel promotes the exchange of ideas and research findings across the Nordic countries and beyond them. The exchange of ideas and research findings extend from the present ongoing transformations of the public sector, to more theoretical notions of changes within the civil society in general.

The recent changes in the Nordic countries' third sector have been several: in Sweden, third sector associations increase and concentrate more on public services – thus providing new solutions for welfare society, rather than representing ideologies and interests of particular social groups in welfare society. According to some recent research, this is the case in other Nordic countries too. The restructuring of the welfare state, the introduction of quasi-markets and split in purchaser-provider –model have all drawn attention towards third sector. Simultaneously, the trademarks of civil society, such as voluntarism and voluntary organizations have taken a larger role in the practices of organizing the welfare state.

This development intertwines with the introduction of new organizational forms and ways of governing such organizations, such as social enterprises and management by results. Simultaneous trend in Finland is that local fields of voluntary associations are consisting more and more of organizations which are established to serve small group of people in their leisure time hobbies, and these associations do not relate to political ideologies, social or economic issues as much as they did in the 1970's and 1980's, for instance. Some researchers have even suggested that the third sector is splitting into two modes: (a) service providing and semi-enterprise-like organizations, and (b) small scale leisure and ideological associations. (Lundström & Wijkström 1995; Pyykkönen 2007; Siisiäinen 2003.) The transformation of public sector has integrally gender dimension: at the public sector, women constitute majority of paid employment, and it is the transformation of public services into private ones, that changes the gendered positions of the service provisioning in all Nordic countries, irrespective of which mode of third sector is being discussed.

These interrelated perspectives are crucial for the panel. In addition to outlining the picture of recent trends in Nordic civil societies, and their relationship to Nordic model, the presentations of the panel concentrate on following questions: How have the governance of third sector and third sector organizations changed and developed recently? What new kinds of forms of organizations and actions have emerged into the third sector

fields? What do these recent changes mean for the role of third sector in securing the sustainable social development? How do these recent changes in organizational structures and third sector trends influence on accumulation of social capital and struggles over it? Is the role of voluntary work increasing or decreasing in this situation, where also the third sector organizations are evaluated by their social and economic results – according to the market values? What are the main differences and similarities in the third sector development between Nordic countries? What is the relationship between recent changes of the third sector to welfare state development? How do Nordic civil societies differ from the development of civil societies in Europe in general?

Panel will consist of three presentations that all valorize the various aspects put forward above. The presenters and the titles for papers presented in the panel are:

Martti Siisiäinen and Raimo Blom: Finnish voluntary associations in the Nordic context

Miikka Pyykkönen: From community organizations to private businesses? Social enterprises as locomotives of transformation of third sector

Elisabeth Sundin and Anne Kovalainen: The transforming Nordic welfare services – voluntary, skilled and marketable: what happens for women's work?

FINNISH VOLUNTARY ASSOCIATIONS IN THE NORDIC CONTEXT

Martti Siisiäinen & Raimo Blom

Nordic countries can be characterized by close (neocorporatist) mutual relations with the state in which the state is both the target of reform proposals and demands and a potential supporter of association initiatives, and thereby, on the second level, an inclusionary integrator of associations. At the same, the Nordic states guarantee a relatively large democratic and free space for associations to act in ways of their own choice. At its best citizens are aware of the existence of a relatively well functioning system of voluntary associations (Vereinswesen) that is capable of mediating citizens influence on the state and getting reforms done in the welfare system. The state is relatively strong and open at the same time creating channels for real associational influence and the awareness for citizens about the availability of this option. This is a cornerstone of the Nordic mutual dialectics between the associations and the state and of the capability of the state to take care of many of the issues articulated in the civil society.

Finland, without any doubt, belongs to the category of the Nordic countries concerning state – civil society relations (about typologizing, see Schoefer & Fourcade-Counrinhas 2001). It has a strong and open state and a wide and efficiently functioning Vereinswesen. Finland is among those countries with the highest number of association memberships per citizen (see Morales 2001; Baer 2007; Siisiäinen 2007). International comparisons also reveal the fact that Finns are, most probably, people who have concentrated their trusting on formal voluntary associations more exclusively than citizens in any other country (Siisiäinen 2007). Finns have many association memberships in average and proportionately more voluntary associations per population than any other country (especially outside Scandinavia). But on the other hand, Finns are not as active as volunteering association members, as volunteers in general or in more informal networks (social life with workmates, relatives or neighbors) as their fellow citizens in other Nordic countries or in many other European countries (e.g. Wallace 2005; Baer 2007; Blom & Siisiäinen 2007). On the other hand, Finns are very active in mobile phone and e-mail communications.

The paper examines the general characteristics and the “uniqueness” of the Finnish system of voluntary associations in comparison with the most similar countries, the other Nordic countries: historical development and differentiation, memberships, volunteering. The main question to be answered in the paper is: what are the main factors behind these features. The paper uses both synchronic and diachronic analysis: first, it examines the state of the Vereinswesen at present and its social and economic bases; second, it purports to search for the historical roots of some of the most conspicuous features in Finnish history (realism, dominance of the form of the registered association, close state – civil society relations, avoidance of “anarchy” and belief in the value of being organized formally).

References

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- Morales, Laura. 2001. Citizens in polities: the individual and contextual determinants of political membership in Western countries. Madrid: Instituto Juan March de Estudios e Investigaciones. Working Paper 2001/164.
- Siisiäinen, Martti Differentia specifica of voluntary organizing in Finland. In: Annamari Konttinen (ed.) Political Participation in Finland (forthcoming 2008).
- Wallace, Claire. 2005. Trends in Social Capital in the EU. Aberdeen: University of Aberdeen.

To be presented in the Panel:

TRANSFORMATIONS OF THE NORDIC THIRD SECTOR

chaired by Anne Kovalainen and Miikka Pyykkönen

FROM COMMUNITY ORGANISATIONS TO PRIVATE BUSINESSES? Social enterprises as locomotives of transformation of third sector

Pyykkönen, Miikka

The recent changes in the Nordic countries' third sector have been several: in Sweden, third sector associations increase and concentrate more on public services rather than representing ideologies and interests of particular social group. According to some recent research, this is the case in other Nordic countries too. The restructuring of the welfare state, the introduction of quasi-markets and split in purchaser-provider –model have all drawn attention towards third sector. Simultaneously, the trademarks of civil society, such as voluntarism and voluntary organizations have taken a larger role in the practices of organizing the welfare state.

This development has intertwined with the introduction of new organizational forms and ways of governing such organizations, such as social enterprises and management by results. Simultaneous trend in Finland is that local fields of voluntary associations are consisting more and more of organizations which are established to serve small group of people in their leisure time hobbies, and do not relate to political ideologies, social or economic issues as much as they did in the 1970's and 1980's, for instance. Some researchers have even suggested that the third sector is splitting into two modes: (a) service providing and semi-enterprise-like organizations, and (b) small scale leisure and ideological associations. (Lundström & Wijkström 1995; Pyykkönen 2007; Siisiäinen 2003.)

In my paper I concentrate on the recent changes in the ways of understanding the forms and management of third sector organisations. I use mainly examples from Finland, but refer to other Nordic countries, too. Especially focus is on the so called new third sector, i.e. social firms and institutionalized civic organisations producing welfare and employment services.

The main research problem of the presentation is, what do the appearance of New Public Management doctrine and managerialistic business management orientation in the field of production of welfare services mean for the non-profit and semi-profit (e.g. social firms) organisations? The sub-questions are, (i) how do social and economic expectations and goals bind together in social enterprises, and (ii) what do the step towards business oriented activity require from the self-comprehensions and everyday practices of former non-profit organisations?

The first part of the presentation deals with the re-significations of the third sector deriving from recent structural changes and discussions of welfare policy strategies. After this I focus on which kinds of pressures these structural and discursive changes create for the third sector organisations. I draw a close-up of these pressures by analysing five cases of Finnish social firms, which all used to be non-profit organisations. Theoretical and analytical perspective of the presentation comes from the critical management studies and Foucauldian analysis of the advanced or neo-liberalism. I problematize the application of ways of organisational management in third sector coming from the private sector and analyse how these organisational changes can be as signs of emergence and implementation of neoliberal techniques and rationalities of government.

Panel: TRANSFORMATIONS OF THE NORDIC THIRD SECTOR chaired by Anne Kovalainen and Miikka Pyykkönen

TRANSFORMING NORDIC WELFARE SERVICES – VOLUNTARY, SKILLED AND MARKETABLE: WHAT HAPPENS FOR WOMEN’S WORK?

Anne Kovalainen & Elisabeth Sundin

In this paper our aim is to widen the discussion of the ‘traditional’ third sector analysis and bring forward the questions of transformation of the welfare society, gendered work as integral part of welfare society and new third sector development at the welfare services. We aim to bring the analysis closer to the recent developments of the public sector in the Nordic countries: development of the purchaser-provider –split of the welfare services, the role and positions of the voluntary organizations and third sector organizations that have transformed, both by the role given to them in the public discussions, and by their own position. Closely linked to this, the private provision of services is related to the changing position of women at the public sector labour markets. The crucial questions of power, dominance, or indeed of dependence and vulnerability are being left aside in most of the literature that deals with the restructuring of the welfare services.

It is interesting, at least from welfare state policy perspectives, to notice that total employment in the sectors with highest growth rates has grown: health and social work at large accounted for a third of employment in 2003 in Finland and Norway and even more in Sweden. The growth in health and social care has taken place in high skilled jobs. But the ways of performing the work and the organizing principles have changed, and our interest relates to the differing ways of organizing the work around the welfare services in Nordic countries. The transformation concerns the gendered work within the welfare state, work that to large extent can be labelled as women’s work. With the introduction of quasi-market ideology to the public sector service provision, extending from health and social care, cleaning work to library service work, the labour market position of women has been changed. The direction of the changes is from the public sector employer to a new one in the private sector. Sometimes the changes mean a move from paid employment to self-employment or employer positions. While this change seemingly carries the traditional notions of entrepreneurship, such as freedom, it does in practice include usually the deterioration of work conditions, work contracts, social security and protection. What implications does this development have for women? We argue, with the help of case study material from several Nordic countries, that not only women’s work position is about to deteriorate within the Nordic welfare state system, but also their social class position has changed with the new transformations of jobs. We will use especially both Swedish and Finnish examples here to demonstrate the complex relationship between welfare society, voluntary and private sectors of care, and their relationship to strong gendered welfare society and women’s work.

To be presented at

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