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FINNISH CONSUMPTION

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An Emerging Consumer Society
between East and West

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Visa Heinonen and Matti Peltonen
Helsinki, November 2013

Helsinki Worker's
Motorist Club's members
gathered around a new
Triumph motorcycle
in Hakaniemi, Helsinki,
in 1952. Photographer
Yrjö Lintunen (Kansan
Arkisto).





INTRODUCTION: THE FORMATION OF THE FINNISH TYPE OF CONSUMER SOCIETY BETWEEN THE EAST AND THE WEST, THE 1950S AND 1960S

Visa Heinonen

INTRODUCTION

After the Second World War, Finland experienced very rapid social structural change and urbanization especially during the 1960s. Modern conveniences like running water and an indoor toilet became everyday necessities to many Finnish households. The standard of living rose rapidly. Following the international trend, increasing individualism proceeded slowly and was related to the rising commercial culture. Especially from the 1960s onwards, phenomena like advertising and fashion became important arenas where the popular culture flourished. What were the special features of the transition process of the Finnish consumer society? How did the Finnish case stand out from both the US and Western European development and from the development in Eastern European countries?

The essential concepts under scrutiny are the consumer society and its transition. The emphasis of this introductory article is on the post-Second World War decades until the 1980s. Methodologically, the focus is on historical comparison of the crucial trends in social structural change in society in Finland. The Finnish transition will be compared to the trajectories apparent in some Western European countries like Sweden, Norway, Denmark, Germany and England. Finland is a very

interesting case of consumer society transition between the West and the East. The Soviet Union became an important partner in economic cooperation soon after the war, because of the bilateral trade treaty. At the same time, American influences like advertising and commercial popular culture broke through in Finland. During the 1920s and 1930s Finland still received its most important cultural influences from Germany. The American influence in business life started to increase gradually during the 1950s. The advertising business in particular embraced American advertising and marketing ideas during the 1950s and 1960s. The retailing models like self-service, the new ideas of housing and suburban building and the influences of commercial youth culture and music came from the United States, often via Sweden (Pantzar 2000; Heinonen 1998; Heinonen & Konttinen 2001; Kilpiö 2005; Kortti 2003; Lammi 2006; Peltonen, Kurkela & Heinonen 2003). The transition towards a modern consumer society in Finland during the first three post-war decades was interestingly characterized by both Eastern and Western influences adapted from the neighbouring countries of Sweden and the Soviet Union, the most important trading partners being West Germany and the United Kingdom, other Western and Eastern European countries and also from the other side of the Atlantic Ocean.

FROM RATIONING AND SCARCITY TO THE BREAKTHROUGH OF THE MODERN CONSUMER SOCIETY

Soon after the Second World War, Finns faced the bitter fact of having been on the losing side in the war along with countries like Germany and Italy in Europe and Japan outside Europe. Finland got caught up in the war because of being attacked by Soviet troops in the autumn of 1939. The Winter War lasted until March 1940. After an interim peace, Finland became involved in a war again in June 1941, this time allied with Germany which had attacked the Soviet Union. After the bitter and hard years 1942 and 1943, Finland finally succeeded in detaching itself from the war with the Soviet Union by concluding a truce. The defeat in the war cost Finns a very heavy price. The Soviet

Union required that its former allies, the German forces, had to be expelled from Lapland, Finland lost most of the Karelian Isthmus and other territories and the Soviet Union claimed reparation payments of 300 million US dollars to be paid mostly in the form of industrial goods (Eloranta & Kauppila 2006, 225–226; Heinonen 1998, 179). The extreme shortage of almost everything was relieved only by slow efforts in foreign trade with Sweden. The material and financial support in the form of credit in favourable terms given by Sweden was especially important immediately after the war. In 1945 Finland's most important trading partners were Sweden, the Soviet Union, Great Britain and Denmark (Aunesluoma 2011, 94–99; Pihkala 1988, 22). Soon thereafter the Soviet Union, Germany and the United States also became important.

When foreign trade was started after the war, consumer goods became available little by little. The Soviet Union, Germany and the UK were the most important trade partners of Finland for several decades after the war (Pihkala 1988, 73). During the 1950s the trade between Finland and Sweden was at an exceptionally low level, but the importance of Sweden soon gained strength in the 1960s (Aunesluoma 2011, 216). Since then Sweden has remained among the most important trading partners. The trade between Finland and the Soviet Union was bilateral: Finland imported mostly raw materials from the Soviet Union and exported the products of the wood and metal-processing industries, the textile industry and food products. According to the trade agreement of 1947 the Soviet Union received a most-favoured nation treatment (Pihkala 1988, 23). In 1948 Finland and the Soviet Union concluded the YYA Treaty (The Agreement of Friendship, Cooperation and Mutual Assistance), which was the basis of Finno-Soviet relations 1948–1992. The strict rationing of foodstuffs and other consumer goods and raw materials established during the war lasted for many years after the end of the war. The rationing of necessities and foodstuffs like meat, bread, milk, potatoes and salt was abolished gradually in 1947–1949. The Ministry of Supply, founded in 1939, was closed ten years later. (Heinonen 1998, 181–182.) The last ration cards were abolished in 1954, when coffee and sugar were also finally released from control. However, even after abolishing the rationing system the state controlled the Finnish economy and consumption in many ways, including price

control. Most of the Finnish foreign trade was gradually liberated 1955–1957 (Aunesluoma 2011, 155).

On the whole, Finland was gradually integrated into the international economic order established after the Second World War by joining organizations like GATT (The General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade) in 1950 and the United Nations in 1955, thus, becoming a member of the United Nations at the same time as many smaller or less-developed European countries like Albania, Austria, Bulgaria, Portugal, Hungary, Ireland, Italy and Romania and some Asian countries. Finland and Spain were the only Western European countries which did not receive any money from the 13 billion US dollar Marshall aid that was distributed as reconstruction help. It is interesting that Eric Hobsbawm mentions both countries as ‘dramatic examples of industrial revolution’ (Hobsbawm 1995, 261). The economic boom related to the Korean War helped the recovery, and Finland managed to pay the last installment of the reparations to the Soviet Union in September 1952. During the 1950s, the economic fluctuation was quite marked and influenced the employment situation of the economy. For example, during the winter of 1957–1958 the number unemployed was nearly 100,000, which meant about 2.5 per cent of the whole population. The economic environment was very favourable for Finland when the world economy grew very quickly between the 1950s and the 1970s, the industrial output of manufactures quadrupling and world trade growing tenfold (Hobsbawm 1995, 261).

In international relations the signing of the Treaty of Rome in the spring of 1957 was a very important and far-reaching occasion that established the European Economic Community (EEC) by France, West Germany, Italy, Belgium, the Netherlands and Luxemburg. At the same time the Nordic countries negotiated for a deeper economic co-operation, and Finland participated in the negotiations too (Aunesluoma 2011, 176–179). The plan was to establish a Nordic customs union. However, the plan between the Nordic countries was invalidated, when Great Britain, Sweden, Denmark, Norway, Austria, Switzerland and Portugal started negotiations that led to the founding of the European Free Trade Area (EFTA) by signing the Stockholm Treaty in January 1960. Shortly thereafter, Finland concluded a free-trade agreement with the newly founded free-trade area.

METHODOLOGICAL AND THEORETICAL ORIENTATIONS AND CONNECTIONS TO EARLIER STUDIES

Thus, the starting point of our collection of articles is the examination of the main characteristics of the emerging modern consumer society in Finland during the post-Second World War decades. We approach our research subject from the point of view of modern historical research and especially economic and social history. However, the contemporary scientific discourse concerning consumption, consumers and consumer society is strongly multi-disciplinary. The writers of this volume draw inspiration from social scientific discussions. The literature dealing with consumer societies and their trajectories has increased very fast in the last couple of decades. For example, John Brewer and Roy Porter (1993), John Brewer and Frank Trentmann (2006), Elizabeth Cohen (2003), Gary Cross (1993; 2000), Victoria de Grazia (2005), Ben Fine (2002), Sheldon Garon and Patricia Maclachlan (2006), Eric Hobsbawm (1995), Jennifer Loehlin (1999), Neil McKendrick et al. (1983), Daniel Miller (1995), James Obelkevich and Peter Catterall (1994), Kristin Ross (1996), Roberta Sassatelli (2007), Juliet Schor and Douglas Holt (2000), Susan Strasser et al. (1998), Frank Trentmann (2006) and Rosalind Williams (1982) have presented valuable insights into the expanding literature dealing with consumer society. However, the United States has been a paradigmatic example of the consumer society development. This international discussion has inspired us.

Our methodological approaches follow the currents in the historical sciences, which have emerged with the rise of new interactive discussions between historical and social sciences. In addition to consumption and consumer history, themes and theoretical approaches like history of mentalities, history of addiction (alcohol, gambling), media history, cultures of youth and history of popular music have caught our attention. Our research materials have been manifold from statistical data to newsreels, magazines, oral history materials and archive materials like reports and memorandums. The writers' previous research based on advertisements, short films and other material has also been utilized in composing an overall picture of the main trajectories of the post-war decades. Finally, we have focused on

the themes of consumption of popular music, television and young consumers as elements in the consumer society. These are interesting topics that have not been researched intensively until now. Actually one can speak about youth as a consumer group just since the 1960s, when social values started to become more liberal and youngsters had some pocket money of their own. Holiday travel to the Soviet Union is a new and interesting research topic as well. The emphasis in the articles is, firstly on shaping citizens into consumers, secondly on consumption of popular culture and media, and, thirdly, on leisure consumption. Thus, many interesting and important aspects of consumption are beyond the scope of this volume. The writers of this volume have already earlier examined trajectories of consumer society from a variety of viewpoints. Furthermore, Kirsti Ahlqvist et al. (2008) have studied the long run of Finnish consumption, Mika Pantzar (2000) has studied the adaption of household technology in Finland, Kirsi Saarikangas (2002; 2006; 2009) and Anneli Juntto (1990) housing, Johanna Hankonen (1994) city planning from the point of view of consumer society, Minna Lammi home-making (2009), Minna Sarantola-Weiss (2003) furnishing in Finnish homes, Timo Toivonen (1992; 1994; 1996) social classes and consumption, Vesa Muttilainen (2002) debt problems in the Finnish consumer society, Kirsti Ahlqvist (2010) societal governing of consumption and compilation of statistics on it and Mirja Liikkanen et al. (2009) have studied leisure consumption during the decades under scrutiny.

Modernisation is discussed in several articles of our article collection. According to Bendix ([1964]1996, 6) modernisation means all social and political changes that followed industrialisation in the West. These changes include urbanisation, transformation of the occupational structure, increased social mobility, expanding education and political changes. These changes have been observed in all European societies during the latter half of the 20th century and all over the world as well. In the social sciences and especially in development economics, modernisation has been widely discussed especially during the 1950s and 1960s. One of the most influential researchers of modernisation was the economic historian Walt W. Rostow, who summarized his views concerning modernisation in an important book on stages of economic development (Rostow 1960). Although Rostow emphasized

the stage of mass-consumption as the highest stage in economic development, he joined the strong tradition of productionist theories which has dominated economic theorizing since Adam Smith and his work on political economy. Walt Rostow (1960, 12) called his theory “a dynamic theory of production”. Still during the 1960s and 1970s production dominated the discussions concerning modernisation. In the new research on the consumer society, consumption has even been considered to be the driving force of societal change, or at least as important as production and technological change.

The conception of the consumer as the ideal type of citizen and free enterprise as vehicle for promoting democracy broke through in the USA, as ideological objectives, soon after the Second World War. During the Cold War, the United States offered its allies in Western Europe monetary help as investments and material support. During the period 1948–1951 the USA donated some 100 billion dollars as Marshall Aid to Western European countries, excluding Spain and Finland. Moreover, the ideology of American consumer society was connected to the Marshall Plan (Cohen 2006, 58; Kroen 2004, 728). The boost the Marshall Plan provided in terms of investments and the favourable economic environment that it provided resulted in rapid economic growth throughout the world lasting from the beginning of the 1950s until the 1970s. Many scholars have referred to the Kitchen Debate between the Soviet Premier Nikita Khrushchev and the US Vice President Richard Nixon in 1959 at the American Trade Exhibition in Moscow (e.g., Marling 1994, 243–283; May 1988, 162–182; Rosenberg 1999; Oldenziel, Zachmann, Carbone and Reid in Oldenziel & Zachmann 2009a; Reid 2002; 2005). At least part of its fame is based on the fact that the debate was televised (Chernyshova 2013, 185). This debate has been seen as a symbolic occasion or crystallization of the ideological front line in the Cold War: A fundamental controversy between the two superpowers (Oldenziel & Zachmann 2009b, 8). Nixon emphasized the freedom of choice, private consumption and kitchen utensils. Khrushchev for his part tried to shift the attention towards public services, education, public day care, housing, health care and citizens’ right to work (Reid 2002, 225). Basically, it was the confrontation between the free market economy represented by the West under the baton of the United States as the leading economic power and

the state-controlled planned economy camp led by the Soviet Union. In this composition Finland was interestingly situated between the neutral Sweden, which did not participate in the Second World War, and one of the winners of the war, the Soviet Union. Friendly relations towards the Soviet Union formed the very backbone of Finnish foreign policy after 1945. The new orientation in Finland's foreign policy offered prerequisites for adoption of influences from both the East and the West. An interesting crystallization of the Western ideological idea of freedom of choice in Finland was the book *Valinnan yhteiskunta* (The Society of Choice) written by three vital social scientists Klaus Waris, Erik Allardt and Osmo A. Wiio (1970).

One common thread in the articles of this volume is the objective of comparative approach. Comparisons can illustrate resemblance and differences in the consumer society development of the nations compared. However, comparisons require basic information from the cases compared. There is a growing literature concerning development of consumer society in different European countries. Some examples are Ross's (1996) study on France, Söderberg's (1998) study on Sweden, Chernyshova's (2013) study on the Soviet Union, Crew's (2003) and Loehlin's (1999) studies on Germany and de la Bruhèze's, Oldenziel's and others (2008) study on the Netherlands. These basic case studies in single European countries offer possibilities to do more comparisons in the future. Hence it is possible to clarify the overall picture of the consumer societies in Europe and also worldwide.

THE BREAKTHROUGH OF THE MODERN CONSUMER SOCIETY IN FINLAND

The favourable economic development after the wars created a strong basis for the breakthrough of the modern consumer society. The consumer society has been defined:

... as a system where wants are satisfied through a market or as a society with mass production and mass marketing of goods; it can be based upon the role consumption plays in identity formation or as a pervasive element in the society studied. There will probably never develop

a consensus around definitions like these, but that is not necessary as long as the concept is contextualized. (Löfgren 1990, 12)

Paul Glennie has listed the general characteristics of consumer societies agreed upon by many historians: growing consumption per capita, intensifying production of commodities and efficient distribution systems, an expanding social division of labour and increasing social mobility, growing individualism, and consumer acquisitiveness (Glennie 1995, 165). In Finland, the average annual growth of private consumption was almost four per cent per year between 1950 and 1985. At the beginning of the 1950s, the growth of consumption was faster than ever before. (Heinonen 1998, 282; Virén 1989, 174.) However, the fluctuation was quite considerable because of the heavy dependence on export success, especially in the wood-processing industry.

The growth of productivity in the Finnish economy developed favourably after the wars. From 1946 to 1960 the annual growth of productivity was approximately 4.5 per cent in industry and in services three per cent. Across the whole Finnish economy, the percentage was around four per cent during the same period of time. (Hjerppe 1988, 95.) Company distribution channels developed rapidly and innovations like self-service came to Finland in the late 1940s. Self-service stores had been tested in the USA during the First World War and became more common there during the 1930s (Bowlby 2000, 31, 137–140). In Sweden, self-service was tried already during the Second World War and the first store was opened in 1947. The first self-service stores opened in France, Germany, Finland and Denmark in 1948 and in Norway a year later. (Bowlby 2000, 160; Heinonen 2000, 15; Hentilä 1999, 305–306; Spiekermann 2006, 159.) Trade expanded quite rapidly as soon as the rationing system was dismantled, and as the number of shops increased from some 30,000 in 1952 to over 40,000 in 1964. During the 1960s, the number of shops remained more or less the same. During the 1950s, the number of staff increased from 100,000 to 160,000 and then to 166,000 in 1964–1970. During the 1970s, the number of both the shops and staff gradually started to diminish. The number of department stores in Finland increased from two to nine between 1952 and 1970. (Pihkala 1982, 454–455.) Thus the domestic trade and its distribution system clearly strengthened, which provided

new opportunities for consumers. The expansion of trade offered new jobs. In the Finland of the 1950s, the transition in the social division of labour meant an increase in services, although agriculture and forestry were still the most important sources of livelihood. During the 1960s, industry and services employed two-thirds of Finns, while the rest worked in agriculture, forestry or some other industry.

Finally, Paul Glennie (1995) emphasizes growing individualism and consumer acquisitiveness, often connected with fashion and advertising as core characteristics of a modern consumer society. In Finland, American advertising was an important model for the advertising business after the wars (Heinonen, Kortti & Pantzar 2003). On the whole, advertising and media were very important intermediaries of the American way of life and the influence of the consumer society. Soon after the rationing system was abolished and consumer markets were developing, fashion was promoted in women's magazines in particular. The Marimekko Company is an example of a Finnish success story in the fashion business. The company, established in 1951, became very well-known all over the world during the 1960s. The esthetics of Marimekko was based on good designers like Maija Isola, Vuokko Askolin and Annika Rimala, who designed simple and bright clothes and used beautiful colours.

During the 1950s, the American influences filtered into Finland via Sweden. Other than advertising, American movies and the emerging commercial youth culture, the refrigerator, other household appliances and a large kitchen symbolized the American way of life, both in Finland and in Sweden during the 1950s (Löfgren 1990, 25; Pantzar 2000). Although Sweden has been characterized as the most Americanized nation in Europe (Löfgren 1993, 190; Ehn, Frykman & Löfgren 1993, 62–63), the same could be said about Finland as well. In the Finnish context, the Americanization was mostly based on ideas and cultural goods, which were heavily promoted on the commercial television established in Finland in 1957. The most important models of Finnish advertising were adapted from the United States. (Heinonen, Kortti & Pantzar 2003, 6, 9–10, 19–21; Kortti 2007a.) Consumption has been one of the oldest and strongest forms of Americanization (O'Dell 1997, 28). The US model has certainly affected the process of transition towards a modern consumer society both in Sweden

and in Finland. However, a large stream of emigrants had already left Finland and Sweden during the late 19th century and the first decades of the 20th century, as in so many European countries, for the United States, the 'land of opportunity'. Living on the frontier may have been easier for peasants from Nordic countries and Northern Europe on the whole. Thus, the influences from the other side of Atlantic Ocean were frequently adapted through relatives and family members. Later, especially after the Second World War, the media played a decisive role as an intermediary of news, commodities, symbols and other influences from the USA. The 1960s was the decade of the breakthrough for the modern consumer society as well as the great structural change in Finland.

THE SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC PREREQUISITES OF CONSUMPTION UNDER STRICT REGULATION

Although the Soviet Union was the enemy during the wars, it gradually became a very important trading partner and market for Finnish exports. In the Soviet society, the Khrushchev era 1953–1964 was called 'the Thaw' and meant changes in the economy. Housing, agriculture, trade and consumer demand became priorities compared to the Stalin era (Nove 1982, 358). The Khrushchev administration aimed at reducing the wage differentials and narrowing the urban-rural gap. Almost everyone was experiencing some income increases in the Soviet Union (Nove 1982, 347–349; Millar 1985, 695). During the Thaw, GNP increased at an average rate of some six per cent annually. The increase slowed to five per cent during the 1960s and to four per cent for the period 1970–1978. The economic growth driven by consumption ended with the increased military expenditure during the Brezhnev era, 1966–1982 (Millar 1985, 695). In the Soviet Union, the everyday experience of ordinary citizens and consumers was marked by queuing, an underground economy or black market and reciprocal exchange organized among relatives, neighbourhood networks and friends (Millar 1985, 698–703). In the early 1980s, it was reported that Soviet consumers stood in queues for 30–40 per cent of their shopping time and still a further 20 per cent queuing to pay for their purchases, and it

took many consumers even several years waiting to acquire goods like TV sets and refrigerators (Chernyshova 2013, 89, 192). The unofficial economic activity was well-known in all Eastern European countries under 'real socialism', as the following quotation concerning the East German reality demonstrates:

Colleagues helped each other with the acquisition of scarce goods and everybody was always looking out for anything that might be on sale somewhere and for queues (a sign that something scarce, that is, valuable, was for sale). (Veenis 1999, 93)

The Polish experience after the Stalin era consolidated the same kind of changes that took place Khrushchev era in the Soviet Union. New private shops and kiosks were opened and small private businesses like taxi services, restaurants and tailors were established in the new partial market economy after 1957. Elements of modern 'consumer culture' like fashion magazines, advertisements, neon lights and Western movies also became available to the Polish public to some degree. (Crowley 2000, 41–44.) However, the authorities, censorship and ideological propaganda in the socialist reality ensured that the citizens did not get too excited about the temptations of the Western type of consumer society.

During the 1950s, scarcity, thrift, target-saving and principles like rationalization predominated in the emerging modern Finnish consumer society. Finland managed to preserve its social system after the wars, but the bitter defeat and the closeness of the Soviet Union imposed conditions that limited freedom of action. For example, the war indemnities to the Soviet Union limited the growth of domestic consumption until 1952. Saving and rational planning of household finances were important elements of household as well as public finance. Banks encouraged citizens to start saving by becoming account holders and start systematic saving for some specific target like an apartment, decisive measures being taken to encourage home saving and house ownership. (Juntto 1990, 208–211; Kuusterä 1995; Lammi 2009, 536–537.) Beside an apartment, an important objective of saving was durable goods. The acquisition of washing machines, refrigerators and motor vehicles required saving in advance and planning of consumption

decisions (Lehtonen & Pantzar 2002, 214). The target saver became one of the heroes of the decade for whom the banks competed in advertising savings accounts, monetary transactions and targeted loans (Lehtonen & Pantzar 2002, 215; Pantzar 2000, 66–70). During the 1950s, the overall savings and investment rates in Finland were very high compared to many other Western countries.

During the 1950s, household appliances offered new freedom to Finnish women at home and authority at the same time, because they were able to control the monetary expenditures and timetables of the household (Kortti 2003, 254–265; Kortti 2007a). Women were mostly making the everyday consumer decisions of the household. The theme of freedom from house-work was exploited in advertising household appliances (Pantzar 2000, 59–63), advertisements strongly emphasizing efficiency in use of time as well as monetary savings. Liberty as a central theme was strongly present in the advertising of banking services: a saver could free him/herself from the fetters of personal debt (Heinonen & Konttinen 2001, 142, 203; Pantzar 2000, 72–73). Saving and thrift were really heavily emphasized both in public debate and for private households.

The agrarian values like frugality and self-sufficiency were the central moral elements in the peasant economic ethos that was the ruling value system in agrarian Finnish society during the 19th century and up to the Second World War. Agrarian virtues like thrift and self-sufficiency dominated as the core moral principles. Citizens were advised to avoid wasting foodstuffs and raw materials, to repair worn-out clothes instead of immediately buying new ones, to pick berries and mushrooms and to pay for purchases in cash. (Heinonen 1998, 157–163, 230–236, 377–381; Huttunen & Autio 2010, 146–147, 150–151.) On the one hand, the powerful emphasis on self-sufficiency and household thrift can be understood as a consequence of wars – the Civil war in 1918 and the Second World War – and a poor background. Finland was still an underdeveloped peripheral agrarian country at the beginning of the 20th century. On the other hand, the strong Protestant heritage in all Nordic countries explains the appreciation of temperance and moderation and the rejection of luxury (Daun 1998, 187–190; Sørensen & Stråth 1997). Besides, since no genuine domestic royal court existed in Finland as in Sweden, Denmark and Norway, egalitarianism as one of the core values

of the peasant society was relatively strong. However, frugality, patience and orderliness were traditionally virtues appreciated in many societies, as in both East and West Germany, as Ina Merkel (1998, 284, 287) has pointed out. But Finland remained predominantly agrarian until the 1960s, and the social structural change took place over a rather short time compared to Central European societies or even Denmark and Sweden.

THE DECADE OF THE GREAT STRUCTURAL CHANGE: THE 1960S

The 1960s was the decade of a great structural transformation in Finland. People moved from the countryside to cities or to Sweden to find work. The living standard rose, and people bought durables like cars and television sets. The structure of consumption changed in such a way that a growing proportion of household expenditures was used on housing, transport, recreation and miscellaneous consumption, including travelling abroad. The ratio of housing and heating expenditures of the total expenditures grew during 1950–1975 from under nine per cent to a substantial 16 per cent, the expenditure on transport from nearly six per cent to almost 15 per cent and the proportion of recreational expenditures from five and a half per cent to almost eight per cent (Laurila 1985, 50). During the 1960s, material welfare was clearly improving following the drudgery of the previous decade. In 1961, Finland concluded a free-trade agreement FINN-EFTA with The European Free Trade Association (EFTA) that had been founded in 1960 in Stockholm (Aunesluoma 2011, 189–213; Pihkala 1988, 40–42). However, the Soviet Union demanded the same rights in the mutual trade between Finland and the Soviet Union that all the EFTA countries enjoyed. These arrangements led to a powerful economic and social structural change and the gradual tightening of western economic relations, although the bilateral trade with the Soviet Union maintained its importance. New trading possibilities resulted in the growth of foreign trade, in better availability of consumer goods and in the liberation of car imports, for example. After the mid-1960s the Finnish export of industrial products to Swedish markets increased

considerably, which symbolized the new position of Finland moving among the other Nordic countries as a prosperous industrial country. Indeed, in the beginning of the 1970s Sweden outstripped the Soviet Union among Finland's most important trading partners (Aunesluoma 2011, 218; 342). The material standard of living of Finnish citizens was increasing and the world of consumer goods for consumers expanding.

The number of Finnish households owning a refrigerator rose from 11 per cent in 1956 first to 44 per cent in 1966 and then to 84 per cent in 1976. The proportion of those owning a washing machine rose from 19 per cent in 1956 first to 53 per cent in 1966 and then to 67 per cent in 1976 (Kortti 2003, 254; Kortti 2007a.) For example, the number of households with a refrigerator in West Germany rose from 10 per cent in 1955 to 51 per cent in 1963 (Wildt 1998, 307). In the UK, the corresponding figures were 8 per cent in 1955 and 85 per cent in 1975 (Obelkevich 1994, 145). West Germany during the 1950s offers an interesting point of comparison with Finland, because Germany was on the losing side in the Second World War. Working-class households still lived on very tight budgets during the late 1950s (Wildt 1998, 305). In East Germany, or the German Democratic Republic (GDR), founded in 1949, the communist ideology stressed the satisfaction of the basic needs of citizens. Instead of producing more consumer goods like refrigerators and televisions, the ideologists sought alternatives to the western models of limitless consumption and a throwaway culture. The East Germans had to wait patiently for the delivery of a refrigerator, or a washing machine, and on average from eight to fifteen years for a private car. (Merkel 1998, 285–288, 292.) Thus, in the East Germany the distribution of consumer durables was based on a waiting list instead of market demand, because the production of staple foodstuffs and basic goods was prioritized. The waiting time for a car in the GDR increased to 14 years between the 1960s and the end of the 1980s (Merkel 2006, 252). Finns had similar experiences simply because the rationing system existed until the end of the 1940s, the war reparations to Soviet Union limited the potential to produce consumer goods for the Finnish market and the amount of foreign currency available for payment of imported goods was limited by the success of exports.

If the domestic appliances like refrigerators, vacuum cleaners and washing machines arrived in Finnish households during the 1950s, the next decade was characterized by the triumph of television and the private car (for details, see Kortti 2007b; Toiskallio 2001). The 1960s was the decade of the private car in both Finland and Sweden. The importation of cars into Finland was finally freed from import regulations in 1962 when Finland concluded the FINN-EFTA agreement in 1961. (Söderberg 1998, 75; Toivonen 1996, 35–36.) At the end of the 1960s, the number of private cars in Finland already exceeded 700,000 and the number of television licenses was about one million. Beside cars and television, the commercial youth culture gained strength in Finland (see Heinonen 2003; 2005; Peltonen, Kurkela & Heinonen 2003). The youth culture developed in the West represented a new source of purchasing power and was essentially international (Hobsbawm 1995, 326). The emerging commercial Finnish youth culture received its influences mostly from the United States, but Western Europe, particularly countries like the United Kingdom and Sweden were also important sources. For the first time, youngsters had considerable sums of money and young people became a target group for advertising (Heinonen 2003, 459; Ruohonen 2001, 29, 489).

The position of Finland between East and West became quite clear in the supply of both Eastern and Western consumer goods. For example, Eastern European and Soviet cars were available in Finland. A Soviet Moskvich, Volga, Gaz and later Lada, an East German Wartburg and Trabant or a Czechoslovakian Škoda could often be seen on Finnish roads. At the beginning of the 1960s, a private car was still a relatively expensive durable for an average Finnish household, and the prices of the Eastern bloc cars were clearly lower than the Western ones. For example, the Czechoslovakian Škoda was among the most popular cars from the late 1950s to the liberalization of import of cars in 1962 (Mauranen 2005, 203). However, the Finnish market for private cars was very different from the markets in other Western European countries and a Western car was a status symbol for most Finns throughout the period, although some people bought Eastern cars for political reasons as supporters of the political left. The availability of Eastern consumer goods and durables like cars in Finnish consumer markets can largely be explained by the bilateral nature of the trade. All the possible import

goods were welcome, because Finland wanted to increase its own export. The low price of Eastern cars was surely an important factor concerning their import.

The economic historian Walt W. Rostow (1960, 11, 77, 83–87) underscored the symbolic significance of private cars in modern consumer society. According to him, ‘the cheap mass automobile with its quite revolutionary effects – social as well as economic – on the life and expectations of society’ (Rostow 1960, 11) was the crucial element in the process of achieving the age of mass-consumption. In the case of Finland, the paradox is the fact that until the early 1960s most automobiles were imported from the Soviet Union or some East European country. For example, the important vehicle of Americanisation, the American car, was too big or too expensive for a long time for Finnish consumers (see Jukka Kortti’s chapter in this book).

As already pointed out, the everyday life of citizens in the Soviet Union was eased during the Khrushchev rule in the 1960s. Consumer goods became more freely available than before and the possession of goods was no longer considered to be a negative thing (Gurova 2006, 95). The ideological competition between the Soviet Union and the West, especially the United States, was very intense. Nevertheless, influences from the Western consumer culture and fashion penetrated even Soviet society, although in the official rhetoric Western influences were damned as bourgeois decadence. For example, the Beatles had many secret admirers among Soviet youth during the 1960s but were strictly condemned by the ideological propaganda of the communist party. And the reality in Soviet Union was characterized by queuing, scarcity and informal economic arrangements. Olga Shevchenko (2002, 155–156) has pointed out that at the beginning of the 21st century Russian people still remembered very clearly the experiences of the rationing system from the 1980s. Consumer durables were often preserved even when new ones were bought in case of extraordinary circumstances (*ibid.* 154).

However, the 1960s was a period of accelerating transformation in Finland as in most Western countries. New subcultures and popular movements, individualism, the rise of young people, advances in technology, the increase in international interaction, improvements in material life, new permissiveness and many other phenomena that

Arthur Marwick (1998, 16–20) has listed are observable in Finland. However, in the late 1960s the anti-American movement was not so strong in Finland as in many other European countries (cf. Kuisel 1993, 7–10, 65–69, 236–237; O'Dell 1997, 160–198). The rise of youth and youth subcultures was an important phenomenon. The intergenerational balance of power and the relationships between older and younger generations were shaken. Rock music, youth fashion and customs were criticized by many representatives of older generations who had experienced the trials and hardships of war time. However, after the 1960s the tensions between generations gradually moderated as in many Western countries. Women's liberation had a favourable point of departure in the Nordic countries and thus in Finland, because Nordic women had been relatively independent from the early 20th century and Finnish women participated in numbers in the labour force. Egalitarianism alongside permissiveness was an important legacy that made it easier for many people to accept high taxes as the cost of a welfare society. Social democrats together with the agrarian centre party formed many governments together during the 1960s and 1970s and managed to bring Finland closer to the welfare model of other Nordic countries. The enforcement of social welfare reforms like primary school reform and the establishment of public health centers took place during the 1970s as the public sector expanded. Reforms like public health centres and comprehensive school free of charge for all were implemented, and thus public expenditure increased.

Until the 1970s, Finland had gone through a rapid structural change and the breakthrough of modern consumer society. During 1960–1980, the proportion of people living in cities and population centres grew from 38 per cent to 60 per cent and that of people earning their living in agriculture and forestry fell from 32 per cent to nine per cent (Statistics Finland). Finland did not join the European Economic Community (EEC) but signed after complicated negotiations a free trade agreement with the community which came into effect at the beginning of 1974. Finland signed similar agreements with all the countries of the Council for Mutual Economic Assistance (COMECON), which included, apart from the Soviet Union, all the socialist countries of Eastern Europe, Mongolia, Cuba and Vietnam from 1978 onwards. The agreement with the EEC led gradually to an increase in foreign trade with many Western

European countries. The agreement with COMECON countries did not have any large economic effects (Aunesluoma 2011, 276; Pihkala 1988, 56). In socialist countries foreign trade was strongly state controlled. However, the availability of foodstuffs and some consumer goods imported from behind the Iron Curtain was much better than in other Western European countries. In 1972, an international consumer goods exposition was organised in Helsinki, offering vacuum cleaners from the GDR, Hungarian textiles, Polish enamel pots, Romanian vegetables and buckets made of aluminium from the Soviet Union to Finnish consumers (Sarantola-Weiss 2008, 169). Canned vegetables, fruits, caviar and crab meat from the Soviet Union were available, especially in the shops of the co-operative stores like Elanto in Helsinki. Russian cuisine was also well-known in Helsinki for historical reasons and the closeness of the city of Leningrad, which many Finnish tourists visited, as shown in Hanna Kuusi's chapter in this book.

The structure of the bilateral trade between Finland and the Soviet Union changed considerably between the 1950s and 1970s. In the beginning of the 1950s Finland imported mostly agricultural products, fossil fuels including petroleum and metals from the Soviet Union. In the 1970s the import of agricultural products was not important. Since the 1950s the import of machinery, raw wood and especially energy from the Soviet Union increased heavily, and the share of raw oil was finally almost 80 per cent of the total import. The Finnish export to the Soviet Union consisted mostly of the products of metal, wood processing and the consumer goods industries. (Aunesluoma 2011, 343–345.)

On the whole, the 1950s, 1960s and 1970s meant a rising material standard of living for many Finns. New consumer goods were available, and people bought them as soon as they could afford to. The hire-purchase system gradually became general, at least for the purchase of durables like refrigerators, freezers, washing machines, television sets and motor vehicles. All these consumer goods were purchased mostly by families, a fact which emphasised family-centred lifestyle and privacy. However, despite the rapid transformation some things remained as they traditionally had been. People used to go to sauna on Saturdays at least in the countryside and at their summer cottages. Finns have been very enthusiastic users of summer cottages (see Juntto

& Vilkkio 2005; Karisto 2006). *Kesämökki* (summer cottage) means something similar to a Finn to *sommarstuga* to a Swede or *dacha* to a Russian. Although a summer cottage was still some kind of luxury during the 1960s, the number of cottage-owners has steadily risen since the sixties (Melasniemi-Uutela 2004, 147). Time spent at the cottages has also increased significantly. Despite the rapid structural change, modernisation and the seduction of consumer society, Saturday night sauna, a summer cottage and perhaps ice-fishing during winter time represent marked continuity in Finnish culture even during the 21st century. The contemporary Finnish way of life is an interesting mixture of Western and Eastern influences in the north-eastern corner of Europe.

CONCLUSION

The transformation of Finland into a modern consumer society and the special characteristics of the Finnish case between the East and the West offer an interesting point of view on the discussion about consumer society. It is easy to agree with Frank Trentmann that in order to understand consumption as a social phenomenon and a variety of trajectories of transformation taking place all over the world better, we need more historical case studies (see Brewer & Trentmann 2006; Trentmann 2004; 2006; 2009). The Finnish case is an interesting one, which illustrates the trajectory of modern consumer society from the point of view of a small Nordic country developing from a poor agrarian periphery specializing in processing forestry products for world markets into a rich welfare society specializing more in high technology, with a good educational system and a solid social system.

As I have pointed out, as an emerging consumer society after the Second World War Finland received influences both from the East and the West. A certain openness in adapting quickly to new technology like household appliances or cars, new institutional phenomena like the self-service store, new media like television and new promotional tools like American advertising models is a sign of pragmatism (cf. Pantzar 2000; Kortti 2003; Heinonen & Konttinen 2001; Heinonen, Kortti & Pantzar 2003). It has been maintained that during the post-war decades

the Finnish political elite was very loyal to the Soviet Union, but the people were more willing to adopt the models of good society from the West. As a loser in the Second World War, Finland had not very many real choices during the Cold War period but had to cope as well as possible with its Russian neighbour. The bilateral trade arrangement was in the end not at all a bad one for Finland during the oil crises of the 1970s, for example. In the early 1980s, trade between Finland and the Soviet Union was already a quarter of all Finnish foreign trade (Hobsbawm 1995, 375). However, this was an exception, and the long-run share of the trade with the Soviet Union stayed clearly under 20 per cent of the Finnish foreign trade (Hjerppe 1990, 156-163). Finally, the mutual trade between Finland and the Soviet Union collapsed in the end of the 1980s to be recovered later with Russia. And the fact is that during the post-war decades the standard of living of ordinary people in Finland increased markedly particularly from 1960 to 1990. It remains to be seen how Finland will manage to maintain its prosperity now as a member of the European Union since 1995 and a small remote country between the East and the West.

This volume proceeds as follows. The first part of the volume analyses the making of the frugal consumer during the post-Second World War decades. This part of our collection stresses the influence of older aspects of the Finnish mentality towards the role of consumption in everyday life. Visa Heinonen and Minna Autio examine the Finnish consumer mentality and ethos. They also make comparisons between Finland and the neighbouring countries Russia and Sweden. Matti Peltonen analyses Finnish everyday life in the 1950s from the point of view of alcohol consumption and attitudes towards drinking. He points out that strict restrictions and their broad acceptance by both the political elite and the majority of the population mainly determined the development of the drinking culture in Finland. Minna Lammi and Päivi Timonen investigate newsreels presented in cinemas during the 1950s as representations of the economy. They emphasise that these short films demonstrated the central role played by President Urho Kekkonen as a strong leader of the nation. The first part of the book ends with Janne Poikolainen's scrutiny of Finland's popular music scene and its interesting division into two quite different sub-cultures in the beginning of the 1960s, together with the influences coming from abroad.

The second part of the book concentrates on consumption as spectacle in the Finnish context. First, Jukka Kortti analyses the breakthrough of the television in the Finnish society of the 1960s and its influence on the Finnish consumer mentality. He gives a versatile general view of television as a new media and important part of developing consumer culture. Second, Riitta Matilainen offers a cross-section to a developing gambling culture and legalisation of roulette in Finland. She examines the introduction of other forms of gambling, such as Lotto, as well. Third, Finnish tourism to the Soviet Union is studied by Hanna Kuusi in her article by using oral history material. An interesting finding in her study is the extent of illegal trading that occurred during the travels in spite of quite severe sanctions. In the final article Kaarina Kilpiö examines the styles and development of background music in the marketing context in Finland.

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PART I.
THE MAKING
OF THE FRUGAL
CONSUMER

Moskvich car
surrounded by
the participants
of the
International
Youth Festival in
Moscow 1957.
Photographer
unknown
(Kansan
Arkisto).





THE FINNISH CONSUMER MENTALITY AND ETHOS: AT THE INTERSECTION BETWEEN EAST AND WEST

Visa Heinonen & Minna Autio

INTRODUCTION

Nowadays, a rising number of consumer researchers agree on the idea that the motives underlying consumer choice are not simply rational but emotional as well. The multidisciplinary consumer research since the 1980s has enriched our understanding of consumption and consumers from the point of view of sociological, economic, psychological, historical, anthropological and communicational research; e.g., consumer mentality and the ethos of consumption are rather challenging research areas that have been discussed by some classics like Thorstein Veblen and Georg Simmel and some contemporary scholars like Colin Campbell. Veblen (1899) and Simmel (1900) wrote their classic works at the beginning of the 20th century. Veblen wrote about conspicuous consumption and pecuniary emulation among newly rich people during his time in the United States. His theory of the leisure class can be interpreted as a description of a consumer mentality in which status-seeking people try to show their prosperity by lavish consumption. Georg Simmel wrote about city life and modern consumers in a 20th-century metropolis, where a new kind of consumer mentality emerged. Colin Campbell's (1987) subject was the modern consumer mentality which first appeared among upper-class women in Great Britain at the beginning of the 19th century. These women had free

time to spend consuming and plenty of money available. This new mentality was the result of new opportunities to consume enabled by the 18th-century industrial revolution, the spirit of the romantic ethos and rising prosperity.

The objective of this article is to give an overview of the research concerning the consumer mentality and ethos in Finland. We discuss the Finnish case in its historical and social context and also offer a comparative perspective. Because Finland is sited geographically, culturally and politically between the East and the West, to be precise, between Sweden and Russia, the location has played a very important role in the history of the nation. The Finnish consumer mentality and ethos have previously been studied by Autio (2006), Autio and Heinonen (2004), Autio, Heiskanen and Heinonen (2009), Autio, Huttunen and Puhakka (2010), Heinonen (1998; 1999), Heinonen and Pantzar (2002), Huttunen and Autio (2009; 2010), Huttunen and Lammi (2009) and Lehtonen and Pantzar (2002). Our aim is, firstly, to draw together, sum up and elaborate the findings of these studies. Secondly, we put these results in a comparative perspective with the neighbouring countries in both the East and the West.

The article proceeds as follows. Firstly, we discuss the concepts of mentality and ethos and their use in discussions in historical, social scientific and humanities studies. The relationship between these concepts and the concept of world-view will be clarified for the reader. Secondly, we focus on the general concept of mentality in a comparative perspective and thoroughly analyse the historical phases in the transition of the Finnish consumer mentality. We argue that the mentality of scarcity transforms somewhat into a mentality of abundance. We then compare our results to mentalities in the neighbouring countries, Russia and Sweden. These comparisons are based on historical studies, the research of ethnologists and the above-mentioned studies by Finnish scholars, including ourselves. Sweden has been a model of modernisation and the development of a consumer society. At the beginning of the 21st century, Finland has slowly reached the same stage as Sweden as a modernised consumer society, while Russia is still on the road to an abundant society. The mentalities of Finnish and Swedish consumers seem to have developed into a kind of mentality of moderation. At the same time, Russian consumers are still struggling with the conflict

between temptations of abundance and the need for a more moderate way of living caused by the limitations of global sustainability.

MENTALITY, WORLD-VIEW AND ETHOS

The history of mentalities grew as a current of history research in the 1960s. Its relationship to disciplines like ethnology, sociology, social psychology and anthropology is close (Le Goff 1978, 245–246). The term *mentalité* was introduced by the French anthropologist Lucien Lévy-Bruhl (Burke 1986, 444). Research into the history of mentalities has been on everyday life and common people instead of the elite, their lives and the greatest achievements of science and art. The leading scholars of the history of mentalities like Jacques Le Goff, Georges Duby, Philippe Ariès, Emmanuel Le Roy Ladurie, Carlo Ginzburg, Robert Darnton and Natalie Zemon Davis have used new types of sources. These have been trial documents, posters and other objects of popular culture, private diaries and descriptions of rituals, festivals and riots by the common people (Peltonen 1992a, 16). In their studies, these historians of mentalities have examined mentalities in medieval France, like Le Goff and Duby, childhood in earlier centuries and attitudes to death, like Ariès, the world-view of an Italian heretic miller like Ginzburg and medieval life in a remote Pyrenean village like Le Roy Ladurie. Mentalities are mostly collective by nature and closely linked to social structures and the social dynamic (Le Goff 1978, 257). Peter Burke (1986, 439) has even suggested the name *historical anthropology of ideas* for mentality. He has also drawn attention to the resemblance to some interpretations of social anthropology.

Apart from the French scholars, classics in the study of mentalities are the sociologist Norbert Elias's 1989 study of Germans and his study of the European civilisation process (Elias 1978; 1982), the folklorist Alan Dundes's 1984 study of German culture through folklore and the study of the Swedish mentality by the ethnologist Åke Daun (1998). According to Elias, it is possible to learn about the translation of Western civilisation by studying the history of individuals and societies side by side. Elias studied the handbook of manners written by Erasmus of Rotterdam and other guides to good manners and pointed out

how the display of emotions gradually became shameful and changed from public to private. Medieval human beings changed into modern humans, who controlled their feelings and emotions and mastered the rules of conduct. The division between public and private spheres of life deepened. Thus, the elite in European societies shaped popular conceptions of conduct in the direction of self-restraint and control of desires.

The historian Markku Hyrkkänen (2002, 110), specializing in the history of ideas, has clarified the relationship between mentality and world-view by characterising mentality as an unconscious aspect of the world-view. Like many other historians, he emphasizes the elusive and somewhat hazy character of the concepts. The concept of world-view has been discussed by many culture researchers. Anthropologists, folklorists, ethnologists and historians have echoed this multidimensional concept. Orvar Löfgren (1981, 26-27) has included notions of human nature, conceptions of the ego, images of society and social stratification, notions of work, perceptions of time and space and images of 'good life' among the possible constituents of a world view.

The concept of the mentality has explanatory power, and is based on a stance towards a variety of dimensions of human existence (Hyrkkänen 2002, 99). Thus all realms or dimensions of human existence can be examined by the history of mentalities. Peter Burke (1986) has characterised a mentality as a 'system of beliefs'. Thus, the definition and description of a mentality could mean tracking and showing the conceptual relationships between the beliefs (Burke 1986, 442, 444). Beside belief systems, Burke (1992, 91) also refers to terms used by sociologists like 'modes of thought' or 'cognitive maps'. Mentalities are collective mental phenomena that are, like Weberian ideal types, typical in particular cultures and circumstances during certain periods of time. Mentalities usually change rather slowly but may also change rapidly. However, mentalities are not only ideological phenomena but are related to collective human behaviour, rituals, and manners. Scholars can draw conclusions about mentalities by observing and interpreting everyday living, practices, manners, behaviour, clothing and all the typical features of everyday life not always documented in writing. Thus, paintings, folklore, proverbs, clothes, furniture and material objects may be important sources for historians of mentalities.

Many historians of mentalities have assumed that by scrutinising a mentality it is possible to access the preconditions of action and thinking like the ideas of what is right and what is wrong (Hyrkkänen 2002, 94). These ideas and moral, normative and evaluative aspects of a culture have together been defined as an ethos, whereas the cognitive and existential aspects have often been called a world-view (Dundes 1971, 102; Geertz 1968, 303). Thus, an ethos means a cultural system, a system of ethical and aesthetic values and norms (Ahlman 1939, 18–19, 99–103). The meaning of good and bad is defined by these values and norms. For example, norms and rules in human society spring from the belief system that includes the conceptions of good and bad (Alasuutari 2007, 56). This kind of belief system can be called an ethos. Furthermore, an ethos can be interpreted like a discourse: a culturally typical and commonly acceptable way of discussing consuming, for example (Huttunen & Autio 2010). Thus, the consumer ethos includes guidelines and norms governing how a virtuous consumer should behave in a society and what accepted lifestyle choices are. Furthermore, a consumer ethos embraces the appreciation of money and wealth in society – what is ‘good’ and ‘bad’ lending and spending.

MENTALITIES FROM A COMPARATIVE PERSPECTIVE

It is always interesting to make comparisons between neighbouring countries. The differences and similarities between the countries may be based on many cultural, social and economic factors besides historical circumstances. Because of Finland’s geopolitical position as the portal between the East and the West, ideas and technology have circulated from both directions and shaped the Finnish society and domestic spaces in many ways (Saarikangas 2009, 286). Finland, an independent nation since 1917, used to be a part of the Swedish Kingdom until 1809, when the Russians conquered the territory that became a Grand Duchy and the Russian Emperor its Grand-Duke. As a Grand Duchy, Finland was autonomous in the sense that the old legal system was maintained and the Grand Duchy had its own central administration alongside the Senate as the highest organ (Heikkinen et al. 2000, 21). Thus the

Swedish cultural tradition was very strong and Swedish was spoken by the ruling class. During the 19th century, Russian and German influences on Finnish culture grew gradually. At the same time, Swedish influences remained quite strong. Above all, the 19th century meant the strengthening of the Finnish national identity following the rise of the nationalist ideology among many European nations (Hobsbawm 1990). The Finnish nationalist ideology was called Fennomania and its proponents Fennomans. An important reform was the adoption of universal suffrage that took place in 1906, second in the world just after New Zealand. After the declaration of independence in September 1917 and the cruel civil war in the spring of 1918, Finns started to build an independent nation state. The 1920s and 1930s meant a period of the preliminary stage of the consumer society in Finland (Heinonen 2000, 10–13). In this stage, the monetary economy finally broke through in the Finnish countryside, the distribution system for consumer goods developed, markets for cinema, records and other products of popular culture were established and the press and modern advertising expanded. Later we examine the breakthrough of the modern consumer society in Finland as the background to the consumer mentality.

The fundamental features of the Russian mentality have been described by the Polish philosopher Jasinowski as follows: collectivism, maximalism, utopianism, and duality in thinking (Brzechczyn 2008, 830). The Russian mentality has been largely shaped by the Byzantine heritage and the Orthodox religion. However, during the 1920s, soon after the revolution and the civil war, a scarcity of consumer goods and the New Economic Policy (NEP) touched people's everyday lives economically. During the dismal times of Stalin's rule, risk-taking was a necessity for effective agency in economic relations and highly esteemed by people. To survive in everyday life, people adopted a kind of gambling behaviour and even mentality. This was the antithesis of the rational planning mentality (Five Year Plan) which came to dominate the regime (Fitzpatrick 1999, 221). Although the rulers tried to inculcate a sense of rational planning in the minds of Soviet citizens, risk-takers were highly valued. The historian Sheila Fitzpatrick has argued that socialist realism in art was a Stalinist mentality as well as an artistic style (Fitzpatrick 1999, 9). The evolving relationship between the producers and the consumers of socialist realist products, made this

artistic current into much more than an artistic style during the Stalinist era and into 'the product of the masses from below, answering their need for accessibility and a particular kind of realism in art' (Barker 1999, 29). Socialist realism aimed at promoting the political goals of socialism and communism. In socialist realistic art, the everyday life of ordinary soviet citizens in the new socialist state was glorified and presented as happy, busy, industrious and, above all, a better life than under capitalism. In the art works, the sacrifices of the workers and heroic labourers were pictured and described romantically. Art works of socialist realist aesthetics were typically Utopian representations of a happy everyday life in the socialist future society. Future optimism, happiness and joy were emphasized (Crowley & Reid 2010, 4). In short, socialist realism presented reality and everyday life in a greatly idealised, embellished and abstracted way (Gronow 2003, 150).

The Swedish mentality has been studied by the ethnologists Åke Daun (1998) and Billy Ehn, Jonas Frykman and Orvar Löfgren (1993). According to Daun (1998, 36) Swedes have been described as quiet, serious, constrained, sad, shallowly friendly, precise, asocial, inflexible, arrogant and exaggeratedly cautious. Shyness, independence, aversion of conflicts, reserve, honesty, a tension between collectivism and individualism and modesty are characteristics of the Swedes in their social relations (Daun 1998, 46–127; Ehn et al. 1993, 54, 132). These characteristics can be generalised to characterise Nordic people more generally: the same features can be identified more or less among the Danes, the Norwegians and the Finns. One could speak about a special Nordic mentality (see Sørensen & Stråth, eds. 1997). Besides, Daun (1998, 69) points out that it is important for a Swede to be a decent man or woman. Swedes have also claimed to be well-organised and controlled or even too controlled like the Germans (Ehn, Frykman & Löfgren 1993, 33). Lastly, since the 1960s, rationality and future orientation have strengthened among the Swedes (Daun 1998, 88). Sweden has often been labelled as a model modernist nation. During the 1950s, Sweden was seen as the prototype of a modern society (Ehn et al. 1993, 65). The Nordic welfare society model has also been claimed to originate in Sweden, where the state has been powerful since the time of King Gustav I Vasa in the 16th century. Beside many similarities, there are certainly many characteristics in common between the Nordic

countries. However, Nordic countries have strong cultural ties and a common historical heritage. Finland belonged to the Swedish kingdom for several hundred years until 1809, and Norway became independent in 1905 after having been a part of the Danish kingdom many centuries and in dynastic union with Sweden during 1814–1905.

Nina Witoszek (1997, 73) has pointed out that the Enlightenment is the founding tradition of culture in Scandinavian countries, meaning Sweden, Norway and Denmark. Secondly, she stresses the importance of Christianity in the success, strength and ethical rectitude of the Nordic Enlightenment. These factors partly explain the powerful modern and rational features in all these societies. The Lutheran tradition was especially powerful in all the Nordic countries, including Finland, although it became a part of Russian Empire at the beginning of the 19th century. During the 16th century, the Lutheran reformation realised in the Nordic countries brought the church and the state closer to each other, and, accordingly, it became the fundamental principle of Nordic social organisation to see that everybody worked and thus brought his/her contribution to society (Stenius 1997, 161–165). Thus, diligence became a greatly valued virtue and the Weberian protestant work ethic became early a primary ethos of society. Max Weber ([1904–1905] 1980, 226) even mentions peasants when writing about Lutheranism. In the Lutheran heritage, the ideas of stability and continuity are important and conformity is valued (Stenius 1997, 167). In all the Nordic countries, the peasantry was a very important political force. As Henrik Stenius (1997, 168) has shown, the landowning peasant was a prototype of the Nordic citizen, and egalitarianism was a common objective, although the poor landless people had no role in the formation of the political culture.

The central features of the Weberian protestant ethic were, firstly, the importance of individuality in Calvinism; secondly, a modest or even ascetic way of life and strict self-control, and, thirdly, an important role for religion in everyday life (Weber [1904–1905] 1980, 76, 113). In Protestantism, religious asceticism was a part of the everyday lives of ordinary people instead of characterizing monastic life. An essential feature of Protestant asceticism was hard work, which has been highly valued in the Finnish peasant society as well. Besides, honesty, patience, friendliness, diligence and self-control were desirable virtues

(Heinonen 1998, 138; 1999, 77). Seriousness and modesty were also basic virtues. Public enlightenment and popular education grew as a social movement among the Finnish elite during the 19th century. The educators emphasised the spirit of enterprise, thrift, method and discipline (Heinonen 1998, 138). Thus, the Protestant belief in hard work and the virtues mentioned above were the basic elements of the prevailing mentality of Finns during the 19th century and the first half of the 20th century. We will call this mentality *the mentality of scarcity* that manifested itself in the Finnish culture as a fundamental concern with saving. The scarcity caused by harsh natural conditions was self-evident in the fact that the peasants and other common people did not have the courage to transcend the ascetic way of life even in their fantasies (Apo 1987, 119). We examine the mentality of scarcity in the next section.

THE MENTALITY OF SCARCITY AND NEEDLESS CONSUMPTION

The starting-point in considering the ethos in the sphere of the economy can be seen as related to the question of the allocation of resources. Economic categories like production, consumption or saving are important, and historical experiences of the nation and the people largely determine the prevailing value system and thus the ethos. Finland developed during the last hundred years from a poor Northern periphery into a Nordic welfare society. Education, hard work, the development of democratic institutions, fairly equal opportunities for everybody to earn his or her living and the spirit of free enterprise have all played important roles in this process.

In Finnish proverbs, conventional expressions and folklore, the ideal person has been described as industrious, prudent, persistent, calm and frugal (Heinonen 1998, 12; Stark 2011, 55). These characteristics reflect the fundamental values of the agrarian culture in Finland during the 19th century and the early 20th. The struggle for survival in food production and providing shelter was the first consideration of the everyday lives of most people. Material scarcity and poverty, the austerity of the environment and climate and the unpredictability of life touched

almost everybody (Stark 2011, 388). The peasants were well aware of the necessity to prepare for bad harvests because of harsh experiences in times past (Heinonen 1998, 32–33). Finns had experienced many wars, first as a part of the Swedish Kingdom and then as a Russian Grand Duchy since 1809. During the 19th century they came to suffer the great famine from 1866 to 1868. The estimated mortality rate in normal conditions during the late-1860s was around 50,000 people. However, the excess mortality during these three years was 132,000 (Pitkänen 1991, 207–208). This meant approximately eight per cent in a population of two million people.

A very important economic objective was self-sufficiency. A kind of nostalgia concerning self-sufficiency has emerged in research into elderly people's life-stories (Huttunen & Autio 2009, 250, 258; Stark 2011, 352). Beside being an economic principle in the peasant agricultural economy, self-sufficiency became an important economic policy objective during the 1920s and 1930s (Heinonen 1998, 33, 54; 1999, 77–78). The most important form of self-sufficiency was a small farm. In November 1918, after the Civil War, a new tenancy law was passed. It gave small leaseholders the right to claim the ownership of the farm they cultivated (Peltonen 1992b, 423). The number of small farms increased rapidly after the agricultural reforms at the beginning of the 1920s, and over 50,000 small farms became independent. Agriculture was still the most important source of livelihood in the 1920s. Two small farmers' organisations acted as pressure groups for the small farmer population. (Heinonen 1998, 127–131.) The protectionist economic policy gained strength overall between the world wars, the experience of the Great Depression at the beginning of the 1930s having increased the popularity of protectionism and self-sufficiency.

The principle of self-sufficiency became rooted in the collective experiences of the Finnish peasantry over hundreds of years as they tried to earn their living by practising agriculture in the Northern climate and the harsh natural conditions. Because of uncertainty concerning harvests and possible scarcity of food, saving resources was a necessity. This undeniable fact was behind the mentality of scarcity (Heinonen 1998; 1999). Firstly, saving resources meant saving of *money*. For example, the savings banks encouraged saving among every social group, including the young and children. During the 1930s,

savings in public expenditures and the state budget were carried out. In the years of the Second World War, Finns faced extreme scarcity and strict rationing of food and other consumer goods. Secondly, saving resources meant saving *time*, in practice rationalisation of work, both in material production and in the household. Thirdly, it meant saving *work* by introducing machines. (Heinonen 1998, 32–45; 1999, 79–82.) Economising and the frugal use of goods was taught, especially to housewives by women's household organisations (see, Heinonen 1998; Huttunen & Autio 2009, 250–251). A deeply-rooted aversion of needless and unnecessary 'consumption', dandyism and waste of money dominated ordinary people's idea of consumption in general.

In 1900, some 52 per cent of the consumer expenditures of Finnish households went on food and drink. In Denmark and Norway, the corresponding proportion was 41 per cent. (Laurila 1985, 50–56.) At that time Finland was an autonomous grand duchy of the Russian empire and one of the most agrarian countries in Europe, with a population of 2.7 million people of whom 87 per cent were living in the countryside. Forty years later, the Finnish population was 3.6 million and the ratio of those living on the countryside had fallen to 73 per cent. In 1960, the corresponding population was 4.4. million and the proportion of people living in provincial regions was 62 per cent. At the beginning of the 1960s, one-third of Finns still earned their living in agriculture and forestry. (Heinonen 1998, 54, 247; Peltonen 1992b, 266.) The 1960s was the decade of the breakthrough of the modern consumer society in Finland (Heinonen 1998, 246–256; Heinonen 2000). The rapid structural change is an important explanatory factor behind the Finnish consumer mentality.

An important phase in the process of forming of the modern Finnish consumer society was the rise of the co-operative movement, which took place in the early 20th century. Its roots go back to the work of the Rochdale weavers, who were the pioneers of the co-operative movement that originated in England during the 1840s (Hilton 2003, 36, 80). In Finland, the co-operative movement started originally as producer co-operatives, when The Pellervo Society was established in 1899. The co-operative retail company SOK was established in 1904. The Finnish co-operative movement was divided into two parts in a meeting of

1916: the SOK organization represented the political right, while the so-called progressive co-operatives (E-movement) was established by social democrats and socialists (Heinonen 1998, 154–157). The divide between the two co-operative movements was profound. The progressive E-movement has strongly emphasized consumer issues since the 1920s. They provided consumer information, produced short propaganda films and organized meetings to discuss topical themes of consumerism and inform homemakers about, how to organize household work and consumption efficiently. This forced the SOK organization to respond and start consumer information work later during the 1940s. The war years and the end of the 1940s was a period of extreme scarcity. Both co-operative movements and the household organizations like the Martha Organization, The Agricultural Women and small farmers associations organized a lot of domestic advice given by professional female advisors to alleviate the effects of economically hard times.

The process that led to the breakthrough of the modern consumer society started during the 1950s. Once the indemnities to Soviet Union were paid out in 1952 the consumer markets developed favourably and new consumer goods flowed into the markets. Maija Järventausta-Sorsimo, who worked at the SOK retail co-operative as an adviser, chief of experimental cuisine and later the whole household department talked in an interview about her experiences as an adviser:

I talked about some new products. Somebody there said: “You can’t even say something like that. It is misleading. There cannot be any fine goods in a can.” There is so much barter-economy-spirit in advising, teaching and everything in advisory organizations. The selection of goods started to grow so fast. It was difficult. (Heinonen 1998, 290)

The transition to a modern consumer society took place during a rather brief period from the 1950s to the 1970s (Heinonen 2000, 14–16). The same kind of transformation took place in Germany, despite their major defeat in the Second World War. Although West Germany received Marshall Aid and debtor nations were given relief from the repayments of their debts, the national economic propaganda strongly emphasized the ideals of thrifty consumers and households that did not live beyond

their means (Wildt 2003, 225–227). Thus, stressing the mentality of scarcity was especially necessary in the countries that were on the losing side after the war.

During the 1950s, the extreme austerity was gradually relieved. It can be argued that the modern consumer society broke through during the 1960s, when the material standard of living slowly increased and more economic resources were available to consumers. As mentioned above, the consumer mentality that prevailed before the breakthrough of the modern consumer society and at least until the 1970s and 1980s was that of scarcity. The essential element of the mentality was a moderate and modest attitude towards consumption, the use of money and especially pleasures (Autio et al. 2010, 111). Resisting and preventing needless and unnecessary consumption has also been a marked feature of the Finnish consumer mentality. Peasants acting as agricultural producers must refrain from pleasures and luxury for the future and avoid needless and unnecessary consumption (Heinonen 1998, 33; Autio et al. 2010, 105). For example, in the research material collected by Kaisa Huttunen and the Finnish Literature Society in 2007, which consists of 53 consumer life-stories needless consumption appears as something to be avoided (Huttunen & Lammi 2009, 92).¹ In their life-stories, the consumers do not identify themselves as being large-scale, mass or conspicuous consumers. They emphasise that their consumer choices were based on their basic needs. Many of the writers of the consumer life-stories disapproved openly extravagant and wasteful consumption (Huttunen & Lammi 2009, 93), which strengthens our argument about the dominance and durability of the mentality of scarcity.

Strong disapproval of needless consumption was expressed by several young people in the research material that Minna Autio (2006) gathered for her dissertation. Unnecessary consumption attracted a variety of meanings by way of speaking of dissipation, thrift and ecological ethicality (Autio 2006, 100–106). The youngsters in Autio's research material saw pleasures such as spending time in coffee houses, smoking, drinking alcoholic beverages, partying and even

¹ For more precise description of this collected consumer life-story material, see Huttunen & Lammi 2009; Huttunen & Autio 2009; Huttunen & Autio 2010, 147; Autio, Huttunen & Puhakka 2010, 98.

eating out as unnecessary. Many of them regretted the money spent on these amusements and pleasures. One example of disapproval of needless consumption is stated by an unemployed Master of Science in Economics and Business Administration in a publication on stories written by unemployed people:

Needless consumption decreases, when one has time and an economic reason to look for other pleasures than the swift splendour of consumption. I do not miss those consumption parties, where the living room furniture was replaced according the colour trends, clothes worn a couple of times were taken to the rubbish dump and everyone of driving age trundled up with his or her own banger, polluting the air and wasting natural resources. I do not miss shopping trips with the ferry boats going to Sweden that were closed floating hotels. (Laaksonen & Piela 1993, 188)

This quotation is an example of a critique of needless consumption based on anxiety for the state of the environment affected by increasing consumption.

Eija Stark (2002, 516) has identified disapproval of extravagant consumption in her study as well. Credit, overindulgence and lavish consumption is condemned by the writers of the autobiographical stories in her research material. The abandonment of raw materials and goods when they still were usable is also considered as needless consumption (Stark 2002, 517; 2011, 354). Parsimony is seen as a crucial virtue. Why has parsimony been so very important a virtue? In Finnish society, the landless poor people formed a growing social class in the countryside at the beginning of the 20th century. Their experience of poverty and habituation to fate made them passive and humble (Haatanen 1968, 307–308; Stark 2011, 143). The material wealth of the poor was very modest, and they could easily be identified because of the ragged and dirty appearance that resulted from poor living conditions and the lack of hygiene. Scarcity, shortage and even occasional hunger as well as a battle for survival often concerned women as responsible for the food and shelter of children in the last resort (Stark 2011, 259; Virkkunen 2010, 74–90). The American anthropologist Oscar Lewis has written about the culture of poverty that is very much a culture of material daydreams

and a bid to fulfil these daydreams (Lewis 1989, 260, 456; Stark 2011, 282). The daydreamers often knew that they daydreamed about the unattainable, but the dream kept them going. In life-stories analysed by Kaisa Huttunen and Minna Autio (2009) and Eija Stark (2011, 352), the word consumption was understood negatively in many cases. The writers of the life-stories did not consider themselves as consumers. Besides, the word 'consumer' still had a political sense during the 1950s in Finland: the members of the so-called E-movement or left-wing retail co-operative movement spoke about consumers in their education material and propaganda (Heinonen 1998, 290–291). This characterises the special meaning and political nature of consumption and the consumer in Finland in the first half of the 20th century.

THE MENTALITY OF ABUNDANCE

After the breakthrough of the modern consumer society in Finland during the 1960s, the mentality of consumption gradually started to transform as well. Many new consumer goods like private cars, household machines, home entertainment electronics like television sets and means of modern consumption such as self-service groceries and other new channels of distribution, hire purchase, modern means of communication, advertising and marketing, modern macroeconomic management of demand and increasing consumers purchasing power made the increase in consumption possible. In 1965, the Finnish government enacted a piece of legislation that enabled the gradual transformation to a five-days working week (Heinonen 2008, 5). Thus, Saturdays became holidays and leisure time expanded. The 1970s meant a period of expanding public consumption in public, education and social services. Besides, the public regulation of consumption gained strength, and in 1978 the Consumer Protection Law came into effect.

The Finnish consumer society of the latter half of the 1980s can with good reason be characterised as an affluent society. The economic growth was quite steady and unemployment was not a big problem. The level of general welfare increased, and Finnish society gained on the other Nordic societies as a welfare society (Heinonen 2000, 18). During the latter half of the 1980s in particular the consumption of

culture and leisure services, books and magazines and packaged tours increased significantly in all household groups (Räsänen 2008, 132–140). The opportunity to consume media increased. Cable television expanded its operation, local radio stations started to operate in 1985 and Finland received a third television channel in 1986 (Heinonen & Konttinen 2001, 216–217). An important and economically significant reform was the liberation of financial markets that took place during the decade. This reform enabled easier lending and competition on interest rates between private banks, whereas the Bank of Finland had previously imposed the general interest rate. People began to borrow money to finance even the purchase of consumer goods, and private consumption increased steadily. The Director-general of the Bank of Finland, Rolf Kullberg, labelled the situation as ‘consumer celebration’. This rather moralistic characterisation can be interpreted as a warning against consumption based on consumption credit. People bought new fashionable consumer goods like VHS recorders, waterbeds and baking machines and travelled to distant resorts more than before. However, the 1980s meant a growing awareness of environmental menaces in Finland as in so many industrialised countries.

The consumer celebration of the 1980s ended suddenly with an overheated economy, a severe current account deficit and indebtedness problems for small firms and households. The following decade started with compulsory devaluation of the currency, an unstable economy, bankruptcies and rapidly increasing unemployment. The deep economic depression affected many firms and households severely. Severe long-term unemployment, indebtedness and increasing inequality became the scourges of society. Finland went through a serious banking crisis, which led to mergers, a need for public support and reorganisation in the banking business. (Kiander & Vartia 1998; Kiander 2001.) During the depression, Finnish households reduced consumption of clothes and durables like cars, household machines and furniture as well as traveling. The consumption of stimulants like alcohol and tobacco, eating out and leisure expenditure also reduced significantly. (Ahlqvist & Ylitalo 2009; 51; Maula, Pantzar & Raijas 1995, 7–8.) Some underprivileged people even had to cut expenditure on food and health care. Leisure expenditures decreased by some 14 per cent (Ylitalo 2009, 116). However, after the difficult years of 1991–1992,

economic growth accelerated again, industrial production and exports recovered, slowly but gradually relieving unemployment and bringing the economy back to a favourable growth track.

In 1995 Finland joined the European Union, which increased the import of consumer goods from European countries. The consumer needs bottled up during the economic depression and crisis were relieved by increasing expenditures on consumer goods and services. Consumers who had maintained their jobs also bought new cars, renewed their old machinery and spent money on mobile phones and information technology. For most Finns, the new millennium started with the success of Nokia Corporation and positive expectations for the future. From the 1980s to 2006, consumer expenditure on food had diminished among all social groups and expenditure on housing and transport had increased (Ahlqvist & Ylitalo 2009, 66). The beginning of the new millennium saw rising disposable income for most Finns. Finnish household expenditure on information technology, clothes and shoes increased significantly (Ahlqvist & Ylitalo 2009, 52). Between 2001 and 2006, the disposable incomes of Finnish households increased by 16 per cent and leisure expenditure by 32 per cent (Ylitalo 2009, 117). However, the first decade ended as a new age of uncertainty and diminishing expectations with a global financial crisis caused by the unhealthy development in housing and financial markets that spread from the USA to Europe. Despite the economic recession, strong growth continued in the new economic giants China, India, and Brazil. In these countries a growing middle-class started to adopt consumer habits and consumption styles that had previously been the privilege of the Western hemisphere including Japan and rich oil-producing countries. The globalisation process accelerated.

In the context of socio-economic development, the Finnish consumer mentality of scarcity that was inherited from the earlier stages of consumer society lost its dominant position and a new kind of mentality was emerging. This new mentality, which can be called the mentality of abundance, gained its strength from the affluence and welfare that gradually accumulated as a consequence of economic and social reforms, favourable development, better availability of consumer goods, housing, education, health and social services and a rising standard of

living. During the 1970s and 1980s, the intrinsic features of modern consumer society like media, advertising, fashion and the commercial youth culture were strengthening. The consumers' opportunities to receive stimulus and information about novelties and also to consume grew better than in previous decades. Finland reached the stage of a mature modern consumer society. However, this mentality of abundance meant a new and less moralistic attitude towards consumption.

The new mentality recognises human wants beside needs as drivers of consumer choice. Behind the need discourse is the puritan-inspired utilitarian philosophy of comfort and satisfaction, and consumption based on needs is substantially replacement consumption (Campbell 1998, 237). The want discourse is based on a Romantic-inspired philosophy of pleasure-seeking. Pleasure is a quality of experience which is rather subjective. This division between the two discourses reflects the valuation of production over consumption that has been embodied in economics and many prevailing theories of consumption (Campbell 1998, 238). The emphasis in the new mentality of abundance is moving slightly towards the want discourse, and strong moralistic attitudes towards consumption as such diminish. In a mature modern consumer society, a consumer can enjoy even when abstaining from consumption. The sociologist Turo-Kimmo Lehtonen (1999, 18–35) and his colleague Pasi Mäenpää (Lehtonen & Mäenpää 1997, 158, 163) have discussed interesting examples of Finnish consumers enjoying forbearance. The relationship between self-control and pleasure is an interesting motive of consumer behaviour in a consumer society, because some of the pleasure of shopping is often based on the state of expectation even if the expectations are not fulfilled. Next we are going to examine the consumer ethos. A consumer ethos is an element of a mentality. Since an ethos offers guidelines and includes conceptions of good and bad, it is a value system of culturally typical and commonly accepted ideas of what is acceptable consumption, consumer behaviour and use of money. Our findings are based on the research conducted by ourselves and our Finnish colleagues.

THE CONSUMER ETHOS IN PRACTICE: TOWARDS A MIDDLE-CLASS ETHOS

As argued before, Finnish consumer culture has not been very favourable to the enjoyment of consumption, at least in the rhetoric of everyday language and in ideological terms (Pantzar 1996; Wilska 2002, for instance). In our culture, a puritan model of the prudent, rational consumer who is in control of his/her wants and emotions has been, and still is, influential among consumers. We have a long history of being economical and careful consumers, and self-control is still regarded as a virtue (Lehtonen 1999; Autio 2006). According to Visa Heinonen (1998), this Finnish way of thinking, based on Protestantism, can be interpreted as a 'peasant economic ethic', which derives from the Scandinavian peasant ethos (Sørensen & Stråth 1997), in which a virtuous consumer is seen as economical in both money and material, saving and self-sufficiency being the central moralities. Furthermore, a virtuous consumer was expected to be a hardworking, reasonable and frugal subject (see Table 1). Peasants should also deny themselves pleasures for the sake of future success, and they were guided to avoid unnecessary spending (Heinonen 1998, 33).

The opposing 'twin brother' of the Protestant ethic is hedonistic 'modernism' with its values of instant gratification, pleasure and egoistic individualism (Sulkunen 2009, 58). This hedonistic ethos gradually became established as Finland changed from an agrarian society to a middle-class society (Alestalo 1990, 215–217) – one of paid labour and significant free time, the ideals of consumption being formed accordingly. For Finland, this meant that the way of thinking that emphasised self-sufficiency was no longer as necessary to make ends meet as it had been in a peasant society. Ever-growing consumption, material affluence and enjoying all this had to be adapted to a thoroughly puritan peasant tradition. The agrarian tradition based on self-sufficiency and economising thus began to give way as urbanisation and prosperity spread. According to Puhakka (2010), a middle-class consumer ethos was constructed in its place, allowing oneself the new consumer items and services and enjoyment brought by a higher standard of living, granted that these are carried out in moderation and without boasting (Table 1).

Table 1. Consumer ethos, agency and relation to money, consumption, way of being, working life and hedonism.

	Agrarian / peasant consumer ethos	Middle-class consumer ethos	Consumer ethos of economism
Agency	<u>Producer</u>	<u>Worker, consumer</u>	<u>Consumer, investor</u>
Economy	<u>Frugality</u> Self-sufficiency and frugal use of material: the aim is to make ends meet with as few resources as possible and make one's own as much as one can, to avoid spending money	<u>Moderation</u> Use of funds earned through paid labour: the aim is to spend in moderation the money one has earned on living reasonably comfortably	<u>Maximizing profit</u> Calculating use of money: the aim is to acquire as much material/"quality" with as little money as possible
Consumption	Buying as little as possible from the market	Wanting to 'keep up with progress', but not being the first to get anything new	Utilizing various consumer skills: taking advantage of sales, offers, loyalty cards, social benefits, etc., and incurring debts and investing in order to promote wealth
Way of being	<u>Modesty</u> Self-sufficient, puritanical, communal	<u>Ordinariness</u> Respectability Working and spending to keep the wheels of society in motion	<u>Competence</u> Egoistic, individual, calculating and efficient
Working life	<u>Diligence</u> Working both at home as well as outside it	<u>Working</u> Paid labour, pension	<u>Enterprise</u> Paid labour, entrepreneurship, 'playing' with social benefits, investing
Hedonism	<u>Self-denial</u> Avoiding unnecessary consumption	<u>Entitlement</u> The earned right to enjoyment, based on paid labour	<u>Calculating</u> Enjoying spending and consuming

Sources: Autio et al. (2010), Heinonen (1998).

Puhakka (2010) has argued that the middle-class consumer ethos has established itself in the Finnish way of thinking precisely because of the change in the social structure. The middle-class consumer ethos can be traced back to diligence and thrift, just like the peasant economic ethic (Heinonen 1998), but it differs from a culture emphasising self-sufficiency by stressing the importance of paid labour. As argued before, working has been a powerful unifying factor in Nordic cultures, and one that the upper classes have also deemed appropriate (Stenius 1997, 165). Work is sanctified in a way, and excessive consumption has long been a sign of poor taste – or even a sin (*ibid.*, 164–165). When the modernisation of society democratised livelihood and prosperity and at the same time standardised the ideals of consumption (Sarantola-Weiss 2003), it simultaneously created the middle-class lifestyle. This lifestyle stands for the virtue of moderation, where the changes in consumption habits and ultimately the enjoyment of consumption brought on by a higher standard of living are accepted as long as they follow the principle of “business before pleasure” (Autio et al. 2010). Middle-class consumption is normal, decent “keeping up with progress” earned through work, which disassociates itself from “extravagant spending” based on debt.

Huttunen and Autio (2009; 2010) have pointed out that modern consumer-centric society has required legitimising not only paid labour and urbanisation but also selfish and calculating behaviour as part of acceptable market activity. The researchers call this way of thinking the ethos of economism, in which the focus is on the efficient use of money in the consumer market and on accumulating wealth. Throughout this ethos, a new kind of consumption morality and skills were introduced to consumers, such as how to invest money and use credit cards wisely. According to Huttunen and Autio (2010), the rationality of a consumer is associated with self-interest and utility, the meaning of price being particularly significant. The ethos has drawn its image of human nature from economics, in which the consumer has been presented as a rational and active chooser – *homo economicus*. The rationality of the consumer has been seen as similar to that of an enterprise, both acting to obtain the highest possible benefits at the lowest possible costs (*ibid.*). As Johan Galtung (2003, 112) has argued, emphasizing economism has led to

the legitimization of egoism: nowadays, maximising financial benefits is allowed and is even a desirable behaviour.

According to Huttunen and Autio (2010), the ethos of economism can be interpreted as an extension of the agrarian peasant ethos, in which new consumer skills are appreciated. As society became more urbanised and middle-class, it needed agents wanting as many new consumer goods as possible, and able to invest and incur debts in the 'right' way (Calder 1999, 211–212). Particularly during the 1970s and 1980s, households first started to learn how inflation affects the value of money, and then what the interest rates were for a mortgage. Consumers were also taught to invest in bonds and shares. Experiencing enjoyment such as amusement parks and trips abroad also became part of the lives of more and more consumers. Controlled enjoyment, where one does not live beyond one's means, is thus allowed. By target saving and denying themselves impulsive purchases, consumers are able to transfer this 'extra' money saved to bigger future purchases and moments of enjoyment. Overall there has been a shift from the peasant culture to a market-driven society of paid labour, where the producer has turned into a consumer and an investor. Attitudes towards enjoyment have become more permissive.

CONSUMER MENTALITIES IN COMPARISON

The Consumer Mentality in the Soviet Union

The Soviet Union ran deficit economy in which there ruled a permanent shortage of consumer goods had prevailed since the revolution. As in all other countries of Eastern Europe under the 'real socialist' system, in the Soviet Union the division between the official, formally organised economy of socialism and the informal economy was apparent, consumption being sacrificed in order to increase and control production, and redistribution of goods was based on queues, unofficial social networks and familial or collegial ties. (Gronow 2003, 146; Verdery 1996, 27.) The ordinary Soviet citizens tried to manage their lives with the help of patronage and a network of personal exchange connections called *blat* (Fitzpatrick

1999, 3). Without these connections, which formed the basis of the informal economy, life could be very difficult. *Blat* meant in particular obtaining consumer goods and services in short supply, of good quality and at lower prices, like foodstuffs, other necessities and health services, leisure activities, even housing or child care, when in reality there was always a shortage and queues were omnipresent. (Ledeneva 1998, 28–33.) This particular system developed as result of a combination of shortages and of repressed consumerism. *Blat* developed as “an everyday pattern of behaviour and mentality, penetrating personal relationships, such as friendship, etc. and shaping specific attitudes towards legality” (Ledeneva 1998, 36). It offered solutions to the practical problems of everyday life. However, during the late 1950s and 1960s, the East-European socialist countries transformed into mass consumer societies, and until the late 1970s the corresponding transformation had taken place in the Soviet Union (Crowley & Reid 2010, 11).

The unofficial sphere in the Soviet Union was a very important part of everyday life, or *byt* in Russian, through which the ordinary citizens found content and meaning for their existence by buying the desired consumer goods on the black market or acquiring them with the help of networks (Barker 1999, 22). Thus, the long-lasting scarcity of consumer goods because of the war, the priority for production instead of consumption, commitment to modernism, the scientific world view and socialist ideology emphasizing collective ownership instead of private property were factors coalesced in the mentality of extreme scarcity or the mentality of survival (cf. Fitzpatrick 1999, 227). During the hard times of the 1920s and 1930s, Soviet citizens had no choice but to try to survive. However, it has been pointed out above that the mentality of socialist realism was typical of the Stalinist era from the 1930s to the early 1950s. It can be argued that the mentality of survival and the mentality of socialist realism existed side by side in the Soviet society during the 1930s. The mentality of socialist realism was a one of repressed consumerism. The mentality of survival developed among people who tried to manage their everyday lives despite extreme shortages of food, consumer goods and accommodation.

During the NEP period of 1921–1928, self-sufficiency was prioritized, and household advice and the women’s role in organising households was increased reluctantly following the retreat from socialist goals set

after the revolution (Buchli 2000, 42). However, the efforts to reform and eliminate the domestic realm and emancipate women by promoting communes and co-operative housing gradually faded out under Stalin's rule. At the end of the 1920s, private enterprise was outlawed, and the state became the main distributor of consumer goods and services (Fitzpatrick 1999, 54). The collectivization of peasant agriculture at the beginning of the 1930s led to severe food shortages, rationing and, in 1932–33, even to famine in many regions of the Soviet Union (Fitzpatrick 1999, 4). At the same time, migration to cities continued apace. Between 1929 and 1935, eighteen million peasants moved to the cities, and 33 per cent of the 171 million Soviet people lived in the cities in 1939 (Ledeneva 1998, 75–76). Although Marxist doctrine promised abundance as the consequence of socialism, the everyday experience of Soviet citizens was permanent scarcity of food, consumer goods and even accommodation. The housing conditions in the big cities were terrible, extremely stressful for most people and characterised by the lack of private space (Fitzpatrick 1999, 46–50). The main features of the new trading system during the 1930s were rationing and 'closed distribution', in which goods were distributed at the workplace by employees according to a list. Rationing was introduced during the First World War and was in force at the beginning of the 1930s and during the Second World War, thus almost half of the Stalinist period. (Fitzpatrick 1999, 55–58.) Outside the trading system, there was an illegal black market run by speculators who offered an opportunity to make purchases if one had money and was ready to take risks. There was also a system of privileges that enabled the political elite and Stakhanovites, hero workers named after the record-breaking coalminer Aleksei Stakhanov, a more comfortable life with better hospitals, special stores and rations, even cars and personal vacation homes, and so on. (Fitzpatrick 1999, 74, 95–106; Ledeneva 1998, 97). The system of privileges was never really eliminated in the Soviet Union.

After very hard times at the beginning of the 1930s, the everyday atmosphere for ordinary citizens eased slightly, and merry-making, festivals and carnivals were allowed and even encouraged (Fitzpatrick 1999, 93–95). In 1935, Stalin famously declared: 'Life has become better, life has become more gay'. Champagne became a symbol of the Soviet good life. (Buchli 2000, 78; Fitzpatrick 1999, 90–91; Gronow

2003, 17–18.) In the meanwhile, the party leader Sergei Kirov was murdered. After Kirov's murder, in 1936–1938, Stalin strove to show up his power by implementing a cruel political persecution, the so-called Great Purge. There were also bread shortages and huge bread lines during the winter and spring of 1936–1937 and again in 1939–1940 (Fitzpatrick 1999, 43). During the 1930s, overcrowding in the cities because of migration from the countryside causing a severe shortage of accommodation, an upsurge in hooliganism and organised crime and deeply-rooted corruption were the scourges of the Soviet society. Beside bread and accommodation there was a continuous shortage of many other foodstuffs, shoes, decent clothes and necessities like salt, soap, kerosene, matches, toilet paper and other everyday items (Fitzpatrick 1999, 43–44). During the 1930s, the *blat* connections became increasingly important in organising consumption and obtaining necessities like shoes, boots, coats, fabric, kerosene lamps and train tickets, for instance (Ledeneva 1998, 22). Only the elite of highest-ranked leaders of communist party could avoid the difficulties of everyday life.

Vigilance as an attitude of watchful suspicion was an important part of the communist mentality and led to constant surveillance of possible class enemies in society (Fitzpatrick 1999, 19). At the time of the Great Purge, the Stalinist good life at home was encouraged by 'socialist competition' and production of consumer goods like furniture, radios, phonographs, cameras and electrical appliances (Buchli 2000, 86). The first regular advertisements for consumer goods appeared in Soviet newspapers and journals in 1936. Products like Georgian tea, Muscat wine, Dutch gin, toys, fur coats, textiles, clothes, shoes, soap and canned foods were advertised (Gronow 2003, 80–81). The advertisements had a markedly educational character. The radical reforms of the 1920s were run down, and the contradiction between the world presented in the advertisements and the art of socialist realism and the reality of everyday life grew ever deeper.

American influences became very important for Soviet delegations visiting the USA under the leadership of the Minister of Food Industry, Anastas Mikoyan, in the mid-1930s, and the American way of life and goods and phenomena related to it like ketchup, hamburgers, cornflakes, canned food, jazz music and film musicals were presented to the Soviet

audience, for example, by the popular weekly journal *Ogoniek*. The function of the advertisements was very much educational: people had to be informed about how to use the new products (Fitzpatrick 1999, 90–91; Gronow 2003, 70–74). Thus, somewhat contrary to the American influence or maybe, to be more precise, the American model of modernism and affluent consumer culture and certain consumer goods became desirable in the socialist Soviet Union at least at the level of Stalinist propaganda just before the Second World War. It was one way to divert the attention of the citizenry from political terror.

After the Second World War, four features of the Soviet society were comparable to the corresponding western ones. These were the memory of the Second World War, Western individualism, the role of religion in society and a peculiar consumer culture (Golubev 2011, 417). After Stalin's death, during the so-called 'Thaw' period under Khrushchev's rule, economic growth speeded up, wage differentials were reduced and real income increased. The material standard of living was increasing; Khrushchev made a strong commitment to improve it further and there was a strong sense of optimism (Ledeneva 1998, 97; Millar 1985, 694–695; Reid 2002, 221). Nikita Khrushchev became the First Secretary of the Communist Party of the Soviet Union. Victor Buchli (2000, 137) describes the development that took place under the 'Thaw' period 1953–1964 as a second Cultural Revolution. This meant a return to the principles of the first Cultural Revolution of the 1920s and of Leninist norms as well as a revival of the plain modernist aesthetics (Reid 2002, 218). In the early 1950s, Western dance music, even American jazz and Western-style clothes were popular among the Westernized youth subculture despite harsh criticism aimed at youngsters (Yurchak 1999, 81–82). Khrushchev's economic policy emphasised consumption and made it attainable for many Soviet citizens to a greater extent than before (Crowley & Reid 2000, 12; Reid 2002, 212). However, despite the official rhetoric of 'democratisation' and mass participation, the official policy was authoritarian. In the Soviet economy the prices were centrally fixed and sales were almost unknown, but price cuts of basic consumer goods and food were realised from time to time (Gronow & Zhuravlev 2010, 125).

An important symbolic event in the development of consumer society in the Soviet Union was the re-opening of the GUM (State Universal

Store) department store in Moscow after Stalin's death in 1953 (Reid 2002, 228–229). It was one of the largest department stores in the whole world and offered quite new shopping opportunities to Muscovites. Consumer culture was an important part of the socialist modernisation project already during the first decades of the Soviet Union and was strongly emphasized during the Khrushchev era (Chernyshova 2013, 8). Two important objectives coexisted: the extension of mass consumption and socialist construction and political mobilization (Crowley & Reid 2010, 15). The return to the modernist ideals can be seen in many aspects of everyday life. For example, in design, interior decoration and furnishing, the sources of good taste were the Baltic Republics inside the Soviet Union and, outside the country, contemporary Czechoslovakia and the Nordic countries (Reid 1997, 189; 2002, 244). One important aspect of modernisation in Western societies was the ideology of hygiene. In housing, this was clearly seen as the emphasis on having a clean kitchen and the importance of cleaning one's apartment. In the Soviet Union the discourses on hygiene was reinvigorated in the household advice literature of the 1950s–1960s (Reid 2005, 298). During the Khrushchev period household appliances also started to find their way into Soviet households. However, although 910,000 refrigerators were produced in 1963, they were still expensive and hardly obtainable (Crowley & Reid 2010, 27). Refrigerators became standard home equipment a little later. For the party elite and their wives, there were luxury fashion and furs available, as Larissa Zakharova (2010) and Anna Tikhomirova (2010) have shown.

The relationship between the West and the Soviet Union, however, experienced a crisis at the end of the 1950s and in the beginning of the 1960s. Especially the Cuban Missile crisis and the building of the Berlin Wall in 1962 meant the rapid deterioration in the relationships between the superpowers of world politics, the Soviet Union and the United States. Although, even after the crisis eased off, the tension between the two superpowers remained. Nikita Khrushchev was superseded by Leonid Brezhnev in 1964. Brezhnev's contribution to socialism was further development of privileges and consumerism (Ledeneva 1999, 101). He was the main secretary of the communist party from 1966 to 1982. The Brezhnev period is known both for a certain acceptance of individualism and adaptation of the values

of the 'welfare society' (Ledeneva 1999, 27). The unofficial cultural production expanded dramatically during the 1960s, and the Soviet people bought approximately 50 million Soviet-made tape recorders from 1960 to 1985 (Yurchak 1999, 82–83). However, the period is also known for the occupation of Czechoslovakia in 1968, an ambitious defence policy and intensification of armament, which was very bad for the power relations in international politics. The arms race jeopardised the efforts to improve living standards that were an important goal of the Khrushchev regime (Millar 1985, 695), which tried to achieve large-scale reforms. During the Brezhnev years, micro-level reforms like increasing political and economic freedom among networks and tolerating small private enterprise were implemented. According to Millar (1985, 695–697) these were the main components of Brezhnev's 'Little Deal'.

During the 1970s, the salaries and privileges of the elites were raised and the aim towards increased egalitarianism of the Khrushchev era was rejected (Chernyshova 2013, 6–7). Social relations were increasingly determined by access to consumer goods and services and possession of material objects (ibid. 4). Thus, the socialist goal of eliminating the social classes remained a propagandistic phrase. For example, tourism to Western countries was not totally forbidden, but travelling was very expensive. Travelling for work was possible only for elite groups like top Party officials, diplomats, artists and academics, etc. (Chernyshova 2013, 115). Travel abroad, like access to tax-free shops and luxury products, gradually became more frequent during the Brezhnev era, but only for the *nomenklatura*. Officially, Western influences were often distrusted and judged as suspicious signs of philistinism and capitalistic materialism.

During the 1970s and 1980s under the Brezhnev era, the demand for household appliances and durable goods like tape recorders, colour television sets, sewing machines, washing machines and refrigerators was very strong in the Soviet Union. For example, in 1985 ownership of television sets was nearly 99 per cent among all Soviet households, the ownership of washing machines 72 per cent and of refrigerators 92 per cent (Chernyshova 2013, 186). However, through official channels consumer durables could be bought only with allocation slips, which were given to organisations and enterprises and distributed to selected

employees every year (Ledeneva 1999, 28-29). Furthermore, in 1970 only two per cent of Soviet households owned a car, in 1980 ten per cent and in 1985 fifteen per cent (Gronow & Zhuravlev 2010, 135). The Little Deal implemented by the Brezhnev regime extended to reciprocal economic relationships and to small business and thus reinforced the *blat* personal exchange system (Millar 1985, 702). However, the most frequent use of *blat* was the acquisition of food, as an interviewee of the researcher Alena Ledeneva explained:

In Soviet times the main role of *blat* was to obtain foodstuffs. It was the basis of life. If you had an acquaintance working in a shop, you were able to buy products in short supply. You paid the same price, but an acquaintance meant that you knew when to come, could buy more or even jump the queue. It is difficult to remember now, now we can buy everything, if there is money. (Ledeneva 1998, 28)

As a neighbouring country of the Soviet Union, Finland was already an important holiday destination for Soviet tourists during the Cold War era. The Soviet painter Kudrov reported about his first visit to the West in Finland in 1962 with mixed feelings of fascination concerning the abundance of consumer goods in shops and also bitterness because of his lack of money (Chernyshova 2013, 116). The groups for tours abroad were formed according to implicit principles that people knew from experience (Ledeneva 1998, 101). The first impression of many Soviets travelling to Finland was the abundance and availability of consumer goods in retail shops (Golubev 2011, 417). For example, many dishes at restaurants, foodstuffs in retail shops, private cars, household appliances and furniture appealed to them. After the Brezhnev years, the followers Yuri Andropov and Konstantin Chernenko continued the Little Deal before greater changes started during Mikhail Gorbachev's regime 1985–1991.

Mikhail Gorbachev introduced the policies of *glasnost* (openness) and *perestroika* (restructuring) that started fundamental changes and led to the transformation and breakdown of the Soviet system, the existing socialism in Eastern European countries and, finally, the end of the Cold War. The end of the Soviet Union was followed by several big reforms

aiming at establishing a market economy. Firstly, markets for goods and capital did away with the shortage and rationing, secondly, the property of the state was gradually privatised, and, thirdly, the system of socialist guarantees like lifelong jobs was abolished (Ledeneva 1998, 176). All this led to gradual change and reduction in the significance of the *blat* exchange system. During 1992–1993 in particular, the transformation took place that has been described in the capital, Moscow, as a shift from ‘a totalitarian culture in ruins to a consumer culture in disarray’ (Condee & Padunov 1995, 131). The direct economic consequences were dramatic. The Russian currency exchange rate collapsed and the cost of raw materials, consumer goods prices and accommodation costs increased greatly, wiping out the life savings of many Russians and causing a lot of anxiety and unrest (Condee & Padunov 1995, 137–138). The hard and winding road to the market economy began.

It seems that after all the temptations of the modern consumer society like fashionable clothes, all the fruits of popular culture like jeans, pop music, movies and all the comforts and ‘vanities’ of everyday life were too much to resist. Beside the mentalities mentioned above, the mentality of real socialism and the mentality of survival, there was a youth counterculture, in which the fruits of the Western consumer society were admired. Although it was a subculture and a marginal phenomenon in the cities of this enormous country, the counterculture tempted youngsters who imitated the Western styles in clothing and trends in pop music. The records of the music of Western bands were not officially available; however, recordings by favourite bands like the Beatles, Led Zeppelin and Deep Purple circulated all over the country during the 1970s (Yurchak 1999, 83). Soviet rock bands performed in rock concerts and, despite the strict control, the lyrics of the songs might be ‘ideologically suspect’. The counterculture mentality of the young remained underground in the Soviet Union. However, it laid the ground for the coming of the consumer society that started as a transition period during the 1990s and later gradually led to the adaptation of market economy principles. It remains to clarify by further research what kind of consumer mentalities there are in contemporary Russia. In 2013, the numbers of Russian shopping tourists visiting Finland have been rising constantly and continue to rise.

Swedish Consumer Mentality

Sweden has offered a model of industrialisation among the Nordic countries and in Northern Europe as well. During the 18th century, the Swedish Kingdom adopted the key ideas of the Enlightenment from France and the fruits of the industrial revolution in Great Britain. During the 19th century, industrialisation progressed in Sweden. Universal suffrage was achieved in 1921 (Ehn et al. 1993, 54), and the social democrats won elections. They started to build social security and other welfare systems under their party leader and long-term Prime Minister Per Albin Hansson. The period from 1920 to 1965 was an age of economic growth and formation of the Swedish welfare state (Söderberg 1998, 71). Since 1932, the social democrats created a new political rhetoric that was founded on ideological internationalism and modernity. Modernity became a Nordic and especially a very Swedish project (Löfgren 1993, 181–182; Kettunen 2008, 151). The Swedish modernist vision meant functionality, practicality, rationality and aesthetic simplicity (O'Dell 1997, 128, 137). During the 1930s, class distinction was still significant, there was a considerable cultural divide between cities and rural areas and the housing conditions were still among the worst compared to other Western European countries (Ehn et al. 1993, 184; Löfgren 1990, 21). However, the egalitarian endeavour started to have an impact on the society. The welfare state started to influence everyday life in sewage projects, road construction and installation of electricity and telephone lines binding the Swedes together as members of the 'peoples' home', and the state became a benevolent protector (Löfgren 1993, 165, 186). Social reforms and welfare programs implemented by the social democratic government had an influence in many areas of people's lives. For example, the income distribution became clearly more equitable than it had been before the First World War (Gustavsson et al. 2009). The living standard of Swedes started to rise.

During the Second World War, Sweden was spared from war operations. Nevertheless, there was a scarcity of foodstuffs and a rationing system was established to guarantee the availability of food. However, self-service was tested in Sweden during the war, when the first self-service shop opened in Stockholm at midsummer 1941 (Söderberg

1998, 75). Thus, Sweden was in the vanguard among Nordic countries in establishing the institutions of the modern consumer society. After the Second World War, Sweden was a model country of abundance at least for Finns, who had recently experienced two wars and lived through extreme austerity during the war. In the Sweden of the 1950s, the refrigerator became a symbol of the modern American way of life (Löfgren 1990, 25). During the 1950s, the standard of living was increasing rapidly in Sweden. One significant feature of post-war Swedish society was great social mobility (O'Dell 1997, 131). A good example of this is that in the late-1950s half of the households in Stockholm had access to holiday homes (Söderberg 1998, 77). During 1950–1975, the purchasing power of Swedes doubled (Ehn et al. 1993, 61). Compared to Finland, which suffered from a shortage of consumer goods long after the war, Sweden was already an affluent modernist model country during the 1950s. The abundance increased further during the 1960s. The rational, future-oriented and ready-for-change mentality among Swedes flourished (Daun 1998, 88). The prospects for the future were very positive.

Swedes themselves often claimed that Sweden was the most Americanised country in Europe during the 1950s and 1960s (O'Dell 1997, 114; Löfgren 1990, 26; 1993, 190). Americanisation usually refers to social transformation towards a modern consumer society. It is in one sense a homogenising process as well, and many Swedish families gained access to modernity through adapting the 'American way' of mass consumption (O'Dell 1997, 27). This often meant consumer goods like cars, movies, popular music and other commodities full of narratives and images about America. The same kind of Americanisation took place in Finland at the same time (Heinonen & Pantzar 2002; Heinonen et al. 2003). In addition to O'Dell (1997), also Lundén and Åsard (1992) and Shands et al. (2004) have researched Americanisation from Swedish and Scandinavian perspectives. Petersen and Sørensen (2008) have offered an interesting example of Coca-Cola as a vehicle of Americanisation in Denmark. Ralph Willett (1989) has studied Americanisation in Germany, Richard Kuisel (1993) in France and Reinhold Wagnleitner (1994) in Austria. Wagnleitner and May (2000) have edited an interesting collection of articles on the influence of American Popular Culture. Furthermore, Rob Kroes (1996) and

Victoria de Grazia (2005) have offered valuable overviews of American influences in Europe.

The 1960s was the decade of the breakthrough of young people as a consumer segment in Sweden, as in Finland, as well. At the beginning of the decade, the teenage market grew markedly (Söderberg 1998, 80). Following fashion and popular culture became important. At the same time, people acquired consumer skills from advertising, television, department stores, mail order catalogues, other institutions of consumer society and finally consumer education. The middle-class became a mass of consumers who regarded individuality as its central virtue (Löfgren 1990, 19). The home gradually became an important area of individual lifestyle and furnishings a way to express one's individualism. The magazines and advertisements gave people advice on how to fulfil one's daydreams. The furniture chain store IKEA became a huge success story not only in Sweden but gradually all over the world. Cosiness, improvisation, practicality and informality were emphasised as ideals of furnishing modern Swedish homes (Löfgren 1990, 28). Thus the dominant consumer mentality in the 1950s and 1960s in Sweden seems to be the mentality of modernity. According to Lefebvre (2002, 28, 30, 204–206) one feature of the modern mentality is anxiety over not being fashionable and trendy. The sphere of consumption promised to relieve people of this anxiety with the help of consumer goods (Sarantola-Weiss 2012, 285). The mentality of modernity fitted well into the modern consumer society, Sweden as an industrialised European country being a very good example.

In Finland modernism dominated architecture, design and the organisation of industry and administration. However, the dominant consumer mentality was that of scarcity until the 1970s, because of the retardation of industrialisation and social structural change and scarcity of supply in consumer markets. Finland started to gain on other Nordic countries in the 1980s. Around the turn of the decade and the early 1970s, a critical attitude towards consumerism and awareness of environmental concerns was increasing. Consumption was redefined as a political act rather than as a private right (O'Dell 1997, 163). The environmental concerns formed an obvious reaction to the throwaway mentality that spread as a consequence of the strong economic growth and consumerism of the 1960s from the United States to Europe.

Löfgren (1993, 27) has identified a new mentality that was expressed as flexibility, informality and a new attitude towards possessions, dressing and interior decoration. Instead of ownership, young middle-class people preferred second-hand buying and swapping, and criticised unnecessary and wasteful consumption. The same attitude was observable in Finland as well. However, it was mostly a marginal phenomenon limited to students and academics. During the 1950s, refrigerators, cars and vacuum cleaners were the symbols of modernity, but 'they were on their way to being replaced by wooden shoes, ecology and earth tones in the seventies' (O'Dell 1997, 205). However, there were signs of slight changes in the public discourse on consumption again during the 1980s. The 1980s was a decade of steady economic growth. For example, luxury and fun were used to market furniture, and fashion colonised new territories in the home (Löfgren 1990, 29). In Finland, the mentality of abundance dominated, and it is easy to conclude that the situation was more or less the same in Sweden which was even more affluent and some decade 'older' and more mature as a consumer society. One can tentatively argue that at the beginning of the 21st century both in Sweden and in Finland the mentality of abundance dominated, in which individuality, reflexivity and the fragmentation of society played an important role.

Sweden was a fairly early industrialised country in Northern Europe and was a leading consumer society among Nordic countries during the 20th century. As a rich welfare society, Sweden has offered an important model of development for its Nordic neighbours and many other societies around the world. Johan Fornäs (2007) with his colleagues conducted an interesting research project concerning media, shopping and everyday life in contemporary Sweden. Following the tradition of the German cultural critic, Walter Benjamin, who wrote about the 19th-century Paris, they gathered research material at the Solna Centre near the Swedish capital Stockholm. One of their many interesting findings was that while women dominated the world of shopping, that dominance is about to break down and the commercial space is about to become more equal from the gender perspective (Fornäs et al. 2007, 183–184). It remains for further research to reveal what kind of transformation this will bring to the mentality of consumption.

CONCLUSIONS: TOWARDS THE MENTALITY OF MODERATION

Nowadays, it seems that an ideal citizen all over the world is increasingly a good consumer. National economies and ever larger multinational corporations need consumers to keep the wheels of economies turning. As Frank Trentmann (2006, 21) has argued, the consumer may be a relatively thin, flexible or diffuse identity. However, it is important to remember how the thicker identities have included totalizing and brutal projects like nationalism, fascism or communism. The study of consumers, their mentalities and identities, and of consumption may help in understanding the contemporary world of globalization, increasing democracy and pluralistic politics recognizing the diversity of cultures and tolerance among them.

We have focused in this article on mentality and especially the consumer mentality. We have found that for many historical, social and cultural reasons the mentality of scarcity that greatly emphasizes saving prevailed strongly in Finland during the first half of 20th century up until the 1970s and 1980s. During the two decades following the Second World War, Finland had gone through a rapid structural change and finally a breakthrough into a modern consumer society, where agrarian values and an emphasis on self-sufficiency and saving had previously dominated in the sphere of consumption. The Second World War and its bitter consequences delayed this breakthrough. As late as the beginning of the 1960s, one-third of Finns earned a living in agriculture and forestry. The attitude towards consumption was tempered and even negative. For example, Finnish consumers were set against consuming on credit and lavish consumption, and parsimony was seen as a crucial virtue. Disapproval of needless consumption was an important element in the mentality of scarcity, which had its roots in the experiences of ordinary people (cf. Wildt 2003). Self-sufficiency was a strategy of survival in the harsh Nordic climate where the practice of agriculture required patience, parsimony, and hard work.

In Finland, the first signs of a new mentality of consumption were developing during the 1970s, and during the next decade the mentality of abundance already dominated at least among the urban population and the young. Finland reached the stage of a mature modern consumer

society, in which the role of increasing consumption fed by consumer culture phenomena like mass media, advertising and fashion played an important role. Structural change meant economic growth and social reform during the decades after the Second World War which made Finland a wealthy Nordic welfare society, in which extreme poverty was gradually becoming very rare, income distribution was fairly even and the values of democracy and equality were accepted among its citizens. At the same time, a slowly rising criticism of consumerism and accelerating material economic growth was an expanding attitude among students, people looking for alternative models of social development and environmental activists. The same kind of attitudes or even a new mentality developed in Sweden, which was very wealthy and the leading industrialized nation among the Nordic countries. Sweden had long been a kind of model society for Finns. During the 1980s Finland managed to catch the other Nordic countries in economic and social development.

People's experience of everyday life and consumption in Russia and the Soviet Union differed in many senses from the experience in the Western societies like Finland and Sweden. In the first half of the 20th century, Russia went through revolution, civil war and the establishment of socialism. In the Soviet Union during the Stalin era in the 1930s, the continuing shortages, queuing and even famine caused hardship for ordinary people who tried to manage on their own, live their everyday lives and survive. At the same time, the official propaganda emphasized the supremacy of socialism over capitalism. Stalin and his administration declared the 'better and gay' everyday life of soviet people while political persecution reached its height. People adopted the mentality of socialist realism, but they also had to survive the hard everyday life with lack of food and necessities. After the Second World War and the death of Stalin during the 'Thaw' period of the Khrushchev era, the everyday life became a little easier for common people and the consumer goods industry gained in importance. However, political oppression and the lack of real civil liberties in the Western sense continued. The mentality of socialist realism dominated the Soviet Union until the end of socialism in the late 1980s. The Russian consumer mentalities during the last few decades have not really been scrutinized hitherto. Besides, the emergence of Russian consumer society will be the most interesting

research topic focused on by some scholars thus far (see, e.g., Barker 1999; Caldwell 2004; Chernyshova 2013; Ledeneva 1998; Mandel & Humphrey 2002; Patico 2008). A comparative perspective on the transition of consumer societies may reveal interesting differences and resemblances.

Environmental transition including the element of climate change has been recognized by many scholars as the focal challenges for the future of the earth and the whole of mankind. Many scholars warn about the unsustainability of the contemporary model of economic development, which is still based on the increase in material consumption and use of non-renewable natural resources. It remains to be seen whether the new consumer generations could adopt a new mentality of moderation. Luckily, there is hope. Awareness of the environmental challenges started to increase some fifty years ago during the 1960s. Nowadays, school children learn about the challenges, and many of them have the opportunity to grow up as highly educated and critical citizens. We may hope that the mentality of moderation spreads among future consumers before it is too late. However, the consumers cannot change the world alone. Governments, firms and NGOs all have a great responsibility for the destiny of the earth and mankind.

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Temperance association Koitto's choir visiting the town of Lahti in the 1950s. Photographer unknown (Kansan Arkisto).

A COUNTRY OF DECENT CONSUMERS: THE ROLE OF ALCOHOL IN EVERYDAY FINNISH LIFE IN THE 1950S

Matti Peltonen

WHY FINNISH ALCOHOL CONSUMPTION DID NOT INCREASE IN THE 1950S?

In the 1950s the yearly consumption of alcohol in Finland remained fixed at just under two litres of pure alcohol per capita. This quite modest level had been typical of Finnish consumers for more than one hundred years, and at least from the middle of the 19th century. At certain times, for example during the First World War, consumption fell even lower – in 1916 to about 0.5 litres per capita (Peltonen 1997, 63). At the present time, the amount of pure alcohol consumption is around 10 litres annually.

It is easy to understand that alcohol consumption in Finland had been lower than in the other Nordic countries because the Finnish standard of living was lower, a circumstance exerbated by the First and Second World Wars and the Great Depression of the 1930s. But the fact that the level of alcohol consumption remained the same, and even had a tendency to fall in the late 1950s, is peculiar. This contrasts strikingly with the development of alcohol consumption in Sweden, particularly when it could be expected that a parallel change would have characterised Finnish drinking habits. Why Finns were so different from the Swedes in the 1950s? Why were respectability and decency so important to them? Where had the roughness and restlessness of the immediate post-war years disappeared?

CUSTOMER CONTROL

Finnish alcohol policy was reformed after the Second World War. The aim was to exert a measure of control over the customers of the state alcohol monopoly *Alkoholiliike* (later *Alko*), the only retail outlet in the country besides restaurants where alcohol could be bought legally.¹ The new policy was called ‘customer control’, and was an adaptation of the Swedish *Bratt system* which had been established during the First World War. The Swedish alcohol policy was named after its inventor Dr. Ivan Bratt. All persons who wished to purchase alcoholic beverages had to register at Alko and receive a card, which had to be shown every time they visited *Alko*’s retail shops. Purchases were recorded on the liquor card and on another card that was kept in the shop. This information was transferred to the central database at Alko’s headquarters in Helsinki. A customer could use only one shop, the one nearest to one’s home. Most women could also have a liquor card unlike in Sweden where only unmarried women could apply for the right to be a customer of the Systembolaget alcohol monopoly (Peltonen 2002, 42).

If Alko customers were discovered to have abused their cards by selling alcohol to persons who were minors, did not have the right to buy and consume alcohol, or had bought amounts of alcohol disproportionate to their income and social status, they could be punished. In such cases the customer was at first given a notice that his or her buying habits were not acceptable. The second step was terminating the liquor card. Usually those punished were prohibited from buying alcoholic beverages for a certain period (typically six months). In severe cases the right to be an Alko customer was denied for life. The *Alko* Company employed a special staff with police rights to gather information on suspected customers. These “overseer detectives” contacted local police authorities, authorities in the social services, as well as neighbours and

¹ *Alko*, a state-owned company, had the monopoly to produce, import and sell alcohol in Finland. It could license other companies to produce or import alcoholic beverages, but all retail shops belonged to it. Only *Alko* and licensed producers or import agents could sell alcohol to restaurants, which were monitored by *Alko*’s personnel. *Alko* had been established in 1932 after a referendum concerning the Prohibition Law. In the referendum the majority of voters voted to abolish Prohibition.

Table 1. A Comparison of Alcohol Policy in Finland and Sweden.

	<i>Sweden</i>	<i>Finland</i>
<i>GDP per capita in 1950, 1000 USD</i>	3.9	2.6
<i>Rural population, %</i>	22	46
<i>Number of retail shops for alcohol in 1955</i>	249	96
<i>Number of "liquor card" holders in 1954, mill.</i>	2.0	0.7
<i>Individual rationing in alcohol sales</i>	yes	no
<i>Individual alcohol rationing applied in restaurants</i>	yes	no
<i>Minimum age to apply for liquor card</i>	25	21
<i>Married women allowed to apply for liquor card</i>	no	yes

Source: Peltonen 2001, 361.

family members of customers whose buying habits were irregular or excessive (Peltonen 2001, 361–362).

Compared to the Swedish Bratt system, Finnish customer control was more relaxed. In Sweden, each customer had a specific quota for strong liquor that he or she could buy. The quota was decided by the local alcohol monopoly with regard to the social status and income level of the customer. As well, drinks enjoyed at restaurants were controlled in a similar fashion (Knoblock 1995, Nycander 1996). However, in Sweden individual alcohol quotas were perceived as rights, and consequently the level of alcohol consumption, especially among older and wealthier Swedish males, was quite high. Many experts, particularly in the temperance movement, thought the Finnish system was much better (Peltonen 2001, 364).

Only about a hundred retail shops in Finland sold alcohol in the 1950s, and they all were located in towns, as well as alcohol-licensed restaurants. However, Finnish towns were not so numerous, and consequently many rural customers had difficulties in obtaining alcohol. This led to the widespread practice of using liquids produced for technical and hygienic purposes to obtain alcohol. Such surrogate alcohol, and the illegal production of home-made vodka, was a severe problem during the early 1950s. It is clear that the immediate reason for the astonishingly low level of alcohol consumption in Finland was the restricted supply of alcohol. Hence the main problem is how to explain

Table 2. Data concerning the consumer control system applied in Finnish alcohol policy.

	<i>Cancelled liquor cards</i>	<i>Number of personnel*</i>
1948	43,234	266
1952	15,482	215
1956	17,205	133
1960	13,052	–

*The number of personnel in customer control activities does not include the sales personnel in Alko's retail shops.

Source: Peltonen 2002, 194.

the widespread acceptance of this kind of alcohol policy. Perhaps it was not very popular within all segments of alcohol users – for instance, certain etiquette books, especially those written for “gentlemen” were quite critical of the official alcohol policy and suggested a more liberal alcohol culture, at least for male members of the upper classes. The other classes, farmers in the countryside and workers in towns and cities, were, of course, thought to be not educated enough to consume alcohol in a civilised manner (Peltonen 2002, 101–104). Yet when the writers of these etiquette manuals appeared in public under their own name – and not as columnists under an alias – they supported the official line of strict measures in alcohol policy.

The customer control policy was criticised already in the 1950s. The most severe arguments against the system, however, came from within the system itself. It was seen as ineffective, that its stated goal was not being attained. The bureaucracy required was also expensive and involved a great deal of paperwork to keep its filing system intact. In addition, the methods of punishment for “irregular use of alcohol” were soon discovered to be counterproductive. Cancelling “liquor cards” permanently or even temporarily only created a greater demand for illegal alcohol (Peltonen 2002, 159–160).

The customer control system was discarded in mid-1950s. Personnel were transferred to other jobs and customers' control was relaxed considerably. However, the liquor card system was maintained until

Table 3. Alcohol Consumption in Finland during the 1950s, absolute alcohol per capita.

	<i>Vodka</i>	<i>Other strong</i>	<i>Wine</i>	<i>Beer</i>	<i>Total</i>
1950	0.729	0.658	0.083	0.257	1.727
1955	0.773	0.525	0.346	0.322	1.966
1960	0.856	0.448	0.194	0.349	1.847

Source: Peltonen 2002, 191.

the beginning of the 1970s. Its purpose by that time was to identify customers and help in monitoring their age. The amounts purchased by customers were no longer recorded on the card. Noteworthy is the fact that, although the regulation of alcohol consumption was relaxed in a significant way, the average amount consumed did not rise. In Sweden a similar relaxing of the liquor card system (*Bratt system*) led to a considerable rise in alcohol consumption. To counteract this, the level of alcohol taxation and, consequently, the retail prices of alcohol were raised dramatically after Sweden's 1955 "October Revolution" (Nycander 1996, 199–200).

The customer control policy of the late 1940s and 1950s was replaced by a new alcohol policy which was supposed to favour "mild" alcohol beverages such as wine and beer. This was a principle that the temperance movement could not object to, even though they sometimes announced that they disagreed with the promotion of even milder drinks because it was often seen as a gateway to more serious drinking. In practice, however, very little was done to make wine or beer drinking more popular. The case of wine was particularly difficult because the state alcohol monopoly did not want to diminish its revenue from taxes on alcohol beverages.

FIGHTING THE HEGEMONY OF THE TEMPERANCE MOVEMENT

An explanation for the stable level of alcohol consumption might be found in the structure of the alcohol discourse in Finland. After the struggle to establish the Prohibition Law which lasted from the late 1890s to the end of the First World War, and especially after the era of the Prohibition Law (1919–1932), the Finnish alcohol discourse had many national peculiarities, which resulted from its rather peculiar situation. One of the most salient characteristics of the Finnish situation was that the Prohibition Law was established in one of the most temperate countries of Europe. The level of alcohol consumption was about 1.5 litres per capita at the beginning of the 20th century (Peltonen 1997). At the same time, the Finnish Parliament voted four times with an overwhelming majority in favour of the Prohibition Law; in the first vote the M. Ps were actually unanimous about the urgent need to implement in Finland the strictest alcohol policy of all Europe. The Russian government, who until Finland's independence in December 1917 had the power to make final decision concerning such legislation, finally relented and approved the Prohibition Law in the spring of 1917.

During and after the Second World War the temperance movement regained the strength it had lost after the Prohibition Law was repealed in 1932. The state alcohol monopoly *Alkoholiliike* had to work in an atmosphere where temperance was still regarded, at least in the public discourse, as something valuable. Many M.P.s presented themselves as teetotallers and formed a special and quite influential temperance group within the Parliament. The ideas and opinions of the temperance movement were also taken into account when planning reforms to the official alcohol policy. The temperance movement was also represented in the governing organs of the state alcohol monopoly.

In the eyes of the *Alko*'s leadership, the most difficult remaining aspect of the temperance movement ideology after the Second World War was adherence to the idea of prohibition. It thought this idea was an obstacle to the policy it wanted to promote. The state alcohol monopoly wanted to expand its activities, open new stores to alleviate the inequality between the countryside and the towns, and sell alcoholic

beverages, especially medium-strength beer in all groceries, not merely *Alko*'s own retail shops. Some of the *Alko*'s leaders stated publicly that an increase in alcohol consumption would be no great cause for concern, because the level of consumption was so low that its affects would be harmless. Sometimes Finnish alcohol researchers referred to the level of alcohol consumption in France (about fifteen litres) and joked that Finns still had thirteen litres to consume in order to catch up with the civilised and sophisticated French.

So the state alcohol monopoly in actual fact wanted to increase alcohol consumption and ensure a healthy flow of income from alcohol taxes to finance the state budget. In the late 1940s alcohol taxes comprised about 20 per cent of state revenue and at the end of the 1950s around 15 per cent (Peltonen 2002). If we take the important role of the temperance movement to be a Western characteristic of Finnish alcohol culture, then the considerable contribution of alcohol-related income to the state revenue – and the important effect of the state in alcohol policy – is definitely one of its most conspicuous Eastern characteristics.

Following a schism in the temperance movement in the early post-war years, an interesting development occurred. Many members of the Academic Temperance League felt that the Prohibition Law had failed and thought that prohibition represented something old-fashioned and unattractive for the younger generation who had just witnessed the war. At the forefront of these developments was the young social scientist Pekka Kuusi, a member of a famous family in the temperance movement. Pekka Kuusi's criticism of prohibition ideology received support from *Alko*'s leadership, especially the vice-president of the company, Arvo Linturi (Peltonen 1991, 224–226; Peltonen 2002, 31–35). Linturi had already during the late 1930s studied the alcohol systems of other European countries, and began to pay special attention to the Swedish alcohol policy already described above.

Soon Linturi and Kuusi joined forces and an unusual popular movement was created with the help of members of the Academic Temperance Movement and *Alko*. Its purpose was to promote good manners among citizens and introduce moderation in drinking habits. The role of *Alko* was mostly that of financing the activities of the movement, called *Kansalaisryhti* (Upright Citizens) and later *Suomen*

Kansan Ryhtiliike (The Virtuous of the Finnish People²). Alko's leadership, however, also took part by deciding on the priorities of activities. The state alcohol monopoly tried to take advantage of the Olympic Games that were being held in Helsinki in 1952. Temporary alcohol legislation was established; early August 1952 tourists could buy alcohol without having to register as *Alko* customers for possession of a liquor card, as was otherwise required. Restaurants could serve alcoholic drinks before twelve noon and without obligatory food orders, as was thought customary in "civilised countries".

The Helsinki Olympic Games of 1952 were also used as a pretext for organising specific campaigns to teach the Finnish public to behave in a civilised manner during the great event. These campaigns involved the *Upright Citizen's Movement*, and ideas about proper ways to behave with alcohol were prominent. Specific book of manners was also produced. It was paid for by the state alcohol monopoly and its publishing was organised using the *Upright Citizen's Movement* as a cover (Peltonen 2002, 78–128). The *Upright Citizen's Movement* was a curious mix of popular movement and state control. This can perhaps be understood when considering the fact that many of those active in *Ryhtiliike* had been involved with the controlling and management of public opinion during the Second World War. The movement lost its original purpose in the 1960s and *Alko's* the tight control of it was relaxed.

THE IMAGE OF THE DRUNKEN WORKER

The main problem of the state-sponsored temperance movement was that it was not consistent in its thinking. It wanted to increase alcohol consumption, but at the same time it surrendered to the idea of 'Finnish Boozing', created during the struggle over the Prohibition Law at the beginning of the 20th century. This notion held that although Finland

² The words *Kansalaisryhti* and *Suomen Kansan Ryhtiliike* are almost impossible to translate into English. A similar but older Russian organisation was called The Guardianship of Public Sobriety (Herlihy 2002, 14–35). *Ryhtiliike* was a quite typical organisation for the improvement of manners ("reform of popular culture"). See e.g. Hunt 1999.

Table 4. The frequency of drunken arrests in the Nordic countries in 1969, arrests per 1000 inhabitants over 15 years of age.

Finland	40.0
Sweden	17.5
Norway	12.2
Denmark	5.1

Source: Bruun 1972, 300.

was the most temperate country in Europe, it still needed prohibition because even a very small amount of alcohol could create tremendous problems for Finns. It was thought that a hereditary genetic failure in the Finnish population meant that, while drunk, Finns behaved more violently than any other nationality. This Finnish myth is similar to attitudes towards Irish drinking habits in late 19th and early 20th century America.

Although the temperance movement usually spoke of this problem as common to the entire Finnish-speaking population, most public contributions to the alcohol discourse were from representatives of the middle and upper classes, who either intentionally or not, often conveyed the idea that 'the people' meant only farmers and workers. This fostered *the image of the drunken worker*, which was still very prevalent in the late 1940s and 1950s in the discourse of leading policy-makers. The image of the drunken worker also penetrated into sociological research on alcohol problems and even sociological textbooks of the period (Kuusi 1948; Sariola 1954; Allardt & Littunen 1958).

The image of the drunken worker was given extra credibility by the statistics on drunken arrests. Appearing publicly in a drunken condition had been criminalised in 1733 by the king of Sweden and in Finland it remained classified as a criminal act until 1969. Drunken arrests largely concerned the male working population in the towns. Although numerous, they only involved a limited number of mostly homeless persons who were arrested again and again. So the astonishingly high level of drunken arrests reflects the peculiar history of the legislation and the difficult housing situation in the post-war decades (Taipale 1982). During the General Strike of 1956 the image of the drunken

worker was used by the conservative press to discredit the morality of the protesting workers. This kind of labelling had the desired effect among the working-class activists, who were always eager to emphasise the decent behaviour of the working class.

Developments were significantly different in post-war Sweden, where the temperance movement took the lead in criticising the Swedish liquor-card system. The ideological leadership of the temperance movement materialised in an important parliamentary committee, which conducted several investigations in order to reform Swedish alcohol policy. A favourable picture of the Finnish system was presented in these volumes published in the late 1940s and early 1950s. Swedish alcohol policy was relaxed in 1956, when the Bratt system was finally abandoned. The first consequence was an immediate rise in alcohol consumption which then had to be curtailed by raising alcohol taxes. The fact that the leaders of the temperance movement began to criticise alcohol policy also gave freer hands to the working-class movement, which was encouraged to join or at least support its liberalisation (Peltonen 2001). The case of Finland was different from Sweden because the Finnish temperance movement supported *Alko's* official alcohol policy, although occasional critical voices within the temperance discourse called for developing Finnish alcohol policy more in line with Sweden's Bratt system.

THE LACK OF INTELLECTUAL TOOLS

It is difficult to understand why the class view of alcohol consumption prevailed so strongly among the Finnish intellectual elite in the post-war decades. Perhaps it could be explained by the fears which the more right-wing members of the elite felt after the war, when the banning of the Communist Party had to be lifted on account of the Paris Peace Treaty of 1947. Moreover, political prisoners were released from prisons and were allowed to participate in political life as equal citizens. Under these circumstances Finnish society was expected by many of its elite members to be democratised by "outside forces". This fear of democracy in action created an unhealthy atmosphere towards the end of the 1940s, known as the "years of danger". It is easy to see, however, that this sentiment was not just apprehension about the growing strength of

the Soviet Union, but had as a major ingredient a view of the working class being unable to participate in normal society. It was so ingrained in the tradition of the Finnish elite that the working class should be kept out of political life and effectively ghettoised that the democratisation of political life was seen as a significant threat (Peltonen 1991, 222; Peltonen 2002, 14–18).

The discourse on the drunken worker was part of the more general post-war sentiment, although the image had a long history in European political thought. The attempts by Pekka Kuusi and the *Ryhtiliike* popular movement he founded, to view alcohol problems and temperance in a new way show how strong the traditional image of the drunken worker still was in the late 1940s and in the 1950s. It is clear that Pekka Kuusi and others did not see the situation clearly enough and made no extra effort to change the linguistic expressions they used to describe alcohol problems. Although Kuusi spoke more often than most of his associates of the alcohol abuse being a problem of Finns rather than only of the working class, even he did not clearly and strongly distance himself from the class view of alcohol problems. Even the leading revisionist Kuusi was caught in the web of the hegemonic discourse and ended up repeating the slogans of the most conservative temperance ideologists (Kuusi 1948, *passim*; see also Verkko 1949). So even those wishing to liberalise Finnish alcohol policy and increase consumption ended up spending their energy and resources on achieving exactly the opposite. They could not say in public what they truly thought.

This situation can also be described in Lucien Febvre's style as a lack of proper intellectual tools for speaking (and thinking) otherwise (Febvre 1982 [1942]). In the same way that it was impossible for Rabelais to be an atheist in sixteenth-century France, so too was it difficult in the 1950s for Finnish intellectuals to speak of alcohol consumption in a neutral way. At the time there were only two alternatives to the image of the drunken worker. Firstly, in the etiquette books of the elite, alcohol could be described in neutral and sometimes even positive terms – particularly when the writers were male – as something relaxing and fun as mentioned above. In some Finnish etiquette books of the period strong drinks were openly admired and the official alcohol policy was ridiculed. Secondly, working-class males themselves could often speak

favourably of vodka and give colourful descriptions of the drunken states and terrible hangovers they had experienced. It is, of course, clear that neither of these discourses could be used in public by those who were responsible for alcohol policy.

It was only in the 1960s that one group managed to create a discourse in which Finns and alcohol were connected in a non-alarmist way (Soikkeli 2003). This was the Finnish Breweries Association which in its massive advertising campaign defending the position of Finnish beer producers after the EFTA free trade treaty from 1961 allowed the import of beer from EFTA-countries in 1964. The campaign lasted from 1964 to 1970 and its main slogan was “Finnish – Of course!” (Turunen 2002, 183). In this campaign, directed mainly against the Danish Carlsberg and Tuborg brands, a new image of the Finnish alcohol consumer was created. And that was, you could leave a Finn alone with a glass of beer without fearing devastating consequences. Finnish consumers of alcohol were no longer described as uncultured, they were no longer seen as brutes seeking only intoxication and were no longer accused of starting fights when enjoying even the smallest drop of alcohol. This campaign by the brewery industry represented a remarkable change in the Finnish alcohol consumption discourse. The new medium of television provided massive support to this new alcohol discourse in the public sphere. Opinion polls showed that the attitudes of citizens during the 1960s also became more liberal (Mäkelä 1979, 176). And finally, by January 1969, instead only of about a hundred Alko retail shops, Finns could purchase medium-strength beer from over 50 000 outlets. At the same time the temperance movement lost its general appeal. But it was not only the temperance movement that lost its almost hegemonic position vis-a-vis alcohol policy at the end of the 1960s – the state’s grip on alcohol policy began to loosen and the role of private enterprise, particularly breweries, began to grow.

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Soviet First Deputy Premier Alexei Kosygin with president Urho Kekkonen at the Rautaruukki iron works in Raahе 1977. Photographer unknown (Kansan Arkisto).



IMAGINING ECONOMY

Finlandia Newsreels Building Up shared Imagery in the 1950s and early 1960s¹

Minna Lammi and Päivi Timonen

INTRODUCTION

The modern Finnish market economy and consumer society was not born out of a void. Finland's small economy has led the country to seek economic co-operation and enter trade with its neighbors throughout its history. After the Second World War these connections needed reconstruction. In a bipolar world a policy of neutrality was at the core of the Finnish national strategy. It made it possible for Finland to cooperate with the Soviet Union as well as with western EEC and EFTA countries. Trade with the Soviet Union was of major importance for the Finnish economy all the way until the collapse of the Soviet economy. The position between the east and the west required understanding of both eastern planned economy and western market economy.

The transition from an agrarian society to an urbanized industrial and service society called forth a change in the production and social

¹ This paper is a part of the research project *Imagining Economy in Finnish Advertising and Journalism*, which studies cultural representations of economy in the Finnish public sphere from the early 1950s to the new millennium. Historically the study covers a fair part of the development of the Finnish consumer society (Peltonen et al. 2003; Lammi 2006).

structures. After the Second World War the intensification of economic exchange turned Finns into modern economic actors, resulting in new modes of economic discourse that proliferated in the Finnish media. Furthermore, changes also occurred in people's attitudes towards the new economic system and their role in it. Finns were advised, educated and shaped to operate in a market driven consumer society long before the birth of the modern consumer.

Connections between policy making and economy in trade have been analyzed before (e.g. Aunesluoma 2003). Economy and culture have been viewed as a comprehensive whole by sociologists, historians and anthropologists. Furthermore, the notion of trust has been a long-lasting question of reflection in social sciences from Max Weber (2009 [1927]) to contemporary scholars such as Dasgupta (1988) and Gambetta (1988). Sahlins (1978) has stressed the importance of regarding economic activities as "expressions of culture" and "not the antithesis" (Sahlins 2004, xiii). In this view economy as a cultural system denaturalizes both market capitalism and modern economics by showing how the "cultural" aspects of a society are "economically relevant" (see Weber 1922, 165).

However, previous research has not fully considered the consequences of how economic representations have been used as means for integrating citizens in a more abstract way into society with new possibilities for self-realization and new obligations and needs. The economic representations are a powerful way to arrange private observations into a shared imagery. It can put forth an entirely new world of imagination, including new economic thinking. For us, this entails notions like what does it mean to be a consumer, what are the roles of various market actors, and above all a shared understanding of modern economy activity. With modern economic actors we mean those who make the markets, new actors that were not common in the former agrarian culture, but are crucial in modern market economy.

The aim in the present chapter is to provide an empirical analysis on how economic systems were featured in Finnish newsreels in the 1950s and early 1960s. Finland, as a country between the east and the west, adapted its economy and trade both to eastern planned economy and western market economy. The question is, how were the different economic systems featured in the newsreels? What were the differences

put forth, who were the main actors, what kind of a material world was presented and how was Finland positioned in this?

NEWSREELS CHOSEN FOR STUDY AND RESEARCH METHOD

In this chapter we examine Finlandia newsreels from the mid 1950s (1954, 1956 and 1957) and the beginning of the 1960s (1961 and 1962). The sample is based on a principle applied in the research project of choosing the sample years based on the occurrence of important events. The data were chosen from the sample years by picking out from the content listings material dealing with money, businesses, trade, consumption, production, and the national and private sector economy. On the basis of the data, we have listed the dates according to the original classification dates. A random sampling was taken of the dates so that one half of the dates fell into the sample. With this technique, a total of 81 Finlandia newsreels (in Finnish Finlandia-katsaus, later FK) were selected for the data. The newsreels were magazine-type by structure: One 7–8 -minute reel included several topics. Sports, arts and exhibitions were common subjects. The foreign sequences could deal with, for example, scientific discoveries or the conquest of space. Around two hundred inserts in the sample newsreels dealt with economic issues.

The Finlandia newsreels were produced by Suomi-Filmi, the largest short film producer in Finland in the 1950s and 1960s. The films were mostly black and white and they did not include authentic sound, such as interviews or music. The soundtrack was made up of background music and the narrator's speech. The amount of narration was usually very limited, the narrator would, for example, explain who was speaking at an event but not comment on the content of the speech. The narrative lines usually consist only a few sentences, even if the visual material goes on for two, three minutes. This expands the significance and role of the visual material in the newsreels. After the narration, music starts to play in the background. The style reminds of the era of silent films when live music was played in theatres in the background of films.

This chapter proceeds from the perception that films are products of culture which are influenced both by the prevailing production structure and the audiences. By shaping worldviews, general opinions, values, attitudes and behavior, films are an important forum for exercising power in society (Kellner 1998, 46–47). We emphasize equal attention to discontinuities and insignificant-looking developments as to continuities or impressive changes. We are interested in both the apparent and the hidden meanings of films, and their historical context.

In what follows below, we will examine the visual and textual approaches applied in film in the economic system developing in Finland after the Second World War. In our reading of the data, we drew from the tradition of social science film research, where media material and especially moving images are examined as a historical phenomenon. It places emphasis on how films are made under specific circumstances and how they serve specific tasks (for example Bordwell 1985, 2005, 2006; Bordwell, Thompson 1986, 1994; Bordwell, Staiger, Thompson [1985] 1996).

This article shows how the media contributed to emerging features in economic systems. It offered economic imagery to Finns for organizing social experiences. In the following we will illustrate that films concentrated on building up economic thinking. Furthermore, we will discuss how eastern planned economy, western market economy and their connections to Finnish mixed economy were featured. The findings suggest that newsreels were used to strengthen overall trust in Finnish policy, industry and political leaders.

FILMS TEACHING NEW ECONOMIC THINKING

Short films played an important part in public outreach and educating the public towards a new kind of economic thinking (Lammi 2006, Lammi & Pantzar 2010). Especially the 1950s were a golden age for both feature and short film production. There were two big companies producing feature films in the country, Suomi-Filmi and Suomen Filmitölkki (SF), which partly ensured competition as well as continuity in the field

(Laine 1995, 74–75). Short films sold well because movie theatres had an interest in showing tax reduction films² before the main feature of the evening.

Newsreels, in a similar fashion as the other tax reduction films, were shown in movie theatres as a “prelude” to the main feature, which meant that they received large numbers of viewers. Today advertisements and trailers are shown in the same slot. Newsreels became common practice in Finland in the late 1940s. A law enacted in 1948 required that in newsreels with a length of 200 meters or more at least 100 meters of the footage had to be shot in Finland. In many of the newsreels, the foreign material was usually featured at the end, as a “kicker”. Films with tax reduction status were required to be screened in conjunction with a particular feature film: The objective was to keep movie theatres from running the same, old tax reduction films week after week (Repealed Act on Stamp Duties 1948; Uusitalo 1965, 73–77; Uusitalo 1977, 171–179). The subjects of the newsreels were usually entertaining, and in the domestic material the share of sports, recreation, consumption and entertainment was high. Some of the events that were shown in the newsreels were also reported in newspapers. Therefore, the newsreels could also visually complete what movie-goers had already read in newspapers.

Various companies in Finland produced newsreels, but most of them did not stay in business for long. Finlandia-Kuva, which was initially owned by Aseveliliitto, an association supporting soldiers on the front and their families, was established to produce newsreels on the war, but as the military operations turned into trench war, more was required than mere footage from the front. Aseveliliitto sold Finlandia-Kuva to Suomi-Filmi in 1945, which continued producing Finlandia newsreels up until the tax reduction law was repealed in 1964. The Finlandia

2 The system of giving short films a tax reduction status, which began in 1933 and was created to invigorate the film industry, established this exceptional type of film for the following three decades to come. Since short films portraying business and industry qualified as tax reduction films, an active market for commissioned films was also born. Besides commissioned films, newsreels were a significant genre of short film, starting from the years of war. The tax reduction practice kept the volume of produced short films high all the way up to 1964, when the system was abandoned (Uusitalo 1981, 283).

newsreels were one of the most the longstanding and significant newsreel series produced in Finland (Harrivirta 1983, 108–115; Ristimäki 1996, 257–259; Uusitalo 1965, 76; Uusitalo 1977, 173, 201, 203). It is for this reason that we chose as the focus of our study the Finlandia newsreels, which regardless of their popularity haven't been researched to any larger extent before.

The arrival of television in the late 1950s and in the 1960s had a tremendous effect on the Finnish film industry. Furthermore, it rendered the movie theatre newsreels redundant. Along with the end of the tax reduction system, newsreels and documentaries moved over almost entirely to television, and the filmmakers had no market for much more than advertisement and commissioned films (Toiviainen 1983, 115; Uusitalo 1984, 222–226). Newsreels can be seen as a precursor of today's news programs both in Finland and worldwide. (Dorté 2002, 239–245.)

FINLAND IN THE SAMPLE YEARS

The sample is based on the occurrence of important economic events in Finland's history. We have chosen 1954 as our first sample year. This was the year when wartime rationing ended in Finland and sugar, coffee, rice and margarine coupons were abandoned. From the 1950s we have also picked out the years 1956, when Juho Kusti Paasikivi stepped down and Urho Kekkonen was elected President, the country drifted into a general strike and Finland joined the UN; and 1957, when the economic crisis was resolved through devaluation of the Finnish mark and western foreign trade was deregulated. As our sample years from the early 1960s we chose 1961, when Finland concluded a free trade agreement with the European Free Trade Association, EFTA; and 1962, when discussion on consumer policies started to gain momentum both internationally and in Finland.

Up until 1955 the parliament would annually renew a special law that enabled the exercise of wage and price regulation in Finland. Balance was sought in labor market relations through agreements between the Rural Party and the Social Democrats, as well as trade unions. When the Parliament ceased to renew the law in 1955, the pressure on prices was

lifted, which could be seen as a rise in the prices of e.g. rents, services and agricultural products. The negotiations between the interest groups came to a gridlock and the government of Prime Minister Kekkonen faced serious problems. Kekkonen was elected President in 1956 when he resigned from his post as prime minister. In March, both a general strike and a partial delivery strike imposed on agricultural products were launched, as the government was no longer authorized to regulate prices or wages. The strike ended at the end of March when the government threatened to enact emergency law, and the Confederation of Finnish Employers, STK, for its part, yielded to the wage demands (Pihkala & Soikkanen 1982, 363–364; Jussila et al. 2006, 260–261, 265).

The process of developing the Finnish national economy towards market economy and liberalization of western foreign trade had already begun in the late 1940s, after an opposite tendency during the interwar years. Finland became a member of the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund (1948) and GATT, which acted in the interest of increasing international trade (1950). The YYA Treaty (The Agreement of Friendship, Cooperation and Mutual Assistance) with the Soviet Union defined, alongside the Paris Peace Treaties, foreign policies and international relations. The year 1955 was another turning point in Finland's international positioning: Finland joined the UN and the Nordic Council, which had been founded three years earlier. Meanwhile in Western Europe, plans were progressing for the development of future integration.

The weakening international economic trends started to affect Finland after the mid-1950s, too, and the growth of production was stalled. Sawn timber, pulp and paper still brought in the largest part of the export revenues. The economic crisis of 1957 was triggered in the autumn of that year with a devaluation of the Finnish mark, combined with measures to deregulate western foreign trade. Through the freeing of western trade, the country shifted towards a new era of international integration (Pihkala 1982, 370; Pihkala & Soikkanen 1982, 364; Jussila et al. 2006, 276–277; Kuisma 2009, 197–199).

The transition to open economy led to deep social and political changes as politics was no longer predominated by the rift between the Reds and the Whites that had prevailed since the civil war (1917–1918) (Kalela 2005, 205–206). In the early years of the decade, relations to

Western Europe were negotiated from the framework of maintaining the special status of the Soviet Union in Finnish foreign policy. In a discussion held in September 1960, Nikita Khrushchev and Urho Kekkonen reached an agreement on how Finland could look after its important markets in an integrating Europe without endangering its relations with the Soviet Union. In 1961 Finland concluded a free trade agreement with EFTA, which was formed by the countries that remained outside the European Economic Community. Around the same time, Finland entered similar agreements on trade relations with the Soviet Union as with the EFTA countries (Jussila et al. 2006, 279).

Internationally the question about consumers' roles and rights came under discussion when U.S. President John F. Kennedy delivered a speech on consumer rights in the United States Congress in 1962. Subsequently, the construction of consumer policies, in their modern form, began also in Europe, with the objective of increasing consumer safety and legal protection and ensuring the rights of consumers to information and being heard as a market participant. The first consumer policy body in state government was Kuluttajain neuvottelukunta (Consumer Advisory Committee), founded in 1962.

EASTERN ECONOMIES CONCENTRATED ON INDUSTRY, WESTERN ON CONSUMPTION

Economy is featured in the newsreels in the form of ceremonious events, state visits, exhibitions, inaugurations and spectacular novelties. This is the key difference when they are compared to other tax reduction films of that time, which usually centered on introducing new, commendable practices and industrial production (Lammi 2006). Two thirds of the inserts in the Finlandia newsreels deal with exhibitions, official visits and other ceremonious events. Less than a third of the content deals with introducing new products and devices, or other novelties.

Eastern economies were keen to showcase the success of their large-scale industries, such as the machinery industry. The Soviet Union, Hungary, Poland and Czechoslovakia organized exhibitions and trade fairs where they presented the achievements of their industries (e.g. FK 248 from 1954, FK 319 from 1957, FK 322 from 1957, FK 338 from

1957, FK 512 from 1961). The fairs mostly took place in Helsinki, but images from these events spread out to cities and rural areas all over Finland through the newsreels.

The featured achievements in science especially concentrated on space and atomic science in the Soviet Union. "Besides the numerous scientific methods and atomic industry raw materials in the exhibition hall, the fair also showcases equipment designed to study nucleus radius, as well as a designs for the Soviet Union Science Academy nuclear plant", were the words in which the exhibition was presented in the film to President Kekkonen (FK 322 from 1957).

The importance of public appearances was especially recognized in the context of international policy and contacts between states. Especially meetings, arrivals of foreign diplomats and official ceremonies have been central in the long tradition of public presentation (e.g. Koski 2005). The newsreels strongly highlight the trade relations between Finland and the Soviet Union and the mediating role of President Kekkonen. In comparison, the role of the former president, Juho Kusti Paasikivi, was invisible, and he was rarely shown in the newsreels. Urho Kekkonen, on the other hand, had a strongly visible public presence already when he was Prime Minister, and conspicuously utilized publicity throughout his political career.

In the 1950s and 1960s the idea of President Kekkonen watching over the nation's interests, his 'gaze', played an important role in assuring the public. The President's visits to trade fairs and factories were staple material in the Finlandia newsreels. In different shots, his enthusiastic eye inspects Polish, Hungarian or Czech products on display in the Helsinki Trade Center (e.g. FK 512 from 1961).

The newsreels also show President Kekkonen building trust in and demand for the products of Finnish industries. The wide range of production and industrial knowhow is presented to state guests in production plants and at testing grounds (e.g. FK 536 from 1961, FK 544 from 1961). Especially high government officials from the Soviet Union were taken on tours that lasted several days, showcasing the Finnish metal, wood processing and textile industries (e.g. the newsreels on Nikita Khrushchev's visit in 1957 FK 333–335, or the newsreels on Leonid Brezhnev's visit in 1961 FK 560–562).

President Kekkonen was the nation's number one trade negotiator and, for example, the signings of trade agreements (e.g. signing of trade agreement between Finland and the Soviet Union in 1962 FK 631) or the handing over of ice-breakers built in Finnish dockyards (FK 351 from 1957) were ceremonious moments that were also popular subjects for the newsreels.

While the newsreels featuring planned economy emphasized the role of the state as an actor in economy, in western market economy state actors were nearly invisible, yielding space to private companies. The newsreels showed how a new bank building in New York was built mostly from glass and how modern its interior was (FK 250 from 1954). IBM was mentioned in connection with an exhibition celebrating the work of Leonardo da Vinci. The fair was organized by IBM and held in the Stockmann department store (FK 230 from 1954). The exhibition "America Today" focused on home appliances (FK 524 from 1961).

During the 1950s and 1960s planned economies did not concentrate on representing consumption, although politically it was a central concern and symbol of power during the Cold War (Reid 2002). Instead of consumption, industry and science were heavily emphasized in their interests. While western economies shared this interest to display their knowhow in science, the featured production was not heavy industry as in planned economies but consumer-oriented and targeted to market-driven consumer societies. A good example is a Finlandia newsreel (FK 299 from 1954) that shows a new direct flight connection from Helsinki to New York operated by Pan American Airways. During an industrial exhibition the Stockmann department store sold products from America and entertained customers with the music of the U.S. Air Force Band (FK 526 from 1961).

FINNS WERE SEEN AS WORKERS AND CONSUMERS

During the period under study, Finland was taking important steps from an agrarian society towards consumer and market economy and liberalization of western foreign trade. Along with the reparations

following the Second World War, the national income declined and the war reparations directed capital and labor into the metals industry (Pihkala 1982, 342). After the war reparations program ended in 1952, economic development was steered by the expansion of international markets and scientific/technological progress.

The inserts in the newsreels introducing production processes were backed by a longer tradition of production-centered films. Factories and their production processes were already actively introduced in Finnish short films in the 1920s and especially the 1930s. The main emphasis in these films was on the machinery. The films mostly focus on what the machines do and how effective they are. The workers just stand by the machines, nameless, and usually faceless, too. The film serves as an eye through which people get to see for themselves that an industrial product is usable, hygienically manufactured and safe. The camera brings into the consumers' view the preciseness and high level of hygiene of the processes, which would otherwise remain invisible (Lammi 2006; Lammi and Pantzar 2010).

The method of filming machines was similar in both the newsreels and the other short films of that time. The machines were usually shown in effective close-ups, with glimmering cogs, wheels and other moving parts featured in rhythmic and fast motion. Technological development was often associated with national identity and new technology made the rebuilt, renewed country stronger also on this front. The idea of increased welfare through machines, familiar from the first decades of the century, was perhaps no longer connected with just the machines but, more so, with industrialization (see e.g. Kettunen 1994, 210).

In addition to the effectiveness of industrial production, the camera also reveals problems that are invisible to an uninformed outsider, and how they are dealt with. The viewers get to see, for example, an electric eye which in a coffee roastery separates the "rogue beans" from the good beans (FK 506 from 1961), or the camera focuses on modern scales where a policeman is weighing trucks on their way to a flimsy and weight-restricted bridge (FK 512 from 1961). The markets do their business and the viewers can rest assured and go on with their lives.

Featured strong in the contents of the Finlandia newsreels were industrial high points, such as the completion of the construction of a tricot factory (FK 253 from 1954), the launch of an ice-breaker

(e.g. FK 228 from 1954) or the roofing celebration of the new Otava publishing house building in Keuruu (e.g. FK 238 from 1954). In the other short films the emphasis was usually on industrial processes, while the newsreels preferred to highlight ceremonious events. Also, it was important to show that the events were attended by prestigious guests. The aspects of 'attendance', making appearances or achieving something new, played a more important part in the newsreels than the production processes.

Educating the public to adopt new practices also played its own part in the building of trust. At the opening of Finland's first motorway, the public is told that the left lane is meant for overtaking and the road is not meant for pedestrian use (FK 538 from 1961). The movement of products to markets outside Finland was also an important theme. The newsreels served to build understanding of the way in which markets operated in terms of, for example, the global movement of raw materials, product quality factors, novelties and acceptability. The role of public authority and professions is also strongly visible in the newsreels (e.g. FK 505 from 1961, FK 524 from 1961, FK 580 from 1962 and FK 596 from 1962).

In the newsreels technology was strongly highlighted and linked to the economy through employment opportunities. The reels introducing equipment for digging ditches (FK 571 from 1961), earthmoving (FK 553 from 1961) or the industrial production of foodstuffs (FK 506 from 1961) remembered to mention that human labor is still indispensable in the operations.

In the period between the world wars, the idealization of machines still kept the workers in the background. The machines did all the work, with practically no need for the human hand. But the labor shortage during the Second World War changed people's attitudes: The belief that machines could do everything was abandoned. Of course a large part of the production still took place without machines. The newsreels show, for example, sites where power plants (FK 554 from 1961), bridges (FK 553 from 1961) and schools (FK 229 from 1954) are constructed without the aid of machines. This, while tracing the market journey of Bulgarian strawberries from the fields to the dining tables of gourmands in Berlin and Moscow (FK 538 from 1961).

In the newsreels ordinary citizens are featured both as workers and consumers. Even though workers were usually mentioned in speech only referentially, in the visual material they are present, foremost, doing work, while consumption plays only a subsidiary part. The national postwar ethos was, first and foremost, to reach full employment and ensure economic growth. In this we can see very similar images and emphases both in Finland as well as in Eastern European countries. Daily life meant working on construction sites and in offices and factories. Consumption, in turn, meant a state of exception, such as Christmas with its festivities and presents.

THE ROLE OF STATE IN BUILDING TRUST

In Finland the state assumed the task of determining and controlling the quality of the products that entered the markets, perhaps partly by chance. The strong role of the state was connected with the volatility and essential role of foreign trade in the construction of welfare.

When looking at the 1960s, the role of the state in overall trust in the economy becomes increasingly strong. The state, and especially its leadership, took an active part in the construction of trust in the economy. With potential buyers, trust in products manufactured in Finland was forged through showy events. Finns were assured of the effective functioning of the market by the buyers' interested eyes and contract signatures.

Markets can operate only if three inevitable coordination problems are resolved: the value problem, the problem of competition and the problem of cooperation (Beckert 2009). The notion of trust is central in the cooperation problem. If the trust is questioned, the stability of economic, political and social systems is threatened (Sztompka 1999). Trust is central to all transactions.

In a social structure where the role of the state leader is constitutionally constructed to be exceptionally strong, the president naturally oversaw all major foreign and domestic policies, but he also took a leading role in market building. Even though all of the political and economic elite did not support President Kekkonen especially in his early years as president, he does appear as a strong mediator between the east and the west.

President Kekkonen assured buyers in the newsreels, usually state leaders of other countries, that Finnish production was reliable and of high quality. At the same time, he came to build a self-image among Finns as good producers and sellers rather than consumers. In his speeches and writings, President Kekkonen (e.g. Kekkonen 1952) emphasized investments, not consumption. Still, he took part in the building of trust in creating cooperation opportunities for export, but also, by the same token, for domestic consumption. According to Guy Debord ([1967] 2005), the spectacle is not just a collection of images but also a social relation. The spectacle can be seen as a worldview legitimizing the existing system.

As the state forged trust in production not only did it involve itself with the principal theme on the markets, decreasing the asymmetry between sellers and buyers, but also with price formation, where the participation of the state produced markers of quality and thus had an impact on the valuation of products. Our view is that in postwar Finland the participation of the state in value formation took place especially in the context of trust building. Furthermore, it also built up trust in Finnish products within domestic markets.

The change in the traditional lifestyle set off by industrialism and a consumption-based social structure gave rise to various questions of trust as the public found itself making new kinds of choices and facing new kinds of risks. In capitalist market economies the distribution system is one central factor that structures society where trust is constantly measured. According to Zygmunt Bauman (2001), in the modern world people are constantly seeking equilibrium between safety and freedom. This kind of a modern lifestyle also lays emphasis on trust in various actors and institutions.

Trust can be regarded as a response to expected future behavior (Lundvall 1996, 14). According to Kirsi-Marja Blomqvist (1997, 277), there is some empirical evidence of positive functions of trust in relationship development and cooperation. Blomqvist (1997, 282–283) stresses the importance of trust in the construction of partnerships and in cooperation. Insecurities, vulnerabilities and risks connected with economy create a need to build trust.

In daily life, trust is one of the key elements of interaction. For exchange to take place in the markets, the market participants must have

sufficiently similar views on the nature of their actions. In economic research, trust is given a crucial role, as it increases the predictability of how people act, makes them adjust to changes faster and enhances strategic flexibility. Trust has been recognized as a significant aspect in, for example, the trade of investment commodities, client relationship management-led marketing and other forms of production and marketing based on cooperation (see Blomkvist 1997; Seppänen et al. 2005).

The image of Kekkonen as a constructor of Finnish industry, on the one hand, and of Finland's success in trade and politics, on the other, is typical of the prevailing time. It should be noted that in a traditional agrarian society people were used to co-operating at a personal level, and trust tied into this level was therefore central. However, modernization processes, industrialism and nation building shifted the co-operation from personal to an institutional and system-based level, where trust is tied to societal structures (e.g. Zucker 1986). In the newsreels Kekkonen served as a personal builder of trust and as a mediator of trust both domestically and internationally, especially in the direction of the Soviet Union.

CONCLUSIONS

This chapter has examined how eastern and western economic systems were featured in Finnish newsreels. Furthermore, we have discussed the importance of trust in economic systems and the role of newsreels constructing trust among Finns. Our findings show that newsreels featured two kinds of modernization processes, one in eastern planned economy and the other in western market economy. While eastern economy concentrated on large scale industry and the importance of state, western economy was more determined to point out the work of companies and consumption.

The Finnish economy and the nation's political leaders adapted their behavior both to eastern and western economies. It is clearly visible in the films how eastern planned economy generated interest in industry and state, and how western economy was adapted to consumer demands. The role of Finnish leaders, especially the central role of President Urho

Kekkonen, was featured in the films distinctly. President Kekkonen was shown as the number one salesman for Finland, supporting work and welfare for the nation.

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Dancing at the Vähätäri dance hall in Kokemäki some evening in the 1960s. Photographer unknown (Kansan Arkisto).



ANGLO-AMERICAN POP MUSIC, FINNISH TANGO, AND THE CONTROVERSIAL IMAGES OF MODERNITY IN FINLAND IN THE 1960S

Janne Poikolainen

A COLLISION OF MUSIC STYLES

The year 1963 was in many respects an epoch-making year in the history of popular music in Finland. Above all, it is remembered as the year of the breakthrough of Anglo-American guitar-based pop music. The Finnish general public was introduced to the sounds and lineup of guitar bands in the spring, along with the climax of the boom of *rautalanka* ('wire'), a unique instrumental music style combining Fenno-Slavic folk songs or romances, twist rhythm, and heavily echoed electric guitars à la the Shadows and the Ventures. The real revolutionary turn, however, was to come in November when the Beatles' single *Twist and Shout* rushed right to the top of the national charts and cleared the way for a whole generation of British beat, rhythm and blues, and various styles of American pop and rock. (Jalkanen and Kurkela, 2003, pp. 463, 467–470.)

Along with the record sales, the new musical influences also affected the repertoires of newly founded Finnish guitar groups, which often

formed to play cover versions of their British and American ideals. The influence of Anglo-American bands could also be seen in the new stage names of their Finnish counterparts, such as Danny & The Islanders, Jim & The Beatmakers, or Topmost, to name a few. (Bruun, Lindfors, Luoto and Salo, 2002, pp. 77–79.) In addition to the musical taste and repertoire, the breakthrough of Anglo-American pop also affected the outward appearance of Finnish youth. This became particularly visible in the mod-influenced *popparit* ('the pop youth') subculture emerging into the street scene in the mid-1960s. (See, for example, Puuronen, 2003, pp. 384–385; Vuori 1971, pp. 95, 103–112.)

Yet 1963 was not only a year of new sounds; it also saw the emergence of a phenomenon much more traditional in its musical contents: the strong revival of Finnish tango. Unlike Anglo-American guitar pop, tango already had a decades-long history in Finland. It arrived in the southern towns via Europe in the early 1910s and started to gain wider popularity in the next decade. The first known Finnish tango piece was supposedly heard as early as 1914, but domestic tango music was not recorded until 1929. After this, Finnish tango slowly began to establish its status as part of the local music culture, achieving its final breakthrough in the late 1930s and during the Second World War. At that time, Finnish tango also began to acquire its unique national character, particularly the melancholic minor mood and the lyrical themes related to Finnish nature and the Finnish mentality, thus separating itself from the Argentinean and European tango styles. (Gronow, 2004, pp. 14–16, 20–23; Suutari, 1994, pp. 21–24.)

In the postwar years, Finnish tango continued to confirm its status as a cornerstone of the Finnish dance culture, reaching its first heyday in the 1950s, during the prime of Olavi Virta, the most well-known and recognized Finnish tango singer. In the latter half of the decade, however, new musical trends and the removal of import restrictions on foreign records put a stop to this uptrend, pushing tango under the surface of the Finnish music culture for several years. But, as it later came out, the 1950s tango craze had only been a warm up for the sudden rise of "tango fever" in 1963. During the tango boom of the following years, Finnish tango became exceptionally popular both within the record

market and at dance pavilions¹, making the most successful tango singers stars and idols in the same manner as contemporary pop stars (see, for example, *Iskelmä* 12/1963, 4–5; *Iskelmä* 4/1965, 4; *Suosikki* 5/1964, 62–63; *Suosikki* 5/1964, 73, *Suosikki* 6/1964, 76–77). As a result, Finnish tango, instead of being only a specific style of tango or a form of dancing, acquired the status of a distinct music style. (Gronow, 2004, pp. 24–32; Jalkanen and Kurkela, 2003, pp. 426, 473–476, 479; Suutari, 1994, pp. 24–25.)

Out of the many musical phenomena of the mid-1960s, these two – the tango fever and the emergence of Anglo-American pop – doubtlessly defined the musical landscape of the time most dramatically. However, if we want to understand the cultural dynamics of the Finnish “sixties”, we should not only focus on the particular music styles in themselves, but also study the problematic interrelationship between them, evident from the very beginning of the simultaneous booms.

The conflict between pop and tango quickly developed into a heated cultural confrontation, manifesting itself on every level of the Finnish popular music culture for half a decade. It was not until about 1968 that tango finally lost its place in the limelight to pop and rock. The confrontation could be seen in the polarization of the charts, and in the increasing tensions between audiences at the dance pavilions, which were common arenas also for pop groups. Conflict also became visible in the tension between the pop youth and the *rasvikset* (‘greasers’) subculture, whose members had adopted the style of British rockers but have in many cases been described as passionate supporters of Finnish tango.² In the media, the confrontation was particularly visible

¹ In Finland, the period from the end of the Second World War to the late 1960s was the golden age of dancing and dance pavilions. After the abolishment of the war-time dance ban (completely in 1948) and the permission to organize dances without other programme (1945), numerous new dance pavilions were erected all around the country, mostly in the countryside and the outskirts of towns. The number of pavilions reached over 1,000 in the 1950s. Along with them, facilities for dancing were offered by people’s halls, youth association halls, and other similar buildings, numbering almost 3,000 in the 1950s. These buildings were important dance venues particularly in the cold wintertime. (Jalkanen and Kurkela, 2003, pp. 352–353.)

² As a subculture, *rasvikset* was quite heterogeneous, the stylistic and ideological elements varying between local groups (Vuori, 1971, p. 110). It is also unclear to what extent these groups shared any clear musical preferences. In 1965, Jyrki Hämäläinen

on the pages of domestic music magazines, which published numerous edgy articles and letters to the editor including comments both for and against the two music styles.

In the 1960s context, the confrontation of pop and tango was often pictured as a clash of “musical tastes”, referring mostly to the aesthetic features of the music styles. This interpretation, however, seems somewhat insufficient considering the intensity of the conflict and especially the fact that the music *per se* was often discussed quite superficially in the public debate surrounding it. Instead, a more in-depth reading of this debate shows that the conflict had a much wider socio-cultural background, related to the tensions caused by the rapid modernization of Finnish society in the postwar decades. In this article, I take a closer look at this linkage, particularly as it appeared in the writings and letters to the editor of three Finnish popular music magazines: *Suosikki* (‘The Favorite’), *Iskelmä* (‘Hit Tune’), and *Stump*.³ In the mid-1960s, the fragmentation of Finnish music audiences had not yet caused significant specification in the contents of these magazines. Thus they offer a good view of the ideas and attitudes of both parties of the conflict: pop fans, pop youth, and young pro-pop journalists on one side; young tango enthusiasts, tango-preferring greasers, and other opponents of pop music on the other.

This article focuses especially on the connection between the musical conflict and the two sub-levels of the postwar modernization process that were particularly evident within the debate on pop and tango:

the chief editor of *Suosikki* magazine, wrote that there was no clearly distinguishable English-style rock’n’roll based ‘rockers’ group in Finland; only a local version of the subculture, called *rasvaletit* (‘grease heads’). The article gives no clear picture of the musical taste of the *rasvaletit*, only implying that the musical preferences reached all the way from the Rolling Stones to Finnish tango (*Suosikki* 11/1965, pp. 4–13, 28, 67). Three years later, Pekka Gronow and Seppo Bruun (1968, p. 79) described the members of the *rasvikset* subculture as a group that listens to “rock” but favours dance venues with tango. Nevertheless, in popular memory and local histories, the *rasvikset* is often linked specifically with tango and the “more traditional dance pavilion culture” (see, for example, *Aikamatka Oulu*; Heikkilä, 2005, p. 104; Karkiainen, 2009; Vuorinen, 2005, p. 251. See also, Bruun, Lindfors, Luoto and Salo, 2002, p. 102; Kurkela, 2005, pp. 15–16; Vuori, 1971, p. 104).

³ For a similar linkage between early jazz and the interwar modernization wave in Finland, see Haavisto, 1991, pp. 60–62; Jalkanen and Kurkela, 2003, pp. 253–255.

westernization (Anglo-Americanization) and urbanization. We will also see how the images attached to pop and tango reflected the hopes, fears, and expectations concerning modernizing culture and youth. This approach opens up an interesting view of the dynamics between popular music, taste, and socio-cultural change, as well as the potential of music culture as a framework for discussion – explicit, implicit, or symbolic – on larger social phenomena. This perspective also offers a unique glimpse of the attitudes among Finnish youth of the 1960s towards cultural modernization, showing that they were not as homogeneous and favourable as often pictured in the popular memory.

TUNES OF MODERNITY

In the 1960s, Finland was going through a massive modernization process. This process consisted of many different dimensions and levels, including a rise in standard of living, growth of private consumption, rapid urbanization, and a radical leap in the economic structure from one based on agriculture towards one based on industry and services. (Granberg, 1993, pp. 74–77, 81–82; Hjerpe and Jalava, 2006; Myllyntaus, 1993, pp. 60–64.) It also entailed the all-embracing, accelerating westernization of Finnish society and culture. In Finland, as in Europe in general, this was often experienced as “Americanization”, that is, an increasing penetration of American influences into the different sectors of everyday life. Soon, “America” – a unity that consisted at least as much of images and metaphors as the reality of American society (see Kroes, 1996, p. 40; Pells, 1997, p. 153) – became an important measuring rod for social and cultural development. In fact, the role of “America” as a model for “modernity” in Europe was so notable that these concepts have often been used as direct synonyms. In Finland, this absorption was promoted especially by the media and advertisers who widely shared the common European vision of “Americanism” as a symbol of wealth, freedom, casual living, technological development, and other aspects of ideal modern life. (See, for example, Heinonen and Pantzar, 2001; O’Dell, 1997, pp. 164–165; Pells, 1997, p. 154.)

In the context of popular and youth culture in Finland, however, the equation of modernization and westernization with Americanization

seems somewhat insufficient. In this field the model of America was paralleled by another, at least equally strong source of influence: Great Britain (see also, Sørensen and Petersen, 2007, p. 129). Towards the mid-1960s, Britain, and especially London, became the cradle of new trends in popular culture and youth fashion, which were monitored closely by Finnish youth magazines. In popular music, the role of Britain as a transmitter of modern western youth culture was particularly important. The “British Invasion” reshaped the charts all around Europe, and British influence on record sales was clearly visible in Finland, too. Within the five-year period starting from the appearance of *Twist and Shout* in December 1963, the monthly national single charts were topped eleven times and the album charts (established in January 1966) twenty-two times by a British pop artist or band. In contrast, the first American artist to reach the singles Top 5 after December 1963 was Nancy Sinatra with *These Boots Are Made For Walkin’* in April 1966. The first American LP in the albums Top 5 was to come even later, it being the self-titled number one album by the Monkees in January 1967. (For the charts, see Nyman, 2005, pp. 110–117.)

The role of British popular culture and music as a flag bearer of modern western youth in Finland becomes even more concrete when it is noted that the 1950s craze of “American” rock’n’roll – often pictured as the breakthrough of the commercial youth culture in Europe – had a relatively minor appeal for Finnish audiences (Jalkanen and Kurkela, 2003, p. 460. See also, Siefert, 2007, pp. 198–199). And, after all, even rock ‘n’ roll often had a British tone in it: in many European countries much of the music that passed as American rock ‘n’ roll was in fact of British origin, at least in terms of the performers (Pells, 1997, p. 206). Against this background, it seems reasonable to abandon the concept of Americanization and use the term “Anglo-Americanization” instead, at least when discussing the modernization and westernization of the youth culture.

The symbolic connection between Anglo-American popular music and western modernity was visible also on the pages of the 1960s Finnish music magazines. This link can be seen particularly in the images and epithets attached to British and American pop music by its fans and proponents. In articles and letters to the editor, pop was often represented as the music of trendy youth who were interested not only

in new musical sounds but also in international youth cultural currents, new styles of dressing, and, of course, having fun (see, for example, *Suosikki* 2/1966, pp. 14–15, 61; *Suosikki* 6/1967, pp. 28–29; *Suosikki* 10/1967, pp. 70, 75). These images were summarized illustratively in an article by Jyrki Hämäläinen (b. 1942), the chief editor of *Suosikki* magazine and a tireless proponent of Anglo-American pop music culture. In his article, written in October 1967, Hämäläinen pictured five stereotypical figures of Finnish youth culture, one of them being “Pete Poppari”, a “typical” pop youth:

Pete Poppari is a type that represents the majority of the country’s trendy youth. He has an admiral’s jacket, a long Mick Jagger hairdo, tight pants and a huge pile of LP records under his arm: Procol Harum, Sandie Shaw, Young Rascals, Danny, Johnny [both Finnish artists] and whatever is *in* and connected to beat music. ... Pete-Boy tries to starve the barbers, he wants, passionately and with every nerve fibre, to travel to London and Hollywood, and to go wherever the action is. ... He spends his nights in a whirl. Jumping in the streets and dance halls where paralyzed, fossilized souls stare at him, astonished by his jumping, toes trembling, in rhythm with ... *Stone Free*. (*Suosikki* 10/1967, pp. 70, 75. All translations by JP.)

The description is, of course, caricatured but even as such it demonstrates the connection between the images of Western modernity and Anglo-American pop culture. The quotation also shows that pop music was not only considered a style of music but also a set of extra-musical values and stylistic choices. In other words, it was also seen as a life style: “extraordinarily cheerful and optimistic” like the music itself, happy and casual as the image of modernity overall (see Bergmann 1998, p. 81; Interview, male, b. 1953).

The symbolic tie between modernity and Anglo-American pop music was quickly noticed by Finnish advertisers, who were among the most important transmitters of the imagery of Western modernity. The ideas of Western culture and youthful modernity had already been symbolically linked to Anglo-American popular music in the 1950s when rock ‘n’ roll music (although often sung in Finnish) was used in advertising blue jeans and other “American” products. In the 1960s, “youth

music” and its performers became increasingly popular in advertising both in the printed and electronic media. (Heinonen & Konttinen, 2001, pp. 174–176; Heinonen, Kortti and Pantzar, 2003, pp. 7–15; Kilpiö, 2005, pp. 63, 230–247, 307–311.) After the breakthrough of beat music, advertisements also adopted the concepts of the new music culture; the word ‘pop’ with its clear symbolic meanings was the most important of them. These buzzwords could soon be found in most imaginative contexts: a local clothing store advertised its products with an announcement stating “Wear POP – Skipper’s jacket is POP”, and even Kansallis-Osake-Pankki, a Finnish bank known for its conservative image, marketed its own “go-go credits” (*go-go-säästöluotto*) (Bruun, Lindfors, Luoto and Salo, 2002, p. 80; Heikkilä, 2005, p. 75).

A SYMBOLIC BREAKAWAY

Yet the enthusiasm for Anglo-American pop music culture should not be understood only as a symbolic reach for Western modernity. In the atmosphere of the strong cultural polarities of the 1960s, it also meant distancing oneself from the dominant or “traditional” norms of contemporary Finnish culture:

[I]t meant a very strong cultural polarity and breakaway, and the ideals were adopted from a totally different world. And of course, it irritated parents, not all but many of them, quite much. Maybe it was also the intention, sometimes. But it also irritated the tango folks, the so-called greasers who were regarded as yokels with a poor taste in music and so on. So, it meant being distinct. (Interview, male, b. 1953)

Besides offering an insight into the meaning of pop music as a cultural breakaway, the quote also brings into the discussion the other side of the musical conflict: Finnish tango and Finnish tango enthusiasts. In this musical confrontation, tango acquired an important symbolic role as an icon of traditional Finnishness, thus forming a kind of cultural opposite for Anglo-American pop and the modernity it represented. In the writings of proponents of pop, the idea of traditionality, however, very often meant something totally different from the ideas of authenticity,

originality, and security usually attached to it. Instead, it was seen more as backwardness – an inability to see that “time keeps on rolling” (*Iskelmä* 4/1966, p. 39). Tango and “tango folks”, for their part, were seen to represent the unwanted elements of this backward Finnishness, such as conservativeness, clumsy formality, and problematic norms of gender and sexuality⁴. These images were personified in the portrayal of tango enthusiast “Teuvo Tango”, another stereotypical figure described by chief editor Hämäläinen:

[Beer], whispers in a girl’s ear, tangos, car rides, jokes at the dance pavilion table, and escorting the girl home more or less successfully create the colourful texture of Teuvo Tango’s night, a texture rhythmized by *jumpampampampaa* [an onomatopoeia for the heavy rhythmic pattern of Finnish tango], bad breath, dance, and long, deep sleep. (*Suosikki* 10/1967, pp. 70–75)

This critical image was backed up by letters to the editor, sent to music magazines by proponents of pop. The following letter is of particular interest because of its parodic tone. It is written from the perspective of a tango greaser who, while unable to see his own ridiculousness, disapproves of a pop fan living next door:

Tango-lad is a tough lad, with hair combed back, yellow teeth, and armpits smelling like cat piss. And he has patent leather shoes, too. There’s a yeah-yeah [refers to pop music] boy living next door, listening to yeah-yeah music and boozing. These are serious matters. Milk and psalms are good for the youth. And women should wear a topknot, right? (*Stump* 1/1968, p. 13)

Intertwined in these images of backwardness and stagnation, tango and the melancholic “whining” (*Iskelmä* 2/1963, pp. 34–35) of tango singers

⁴ Tango, as a dance style, provided a favourable environment for adolescent sexuality; the dance position allowed exceptionally close physical contact with the opposite sex. This may partly explain the popularity of tango dancing among the youth. (Kontukoski, 2012, 91.)

was a clear cultural counterpoint, which underlined the modernity of pop culture, and against which the pop youth could define their own national identity and visions of a future Finland.

The meaning of pop and tango as symbolic indicators of cultural modernity and backwardness becomes visible also in the discourse of shame apparent in some comments on the state of the country's music scene. The following quotation from *Suosikki* is illustrative of this:

Is tango our national disgrace? Lots of dubious things go on in Finnish show business. Foreigners are getting to know us as *metsäläiset* ['the ones who live in the forests'; refers to backwardness]. Travelling around our country, they have clearly shown how ridiculous they think we are. The Finland of tango, sauna and censorship is getting on the map. Everybody laughs at us! (*Suosikki* 10/1967, pp. 11, 27. See also, *Suosikki* 2/1966, pp. 14–15, 61; *Iskelmä* 1964, pp. 34–35)

This citation also shows that the cultural conflict behind the musical confrontation was not seen simply as an intrinsic struggle for the adoption or rejection of Anglo-American influences, with Finland only as a receiving or non-receiving party. Instead, it reflects an idea of Finland moulding its cultural image in the eyes of the westernizing world through choices in music and other products of the popular culture. From the perspective of the proponents of pop, there seems to have been two possible options: to move towards the modern West, or to remain stuck in the backward traditional Finnishness – and maybe fall even deeper into the cultural sphere of influences of the eastern neighbor, the Soviet Union, already casting its shadow over the politics and economics of Finland (see *Suosikki* 2/1966, pp. 14–15, 61).

What the claims of the backwardness of the Finnish music culture missed, however, was that the Anglo-American pop culture also confronted notable opposition in many highly westernized countries, including the “cradles” of pop and rock, the USA and Britain. In many respects, the cultural atmospheres in these countries were even more intolerant than in Finland. In both the USA and Britain, many popular bands, including the Beatles, the Rolling Stones, and the Doors, were banned from certain major cities, and some cities forbade the use of all public premises for pop concerts. In 1964, the US administration

tried to ban the Beatles from touring the country. In this case, the attempt was unsuccessful due to the heavy pressure of fans, but many other British bands of the era, such as the Kinks, were not as lucky. The increasing popularity of pop music also raised direct protest campaigns which culminated in the anti-rock demonstration of thirty thousand people – both teens and adults – in Miami in March 1969. (Martin and Segrave, 1988, pp. 117–127; Roberts, 2010.) In this sense, claims that the Finnish music culture was “outstandingly behind the times” (*Suosikki* 2/1966, pp. 14–15, 61) were exaggerated, at least if the cultural atmospheres of the USA and Britain are used as measuring rods.

CULTURAL IMPERIALISM AND MORAL DECAY – THE PERSPECTIVE OF THE “TANGO FOLKS”

The symbolic roles of Anglo-American pop music and Finnish tango as markers of modernity and traditional culture were by no means promoted only by the proponents of pop. Tango enthusiasts and opponents of pop – these groups often overlapping each other – shared these images, but gave clearly different meanings to “modern” and “traditional”. Whereas pop youth pictured the western modernity carried by the pop culture as a promise of cultural progress, the other side of the conflict saw it more as a threat to the Finnish culture and its autonomy (see also, Pells, 1997, pp. 202–203). An article titled “Kuolema Go-Go’lle!” (‘Death to Go-Go!’), written by “a well-known Finnish hit music person” under the pseudonym “Sebastian”, is illustrative in this sense:

The printed word, and names like Tuppukylä [‘Boondocks’], Härmä [‘Hinterland’], and many others, are used as a weapon against the Finnish audience. We Finns are widely mocked for loving tango and foxtrot. They try to tell us what we have to admire and whose records we have to buy. But isn’t this absurd! We, the youth, are the very buying audience, the customer who is always right! ... [W]e choose our own idols and buy their records. It is by no means the magazines’ business to tell us about what THEY want, but about what WE want! It isn’t a flaw if we aren’t like the Americans and English! ... In the end, every nation wants its very own idols... *Iskelmä* 5/1966, p. 7)

This writing brings the critical discussion on Anglo-American pop close to the larger European discourse of cultural imperialism, fuelled by the increasing economic, political, and cultural influence of the USA in Western Europe during the postwar years. This critical interpretation of (Anglo-)Americanization was based on the image of a powerful centre that threatened the traditional and authentic local cultures of the European periphery with endless force-feeding of imported ideas, values, and products. It was also characteristic for this interpretation to place little trust in the possibilities of the receiving culture to transform the imported cultural influences so that they could be absorbed without the receivers losing their authenticity or autonomy. (Pells, 1997, pp. 188–189, 202–203; Prato, 2007, pp. 447–448; Åsard, 2004, pp. 16–17.)

However, a closer look at the musical landscape of 1960s Europe shows that the idea of cultural imperialism underestimated the cultural potential of the local or peripheral level in many ways. Anglo-American cultural products and influences surely aroused enthusiasm all around the continent, but this does not mean that these products and influences were always taken as given, without being filtered through sediments of national culture (see Capuzzo, 2012, pp. 612–613; Åsard, 2004, pp. 17–18). A good example of this is cover songs, particularly the cover versions of Anglophone hits with the lyrics translated into, or rewritten in, the local language. Paolo Prato (2007, p. 444) has called these songs “a cross-cultural space” typical of “peripheral countries in an age of transition to full modernity”, using the art of covering as an instance of transformation of imported cultural products into a form that fits the local culture and traditions. In his article, he offers interesting examples from 1960s Italy, but a largely similar development also took place in Finland, where translated and often stylistically tamed cover versions of the latest Anglo-American pop songs were common all through the 1960s. Also, the early Finnish “rock’n’roll” performances of the late 1950s and early 1960s, often stylistically conventionalized, ridiculed or infantilized, are demonstrative examples of this kind of cultural domestication (see Kärjä, 2003, pp. 124, 126–127). Even Finnish tango itself went through this process during its “Finnishization”.

Nevertheless, in the cultural atmosphere of the 1960s, many clearly saw the exterior cultural influences as a real threat. In this context, Finnish tango was given a role as a symbol of cultural authenticity and,

as such, a counterforce against the influx of the Anglo-American pop music culture. Consequently, the national character of Finnish tango was emphasized – this time in a positive sense – and it was even referred to as the “national hymn” of Finland (*Suosikki* 6/1968, pp. 20, 32, 75). Tango began to dominate the musical repertoire at the dance pavilions, whereas pop was seldom tolerated. Pop bands touring the country often had no choice but to adjust to the situation and play tangos, or face a hostile audience that was not afraid to respond to pop songs with vegetables, coins, or other flying objects thrown at the band. According to the stories of musicians, local tango enthusiasts would even hit their knives on the edge of the stage in order to underline the musical rules of the evening. Sometimes a sufficient amount of tango was also ensured by written contracts between bands and promoters. (Bruun, Lindfors, Luoto and Salo, 2002, p. 102; Heikkilä, 2005, p. 133; Suutari, 1994, p. 25.)

Along with the worry about the authenticity and autonomy of the Finnish (music) culture, a concern often embedded in the deep structures of the criticism, the opponents of Anglo-American pop music were also deeply troubled by the influence the music style had on Finnish youth. It was clear that the western pop music culture entailed many values and ideals that collided radically with the values and norms of the dominant Finnish culture, particularly the middle class educational ideology of “home, religion, and fatherland”. In fact, this collision was so severe that some opponents of the “sixties” cultural revolution still name the breakthrough of the Beatles as an important turning point in the crumbling of “genuine Finnishness” (Purhonen, Roos and Hoikkala, 2008, pp. 189–190).

The normative crisis became concrete especially in the demoralizing effect Anglo-American pop culture was seen to have on the youth listening and playing it. Journalist Erkki Pälli (b. 1935) offered an excellent example of this worry in his article “Miksi ruotsalaiset pop-pojat eivät pidä tyttöistä” (‘Why Swedish pop boys don’t like girls’), in which he described the numerous vices of pop culture in Sweden. In the 1960s, Finnish magazines observed Sweden closely since it was a common transition route of Anglo-American influences on their way to Finland; it was also the country of origin of many popular pop groups (see Mäkelä, 2007, p. 111). This time, however, there was little left of

the glorification of the Swedish pop scene. Instead, Pälli connected Swedish pop bands with alcohol, drugs, one night stands with fans, venereal diseases, homosexuality, and the overall perversity of sexual life. (*Iskelmä* 10/1967, pp. 20–21. See also, Bruun, Lindfors, Luoto and Salo, 2002, p. 105.)

The image of moral and cultural decay was shared in many conservative quarters criticizing pop music, particularly certain rigidly religious societies. Their voice was echoed in the pamphlet *Hätähuuto nuorten puolesta* ('*A Cry for Help on Behalf of Our Youth*') by Paavo Hiltunen (1965). He juxtaposed British-style pop with music played in "the jungle of Africa" in order to bring dancers to ecstasy and start up "sexual orgies". He also stated that pop music seemed to be "nourishment" for juvenile delinquents and young people who had lapsed into alcohol and indecency, thus "feeding their will to live outside the moral standards of the society". What is exceptional in the statement of Hiltunen is the racial element included in the implication of the African roots of Anglo-American pop music – something rarely dealt with in the public discussion on genre in Finland. However, this reference was still quite restrained if compared to similar comments for example in the USA: in 1968, for instance, Albert Goldman of the *New York Times* described the style of the Rolling Stones as "sado-homosexual-junkie-diabolic-sarcastic-nigger-evil" and practically called Mick Jagger a "nigger-lover" (cited in Martin and Segrave, 1988, p. 123).

Another strongly controversial feature of the Anglo-American pop culture was the effect it had on the appearance of Finnish youth and particularly some of its male members. The most controversial element of the new pop fashion was the long hair, or the "Beatles hair" as it was also known as. If compared with the hippie style of the late 1960s, the Beatles style was still fairly moderate, the hair hardly reaching the ear level, but in the mid-1960s, it aroused strong antagonism and disgust both among the adults and youth. Long-haired male adolescents had to get used to insults from greasers and other passers-by in the streets, and at home their parents often had no more toleration for this hair style, many of them forcing their sons to get a haircut. In some schools, headmasters and teachers forbade boys' long hairstyles, and those who refused to obey could be suspended temporarily. Numerous cafes and bars prohibited long-haired young men from entering their premises.

(See, for example, Bruun, Lindfors, Luoto and Salo, 2002, p. 103; Nyman, 1999, pp. 72–75. See also, Martin and Segrave, 1988, pp. 117–118.)

The problem of the new stylistic trend, however, not only lay in what was seen as untidiness. The new style also seemed to obscure the strict gender norms of the time. From the perspective of the critics, the appearance and casualty of pop stars and their male fans had little in common with the traditional ideals of manhood, defined by traits such as physical strength, courage, competitiveness and self-control (see, for example, Hapuli, 1993, pp. 105–107).⁵ This difference was emphasized further by the traditionally masculine star image of male tango singers and particularly the tough masculinity and strict gender roles cherished by the *rasvikset* subculture. In the American press, the Beatles style might have been judged as “asexual” (Martin and Segrave, 1988, p. 118) but from the perspective of Finnish opponents of pop, the change in style appeared as pure feminization of the male youth. This interpretation can be seen in many anti-pop writings, such as this letter to the editor written by the pseudonym “Aatami” [‘Adam’]:

I’ve always thought that it’s nice to have both women and men – both girls and boys. It would also be nice if girls resembled women as much as possible, and boys, correspondingly, resembled men as much as possible. But think of The Beatles, The Rolling Stones, and, if you like, their local rivals, Cay and The Scaffolds [a Finnish pop band]! Sometimes, due to their long hair, it’s difficult to know at first sight if the people in the photos are women or men! This style is also mirrored in the recordings of these long-haired bands: sometimes, in the recordings of male bands, one hears such high pitches that one suspects the presence of the so-called weaker sex. (*Iskelmä* 8/1964, pp. 28–29. See also, *Iskelmä* 1/1966, pp. 40–41.)

⁵ In Britain, this controversy between the new and traditional ideas of masculinity led to a full-scale scandal after the Beatles were made Members of the Order of the British Empire in 1965, an award often given for excellence in military service. As a result, hundreds of MBE medals were returned in protest. (Martin and Segrave, 1988, p. 118–119.)

Another possible interpretation was homosexuality, as in the case of a male interviewee: “I realized only later that my own father, for example, had probably thought or feared that his son might possibly be – because of things like growing his hair, or different clothes and ideologies – something else also sexually.” (Interview, male, b. 1953. See also, *Iskelmä* 10/1967, pp. 20–21; *Suosikki* 1965, pp. 2–5.)

BETWEEN URBAN AND RURAL

In addition to the confrontation of Western and Finnish, the conflict between Anglo-American pop and Finnish tango was also linked to another strong dichotomy present in the Finnish society of the 1960s. This was the dichotomy of urbanity and rusticity (see also, Jalkanen and Kurkela, 2003, p. 482). At this point, it is important to note that the musical conflict took place in the middle of a massive and exceptionally fast urbanization process. This process, having its roots in the 1950s, reached its peak in the late 1960s and the 1970s, and it affected practically every Finn in one way or another. In numbers this meant that the share of the Finnish population living in urban municipalities increased from 32% to 60% between 1950 and 1980 (*Statistical Yearbook of Finland* 1981, p. 5). This made urbanization one of the most central aspects of postwar modernization in Finland.

Furthermore, the “Great migration” was closely connected with another social upheaval: the change in economic structure. During the three decades between 1950 and 1980, the number of Finns working in agriculture dropped by two thirds. The process thus extended the effects of urbanization from a change in residential environment to the basics of everyday life. The youth of the 1960s were front row observers of these social and cultural processes, some of them as migrants, some as city youth, and some as those who stayed in the countryside and saw the distress of the farmers. (Granberg, 1993, pp. 74–77, 81–82.) Against this background, it is not surprising that the increasing tensions between urban and rural cultures also penetrated the youth and music cultures.

As a phenomenon, the confrontation of pop and tango in many ways offered favourable ground for dealing with the friction between

the cities and countryside. This was ensured by the cultural origins of these music styles. Beat music was characteristically urban, rising from the clubs of the British cities, and the subsequent waves of American pop and rock had their roots in the bohemian communities of New York, Los Angeles, and San Francisco. Finnish tango, on the other hand, had gained its status as the music of the countryside, and had totally distanced itself from the urban exotics of South America and Paris, which it had exuded in its early years in Finland. The rusticity of tango was also manifested in the music magazines, particularly by the proponents of pop music. The clearest example of this distinction-making was the way in which well-known pop musicians – most of whom were urbanites themselves – enhanced these images with their stories about the antagonistic and aggressive tango audiences of the typically rural dance pavilions.

The polarized images of urban pop and rural tango were clearly shared by many tango enthusiasts, too. A reader from Alavus, for example, wrote to *Iskelmä* to criticize the magazine for neglecting its rural readership. “You see, here we don’t like monotonous music like foreign guitar music, but prefer to listen to tangos and would naturally like to have more information particularly on tango singers”, the reader stated (*Iskelmä* 4/1967, pp. 32–33). What is eye-catching in writings of this sort is the feeling of otherness they show in relation to the urban culture and city youth. These feelings are also evident in the following letter to the editor, in which “Rami”, a male reader from the countryside, shared his experiences of encountering urban culture:

A boy from the hinterland, Helsinki, a record store. A silly thought of buying a record, a domestic one. The “*stadin kundit*” [a slang term for young men living in Helsinki] standing by the counter, *rautalanka* in the air. My turn, at last, “Finnish tango, please”. A stupid request, the sales clerk gazes at me. ... She checks anyway, doesn’t find it. – A domestic record, arrives slowly, she complains. A pity if it doesn’t arrive at all? A boy from the hinterland. Helsinki... (*Iskelmä* 6/1963, p. 27.)

In reality, the geographical distribution in the popularity of the music styles (and surely the cultural norms as well) was not as simple as the writings in the music magazines implied. Anglo-American pop music

had made its breakthrough in the southern towns, but its popularity among the rural youth was increasing towards the end of the 1960s (see, for example, Kontukoski, 2012, p. 90; *Suosikki* 5/1966, pp. 60–61). A survey on Finnish musical tastes – data collected in 1968 – shows that in the late 1960s pop was still more popular in the urban areas but that urbanity was no longer the primary factor defining its audience. Instead, what defined this audience group more than anything else was its young age. (Toiviainen, 1970, pp. 48–49.) Similarly, tango enthusiasts could be found, although decreasingly, among the city youth as well (see, for example, *Suosikki* 5/1966, pp. 60–61). Within the musical debate, however, the picture of a strict geographical polarization of audiences and tastes held on persistently for years.

The debate on urbanity and rusticity should not be seen as distinct from the more general discussion on modernizing youth, just as the urbanization of Finnish society cannot be separated from the larger framework of the postwar modernization process. In fact, sometimes within the musical debate, the images connected to urbanity and rusticity were so closely bound with the imagery of modernity and traditionality (and of Western culture and Finnishness) that these dichotomies became practically absorbed. The pseudonym “Sebastian”, for example, identified the cultural decay of pop culture directly with modern Western urbanity when writing that:

[i]f an American city called New York has a block inhabited by one thousand long-haired homeless bums who admire Donovan and Dylan, it is by no means a shame for our country not to have a single block like that (only a single street somewhere in Helsinki)! (*Iskelmä* 5/1966, p. 7.)

A similar negative vision of urbanity was also echoed in several postwar tango lyrics that pictured the urban environment as lonely, noisy, alienating, and, as such, an antithesis of wholesome country life and the beauty of Finnish nature (Kukkonen, 1996, pp. 159–162). As a curiosity, it can be added that this, in fact, brings these tangos lyrically close to the characteristically American genres of country, bluegrass, and, somewhat surprisingly, the so-called “southern rock” style of bands such as the Allman Brothers and Lynyrd Skynyrd. In the 1960s and 1970s,

these music styles glorified the rural environment and lifestyle of the past threatened by the rapid urbanization of “the South” and modern commercialized culture. This can also be seen as an important factor explaining their nationwide popularity. (Elmore, 2010, pp. 104–107. See also, Jenkins, 2006.) Contemporary Finns, however, were generally unaware of these reactions. For most of them, “America” still represented something urban and modern, just as “Americanism” represented the willingness to pursue these features as cultural and social ideals.

The most obvious example of the absorption of the urban–rural and modern–traditional dichotomies is the concept of *tangoraja* (‘the tango border’), used by the performers and proponents of pop music in the 1960s. The concept referred to a cultural border separating those parts of Finland where pop music could be played on stage from the parts where not much but tango was tolerated. Basically this meant distinguishing between the urban areas of Southern and Central Finland, and the peripheral areas of the North, East, and Ostrobothnia in the West. The idea of the tango border was sustained especially by the touring musicians who shared their negative – and surely often exaggerated – stories about touring behind the border. This description by musician M.A. Numminen is a good example of such stories in the magazines:

I say, brave is the band that dares to travel North from Jyväskylä without tango covering 90 % of their repertoire. I say, you shouldn’t do that, or if you do, you won’t do it again. On the Northern side of the tango border, you have to play tangos 80–90% of the time. Unless you do, you’re in trouble! Musicians tell that in Ostrobothnia a band was threatened with a knife because it didn’t play enough tango. (*Suosikki* 5/1967, pp. 6–9, 33.)

What makes the concept of the tango border particularly interesting is that it compiled all the negative images of the tango culture and connected them closely with the countryside and the people living there. In this way it also brought the vision of “Tango-Finland” closer to the ideas of the contemporary Finnish culture radicals – the flag bearers of the “sixties” – who pictured rural Finland as the cradle of the conservativeness and stagnated formality they criticized (see Purhonen and Hoikkala, 2008, pp. 138–139).

MUSICAL CONFRONTATION AND THE FINNISH “SIXTIES”

As I have pointed out, the cultural debate between the “tango folks” and proponents of pop was often based more on stereotypical images of cultural modernity than on factual knowledge of the state of the Finnish or international music culture. Thus its contents should not be taken too eagerly as a description of Finnish culture in the 1960s; the writings in the music magazines often tell more about the attitudes of their writers than their subject as such. The Finnish music culture could doubtlessly be judged as backward and conservative if measured with the typical measuring rods of cultural modernization, i.e. idealized images of “Anglo-Americanism” offered by the music magazines and other forms of popular media. But if the idea of backwardness is validated with a claim of the Finnish cultural atmosphere being exceptionally intolerant towards new pop culture, it becomes more questionable. After all, Anglo-American pop music (and the cultural phenomena it represented) encountered remarkable opposition and obstacles basically everywhere it was played and performed, even in the USA and Britain.

Furthermore, it must be remembered that no matter what the debate in the magazines may have implied, the opposition to Anglo-American pop music culture did not necessarily mean that all those sharing this antagonism felt the same towards all Western or “modern” cultural influences. The outward style of the “tango greasers”, for example, originated from the British rocker subculture and American motorcycle movies. The most informed greasers also followed international subcultural trends with the intensity equal to the supposed cosmopolitanism of the pop youth (Puuronen, 2003, p. 385).

What the discussion in the music magazines also leaves untold, is that along with the modern–traditional dichotomy, the musical conflict had another important confrontation behind it: the confrontation between the two levels of the national school system. The importance of educational level, and thus, the socio-economic background, as a definer of audience groups can be seen in the 1968 survey on the musical tastes of Finns. According to the survey, Anglo-American pop music was more popular among the relatively educated youth, whereas

“traditional music”, including Finnish tango as one of its sub-categories, was popular particularly within the uneducated (i.e. lower) social groups. (Toiviainen, 1970, pp. 48–49. See also, Kontukoski, 2012, p. 91.) In other words, the confrontation of pop and tango was also about making a distinction between the social classes. This observation is supported by the social structure of the *popparit* and *rasvikset* subcultures: the former consisted mostly of secondary and high school youth, whereas the latter was composed mainly of workers and pupils of comprehensive and vocational schools (Puuronen, 2003, p. 385).

This connection between class and musical/cultural preferences of Finnish youth contradicts the West European poll results from the 1950s. According to polls taken in Britain, France, and West-Germany, the intensity of anti-Americanism on cultural grounds increased when moving upwards on the socio-economic ladder. More precisely, the blue-collar workers, farmers, and operators of small businesses shared a more favourable impression of the USA and American culture than did people in the professions or government. (Pells, 1997, pp. 160–161, 238.) Whether this anomaly is due to national, generational, age-group-related, or other differences, is the subject of another study.

The main focus of this article, however, is not on studying the equivalence between the images and the “reality” but on discussing how the images and stereotypes attached to the music styles reflected the attitudes towards the then ongoing social and cultural changes. The most focal outcome of this approach is that it brings out the diversity of the reactions that cultural modernization – be it in the meaning of westernization or urbanization – caused among Finnish youth. This is particularly interesting since the popular, nostalgic image of the “’60s youth” – both in Finland and abroad – has often pictured this generation as a homogeneous unity gladly welcoming the Anglo-American youth culture and its offerings (see, for example, Karisto, 2005, pp. 34–35). Many academics also seem to have accepted this image of postwar youth “gravitating” (Pells, 1997, p. 240) to American culture and using it as a gesture of rebellion against the older generations and authorities; and since the historical study of anti-Americanism in Europe has often focused more on the academic and politic, that is, on institutionalized and adult levels of the resistance, this image has too seldom been questioned.

From a more general perspective, the confrontation of Anglo-American pop music and Finnish tango offers an interesting historical case which, for its part, sheds light on the different social and cultural linkages behind the formation of what we consider musical taste. As the chapters above show, popular music is always closely connected with the historical context in which it is produced, marketed and consumed. In the case of pop and tango, the focal connection lay between the musical styles and controversial experiences in relation to the modernization process.

The confrontation also illustrates how the popular music culture can function as a forum for discussing and dealing with issues related to larger social and cultural phenomena. This function was highly essential for the Finnish youth of the 1960s, not least because the music culture itself was one of the most important routes through which the elements of the ongoing cultural modernization were relayed to young Finns. Another reason for the importance of this function was the lack of more official public forums for this kind of discussion. As the report of the national youth research committee stated on the youth of the late 1960s, they “would like to be involved in the issues concerning their society... However, there are no sufficient mechanisms for involvement” (Aalto, 1971, p. 24). In these circumstances, with the official routes of involvement and discussion either unobtainable or distant in terms of age and competence, the music and popular culture offered an alternative space for dialogue, both familiar and easily accessible. As Pekka Gronow and Seppo Bruun put it in 1968 (p. 80), “pop music is almost the only thing through which the youth can express themselves without interfering in adults’ affairs”.

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PART II.
CONSUMPTION
AS SPECTACLE:
AGE OF THE
TELEVISION,
AFFLUENCE AND
MEDIATISATION OF
CONSUMER SOCIETY

A family
gathered around
the television in
the early 1970s
in Tuupovaara
to watch
the program
"Moscow's
Great Circus".
Photographer
unknown
(Kansan
Arkisto).





TELEVISION CREATING FINNISH CONSUMER MENTALITY IN THE 1960S

Jukka kortti

Industrial production and supply of consumer goods fundamentally “revolutionised” western societies in the 1960s. The breakthrough of the Finnish consumer society was a result of the strong movement toward modernisation after the Second World War, and the most rapid stage of modernisation took place in the 1960s. In Finnish economic history, the period from the early 1960s to the mid-1970s is considered one of the periods of structural change of the 20th century.¹ It is referred to as the third phase of Finland’s industrialisation that took place in the era of the “second republic” (1944–1991) (Alasuutari, 1996). Finland’s post-war development can be seen as part of the “golden years” (Hobsbawm 1996) of Western Europe, i.e. 1950–70; the development was, however, exceptionally rapid even within that context.

The Finnish post-war rationing ended in 1954. Suddenly, there a wide range of alternatives in food, clothing and other products was now available. Finland was on its way to becoming what economist John Kenneth Galbraith (1958) defined as an “affluent society”. Economic situations of households improved, and people could afford washing machines, refrigerators, vacuum cleaners and TV sets. Saturday became

¹ It was preceded by the structural changes of the 1890s, 1920s and late 1930s. Illustrative of the rapidity of change and growth of wealth is that the average growth of income per capita in Finland between the late 1940s and the mid-1970s equalled to the growth of the preceding two centuries combined (Hjerpe, 1979, p. 37; Hjerpe, 1990, p. 47).

a weekly holiday in addition to longer annual holidays, which increased leisure time and accelerated consumption. Increased money was spent on hobbies, travelling and entertainment. Visa Heinonen (2000, pp.14–16) refers to this post-war reconstruction period as the breakthrough of the consumer society. “Golden years” also meant cultural revolution. Advanced communication services contributed to the increased importance of popular and youth cultures, and the cultural change was characterised by Americanisation. Concurrently with increasing economic prosperity, the Finns learned a new, consumption-oriented way of life. A key role in this process was played by the developments in media, especially the advent of television.

Together with suburbanisation, “motorisation”, the birth of youth culture and increasing economic prosperity, television was an essential part of the expansion of consumer culture in the United States, the leading country of television culture, in the 1950s. The real triumph of television in Europe, which was still recovering from the war, did not take off before the following decade, and its impact on consumer culture in Europe was thus not as significant as in the United States. This resulted largely from the fact that in Europe television was mainly based on the idea of public service, whereas in the United States television was thoroughly commercial and thereby business-oriented. Television, however, had a crucial role in the transmission and adoption of a new and modern way of life in Europe as well.

Television is intrinsically linked to the post-war leisure-time consumerism, which is penetrated by modernity; it can be argued that television was at the heart of modernity. The rapid spread of television gave a new direction to a number of industrial branches, including fashion (Samuel, 2001, p. 46; Robins & Webster, 1985, p. 41). When human experience was to a greater extent linked to purchasable and saleable commodities, television became an important means of transmitting a consumer ethos from corporate producers to consumers.

Television provided models for modern consumerism. The Finns not only saw in their living rooms the modern framework of consumerism created by American television programmes, but also received direct instructions for living in a consumer culture through television commercials. Finland is one of the pioneers in the history of European commercial television. Television commercials were immediately

adopted in the mid-1950s with the first television experiments. Television commercials advanced the change in consumer identity and mentality in a unique way in the 1960s, when the signs of hedonistic consumerism became “acceptable” at the end of the decade (Kortti 2003).

The article examines how television influenced the formation of post-war Finnish ‘consumer mentality’ (see Heinonen & Autio in this collection) and the creation of a ‘new identity’ related to it. Here, identity is considered as a form of mentality (see Hyrkkänen 2002, 89–90). Mentality has been seen as collective, often automatic subconscious behaviour of everyday “normal life” among the (ordinary) people, whereas identity is a more experimental, subjective and short-term conception of self within a particular social, geographical, cultural, and political context. The concept of identity comes close to the concept of ‘philosophy of life’ since it could require mental activity from an individual and media as well as media related consumption (about ‘consumer identity’ later) can play a significant role in the process. Media operates on both subconscious and conscious levels: it is part of the mental-historical context often linked with culture which has an effect on an individual or it may be a device for creating a philosophy of life (see Kortti 2011a). Hence in this article, ‘new identity’ refers to a given situation: consumption centred modern/postmodern mentality of the 1960s fuelled by media.

The topic is approached from two points of view: How did television spread in Finnish living rooms, and what was its *status* as a symbolic commodity? How did television with its commercials provide models for modern Finnish consumerism? In other words, in semiotic terms, how did television *signify* the development of consumer capitalisms? The latter question is not so straightforward by any means, in the light of Finland’s geopolitical position between East and West during the Cold War left a distinct mark on the early years of Finnish television.

The article is based on oral history material on the history of Finnish television viewing and a number of Finnish television commercials from the 1960s, which were used in my two previous studies (Kortti, 2003; Kortti, 2007). The emphasis, however, is on the reminiscences of

television. The methodological framework consists of an analysis of oral history data and a semiotics-based historical-cultural analysis.²

COLD WAR BATTLE FOR BROADCASTING SPACE

Like many other European nations, Finland saw strong advocacy for making television a public, non-commercial medium. In the end, however, the compromise arrangement patterned itself after the British system, in which there was both a public and a commercial station. The result was a hybrid system, in which some programming was purely public, while other programming was commercial, much like in the United States. Under the circumstances, Finnish television was diverse, but of high grade in the standards of the time: the balance between educational and entertaining, commercial (i.e. American) programmes was good. The Finnish experience differs especially from the other Nordic countries, whose television remained advertising free until the late 1980s.

Because of advertising, Finnish television broadcasting started as early as 1956, and a television network quickly spread to all parts of Finland. Without the involvement of business and advertising people, Yleisradio, the national broadcasting company, would probably never have accepted advertising in its operations. The very first Finnish public television broadcast featuring advertising was sent in early 1956. It was sponsored by Amer Tupakka, a Finnish tobacco company. This initial broadcast was sent by the Foundation for the Technology Promotion, who had established their own TV station a year before that. It began as

² The television commercials, altogether 216 in the above-mentioned doctoral dissertation (Kortti 2003), are derived from various sources, but mainly from the Finnish Film Archive (presently, the National Audiovisual Archive). The oral history data derives the 1996 survey *Elokuva ennen ja nyt* ('Cinema past and present'), organised by the Finnish Film Archive and Finland's National Board of Antiquities as a joint project to commemorate the hundredth anniversary of cinema. Part of the questions dealt with television and video. The sample consists of 249 out of a total of 845 respondents. In this context, it is not meaningful to present the materials and methods in detail. For details about the analyses, see Kortti, 2003, pp.168–186; for details about the use of oral history material, see Kortti, 2007, and Kortti & Mähönen, 2009.

an enthusiastic experiment. The story of this TV station, called Tesvisio, ended in 1964, when Yleisradio bought it after Tesvisio encountered an economic crisis. Yleisradio started television broadcasting in the autumn of 1957 and from the very first day it included commercials.³ The extra money was needed mainly because the construction of the VHF network for radio cost a lot of money (Kortti 2003, pp.20–40).

Besides the funding of television, there were also other problems in starting Finnish TV broadcasting in the mid-1950s. The Soviet television programmes were transmitted from Estonia through the Tallinn TV station, and people could watch its programmes in Southern Finland. The Tallinn television service constituted a serious problem for Finland, as it offered the Soviet Union an excellent medium of propaganda. The Finnish government could not prevent the import of Soviet television sets or even the establishment of a relay transmitter at Porkkala, the Soviet military base near Helsinki, which the Soviet Union had leased for 50 years after the Moscow Armistice of 1944.⁴ In addition to the programmes, it was also a case of technology and a Cold War battle for broadcasting space. The Soviets wanted to sell their TV system to Finland. The American RCA won, however, mainly because they offered their transmission system at half the price. Another factor for the outcome was that but also because the Finnish business people – and those in the technology department of Yleisradio as well – wanted the western system, also because it was then clear that the Soviets had fallen behind (see Salokangas, 1996, pp.133–134).

Both the United States and the Soviet Union launched an extensive series of cultural exchange programmes in the years following Stalin's death. It included, among other things, expanding the coverage of its broadcasts abroad and to begin exchanging radio and television programmes with the West. In 1961, for example, the Soviet Union

3 Yleisradio decided to begin a separate company, which would be independent of Yleisradio and would be owned by advertisers, advertising agencies and film production companies. The new company was called Oy Mainos-TV Reklam Ab (nowadays known as channel MTV3, the third oldest commercial television company in Europe).

4 Porkkala was returned to Finland in 1955.

had programme exchanges: with 55 altogether countries – and not only with the socialist countries. The exchange with the western countries consisted mostly of documentary films, recordings of great events and some feature films. This was not a marginal phenomenon during the Cold War era, but an important manifestation of it. Overall, the cultural exchange and influence had its own role to play in the Cold War (Mikkonen, 2011).

Although Soviet programmes were also broadcasted in the early years of Finnish commercial television, American programmes soon took over the foreign programme supply. In the early days of Finnish television, the Americans practised their wartime “psychological warfare” especially through the USIS⁵ (United States Information Service), which supplied a wealth of American film programmes to Finnish television companies, including Yleisradio. Nonetheless, for reasons of fairness and in order to avoid frustrating foreign relations that were important to Finland, even commercial Tesvisio showed Soviet programmes in the early days of the channel (Keinonen, 2011, pp.182–187).

However, the Finnish commercial television companies actively aimed to promote Western culture in the Cold War context. Especially after the Second World War American “cultural imperialism” took a strong hold over the whole of post-war Western Europe through media. Altogether, the Americanisation of Finland did not take place in the influx of physical artefacts as much as in the form of ideas and cultural goods. American products, such as cars, were often either too big or too expensive for Finnish consumer markets. Besides, the rather small markets in Finland were not too attractive for American firms. The transaction costs, import fees, costs of packing, freight, and so on were simply too high. Although Finland was the only western country participating in the Second World War, which did not receive the post-war Marshall Aid package, Finland received instead “the Marshall Aid of ideas” (Alaketola-Tuominen, 1989, pp.9, 21). America was idolised in the 1950s and 1960s just because it seemed to be a place in which things were better, faster, and more effective. The American marketing

⁵ The US historians speak more about the USIA (United States Information Agency), and the USIS referred to the USIA’s office in Finland (Keinonen, 2011, pp.183).

ideas and Americanism as a referent system⁶ for advertising had a strong influence on Finnish television commercials.

BECOMING A STATUS OBJECT FOR LIVING ROOMS

Television's arrival in the Finnish households undoubtedly triggered one of the biggest changes in the social life of the 1960s. Television's role in bringing the new modern lifestyle to people's everyday lives was vital. It transformed people-to-people contacts and advanced a cultural change in which the agrarian society was learning new ways. In the process, television conveyed the new consumerist models for living.

Television spread rapidly in Finland. In 1964, Finland was ranked eighth in the comparison of the penetration of television licenses per capita in Europe. By 1966, three in four urban employee household and in total more than half of the Finns owned a television. In the same year, television also spread into Lapland, leaving slightly above a half percent of the country outside the coverage area of television.

Social domestication of 'radical inventions', such as television, tends to be more difficult than 'less important' innovations. It takes more time for them to take root in people's lifestyles and ways of thinking (Pantzar 1996, pp.17, 19). There is an element of discretion in their acquisition, which might be explained both by the high cost of the good and more careful contemplation of the need for the invention. Nevertheless, within a short period of time television did become *fashion* in Finland.

Many had familiarised themselves with television in public places and abroad as well as at friends, neighbours and relatives prior to acquiring their own television receiver. Many Helsinkians and visitors to Helsinki remember the television presentations at the Stockmann department store in the 1950s. After television broadcasts began, people were able to view television programmes in radio shop windows even outside of Helsinki. New technology was a particularly powerful experience

⁶ Referent systems are clearly ideological systems and draw their significance from areas outside advertising (see Williamson, 1998, pp. 17, 19).

for people in the rural areas, where part of the population was still unacquainted even with the cinema:

My brother sent my mother his old television set, and when we visited her we got to watch it. It was a really wonderful experience there in the backwoods, where even electricity had arrived just recently. We sat there like it was a theatre and were simply awestruck. Even the commercials seemed like a fancy play. We fetched tea or coffee from the kitchen and then we just enjoyed ourselves. It was as if we had entered the world of art. The children were particularly amazed. (Female, born 1920)

Social life in rural areas changed rapidly and radically with the spread of television. Earlier, social interaction was based largely on spontaneous neighbourly visits and associations. The impact of television on the latter was negative. For example, the savings banks' get-togethers in rural areas became frustrating from the perspective of the organisers' work, when the farmers and their wives moved to the other room to watch television (Kuusterä, 1995, p.508).⁷

The desire to follow the neighbours' behaviour may have been an important reason for purchasing a television set; consumer theorists have defined the behavioural pattern as "keeping up with Joneses" phenomenon.⁸

I bought a TV for myself in 1962, and I bought one for my parents as a Christmas present the next year. In the countryside television was acquired, or rather I acquired it, because the neighbours had one as well, and the Ostrobothnians couldn't stand it if the neighbours seemed to be better off. (Male, date of birth unknown)

⁷ However, in the early years of television, when few people owned one, the tradition of neighbourly visits experienced a short period of revival. People from the neighbourhood as well as from farther away gathered to view programmes together in the households in possession of the apparatus. There could be numerous guests for many nights in row. Often the spectators ranged from children to grandparents and from family members to villagers. Talking and coffee drinking were an integral part of viewing television together:

⁸ Other important reasons include the children's wishes, the desire to view a particular programme (e.g. the Olympic Games), and simply the pervasiveness of television.

A travelling television salesman recalls:

When the village bigwigs had been manoeuvred into trying out a television, the neighbours were made envious and the sales went up. They asked the salesman which one and how expensive a set the neighbour had bought. When I replied I also said that there were of course cheaper models of equal quality. As a consequence, the buyer often wanted a bit more expensive one the neighbour had. (Male, born 1932)

The “bigwigs” were not only affluent enough to buy a television set, but also active, curious, enlightened and progressive people. Often the adopters of novelties are local opinion leaders. In the biggest cities, too, the well-off were among the first to purchase a television. For many, it was also an object of status:

According to my mother, the second television set in the whole village was at our home (a farmhouse), even though my grandfather was a relatively stingy person. The TV was said to be bought just for the sake of showing off. (Female, born 1970)

The consumer researchers have been interested in the status value of consumption ever since the classic studies by Thorstein Veblen (*Theory of the Leisure Class*, 1899) and Georg Simmel (*Der Mode*, 1904). Veblen examined especially the development of conspicuous consumption, and Simmel noted how fashion seems to trickle down from the upper classes to the lower. Due to the example set by the progressive and enlightened opinion leaders of the communities, members of the lower social groups, such small farmers and factory workers, could become inspired about television. In Bourdieu's terms, a status object gives the owner the opportunity to tell about his taste and position. Indeed, in *Distinction* (1984), his classic study on the sociology of consumption, sociologist Pierre Bourdieu views consumption as a symbolic power struggle.

As the society became more affluent, consumption became more democratic. The Finnish post-war “pioneer spirit” together with the idea of the welfare state paved the way for modern, more democratic

consumption. Finnish society has not been a class society like France or England, even if the “bigwigs”, lords, priests, merchants and wealthier farmers have been admired, envied and imitated here, too. As such, the Finns’ motives for acquiring a television did not differ from the motives discovered in other countries. For instance in Britain, the most important reason for purchasing a television set was its symbolic status value and the sign of modernity attached to it (O’Sullivan, 1991, p.166).

Based on the oral history material used in the study, it is not possible to make any clear conclusions about the socioeconomic backgrounds of the persons who purchased television sets and those who refused to do so. However, in the material, the buying of television sets is occasionally associated with rich families, and the poor families’ purchase is considered surprising. Overall, the purchase of a television set is considered fairly progressive and the television set itself is seen as a status symbol; but several respondents also specifically emphasise that the neighbours’ example did not affect their purchasing decision. On the other hand, those who take a negative view on television emphasise that the purchase was not urgent and that they had better use for their time than watching television. These texts are often written by the highly educated.

Television soon became the property of nearly all social groups. As a consequence, its status value soon faded. In spite of its domestication, its status value has not become completely irrelevant, however. Indeed, since the 1960s, status has again become clear, for example, in connection with owning a colour television or a big flat-screen television.

LOWBROW (CONSUMER) CULTURE

Television viewing in the rural areas differed from that of the urban areas; in a similar vein, the viewing habits of the working class differed from those of the upper social classes, especially in the early days of television. The purchase of a television set was most rapid among the middle social strata. Lower social groups could not afford it, whereas the upper classes had a low opinion of it, at least at first. For example, in the Helsinki area, which is characterised by the relatively high proportion of

people with a high formal education, a fairly large number of television sets were bought in a short time in the early days. Television viewing was not as frequent in the rural areas, however. Television was looked down on especially in the families in possession of what Bourdieu calls 'cultural capital'. In the early days, there were even anti-television sentiments present especially in the intellectual circles of the upper middle class. This group labelled television as 'low entertainment' and preferred the theatre and read literature instead. Television was regarded as unlearned and vulgar (Kortti 2007, pp.218–246).

This kind of "high culture snobbery" and contempt for popular culture were characteristic of the cultural debates of the 1950s in Finland (see Peltonen, 1996). Novelties manifested nearly limitless opportunities for the early adopters and sellers of new technologies, whereas the learned regarded them as a threat (Pantzar, 1996, p.10). In the United States as well, the upper social groups represented a clear minority of viewers; they were also most critical toward television advertising, while the lower classes were more receptive. Owing partly to this, television set advertising aimed to emphasise that purchasing a set was a sign of the "good taste" of a modern American family (Samuel, 2001, p.41; Tichi, 1991, p.21).

A periodic study (Nordenstreng, 1969, p.22) conducted by Yleisradio in April 1968 showed that, even after television had penetrated virtually the whole population, "there were slightly more of those who were satisfied with a radio in the so-called upper end of the socioeconomic scale than in the middle class." According to a study conducted in 1970, radio and television were valued most in the "lower social strata" (Alfors et al., 1970, p.23). The idiom of television was considered closely related to the working-class culture, which tends to avoid intellectual work and to confine itself to concrete forms of expression. It has even been assumed that the idiom of television is partly working class based. Indeed, television appeals to the working class more than, for example, literature or theatre (Alasuutari & Siltari, 1983, p.88).

As regards television-related consumption, television programmes provided for viewers a means to reflect cultural or any other forms of capital. Intellectual or ascetic approaches to television (life without a TV) are present especially among the highly educated. A quote from a teacher sums up – to a certain extent – what has been stated above:

As long as television has existed, I have viewed the most appropriate and dignified programmes, if I have had the time, that is. Usually, the news, the best of factual, arts and music programmes, the Sunday worship and religious programmes, if I have not been attending church performing my duties. I have always watched few entertainment programmes, and I have chosen them carefully. Of the foreign television serials, etc., I view only those that comprise of correctly spoken language, British English or well-pronounced German. The artistic quality of theatrical performances means much to me. The life I have been given is such a valuable gift that I do not want to waste it on programmes that are not mentally developing or give uplifting experiences. (Male, born 1928)

According to the popular culture researchers John Fiske and John Hartley (1996, pp. 116–126), the devaluing attitude toward television of the educated class stems from tensions between oral and written cultures. Television essentially represents an oral culture of lower value, as opposed to the more valued educational written culture. For instance, the well-known American media critic Neil Postman (1985) has blamed television for ruining America's four-hundred-year-old typographic culture. In addition, Postman claims that it has also trivialized rhetoric.

Postman (1985, pp. 64–82) also points out how the “graphic revolution” since the invention of the telegraph and the photograph has created a *pseudo-context* – “a structure invented to give fragmented and irrelevant information a seeming use”. According to Postman, television only provides visual *amusement* with no genuine connection to our lives. He refers to American essayist Susan Sontag's famous essay *On Photography*, in which she states how language is the medium we use to challenge, dispute, and cross-examine what comes into view, what is on the surface. Photography instead “implies that we know about the world if we accept it as the camera records it” (Sontag 1978, p. 23).

It is obvious, that cultural elites have historically also valued text over image but, on the other hand, film has had an important role to play among the European postwar intelligentsia. In fact, this new intellectual cinema culture – which, on the other hand, was also very literal in the forms of film criticism – lived its heyday in the fifties and sixties (see e.g. Kortti 2011b). The cultural distinctions between an intellectual elite

and a populace was not so much with text and image as with “good and bad” culture during the arrival of television (see Peltonen 1996).

FROM TARGET SAVERS TO HEDONISTS

Television quickly permeated all demographic segments in spite of the relatively high price of the apparatus. People jocularly referred to the aerials on rooftops as bankruptcy rakes or pennants. In rural areas, in particular, television stood for progressive modernity, which involved a rising living standard and increasing leisure. It may even override the milking machine in the list of acquisitions. At the turn of the 1960s, the price of a television set was equivalent to that of a purebred cow or three months’ of a worker’s gross salary. It turned out that social welfare boards were forced to “deliberate the problem of whether welfare benefits should be granted to families which were in temporary difficulties difficulty as a result of purchasing a washing machine, a moped and a television set at the same time” (Siipi, 1967, p. 210).

Finnish consumption underwent a structural change as it doubled between 1952 and 1975. As a consequence, an increasing proportion of consumption expenses were spent on transport, housing, recreation and other expenditures, instead of food. Public consumption began to play an increasingly important role in the national economy. In addition to satisfying the basic needs (food and clothing), the number of household appliances increased rapidly (Heinonen, 2000, p. 17; Vattula, 1983, pp. 462–463, 466–467).

In the scarcity of the 1950s, moralising notions were still attached to domestic appliances – as well as to television and the car. They were regarded as extravagant. Target saving and avoiding “unnecessary costs” were considered to be the prerequisites of a wealthier life. Money was drawn from the account only when it was “absolutely necessary”. Apparently, a television set was considered as such an essential expenditure. Even if the “bankruptcy rake” upon the roof may have driven the poorest families into economic distress, durable goods paradoxically became a tool for managing consumption impulses, when banks and economic policy leaders urged people to save for domestic appliances, in addition to saving for a home (Pantzar, 2000, pp. 38–39, 41, 66–67, 73).

Besides refrigerators, washing machines and vacuum cleaners, television was among the most important domestic acquisition of the 1960s. All of these were found in more than half of Finnish homes by the end of the 1960s (Kortti, 2003, p.254). Domestic appliances were an essential part of the post-war development of the Finnish economy (Pantzar, 2000, p. 66). In private consumer expenditures, the proportion of the amount of money spent on domestic appliances grew seven-fold from the beginning of the 1960s to the mid-1970s (Vattula, 1983, p. 462). Household-related television commercials were also an important part of television advertising. For example, commercials related to housekeeping and household maintenance accounted for 15% and commercials related to home and interior decoration for 5% of the annual turnover of the television company MTV in 1968 (*Mainos-TV tiedottaa* 1968).⁹

The advertising of domestic appliances laid emphasis on rational consumption, the ideology of frugality and efficiency: a washing machine would save time and a refrigerator and freezer would save money, which makes them rational investments. In a UPO refrigerator commercial from 1965, a refrigerator salesman is on the way to present the product to a client, and he explains to a housewife that using a fridge costs only as much as the glass of milk her son holds in his hands. A 1968 freezer commercial by the same manufacturer (UPO) underlines the same bank metaphor by associating between the freezer and a money box: “When you have a UPO freezer, it’s like putting money in a box. You will save money when you buy food cheaply in large quantities.” There is an element of rationalist edification present in the commercials from the 1960s. A freezer was seen as a rational investment for the food management of home economics, a “food bank” (Pantzar, 2000, p. 53–57).

The relatively rapid rise of living standards after the war in Finland was characterised by a certain kind of saving mentality, which came through, for instance, from the banks’ post-war emphasis on saving. Saving was part of the post-war development of the Finnish economy. Target savers were the heroes of the 1950s and the 1960s. It was

⁹ *Mainos-TV tiedottaa*. Oy Mainos-TV-Reklam Ab 4th October 1968. MTV3 archives.

inconsistent, however, that the people were simultaneously encouraged to embrace consumerism; it was feared that people lacked self control. Target saving was justified by complex psychological, social, economic and cultural arguments. Even commercial banks participated in taking care of people's savings, in the vein of savings banks, co-operative banks and dairies. Based on advertisements in the magazines of the era, Mika Pantzar's (2000, pp. 67, 71) study shows that Finnish economic policy, which included the future story of progress and criticism of satisfying one's immediate needs, was visible in television commercials of banks.

This mentality is present in the PYP bank's commercial film *PYP-avain* ('PYP-key') from 1962, in which bank services combine a connotation of trust in the future and enlightenment, along with a long-term consumerist ideology. The advert includes the myth of a target saver, who is a rational and tenacious person. Saving is literally portrayed as a key to a better life. By saving it is possible to purchase a car and a home. At the same time, children are also taught to save. This restrained method of becoming wealthier starts to crumble towards the end of the decade. In the PYP bank's commercial *Säästä puolet* ('Save half') from 1966, it was already possible to get a loan for a summer cottage or for "anything".

By 1969, more hedonistic consumption, emphasising individualism and leisure, was present in bank commercials. In the "Reindeer antler" commercial of Säästöpankki ('Savings bank'), a modern, "far-sighted individual", as the announcer declares, is relaxing by a campfire in a wilderness in Lapland. Irony and humour were, by now, allowed in banking commercials. The viewers expect the hiker to be writing poems or stories of Lapland's wilderness, until it turns out that he is writing a cheque.

Teaching people to save was the spirit of the times. The public authorities regulated financial activities. "Shackled money" increased competition between the banks, because financing was almost entirely based on borrowing. It was not possible to use interest rates as a means of competition, because, for political reasons, interest rates were kept as low as possible and subordinate to the growth policy of the day. Savings banks, for instance, had their own educational departments until the end of the 1950s and dissemination of frugality was stated

as being the first article of the savings bank law. The changes in times and attitudes were also reflected in the terminology. The term “savings propaganda” was used openly until 1963, when it was replaced by the term “advertising”. The term “marketing” came into use in 1969. The emphasis laid on advertising was explained by the fact that the focus of competition had shifted to increasing the availability of bank services. (Kuusterä, 1995, p. 432, 503, 506.)

The ideology of frugality in the 1950s and 1960s was also targeted towards the young people of the baby-boomer generation, who were beginning to have their own money to spend. The cooperative bank Osuuskassa, for example, used teen idols in a campaign in 1967. The commercial’s tune was sung by the folk group Hootenanny Trio, teen idol Johnny Liebkind and actor–singer Pirkko Mannola. Advertising trade magazine *Mainostaja* wrote at the time:

Sometimes people joke that the banks want what’s best in a man, that is, his money. We can, however, establish that the financial institutions in our country have, in particular, in recent times, sought to teach the youth to think a little about the future, too, which they have achieved through advertising, among other things. Although, as the only financial institution in our country, Osuuskassa, for example, has had a so-called youth account in use for as long as four years. (Jäntti, 1968).

There may have been reluctant attitudes to commercials, especially among politicians and social scientists, but people did have positive experiences about them as well. Especially, the jingles, the tunes used in advertising, were memorable:

Children had their own programmes, and all the kids knew the commercials and their tunes by heart back then: *‘Yhdyspankki is our bank...’*; *‘By saving will the loan get paid, the bank is always there to aid...’*; and all the rest. (Female, born 1922.)

TELEVISION AND THE MODERN CONSUMER IDENTITY

Modernity and consumer culture are interconnected in many ways, and modern identity, in particular, is twined around consumption. According to consumer researcher Don Slater (1997, pp. 85, 101), the metaphor of individual choice dominates people's social sense: modern identity is best perceived through images of consumption. People create and reshape their identities with commodities. The identity, too, can be a commercial good.

As mentioned above, the growth of consumption had an important role in the rapid modernisation process in Finland in the 1960s. In addition to becoming vital for the Finnish economy, consumption was also associated with perceptions that influenced the change in people's general mindset. Such perceptions were created especially through the new media, television and advertising, which were unprecedentedly effective. Television commercials were combining the two. What was the consumer model conveyed to the Finns by television like, then? How did it create Finnish people's *consumer identities* and new kind of consumer mentality?

Susan Sontag provides a clue in answer to these questions, when she notes how industrial societies turn their citizens into "image-junkies" (Sontag 1978, p. 23–24). However, television has had an important role in creating an *image culture* – a socio-cultural state in which media images and media-influenced commodity-signs are used as sources for cultural identity (see Jansson 2002).

Social scientists have argued that consumption, spending power and cultural tastes have been emphasised in the course of modernisation, whereas sense of community has lost ground, which has led to *atomisation* of consumption (see e.g. Lash, 1994; McKay, 1997, p. 264). However, it has mainly concerned the postmodern societies. Is the assertion that Finland was a postmodern country in the 1960s not, after all, somewhat bold? Was Finnish consumerism not then still governed by the awareness-raising and rational economic ethos of the farmers? A researcher in the field, Visa Heinonen (1998, p. 381) argues that a shift, which was visible even in consumer education, took place in the mentality already in the 1960s. It appeared in the consumer

protectionist thinking, which, in turn, resulted from the welfare society concept. In the 1970s, in the course of modernisation, the shift was further underlined.

Are there then such postmodern features discernible in Finnish consumerism in the 1960s that are manifested in reflectiveness and atomisation? Examination of Finnish television consumption reveals that television viewing has not become particularly atomised even in the 2000s. In a way, the identity of an educational and sociological subject is maintained in television viewing, which implies that Finns tend to rely on rationality and safe predictability in their television viewing. The more extensive survey on the history of Finnish television viewing I have conducted shows that, even if choices become more difficult and selection routines change due to increased supply, people tend to cling to their old habits. Regardless of the changes, a number of everyday media routines remain intact.

While television had a radical impact on social interaction in the early days, many old Finnish traditions remained. The routine television habits were transformed and adopted into Finnish cultural traditions. In this respect, television can be considered *transmodern* (Hartley, 1999); television viewing incorporates habits that are both newer and older than television. The tradition of watching television after sauna is the most marked old Finnish tradition, and it is very much alive today. The British equivalent is watching television after tea-time (O'Sullivan, 1991, p.171). The media can also be used to expand and cement traditions, instead of just challenging and undermining values and beliefs (Thompson, 1995, p. 183, 192, 195).

Reflective modernisation and the accompanying new (consumer) identity are manifested especially in the aesthetics created by television. The models the new consumerist world offered to Finnish homes in the 1960s were most effectively conveyed by television commercials. As in the above-mentioned cases of advertising household appliances and bank services, with regard to reshaping – or at least representations – of consumer identity and mentality, a clear shift in advertising a number of other product groups can also be dated to the late 1960s.

Modern individualism is intrinsically linked to hedonistic personal fulfilment. There is talk of emotions, feelings, sensations, the primary significance of experiences, and profound individuality. As expected, the

increasing hedonism of Finnish advertising in the 1960s is manifested especially in cosmetics products adverts, whose ultimate function is to improve people's appearances. But cosmetics advertising, too, changed by the 1970s. One no longer applied makeup only in order to be safely married, but to rather to emphasise one's personal fulfilment. A similar type of highly emotional "what the product can do especially for you" thinking emerges in television commercials of a number of other products as well.

In the late 1960s, women in particular were beginning to be represented as more hedonistic and independent consumers. The role of women changed, when working outside of the home became more common. In addition, as a result of a change in the social and cultural mentality provoked by the debates and sexual liberation, which the feminist movement started, women ceased to be merely sensible "finance ministers" of the home. Women were increasingly urban, modern and mobile. Glamorous models appeared in the cosmetics commercials, and their eventful lives were made into objects of identification. Also, sex was increasingly involved in the representations of women (Kortti 2003, pp. 232–300).

The television advertising campaign of Shell Finland took this furthest in the late 1960s. The campaign embodied the 'Supergirl' personifications; the leading role of the ads played by a Finnish supermodel of the time. Shell's long-standing and memorable campaign presented a female equivalent of James Bond, who adventured in to the man's world of advertising petrol as well as other petrol-station products. The Supergirl was indeed an object, but at the same time also very independent (Kortti 2003, pp. 352–388).

The numerous roles of the Supergirl can be perceived as a sign of a new kind of subjectivity. According to the cultural theoretician Stuart Hall (1988), one borderline of the "new era" lies between the objective and subjective dimensions of the change. At the same time as the individual subject has become more important, perceptions regarding the subject have changed. An individual is no longer whole, a solid self, but rather fragmented. Fragmentation, or atomisation, is often used to describe contemporary consumer culture. There are, however, evident signs of that found from Finland in the 1960s. In fact, Hall is also of the view that the "cultural revolution" of 1968 represents a turning point.

In many respects, that year marked a turning point in Finnish television advertising as well (Kortti 2003, pp. 412–413).

CONCLUSION: TIME AND CHANGE

The phenomena of the era – urbanisation, internationalisation and investing in education – had a strong impact on Finland, too. Europe was being rebuilt and the era was characterised by rapid economic growth, building of welfare states and modern consumer societies, and the spread of mass consumption models related to them. People's role as consumers was highlighted. New products such as plastic, television, records and transistor radios permeated societies. Technological breakthroughs were revolutionising everyday life and technology was more capital intensive than before.

The youth of the baby-boomer generation was an important target for advertising in the 1960s, but young people were also at the centre of the 1960s' social movement, which believed in communality. Advertising as popular culture and as a melting pot of other popular cultures created various kinds of models affecting everyday life at least indirectly, if not directly. Although it is not likely that anyone would have truly imagined him or herself to be a superman or a Supergirl, the commercials reflected and shaped the new mentality of the fragmented identity. Media is a very important identity resource, providing the fabric for differentiating between "them and us".

Yet, it must be emphasised that we are talking about advertising images here. It must be kept in mind that advertising will always give a selective and often distorted picture of reality. Individualism has been emphasised in advertising since the 1960s, but that does not mean that the Finns would have become more "individualistic". Nevertheless, individualisation was not just an advertising image, but it can be found also in the social policy of the sixties. As the study by Kirsti Ahlqvist (2010, pp. 191–196) shows, the documentation of statistics on consumption started to emphasize individual autonomy and self-determination in the 1960s.

At the same time, most of the new consumer products such as television were family oriented. Actually, the process of individualisation

took place slowly and was not in fact visible prior to people's lifestyles during the economic boom of the 1980s. At that point in time, the baby boomers were given the opportunity to "expand their youth", when culture was rejuvenated and youthful characteristics became the benchmark for middle-age as well (Wilska, 2004, pp. 248–249).

All in all, the consumer culture of the 2000s in many respects stems from the 1960s, in particular, the late 1960s. Many of the contemporary media-driven phenomena of consumption were already in existence back then, at least as an idea. On the other hand, some consumption habits take time to change and thus carry on the traditions that are being reshaped.

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Roulette table at the
Fennia restaurant in
1983. Photographer
Ritva Kovalainen
(Työväen Arkisto).





THE LEGALIZING OF ROULETTE AND CHANGES IN FINNISH CONSUMER CULTURE IN THE 1960S AND 1970S

Riitta Matilainen

INTRODUCTION

According to Gerda Reith (1999, p.1), “It has long been recognized that analysis of what may appear trivial or mundane can generate insights into fundamental aspects of social life”. This is my starting point for a study of the introduction of the game of roulette in Finland in the 1960s, a time when Finns were experiencing extremely rapid structural and social changes. The focus of the article is to regard a new legalized form of gambling (roulette) and the discourses and practices related to it as clues in an effort to analyze the changing consumer and leisure mentalities and cultures of Finns.

After some experimenting with roulettes onboard passenger ships that regularly travelled between Finland and Germany, it became legal to install roulettes in high-class Finnish restaurants and night-clubs in 1969. It should be noted that the first casino was established in Finland in 1991 which is late in European or North American comparison but earlier than in Sweden where the first casino was opened in 2001. Before 1991 restaurants, night clubs, and ships travelling to Stockholm and Germany were the only legal places for playing roulette in Finland. Many newspapers and magazines welcomed the introduction of roulette as a way of offering Finns a glimpse of the “big world” of gambling associated with casinos like those in Monte Carlo, beautiful women and

the chance of making or losing a fortune overnight. The introduction of roulette was considered a sign of Finland finally measuring up to Western European standards and to the “continental” way of life and consumer culture. However, there was an interesting discrepancy between the image of roulette and the reality of the game. In order to avoid accusations of downright gambling the price of the chip was very low as were the winnings. The class and gender aspects of playing roulette are also of interest. Roulette was marketed as a form of gambling that was particularly suitable for the middle and upper classes. The role of women was also important in the playing of roulette: contrary to many other European countries the first croupiers were women.

The source material used for this paper consists of 14 contemporary newspaper and magazine articles, interviews with the first Finnish croupiers (published in a book), official documents of the roulette operator, Finland’s Slot Machine Association (hence RAY) and legal documents such as memorandums.

GAMBLING AND CONSUMPTION

The field of gambling has received surprisingly little attention in historical research worldwide considering its economic, social and cultural impact on different societies. The situation is however changing rapidly. A new school of gambling studies is emerging and the premises of this school can be crystallized as follows: Gambling is an important part of almost every society’s social, cultural and economic life. Gambling per se is not considered a pathological or criminal activity. Gambling takes place in time and in a certain context. In choosing to gamble, gamblers make a consumer decision, and this choice must be treated as a rational rather than an irrational decision. Gender, class, age and place of residence need to be taken into consideration with the help of, for example, ethnographical studies (See, e.g., Reith 1999; Casey 2003, 2008; Husz 2003, 2004; Garvía 2007; Marksbury 2009; Matilainen 2011).

Many researchers of gambling (see e.g., Garvía 2007 p. 644, and Casey 2008) regard the decision to gamble as a consumer decision. Emma Casey (2008, p. 3), who has studied British women’s experiences of the National lottery, points out that buying a National Lottery ticket

is a hugely popular and routine consumer purchase, which has a rather unique mass appeal in ways that many other consumer products do not. Even though participation in Finnish roulette playing in the 1960s and 1970s can hardly be defined as a routine purchase, it is easy to agree with Casey that gambling products do tend to have an extraordinary appeal for the general public in comparison to many other products.

However, even though gambling is considered a consumer decision, it can still have a rather dubious image. Colin Campbell (1998, pp. 237–238) has interestingly described the tendency in intellectual discussions of consumption to use a terminological dichotomy of want and need. The rhetoric of need has received greater legitimacy in intellectual discussions of consumption as well as in the discourses and rhetoric of ordinary people. As gambling falls into the want category it has had the unfortunate fate of being regarded as something non-essential and unnecessary, even objectionable and thus not worth scientific enquiry.

FINNISH CONSUMER SOCIETY IN THE 1960S AND THE 1970S

What is a consumer society and what are the characteristics of a consumer society? Paul Glennie (1995, p. 165) states that a consumer society is a society where mass consumption, modern consumption and mass culture are merged. There are several signs of a consumer society: for example, a growing per capita consumption of commodities, more efficient methods of production and organised channels of distribution, increasing social divisions of labour and a greater social mobility, an increasing individualism and an increasing possessiveness related to fashion and advertising. All these signs can be seen in Finland in the 1960s and the 1970s.

In a couple of decades after losing the war against the Soviet Union, Finns experienced the breakthrough of a modern consumer culture. Of utmost importance to understanding Finnish society at this time is the formation of the welfare state that brought with it various social security benefits. In this period, Finland closely followed the examples of welfare societies set by other Nordic countries and especially Sweden. This was made possible by the rapid economic growth and structural changes in

the economy then taking place. The Finnish welfare state really took off only in the 1960s as the growth of public expenditure accelerated. (Eloranta and Kauppila 2006, p. 226). Pauli Kettunen (2006, p. 297) states that during the Cold War, it was popular to call Finland a “Nordic democracy” or a “Nordic society”. In Finnish political discourse this implied a proclamation that Finland was not part of the Eastern Bloc despite the fact that the influence of the Soviet Union was very tangible in almost all aspects of political, cultural and economic life. The concept of a “Nordic society” represented a normative standard and a code for the future inherent in the Finnish society. Kettunen states that “the normative standard and the future code were often interpreted in terms of everything that had “already” been achieved in Sweden” (2006, p. 299). This connection to Sweden was also visible in the introduction of roulette. Thus the self-image of Finns was being constantly negotiated between Western, Eastern and Nordic values, influences and images. This conflict and the need to belong to the Western world can also be seen in the discourses concerning roulette.

The Finnish investment rate remained very high after the Second World War and it was only in the 1970s that the investment structure began to show signs typical for formerly industrialized countries (Hjerpe, Peltonen & Pihkala 1984, p. 56.). Parallel to the high levels of public investment was the growing popularity of private target saving. The key idea was to create opportunities for anticipatory pleasure: people were guided and oriented towards commodities while their consumer impulses were being tamed at the same time. (Lehtonen & Pantzar 2002, pp. 211 and 213). Pantzar (2000, p. 82) suggests interestingly that one explanation for Finnish households rather rapidly making the transition from an agrarian culture of saving to a Western consumer culture based on consumption during the 1960s and the 1970s could be that the households were able to create an original model combining both Eastern economic tendencies, which focused on planning and investment, and Western consumer dreams.

The public image of the Finnish consumer in the 1970s was no longer that of a thrifty builder of the national economy but rather of a carefree consumer. However, in reality people continued to save due to the fact that consumer expectations were far greater than the actual amount of disposable income. Finns were eager to take part in a new

consumer culture that made it possible for them to acquire (or at least to dream about) luxury products and services that earlier generations had had very little experience of apart from the upper class. For Finns living in the 1970s (imagined) luxury consisted of such conveniences and amenities as good food and drink, swimming pools, free erotica and fast (Western) cars. The Lotto girl became a symbol of this new consumer culture as Veikkaus (the national lottery organizer) launched its lotto (a form of money lottery) advertising campaigns at the beginning of the decade (Matilainen 2006, p. 144). Travelling abroad was a popular, new aspect of the “good life” even though only a minority of Finns was able to fulfill their dreams of experiencing warm, exotic places and people, romance and freedom. Travelling onboard passenger ships to Sweden, Germany and also to Estonia was particularly popular (Dumell 2008, p. 59). The passenger ships travelling to Sweden became especially popular with the advent of Swedish mass tourism and Finnish emigration to Sweden in the 1960s.

The most important arena of Finnish consumer culture was by far the home, and many Finns saved in order to be able to buy their own flat or house. The structure of consumption within the household was divided: men spent money on, for example, alcohol and tobacco products, which women were only beginning to consume. Therefore it can be said that the playful and hedonistic consumer of the 1970s was usually a man who spent his money on cars, boats and swimming pools. The dream was to have a swimming pool indoors of a single-family house and to lead a more popular version of the imagined lifestyle of American millionaires. The allure of modern luxuries and free erotica was also evident in the popular James Bond films at the time (Sarantola-Weiss 2008, pp. 93, 96–97, and 163–164).

The influence of the Soviet Union and the Eastern Bloc was also felt in the consumer culture. One of the most prominent consumer durables of the time was Eastern Block car which were popular especially in the 1960s. The influx of cheap East-European cars made it possible for working-class people to buy a car, but Western cars had by far the greater status. Contrary to many Western European citizens, many Finns had personal experiences of the Soviet Union since travelling there was very popular. Even though most Finns had been exposed to the rigid everyday life of Soviet citizens during their trips to the USSR,

the image of Russian cuisine was luxurious and nostalgic, with caviar, champagne and the ubiquitous samovar (Sarantola-Weiss 2008, pp. 157, and 169).

Yet another change in Finnish consumer culture was taking place in the restaurant scene in the 1960s. According to Merja Sillanpää (2002, pp. 254, and 256), attitudes towards restaurants, bars and night clubs had long been complex and contradictory. Certainly Finnish Prohibition Act (1919–1932) did not make matters any easier. The most evident questions that were constantly culturally negotiated concerned the relations between social classes and the right of women to attend all kinds of restaurants and bars without a male companion. The division of restaurants and cafés according to their class was an old practice in Finland which was started at the turn of nineteenth century in the cities of Helsinki and Turku. Restaurants were divided into three categories. The first category consisted of the biggest and best kept hotels aimed at the upper class whereas third category restaurants were mainly eating houses intended for the working class. The restaurants patronized by the lower classes were under the tight control of the authorities. The same system was also introduced in the 1930s as Finnish Prohibition ended. Sillanpää (2002, p. 256) writes that

Restaurants were divided according to the same system as in the late 1800's: class I, II and III. Later on an international first class and a class IV were added. There were no bar counters or stools allowed at restaurants for fear of prostitution taking root. In 1935 parliament prohibited dancing at restaurants, for it was seen as encouraging prostitution and alcoholism. The restaurant-going of the lower classes was under particular control.

After the Second World War, restaurants were considered to be civic schools for Finns who were seen to be in dire need of learning correct manners especially concerning the use of alcohol. But by the beginning of the 1960s the situation in the restaurant scene had become untenable. Despite the fact that number of people living in urban centres had increased and society had undergone some fundamental changes, there were still only a few restaurants, which were frequented mainly by the upper and middle classes. In the 1960s there was clearly a need

for restaurants to have a more liberated atmosphere, less strict dress codes and more liberal attitudes towards female clients without male company (Sillanpää 2002, pp. 255–257). In the beginning of the 1960s, an experiment in opening beer houses was started. As a consequence the whole concept of restaurants was changed: the new ideal of an intimate restaurant where mild alcoholic drinks could be consumed in a pleasant atmosphere was introduced (Kuusi 2003, p. 392). New alcohol legislation and a law on medium-strength beer came into force in 1969. It was now allowed to establish restaurants in the countryside and the number of restaurants rose considerably. In 1969 there were more than 1,000 restaurants in Finland and in 1977 more than 1,500. Most importantly, there was now a greater variety of restaurants and they could be accessed by all customer groups. The classification of restaurants was gradually given up at around the same time (Sillanpää 2002, p. 255–257). These changes in the restaurant scene were vital for the game of roulette to become rooted in Finland.

THE CULTURAL HISTORY OF ROULETTE IN FINLAND BEFORE THE INTRODUCTION OF LEGAL ROULETTE PLAYING

The nineteenth century was an important period in the development and democratization of various forms of gambling. The period saw the appearance of recognizably modern forms of the casino, the public racetrack and the mechanized slot machine. What was, however, the new thing was that in place of the massive sums wagered by aristocrats in earlier times gambling became more democratic with more modest stakes and with games that many people at the same time could take part in (Reith 1999, p. 74). The game of roulette established its status in the middle of the 19th century and became the most important form of gambling in European casinos even though it did not supersede the ever popular games of card and dice. Even though casinos were generally exclusive, the commercialism of at least some of these casinos bore witness to some degree of democratisation. This was especially the case in some German casinos. The most famous casino in all of Europe was

the casino in Monte Carlo, which was established in 1861 (Kortelainen 1988, p. 21, and Reith 1999, p. 74).

The roulette as we know it was born when, in a French innovation, colours and thirty-six numbers were added to the wheel revolutionising the simplicity of the original game (Reith 1999, p. 76). David G. Schwartz (2006, pp. 185 and 199) has summed up the cultural history of the roulette in the 19th century by stating that spa gambling defined Europe. The Russians were among the most celebrated visitors to the Rhine resorts. As Finland was part of the Russian empire in the 19th century, tales and stories of Russian aristocrats gambling away huge sums in the casinos of continental Europe were familiar to many Finns. The most influential literary work regarding gambling, Fyodor Dostoyevsky's *The Gambler* (published in 1867) had also been well-known throughout the years in Finland.

Money lotteries were the first form of gambling in Finland. They were introduced already at the end of the seventeenth century when Finland still belonged to Sweden. During the nineteenth century, the organising of money lotteries gradually ceased and in effect became illegal being described as an unethical activity in the criminal code of 1889. However, lotteries of goods (that is lotteries without money prizes for charitable reasons) were permitted in the nineteenth century until the criminal code of 1889 made them subject to licence. The criminal code of 1889 forbade all other forms of gambling as illegal activities. Therefore there were no legal casinos or roulette playing in Finland in the 19th century (Matilainen 2009, p. 24). However, illegal gambling had been a popular pastime at least among members of the upper strata of society, and it is likely that there were roulette wheels in action in secret gambling dens and brothels already in the 19th century. Furthermore, members of the Finnish upper classes with strong connections to Sweden could play roulette in Swedish spa resorts before roulette wheels were forbidden there in 1856 (De Geer 2011, p. 35).

The novelist Rafael Hertzberg (1887) offers an example of a contemporary discourse on gambling as he describes upper- and middle-class gambling and its demoralising consequences in his Swedish-language novel *Helsingfors-Monaco: skildring ur vårt hufvudstadsliv* [*Helsinki-Monaco: a depiction of our lives in the capital city*]. The novel was pub-

lished in 1887. The protagonist Carl Möller ends up killing himself in Monaco after losing not only all of his own money but also the money he had borrowed from his father. The novel starts with scenes from an upper class home where secret gambling gatherings take place. The gentlemen play cards; no roulette wheels are mentioned. The course of events, including gambling debts and poor health, separate the protagonist from his bride and he travels to the French Riviera and also visits the casino in Monaco. The depiction of casino life is so perceptive and vivid that it is likely the novelist had had personal experience from the casino in Monte Carlo or that he had read Dostoyevsky's *The Gambler* very closely: "There was gambling fever in the air, a lurking and treacherous fever, which pushed its way forward in his blood, made the pulse rapid and burnt the brain" (Hertzberg 1887, p. 77. Translation from the Swedish by Riitta Matilainen). The sounds and smells of the exotic South tempt Möller to continue gambling: he turns to roulette with drastic consequences. Notably, the novelist does not particularly explain the rules of various games or roulette; the impression is that the readers of the novel are thought to be, at least to some extent, familiar with the world of casinos and gambling. However, the novel could be described as a morality play and as a warning of what is likely to happen if one dares to enter the world of gambling.

"The gambling prohibition" was gradually lifted in the 1920s as money lotteries and the tote were legalised. Finland's Slot Machine Association (RAY) was founded in 1938 and given a monopoly on all slot machines in Finland. Two years later Veikkaus Oy Ab, which at that time only operated the football pools, was established as a company and given the monopoly on sports betting in Finland. One of the reasons for the liberalization of gambling in Finland was pressure from Sweden: there was desire to prevent Finnish gamblers from taking part in Swedish money lotteries and football pools (Matilainen 2009, pp. 27, 29 and 34).

After the Second World War there were several legal alternatives for Finns to gamble, but the first and to date the only casino to be was opened in Helsinki as late as 1991. This meant that some gamblers (of which the overwhelming majority were men) chose to gamble in illegal gambling dens all around the country. The dens in the countryside were usually saunas or drying barns where men would play cards and drink, but in Helsinki the dens could be rather well-organised and even

glamorous places. There seems to have been a lively scene for illegal gambling in Helsinki at least from the beginning of the 1950s to the end of the 1970s. This scene is described in detail in an oral-history book based on the reminiscences of former criminals who lived in Rööperi (Punavuori), an area that used to be one of the most notorious working-class quarters in Helsinki (Nykänen and Sjöberg 2005). A person called Kuiva (Nykänen and Sjöberg 2005, pp. 222–223. Translation from the Finnish by Riitta Matilainen) recalls: “At that time there were always three better gambling dens and few others. ... The fine place in Runeberginkatu belonged to Pekka Salmi and Reino Salminen and the police never raided it. They had the den for three years and both made three million marks out of it in cash. There was a roulette in one room, a pool table in another and a room exclusively for card playing, plus a kitchen. At best there were around 20 gamblers, sometimes even more. The crème of society went there. ... All the people coming to the den were acquainted with other gamblers and came to the den for the first time either with the proprietor or the croupier”.

Kari Honkanen (Nykänen and Sjöberg 2005, p. 227), a retired policeman tells that the gambling dens were of more use to the police when they were up and running and making profits for their owners: “When we knew where the gambling den was situated and who the owner was we could keep an eye on the place and find there some people that were otherwise difficult to pinpoint. There were burglars selling stuff, prostitutes and wanted criminals and also violent debt collectors. The dens were also visited by directors and businessmen... RAY’s casino put an end to all these dens. There are a couple of them left only because it is not possible to play on credit in the RAY’s casino”. Pekka Salmi himself has said that he opened his first illegal gambling den in Helsinki in 1974. In less than a year he states to have made over one million euros (at that time the Finnish currency was the Finnmark) by organising roulette games (Mattila and Erola 2011, p. 79).

In sum, before the 1960s the game of roulette was known to many Finns through literature and perhaps through some films but only a few Finns had ever played it. The image of the game was posh; it was thought to be a game where fortunes could be lost overnight. The roulette wheel did not fit the image of “tamed” Finnish gambling under the patronage of the state through the monopoly holders Veikkaus and RAY.

ORGANIZING THE ROULETTE TABLE

RAY had been interested in establishing a casino in the 1950s but it had been forced to give up the idea since the opposition towards casinos was so fierce. The public justification RAY gave for its interest in casinos and gaming was the need to increase Finland's attractiveness to foreign tourists as a holiday destination. It is interesting to note that an unofficial memorandum by a representative of the tourist industry suggested in 1969 that RAY could establish one or two casinos in Finland in close co-operation with the tourist industry so that Finland could be the first Nordic country to have legalized casino gambling and thus be able to compete better in the tourist market against other Nordic countries (Marte 1968, p. 18).

In the beginning of the 1960s a couple of Swedish businessmen tried to get their hands on the Finnish gambling market by planning to introduce some roulette wheels in high-class night clubs. Some owners of night-clubs were excited about the possibility of having roulette wheels in their premises and some petitions were made to the police regarding licenses for operating them (*Uttasanomat* 4.7.1964). The government was quick to respond: in 1964 it was decreed that roulette wheels were comparable to slot machines and thus fell under the monopoly of RAY (Kortelainen 1988, p. 174, and Heiskanen 1992, p. 7). The monopoly of RAY had suffered a mild blow a year earlier as the newspapers reported that passenger ships travelling from the Finnish cities of Vaasa and Kokkola to Sweden had introduced slot machines. Use of slot machines was only legal in international waters (*Helsingin Sanomat* 19.10.1963).

The Åland Islands off the west coast of Finland was the first region where roulette wheels became legal in 1964. This was due to the autonomous legal status of the islands: in 1951 the islands were granted a right to organize its slot machines differently from the rest of Finland (Kortteinen 1988, p. 144). The first roulette wheel was in a high-class night-club; the price of a chip was 50 Finnish pennies and the biggest possible win 50 Finnish marks (*Helsingin Sanomat* 5.7.1964). The next year the newspapers could report that the shipping company Stena's passenger ship travelling from Stockholm to Århus now had a casino onboard. The passengers could play roulette and try their luck at the

new continental craze, bingo. The casino onboard was established by the same Swedish businessman Bertel Knutsson, who had tried a couple of years earlier to introduce roulette in Finland. RAY was taken by surprise by this but representatives from RAY were forced to concede that gambling in international waters was not illegal. RAY was waiting for new legislation on gambling to come into operation before setting up any roulette wheels (*Suomen Sosialidemokraatti* 9.10.1965 and *Uusi Suomi* 9.10.1965).

In another magazine's coverage of the roulettes onboard ships in May 1968, the question of establishing casinos in Finland was taken up. Casinos are seen as necessary because many foreign tourists and Finns too, criticized Finland for being a dull and uneventful country. A representative of RAY pointed out that the question now was whether to place roulette wheels in casinos or in first class restaurants. If there were to be casinos, other games would be needed as well to attract tourists and indeed Finnish citizens, who would have the right to visit the casinos as well (*Viikko* 10/5.1968).

The experience gained from the trial roulette wheels onboard passenger ships was so encouraging that RAY decided to continue the trial period with roulette by placing roulette wheels in high-class restaurants and night-clubs also on the mainland too. Restaurant owners and the public had expressed their hope that roulette would be allowed in restaurants. The Ministry of Internal Affairs confirmed that the sum of the bets and maximum winnings would be the same as in the trial roulette games onboard the passenger ships: the cost of one chip was 50 Finnish pennies and the maximum win with one chip was 15 marks. The low monetary stakes and thus, the risk involved in Finnish roulette were designed to ensure that roulette was regarded as entertainment and could not therefore be seen as objectionable gambling (Annual Report by RAY for the year 1969).

According to the long-held tradition of following the example of Sweden not only in politics but also in the organizing of gambling, the Swedish example and experiences of organizing roulette were taken into careful consideration (Matilainen 2009). One of the reasons why "the gambling prohibition" was gradually lifted in Finland starting from the 1920s was the (imagined) pressure from Sweden. It was thought that the money pouring out of the country and into Swedish money lotteries

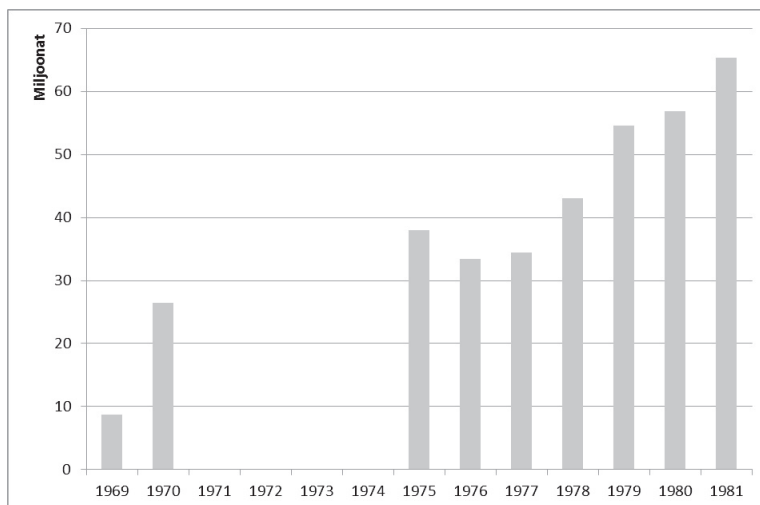
and football pools would be put to better use in Finland. Despite Finnish suspicions towards the Swedish gambling operators, Sweden had always offered models for organizing gambling in Finland.

The roulette wheels at the time were French roulette wheels. The first roulette in mainland Finland was started in the restaurant Adlon in February 1969 and the opening night became a huge media event. By the end of that year there were altogether 19 roulette wheels in Finland of which seven were in Helsinki. The financial result of the first year was satisfactory even though RAY's annual report pointed out that the labour costs of roulette were very high in comparison to slot machines. RAY's unquestionable financial backbone was and still is its slot machines (Annual Reports by RAY for the years 1968 and 1969).

In the following years the number of roulettes increased rather modestly until the end of the 1970s when big changes were made in order to rationalize gaming. In 1974 the cost of a chip was raised from 50 Finnish pennies to one Finnish mark and the maximum win was now 31 Finnish marks. As a result, roulette's profits grew significantly. Three years later 17 roulette wheels that employed both a croupier and a cashier were changed in such a way that a single croupier could now take care of the whole roulette table. This change increased the profitability of roulette wheels and their number could be increased. In 1978 roulette's profits went up by 34 per cent. The cost of one chip was still one Finnish mark, but starting from the year 1979 it was possible to play roulette onboard some passenger ships with a chip worth 10 Finnish marks. The passenger ships were once again deemed suitable gambling laboratories. In 1980 some of the French roulette wheels were replaced by American ones, which meant that every player had to choose their own chip colour in order to avoid quarrels about who had placed the winning chips. The cost of the chip was raised again in 1981. This time the diversity of gambling venues was taken into consideration as the cost of one chip could be one, two, four or five Finnish marks depending on the venue (Annual Reports by RAY for the years 1974–1981.)

In the 1970s and 1980s roulette became a natural part of the Finnish restaurant scene and culture. Even though the financial significance of roulette's profits was modest in comparison to slot machines and even jukeboxes, RAY wanted to hold on to roulette. As roulette wheels

Figure 1. The profit made by RAY's roulette wheels in millions of Finnish marks, 1969–1981. Deflated to 2011 fixed prices.



Source: Annual reports by RAY 1969–1981. Data from the years 1971–1974 is missing.

had established themselves in the minds of the Finnish public, RAY wanted to diversify its business into other casino games as well. RAY had not abandoned the idea of an international casino and chose the introduction of the game of Black Jack in restaurants as a strategic step towards making different casino games the norm in 1982. As was the case with money lotteries, tote, football pools and roulette earlier, the experience and example set by Swedish Black Jack operators were important. Black Jack was started in three upscale international hotels in Helsinki in 1982. At first the game was marketed as a lobby game and as a game for busy (business) travelers. By the end of the year the game could be played at eleven different venues. After the introduction of Black Jack some hotels were in effect mini casinos with slot machines, roulette and card games. The introduction of Black Jack tables did not draw the same kind of media attention as the introduction of roulette had enjoyed. It seems that by the beginning of the 1980s Finns had got

used to and had accepted the idea of playing casino games in restaurants and night-clubs (Kortelainen 1988, pp. 242–244 and Heiskanen 1992, pp. 12, and 16).

AT THE ROULETTE TABLE

This chapter is partly based on interviews of former croupiers published in the book *Uudet panokset. Puhetta peleistä ja pelinhoitajista*. [The New Bets. Talk about gaming and croupiers] edited by Seppo Heiskanen in 1992. Since the book was published by RAY (the operator of the roulette tables) it is quite likely that some negative points have been ignored. However, the book offers a valuable source of information on the first years of Finnish roulette gambling from the point of view of the croupiers, who dealt with roulette customers on regular basis. A more general view on roulette in Finland is provided by analyzing some newspaper and magazine articles.

The reminiscences of the staff working with roulette wheels are filled with rather nostalgic memories of the glamour and respectful attitudes towards the croupiers. The occupation of a croupier was not known in Finland at the end of the 1960s, but the atmosphere around the roulette tables is said to have been both respectful and convivial. Nobody seemed to be in a hurry. Ms Seija Lehtinen (Heiskanen 1992, p. 9), one of the first croupiers and educators of croupiers, recalls that Finnish clients looked very shy and intimidated when they entered a roulette room. The magazine *Seura* (*Seura* 1/5, 1968) reported on the roulette games onboard ships travelling from Finland to Germany, and the reporter noticed that it was the Swedes who were most familiar with the game of roulette. Ms Lehtinen, who was interviewed in the same report, pointed out that Swedes had already been accustomed to roulette since there were roulette wheels in almost every restaurant in Sweden. However, Swedes were interested in Finnish roulette because, at the time, one's winnings at the Swedish roulette tables consisted of food and drink, which had to be consumed in the same place where the gambling had taken place (Heiskanen 1992, p. 9).

At first roulette wheels were only located in high-class restaurants and night-clubs. It is interesting to note that RAY had used a similar

kind of practice in the 1930s and in the beginning of the 1940s concerning slot machines which were only allowed to be placed only in first class restaurants and cafés. The practice made it almost impossible for young people and especially for members of the working class to use slot machines. This practice was of course paternalistic in essence and can in some ways be compared to the strict alcohol policy, which led to the introduction of a personal liquor card and a customer control policy called buyer surveillance in the 1940s. (Häikiö 2007, pp. 131–136). These paternalistic rules became less strict after the Second World War when slot machines were also allowed in second class cafés and restaurants in the countryside.

Inside the restaurants and night-clubs the roulettes were placed wherever there was suitable room for them. It was not allowed to place roulette tables in the serving area, the dining room or the bar. The roulette table might be fitted into a windowless cubby-hole. During the 1970s the need for roulette tables was taken into consideration when new restaurant premises were planned (Heiskanen 1992, pp. 13, and 16). The consumption of drinks while playing was prohibited as the roulette room was not supposed to be used for “socializing” but the customers were not expected to dine in the restaurants as a prerequisite for taking part in roulette action (*Helsingin Sanomat* 1.3.1969). Mr Matti Lappalainen (Heiskanen 1992, p. 16), who worked as a croupier in the 1970s, has a vivid recollection of a luxurious roulette room: “I remember clearly the gambling room in the Lido. There was a soft wall-to-wall carpet, thick and dark red velvet curtains, next to the gambling table a pink plush sofa and on the wall next to the roulette table a large fanciful oil painting of a naked beauty. The lighting created a very sensual and refined atmosphere in the room. In the 1970s the roulettes were placed in “fine” places that were open until 4 o’clock in the morning.” At least these kinds of posh roulette rooms tried to play up to people’s images of luxurious casinos in Monte Carlo and elsewhere in Continental Europe. The décor also served to remind Finns of the upper-class origins of roulette.

The appearance of the roulette personnel can be described as glamorous. At first men wore a black suit, a light shirt and a bow tie. Later on men also wore waistcoats. Women’s skirts were long and they had white long-sleeved shirts. The habitus of the croupiers was under

the strict control of RAY: men with beards or long hair were usually not hired as croupiers. Both the croupiers and the cashiers had a feeling that they were respected. It was not uncommon that croupiers were mistaken for butlers (Heiskanen 1992, pp. 30, and 39).

Regional newspapers were generally thrilled about the introduction of roulette in their own regions. Fears about Finns morally judging and abandoning the new game seemed to be exaggerated. The introduction of roulette in a new town was always an important media event. The roulette premieres were events where all the local VIPs would gather, starting from the mayor. The night was filled with glamour and had an international ambience. The allure of the game of roulette was partly due to the fact that the language was French, and as such was incomprehensible to most Finns but which nevertheless added to the excitement of the game. In the media, Finland was represented as a dull and uneventful land in desperate need of new amenities mainly aimed at foreign tourists but also at the Finns themselves. It was thought that roulette could increase the international attractiveness of Finnish cities and towns and that Finland would finally open up and take on a more Western European attitude towards leisure, fun making and gambling (Heiskanen 1992, pp. 7, 12 and 18, and *Uusi Suomi* 18.2.1969; *Ilta-Sanomat* 26.2.1969; *Nya Pressen* 27.2.1969; *Ilta-Sanomat* 27.3.1969).

However, Finland's joy at finally living up to Western European standards was not shared by some individuals who criticized the Finnish way of organizing roulette in the press. In an article published in *Ilta-Sanomat* in March 1969 (*Ilta-Sanomat* 27.3.1969), it was pointed out that civilized foreigners travelling in Finland were aware of the real rules of roulette and that the specially adjusted Finnish rules would only invoke the ridicule of tourists in the same way as the strict Finnish alcohol policy did. A year earlier a young German (*Seura* 1/5, 1968) had also expressed his disappointment at the Finnish rules of roulette. The reasoning was the same as that put by a Finnish man a year later: if you take the risk out of a roulette game there is no excitement left. And thus no reason to participate in the game. One famous businesswoman and a celebrity (Heiskanen 1992, p. 19) also mocked the Finnish form of roulette for lacking true charm and risk-taking opportunities. A more large-scale negative newspaper campaign concerning roulette started

in 1970s. The aim of the reports was not to arouse moral panic about roulette per se but rather concerned stories about potential frauds around the roulette tables. According to Heiskanen (1992, p. 19), a myth was born about the croupiers who were, it was claimed, very capable of cheating.

The first Finnish croupiers were women. Onboard the passenger ships travelling from Finland to Germany foreigners in particular were astonished at the female croupiers since all the croupiers in the Central European casinos were men. In the book published by RAY the reason for the decision to hire women as croupiers is said to have been that women as croupiers would bring a certain innocence and trustworthiness to the roulette table. The women's presence as croupiers was thought to soften prejudices against the game of roulette which some might still consider to be a particularly harmful form of gambling (Heiskanen 1992, p. 18). The same justifications for hiring women as croupiers are also given in one magazine article (*Seura* 1/5, 1968). However, in the newspaper stories, many of which were written by male journalists, the looks of the croupiers seemed to have stolen all the attention. In an article published in *Nya Pressen* 1.3.1969 after the introduction of the first roulette wheel in Helsinki, it was claimed that beautiful women and gambling make a good combination. But there was also a warning for overly forward men: these beautiful women were croupiers who could not be harassed in any way. If they were harassed a butler would come and take care of the matter. In an article published at the same time by *Helsingin Sanomat* 1.3.1969, a photo shows a beautiful dark and rather exotic looking croupier standing beside the roulette table. It is quite obvious that women were used as croupiers to increase the allure of the game and to entice men to the roulette tables. Another reason for hiring women as croupiers might have been that women's wage level was lower than those of men and women were thought to be more in need of part-time jobs than men.

ROULETTE AS A SIGNIFICANT SYMBOL OF AN IMAGINED WESTERN EUROPEAN WAY OF LIFE

Over the years, as a state stooge, both RAY and Veikkaus have been quite successful in taming Finnish gambling and turning it into a respectable part of normal Finnish life (Matilainen 2009, p. 35). This is also what happened with roulette. Before the introduction of legal roulette wheels in the 1960s, very few Finns had had personal experience of the game. Owing to the cultural images of luxurious casinos in Monte Carlo and continental Europe and of roulette being an upper-class game played by Russian aristocrats in days gone by, the game had to be partially democratized without losing the exciting elements of luxury and exclusiveness. One part of the democratization was the low cost of playing: if a chip cost only 50 Finnish pennies virtually everyone could afford to try their luck. The low cost of the chip and small maximum winnings also guaranteed that RAY could not be accused of promoting and organising downright gambling where fortunes could be lost overnight.

The cultural and economic change in the restaurant scene was vital for roulette to root into Finnish gambling culture and consumer culture. Contrary to many other European countries, women were allowed to act as croupiers. As Finns had more freetime and means than before and as restaurants and night clubs became more liberated, roulettes could offer excitement and a feeling of “the big world”, albeit in a safe manner. However, this does not mean that roulette was the favourite pastime of large numbers of Finns.

In a situation where the influence of the Eastern bloc and especially the Soviet Union was felt in almost every aspect of life, taking part in a game of roulette was one way of proclaiming that Finland and Finns were part of the Western world and could enjoy the pleasures offered by increasing consumption. Geographers Pauliina Raento (2006) and Sami Moisio (2008) have both in their recent works made the same argument with other popular-cultural data (Finnish postage stamps and materials about the Finnish European Union membership debate, respectively). By introducing the concept of consumption to the study of roulette in Finland, a deeper and more theoretical understanding of

this affiliation ensued, facilitating comparison between this particular case and other case studies (Matilainen 2011, p. 90). At least in the media, roulette became a significant symbol of an imagined Western European way of life that many Finns wanted to lead. It can be said that many Finns were “living” the image of a Western or “continental” way of life when participating in roulette.

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The route between Helsinki and Tallinn was opened in 1965 by the m/s Vanemuine. Photographer Yrjö Lintunen (Kansan Arkisto).

ACCIDENTAL TRADERS – FINNISH TOURISTS IN THE SOVIET UNION IN THE 1950s–1970s

Hanna Kuusi

INTRODUCTION

Some foreign commodities are much desired in the Soviet Union, and a good price might be paid for them on the open market. However, the tourist is not allowed to sell imported goods to private Soviet citizens. Black market trading is punishable, the goods are confiscated and a fine is imposed. [- -] Selling clothes may look like a trivial thing, but it is considered an economic crime in the Soviet Union. (Lindström 1965, 41.)

A television documentary from 1969 told about Finns travelling by boat to Tallinn, the capital of the Estonian Soviet Socialist Republic. On the boat, nylon stockings were sold in a small shop. The customers were mainly male passengers, and according to the shop assistant sometimes over a hundred pairs of stockings were sold in one trip. When some men began to buy, the others followed. Over the footage of the document a passenger with a thick provincial accent comments: “The most economical way to get a woman is to buy nylon stockings here and put them into her bosom”. It is no wonder the last words of farewell by relatives at the port terminal were often “behave yourself!” (*Keskiviikko-katsaus*, YLE 1969).

The peculiarities of the Soviet consumer market shaped the nature of the journeys of western tourists. Black market trading and currency exchange was illegal, but despite the risks it became very common on a small scale. This meant that tourists had plenty of roubles to spend at a rather restricted consumer market. Sightseeing and cultural holidays often became trading and shopping trips as well.

The purpose of this article is to examine the experiences of ordinary Finnish tourists with respect to the little developed Soviet consumer market from the late 1950s to the 1970s. It was during this period when the Soviet Union opened up its borders for tourists. At the same time Finnish mass tourism was taking shape. Affordable package tours to the Soviet Union became popular, and Finnish tourists visited particularly the cities of Leningrad, Moscow, Tallinn and Murmansk as well as destinations on the Black Sea coast, for example Sotshi. The article is based on recollections gathered by The Finnish National Board of Antiquities (NBA) in 1981. A total of 141 respondents reported on their journeys to the Soviet Union, including both package tours and independent voyages to various locations.

TRAVELLING TO THE SOVIET UNION

Finnish tourists' visits to the Soviet Union began to increase rapidly in the late 1950s. The popularity of the trips paralleled the development of mass tourism in Finland. In addition, two significant events boosted travel across the eastern border. In 1958 the Soviet Union allowed road vehicles to cross the border. Until then, the crossings could only be made by train or by aeroplane. This meant affordable package tours by bus departing straight from local communities. Also significant was the reopening of the Helsinki–Tallinn sea lane in 1965. Tallinn was now only a few hours away compared to the long surface route via Leningrad.

Auvo Kostiainen has divided the tourism from Finland to the Soviet Union into three consecutive periods. The first saw the transition from individual travel to mass tourism in the 1950s and early 1960s. Then a solid basis for mass tourism was created in the 1960s and finally, the 1970s and 1980s were a period of established mass tourism. Accordingly,

the numbers of tourists multiplied. In the mid-1950s approximately 2 500 Finns visited the Soviet Union annually, in the mid-1960s the figure was 50 000 and in the mid-1970s 200 000. These numbers are relatively small, yet Finns were the Soviet Union's largest western tourist group. (Kostiainen 2001, p. 111.)

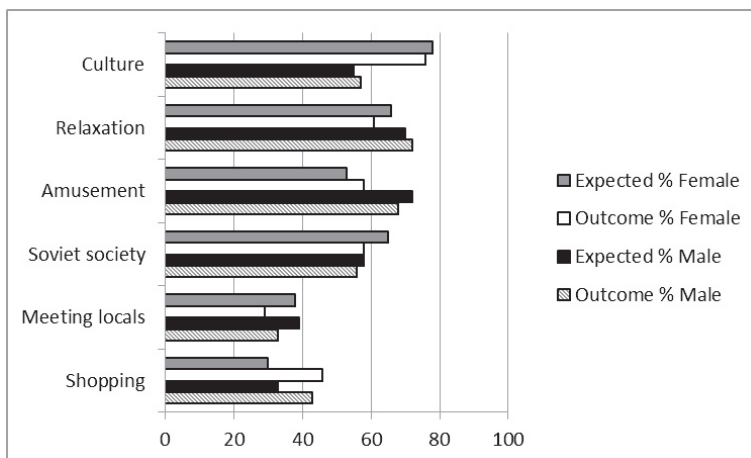
This was in accordance with the objectives of the Soviet Union's official tourist policy. In a 1955 memorandum from Minister of Trade Ivan Kabanov to Mikhail Suslov, Secretary of the Central Committee, and Anastas Mikoyan, First Deputy Premier, the Ministry of Trade was to arrange for the entry of foreign tourists nation by nation. Favourable terms were suggested for tourists from China, North Korea and other communist states, as well as for tourist groups from India, Scandinavia, and particularly Finland. (Kabanov, p. 1955.)

Inturist, the Soviet state administration for foreign tourism, declared in the late 1950s that the doors should be open to visitors from all countries. The efforts of Inturist have most typically been interpreted within the political framework of the Cold War as a way to influence foreign opinion. However, according to Shawn Salmon, Inturist was a commercial institution. The state needed foreign currency for its military and diplomatic corps abroad and to pay for constantly growing imports. According to the Inturist's head, tourism was a miracle industry spurring Soviet economic growth and creating enormous opportunities. (Salmon 2006, pp. 187–192.)

The 'vodka tourist' has been a stereotypical image of Finns travelling to the East. The low-cost and easy availability of alcoholic drinks in the Soviet Union attracted visitors from a country with strict alcohol legislation and high prices. Drunken Finns in the city of Leningrad were a popular theme in the Finnish media, and were also well known by the locals. Official meetings were even arranged to solve the problem. The behaviour of Finnish vodka tourists has been studied for example by Anna-Maria Åström, who analysed it in terms of grotesqueness and carnivalism. (Åström 1993.)

However, many tourists had numerous other reasons for visiting. Auvo Kostiainen has examined the motives of Finnish travellers to the Soviet Union based on a 30-respondent sample of the same written memoirs collected by the NBA. According to him, motives for the trips were varied and similar to any tourism: escape, excitement, curiosity,

Graph 1. Leningrad 1976: Finnish tourists' expectations and their fulfilment



Source: Palosuo, Hannele 1976, table 20, cited by Kostiainen 2001, p. 114.

adventure, relaxation and cultural highlights, in addition to drinking. Many expected to see something new and also to learn more about their socialist neighbour country. For some this meant the benefits of socialism, and for others, its failures. (Kostiainen 2001, pp. 118–119.)

A survey study of Finnish tourists to Leningrad was conducted by sociologist Hannele Palosuo in 1976. She analysed over 700 questionnaires answered by bus travellers in package tours. The questions included a section about expectations before the journey compared to outcomes afterwards. The results are interesting. Female travellers expected culture, male travellers hoped for relaxation and amusement. The interest in culture expressed by over half of the male respondents is noteworthy, however. Expecting cultural highlights was at the time unique in the context of mass tourism, but very typical of tourism to the Soviet Union. And such expectations were mostly satisfied. On the contrary, expectations concerning meeting local people and learning about Soviet living conditions were often not fulfilled. Maybe surprisingly, most unexpected was shopping. Not many expected to

shop but, particularly in the case of female travellers, shopping became a common activity. (Palosuo 1976).

Even though Finnish tourism to the Soviet Union had many common elements with mass tourism anywhere, it had its peculiar features. The curiosity and sensed adventure were related rather to the bureaucracy of a totalitarian country than to exoticism. Auvo Kostiainen has crystallized this quite accurately:

Travel to the Soviet Union, a socialist country, was a trip to the unknown, and it was also a kind of adventure. Those motivations and expectations were fulfilled by many oddities, bureaucratic behaviour of the customs officials as well as illegal business by the tourists themselves. (Kostiainen 2001, p. 119.)

NARRATION AND EXPERIENCE

The written memoirs reporting on experiences abroad were responses to the "Holiday to the south or other journey abroad", carried out by the NBA in 1981. The questionnaire's 12 questions were answered by over 800 respondents, of whom 141 had visited the Soviet Union. The latter wrote approximately 1 500 pages about their trips to various parts of the socialist country. The length of the responses differed from a few pages of handwriting to dozens of carefully typed sheets.

The only background information of the respondents concerned their place of birth. The geographical area of Finland was rather evenly represented. However, the information is particularly interesting in the case of respondents of Karelian origin. Although age was not mentioned, most respondents seem to have been middle-aged or seniors, and usually of the agrarian or working classes.

The written memoirs are various and fragmented, and not a representative sample. Consequently, no generalizations are possible, but rather the common and general are derived from previous research. However, the memoirs are rich narratives articulating the experiences remembered by the tourists.

Travel writing is typically strongly influenced by the conventions of the genre. The narrative often follows the dramatic arc of adventure

including obstacles. Locals are seen as *the genuine other* and one's travelling practices are compared with those of other tourists, *the ignorant other*. And finally, the observing tourist takes the position of an eyewitness, with true reporting overcoming the flaws of previous narratives.

The tendency for the narrative form to determine the contents of the story is clearly present in the collected memoirs of this article. Folklorist Jenni Korjus has called idiomatic travel stories "tourist folklore". Finnish package tours to Soviet Union were very similar in destination, duration and itinerary, and created a similar type of collective culture. Consequently, the stories about the journeys were crystallized by repeated themes. According to Korjus, these themes were related to the formalities at the border and customs, illegal trading and currency exchange, the police, wiretapping, alcohol, women and the levels of cleanliness. Many times the stories emphasized the exciting and even thrilling aspects of the tourist experience. (Korjus 2001, p. 152.)

Naturally, travel writing concerning the Soviet enterprise was quite probably shaped by ideological viewpoints. Mayte Gómez has studied the writing of Spanish travellers to the Soviet Union in the 1930s. According to her the visiting leftist intelligentsia believed in the power of "fair observation", but had to balance their obsession for "truth" with relatively unconscious pre-determined political ideology. (Gómez 2002, p. 69–70.)

In the case of the ordinary Finnish tourists the ideological viewpoint was often forthright. For example a union activist was invited to Leningrad by a regional Soviet council in 1959. For him the tour was all about modern factories with huge machines and also about cultural offerings. Everything was narrated in a positive tone. (NBA K28, p. 468.) On the other hand, there were other tourists who had a very negative attitude towards almost everything. Yet often, the foremost reason for bitterness was not the political controversy as such but the bitter memories of defeat in the war and the loss of the Karelian Isthmus. One respondent had participated in a tour to Petrozavodsk organized by the Karelian Club of the Finland's Centre Party in 1980. She depicted everything in bad light: even when the food was excellent, there was too much of it. (NBA K28, p. 448.) Such an attitude was typical of

respondents who would begin their story with “my first expedition to the Soviet Union took place in 1942–44”. (NBA K28, p. 489.)

Travel memoirs are genre-bound narratives, but also the formulated experiences of individuals. The stories with their dramatic arcs are the final outcome of the experience – they are the immaterial commodity remaining from the journey. In this respect it is not necessary to separate the narration from the experience. However, there certainly are always reasons for not telling everything, either personal or broader ones. One must remember that in 1981 the Soviet Union still existed.

INTIMIDATING CUSTOMS FORMALITIES

The narrated difficulties at the Soviet border may be interpreted as tourist-lore, but still the strict customs control was a shock for many travellers. A Soviet travel guide printed in Moscow and translated into Finnish in the early 1960s described how “crossing the border is always an exciting event, because on the other side there are people living with their own habits”. With this the guidebook wanted to emphasize that there was nothing unique about the border control of the totalitarian state. It became even more outspoken in the next sentences: “All nations believe their border is sacred. Because of this please try to fulfil all the conditions and regulations there are imposed on arriving and departing passengers. In this case the formalities do not cause delays or harm, and there are not many of them.” This is followed by a three-pages presentation of the border procedures. (Priss & co, pp. 33–36.)

The problems at the border were mostly related to the bringing in and taking out of goods. Items not allowed in included weapons, pornography, seeds, farm products including fruit, and most essentially, any kind of material harmful to the Soviet Union politically or economically. This included religious material, bibles and all western magazines. Tourists leaving were allowed to take with them fur products (1 of each); 2 watches or clocks; 1 tea, coffee or dinner service; 1 camera, and a restricted amount of jewellery. Forbidden items included Soviet currency, antiques and art pieces including icons. The latter were allowed only with special permission from the cultural ministry and

the payment of an export fee. (Priss &co, pp. 34–35; Lindström 1967, pp. 24–25.)

Upon arrival the tourist had to fill in a form where the amount of foreign currency brought in, as well as detailed information on accompanying items was reported. Often the customs officials would search luggage for forbidden objects and also listed items suspected of commercial purposes. When departing, the tourist had to have in possession all the listed items and receipts for all purchases. The amount of currency that had been carried in had to match with the receipts.

Potential saleable items were confiscated and kept at customs until the return. In 1965 a group of folk high school teachers and students crossed the border in the beginning of their twelve-day field trip. For some reason one teacher had two electric shavers, of which one was confiscated. The customs officer also paid particular attention to the amount of nylon stockings carried by the female travellers. A gymnastics teacher reacted to this and raised her voice. She explained how the women needed plenty of the delicate stockings because of the length of the trip. Who would like to walk around in the city of Moscow with torn stockings? Referring to the dignified capital city was enough to satisfy the officer. (NBA K28, p. 467.)

Another respondent had gotten into trouble when scissors and black paper were found in his luggage. When he was taken for questioning the chief customs officer could not understand why he was carrying such a weapon. The traveller explained that his hobby was cutting out silhouettes and asked if he could make a silhouette of the chief. The official hesitated but then agreed, and asked a female officer to stand by for safety. They liked the silhouette so much that they asked for one of the female officer too, after which the interrogation was over. (NBA K28, p. 467.)

Some respondents experienced truly unpleasant moments at the border. Their vehicles were meticulously searched, and they were harshly interrogated if found to be carrying forbidden items, for example hymn books. (NBA K28, p. 471). The worst cases were when selected tourists were checked more thoroughly: suitcases were emptied, linings of the handbags ripped out and individuals were strip-searched. (NBA K28, p. 465.)

When leaving, tourists had to explain their expensive purchases if receipts from the official currency exchange did not cover the prices. Presents from locals had to be clearly marked with greetings. A way to solve having not enough official currency was to declare having taken a loan from fellow travellers – when they did not have expensive items themselves. One teacher had bought so much emerald jewellery that he had his female students wear the necklaces of the way out. (NBA K28, p. 467.)

Soviet customs was particularly suspicious of the smuggling of forbidden items. One teacher was caught with an icon under his clothes, and his interrogation delayed the group for several hours. He did not wish to comment on this episode any further. (NBA K28, p. 467.) Many tourists also experienced unpleasant moments when officials ripped films out of their cameras because of suspected illegal photographing. On the other hand, crossing the border with extra alcohol was only a concern of Finnish customs, which poured the bottles out.

Crossing the border and facing the unknown has been interpreted within the framework of rites of passage and liminality. (Korjus 2001, pp. 154–155). For many tourists it was certainly an adventure to boast about afterwards. But many inexperienced tourists were truly frightened of the guards and the possible humiliations. Many episodes at the border were mentioned as something one would rather forget. The following illustrates the often intimidating atmosphere:

At the Vaalimaa customs I had the first feeling of leaving something safe. Well-dressed, healthy Soviet soldiers came to check our papers, and their comparing me with my photograph took unnervingly long. We did not exchange one smile. (NBA K28, p. 412.)

SOVIET CONSUMER SOCIETY

Soviet ideology preferred production over consumption. The emphasis of the five-year plans was typically on heavy industry and defence. However, the 1930s already witnessed an effort to produce consumer goods. The authorities were convinced that there was a desire for new

consumer goods among the population. Basic needs had been met, and it was time to invest in a more refined consumer culture, to develop “Soviet taste”. By the mid-1930s new shops were opened and featuring items were produced for first time in the factories. According to Jukka Gronow, more individualistic lifestyles were encouraged. The Soviet citizen was supposed to enjoy life. This meant that former bourgeois luxuries were to be available for everyone. Chocolate and champagne production began and caviar was tinned so that Soviet workers could enjoy a more aristocratic lifestyle. (Gronow 2003, pp. 6–15.)

However, in the 1950s consumer society was still in its early stages of development with constant shortages and long lines in shops. Due to the widening economic gap between the East and the West, consumption and living standards became a central concern of the “consumer communism” of Nikita Khrushchev during the relatively calm phase of the Cold War. It was already understood that the destiny of the Soviet system was related to the satisfaction of consumers. According to Susan E. Reid “[p]romises to increase consumption played a central part in the post-Stalinist regime’s search to renew and maintain its popular legitimacy without surrendering its exclusive hold on power”. The goal of the economic plan of 1958–1965 was to catch up with the United States in terms of living standards and consumer goods. (Reid 2002, pp. 221, 225.)

Reid alluded to an everyday item, the string shopping bag, or *avos’ka*, as a symbol of the Khrushchev-era consumer society and synecdoche for the Soviet consumer. The name *avos’ka* comes from the word *avos’* meaning ‘perhaps’. Women always had their *avos’kas* with them in case they would run into something available to buy. The bag was expandable and transparent, open to inspection. Women’s spontaneous shopping was impulsive and irrational in the abundant West, but in Soviet society it was, according to Reid, a strategy for dealing with poor distribution and shortages. (Reid 2002, p. 211.)

The *avos’kas* caught the attention of Finnish tourists as well. Shopping excursions were often the closest one could get to the everyday life of the local people. Observing open-air markets and stores was a popular tourist activity for those interested in the local culture. Constant attention was paid for endless queuing of the Soviet customers, which

was actually not such a distant memory for the Finns. One respondent witnessed in 1980 people lined up early in the morning on all four sides of a shop next to her hotel in Tallinn. She was told that by evening all the food was sold out. (NBA K28, p. 41.)

The *avos'kas*, string bags were particularly noticed by the tourists for two reasons. One respondent had visited a Moscow department store. The female customers each had a string bag into which all cabbage heads, beetroots and bread loaves were stuffed. Protruding from the tops of the bags were bottles of wine or vodka. Bottles had been picked up just like that from a grocery stand. Alcoholic beverages were often displayed in a rotating rack, with champagne on the top. (NBA K28, p. 441.) This was bizarre for tourists coming from a land of strict alcohol policies. Alcohol seemed to be a part of Soviet everyday life, something the Finns were not used to.

Another unusual practice was the Soviet habit of barely wrapping groceries. The purchased items were just piled into the *avos'kas* without any paper. The shortage of paper was visible in other ways as well. For example, one respondent noticed the scarcity of paper everywhere in Leningrad in 1966. Very thin paper was used in the hotel for the registration of guests. In the shops, purchases were wrapped in low-quality cardboard. This reminded the respondent of Finland in the 1920s. (NBA K28, p. 477.)

The unwrapped groceries were interpreted as backwardness or poverty. Many found off-putting the local habit of weighing unwrapped bread loaves with hands before a purchase. The Finnish hygienic norms for retail had developed precisely during the pre-antibiotic era and the unpackaged foodstuffs were a shock for many. However, some interpreted what they saw in a positive light. The wrapping of bread was possibly unnecessary. (NBA K28, p. 459.) Not wasting paper was understood as progressive and something the extravagant West could learn from.

SELF-MADE TRADERS

The shortage of consumer goods in the Soviet Union created a constant demand and desire of western commodities. According to Shawn Salmon, tourists usually left the country lighter than when they came – either through selling, bartering, giving away things or being robbed. Black marketers harassing the tourists were called *fartsovshchiki*, and it was difficult for tourists to avoid them. (Salmon 2006, pp. 186–187.)

Many early tourists were unfamiliar with the trading activity. One inexperienced respondent had travelled to Leningrad in 1965 for four days with only the one dress she was wearing, a nightgown and toiletries. She wondered why the attendant on her floor in the hotel was talking to her so enthusiastically, grasping her by the shoulders. She did not understand the woman and tore herself away. Other travellers later explained to her that the attendant probably wanted to buy her dress and that she was trying to indicate that they were of similar size. (NBA K28, p. 404.)

A respondent wrote that her daughter's white jeans were so much desired by two young men that they skulked around the hotel for two days until she threatened to call the police. (NBA K29, p. 466.) Other tourists feared they were being shadowed by two men in Moscow, but it was only a trench coat the stalkers were after. The same coat attracted willing buyers throughout their stay. (NBA K28, p. 467.) One man travelling in Tallinn in 1966 realized his cap had been taken in the crowd and that some roubles had been put into his pocket in return. The act was so sudden he had not been quick enough to react. But he did have some extra money to spend. (NBA K28, p. 477).

Experienced tourists were well aware of the traders, however. A couple travelling in 1960 to Leningrad took old clothes along, because they knew they would fetch a good price. (NBA K28, 443.) Some regretted having not brought extra clothes, especially in the 1960s when anything would have sold. Even without having thought of it was never too late to consider selling something at the beginning of a journey. The bus trip from one's community in Finland to the border often lasted several hours. Passengers had plenty of time to listen to the tour leader and bus driver, and to exchange travel tips with each other. For example,

stockings and bubble gum were often bought collectively at the last stops before the border. (NBA K28, p. 485.)

In a historical inquiry of Tallinn's Viru hotel, Sakari Nupponen listed the most popular items to sell. The list is long, rather mundane and presents a peculiar image of the essence of affluent western consumer society in the 1980s: nylon shirts, stockings, ball point pens, bubble gum, western cigarettes, western alcohol, coffee, Adidas gear, caps with any logo, fashionable clothes, plastic bags featuring advertisements, condoms, c-cassettes, Lada spark plugs, windscreen wipers, videocassettes, pornography, medical syringes, vegetable seeds and electronics. (Nupponen 2007, p. 118.)

Nylon stockings and men's nylon shirts were probably the most common items. More generally, synthetic nylon was one of the symbols of the Cold War of consumption. According to Susan E. Reid, already in 1951 American sociologist David Riesman depicted the "Nylon War" as an alternative to the arms race. (Reid 2002, p. 222) On the other hand, synthetic textile materials were a Soviet solution to cloth shortages. The development of the chemicals industry was to ensure the production of consumer goods. Natalia Lebina has pointed out how synthetics in particular were in Khrushchev's interests. He was quoted as saying "without the development of synthetic materials it would be impossible to resolve the clothing issue". He himself provided the lead and wore artificial lambskin. (Lebina 2009, 37, p. 42.)

In the late 1950s the Central Committee was calling for significant efforts to chemicalize the economy and promote the use of synthetic materials through popular literature, films and exhibitions. The success of wrinkle-proof and easy care fabrics was widespread. Nylon and its Soviet versions made a real breakthrough, and according to a contemporary journalist, even though in France nylon shirts were worn only by poor store clerks and Algerians, Soviet consumers loved them. Demand grew to such an extent that garment factories could not keep up. (Lebina 2009). Hence, western synthetic garments maintained their position as top black market merchandise.

In fact, "stockings as currency" has been a wider discourse typical of the World War II years and after, as Helene Laville has pointed out. Stockings served as currency for American soldiers buying sexual favours from foreign women. According to Laville: "[s]tockings, therefore, carry

a double meaning, serving as powerful symbol of consumerism as both supply and demand, of desire and fulfilment.” This symbolism became stronger in the context of the Cold War. Products designed for style and beauty rather than function and practicality represented the superiority of the West. (Laville 2006, pp. 635–637.)

Bringing extra stockings and shirts into the Soviet Union was illegal, but because it was common, tourists did not consider it a crime. It provided a little extra money which was very much welcomed by ordinary tourists – they did not have that much to spend to begin with. Many regarded it also as a kind of charity, helping their poor neighbours with nice commodities. This sometimes meant that stockings were given to chambermaids for free. The moral acceptance of black market activity extended through the full spectrum of Finnish tourists. In the 1960s a group of Finnish pensioners from Northern Finland travelled to Tallinn. There they witnessed the sophisticated skills of a Member of Parliament from The Centre Party. He was wearing several shirts, and sold them one by one. (NBA K28, p. 60.)

Even having ideological sympathies with the Soviet system did not always prevent illegal behaviour. An elderly lady on a cultural trip to Leningrad soon discovered that some of the other travellers were politically active students. On the bus they lectured her about the strategies of silent revolution, voicing high ideological principles and passing bottles around. As soon as the bus stopped at the Karelian Isthmus, one of the students sold his leather jacket. (NBA K28, p. 412.)

Similar attitudes towards trading activities were common amongst the Finnish left-wing youth delegates participating in the World Festivals of Youth and Students, from 1947 on. The purpose of the festivals was to foster world peace and promote the socialist system. However, according to Pia Koivunen, foreigners took advantage of the fact that anything could be sold on the black market. For example one of her respondents had sold his trousers of the official uniform of the Finnish delegation in Moscow 1957. (Koivunen 2012, p. 150.)

The inexperienced were easy targets of deception. One student sold his sunglasses in Karelia for worthless roubles from the tsarist period. This was recounted by his accompanying teacher – the travellers seldom mentioned such easy traps themselves. (NBA K28, p. 467.) Direct

theft also occurred. One young woman had her underwear stolen from her hotel room. (NBA K28, p. 467.) Even in cases like this the tourists were not always upset because of their overall positive feelings about the journey. A respondent reported several members of a group in Sotshi in 1976 losing clothes in their hotel rooms. It was not considered too disastrous: the respondent noted that travelling always involves some risk. (NBA K28, p. 484.)

Even though black market activity was common, not every tourist dared to take the risk. The strict laws and the border police aroused fear, and for some the idea of breaking the law was too daunting. Because of their obedience, some tourists ran short of money, as the amount allowed out from Finland was relatively low. (NBA K28, p. 508.) In addition, there were examples that warned of the serious trouble one could encounter. One elderly respondent was exploring the streets of Leningrad by herself as her husband was not able to accompany her. She was stopped by a *matryoshka* who touched her home-made scarf. The respondent took three packages of stockings out of her pocket and was then rapidly surrounded by many more *matryoshkas*. Quickly they took the stockings, put some money in her pocket and left. The very next moment the woman was arrested by the police and taken to jail where she was forced to spend the night. Her husband must have been very worried. (NBA K28, p. 465.)

The respondents wrote about their selling activity quite openly, but the illegal exchange of foreign currency was not mentioned to the same extent. Currency crimes were considered more serious in the Soviet Union and could be punishable by prison sentences. Still, because the black market exchange rate was lucrative, it was common for tourists to deal with illegal moneychangers.

Small-scale transactions were for the tourists mostly of symbolic value, but their value cumulated on a larger scale. In Tallinn the availability of western goods clearly improved after the large Viru hotel was opened in 1972. According to Sakari Nupponen, Finnish tourists counteracted the deficiencies of the Soviet economy. It was the business of Viru's chambermaids to obtain goods for their friends and relatives. They did not dare to exchange money: that was done just outside the hotel by the serious Estonian money traders, or *fartsovshchiki*. These individuals

were also known as *Viru ärikas*, the business-men of the Viru Hotel. (Nupponen 2007, pp. 115–116.)

One of the big traders, Indrek Stahl, later told his story. He bought nylon shirts from Finns at 3,10 roubles each, and resold them for 60 roubles. He also exchanged currency, but never went into the hotel himself. Contact persons brought the goods in and the police was bribed. Often the travel guides played their part too. Even some Finns were able to run enterprises in stockings or jeans. Stahl made out a fortune and became a business legend. (Nupponen 2007, pp. 117–118).

SHOPPING AND SOUVENIRS

Finnish tourists had extra money to spend as a result of the black market trading and illegal currency exchange. This was helped by the fact that the package tours were typically all-inclusive or half board, and that most of the cultural activities were included in the price. Loose roubles made dining in fine restaurants and impulsive shopping possible for low-income tourists.

However, shopping at the Soviet market was not easy. There was not that much to buy, especially in the 1960s. The organization of the shops was complicated by separate counters for payment, and tourists were often stuck in long lines. In addition, the customs control required receipts for purchases matching the officially exchanged currency. Consequently the extra money was often spent *in situ* on alcohol, women and fancy dinners. Soviet luxuries originating from the 1930s, champagne and caviar, as well as three-course dinners in the finest restaurants were for once available to ordinary western tourists. In Finland the restaurants were expensive and out of the reach of the lower social classes.

The freedom to drink alcohol did not always have favourable consequences, as is well known. One respondent told of a Finn who began drinking in Leningrad and continued through to Moscow in the 1950s. He drank all his cash, made a mess in the hotel room and broke a vase. The other travellers helped him with money to buy a souvenir for his wife. He bought a cast statue, but it fell from his trembling hands and broke into pieces. (NBA K28, p. 441.)

A possible way to spend extra money, compensate for shortages in the shops as well as deal with the customs control, would have been to purchase local services. This was not common among the respondents, however. It was a result of the language barrier, but there were also other reasons. One traveller to Tbilisi in 1978 reported having heard that the hairdressers in Georgia were reasonably priced. But once there she noticed the overdyed beehives of the local women, and decided not to make an appointment for a perm. (NBA K28, p. 480.)

Foreign tourists were supposed to buy their souvenirs from the hard currency shops, *Beriozkas* or in Ukraine *Kashtans*. These were opened in 1964 for the purpose of providing foreign currency to the state. The selection was far better compared to local shops, and ordinary Soviet citizens were not allowed in. In the same vein foreign currency bars and cafés were opened in the main Inturist hotels throughout the Soviet Union in 1965. They were intended exclusively for foreign tourists, particularly the western ones. The bars were designed along American and European models, and cocktails with ice were served. (Salmon 2006, p. 192–194.)

The hard currency bars and *Beriozkas* became popular gathering places for Finnish tourists. Women preferred *beriozkas*, and men favoured bars even though they bought souvenirs as well. A female respondent reported that during a trip to Sotshi in 1976 she visited a *Kashtan*, a local foreign currency store each day. It was pleasant simply to stroll around and look at the various items. She ended up buying a hand-embroidered shirt, a couple of clay jugs, a jewellery box and numerous smaller items as presents for her children. (NBA K28, p. 484.)

The most popular purchases from the *Beriozkas* – and to some extent from the local stores – were musical instruments, emerald jewellery, *matryoshka* dolls, Russian scarves with colourful flower decorations, cameras, alarm clocks and watches, samovars and tea services, tea, and Russian bread. Not to mention alcohol and cigarettes. A peculiar popular item was “serpent cream” purchased from pharmacies. It was an Asian camphor-based cream, analgesic and anti-inflammatory, and used for rheumatic problems as well as muscle and back pain. Altogether, the lists of souvenirs do not appear very abundant from a contemporary perspective, but in the context of the 1960s and 1970s they were

anything but modest. Furthermore, the quality of the Soviet showcase items was high and the purchases were of good value.

Musical instruments were particularly well known for their reasonable price and many times whole orchestras crossed the border back into Finland, including *balalaikas*, mandolins, guitars, accordions and various brass instruments. According to Jukka Gronow, gramophones (*patéfons*), radios and musical instruments were Soviet ideal products of the 1930s. Stalin had promised that life would be merrier, and music would be a perfect means of it. In the words of Gronow “what better proof there could be than the sight of a gramophone on the table of a *kolkhoz* hut or in the summer garden of a *dacha*, with old and young gathered around it”. In addition, gramophones had only recently been introduced in capitalist countries and were a sign of technological advancement. (Gronow 2003, p. 63.)

As a result, in 1936 every fourth young Soviet industrial worker had a guitar, a *balalaika* or a mandolin, but only a few had a bicycle (Gronow 2003, p. 61. Table 4). Watches and clocks were different: they were not produced in factories before the end of the 1930s, but plenty were circulating second hand. Members of the former upper classes had to sell their watches and jewelry in order to survive. Only by 1938 did the share of Soviet-made watches exceed the second-hand ones of western origin. (Gronow 2003, pp. 65–66.)

Porcelain tea services produced by the Leningrad Lomonosov Porcelain Factory were also much desired by Finnish tourists. In this case it was not only a matter of high quality and reasonable price but also of style. Modernist Finnish design believed in plain and simple form language, but many Finns often still preferred more traditional patterns. (Kuusi 2009, p. 157.) As contrasts to the more minimal Scandinavian designs, the Lomonosov porcelain items decorated with cobalt blue, bright red and gold attracted the tourists. The history of the factory is particularly interesting as it was founded in 1744 as the Imperial Porcelain Factory, and some of its patterns have survived all political upheavals since.

The logic of the *Beriozkas* however, was not clear to the Finnish tourists. In Tallinn, two librarians were asked by a chambermaid, a former school teacher, to buy her an umbrella from the foreign

currency store. The women did so, handed it over to her in complete secrecy, and were given some cheese for the favour. However, the librarians wondered about the logic of having separate stores, and did not really understand it. (NBA K28, p. 55.) The complicated Soviet consumer market was difficult to comprehend.

CONSUMING SOCIALISM

Either on an educational field trip, individual holiday or group tour, the travellers consumed socialism. They had purchased a trip and were either pleased or disappointed with what they received for the money. In most cases there was much to see whether one appreciated it or not. For example Leningrad in the 1970s was for many a shock because of its austerity and gloominess. On the other hand, its simplicity was something the extravagant Finns could learn from, according to one respondent. (NBA K28, p. 471.) Similarly, for some respondents the city of Tallinn was dirty and depressing, for others it was clean and pleasant.

The tours themselves were relatively low-budget and became even less expensive for the tourists with extra money from the black market activities. The illegally received roubles could not be used for large purchases, but because of them one's entire travel budget could be spent in the *Beriozkas*. Extra drinks and other costs could be covered with the money from selling as well as illegal currency exchange. This often meant that tourists could shop more than they had planned, and that they still had too many of roubles to spend.

The Finnish package tours with excessive behaviour, Mediterranean pork feasts and vodka-tourism have been interpreted within the framework of carnivalism. Anna-Maria Åström has depicted how the tourists enter a different reality where everything is turned upside down. The carnivalistic laugh is combined with different features of excess within the sphere of the grotesque: heavy drinking, overindulgence and sexual contact. And, for a brief moment the hierarchies of power are ridiculed. (Åström 1993, p. 173.)

The tourists' temporary affluence can also be seen in terms of carnivalistic excess. This was highlighted by the gap in living standards

between the capitalist West and socialist East. Jenni Korjus has described how the abundance of roubles created a superior attitude among the Finnish tourists. For a moment at least an ordinary tourist could feel rich. This could produce rather irrational behaviour, for example throwing roubles out of the bus window. (Korjus 2001, pp. 163–164.) Such behaviour often suggested revenge for war losses or symbolized potential triumph in the Cold War.

Sociologists Soile Veijola and Eeva Jokinen have criticized the carnivalistic interpretation of tourism in terms of gender relations. Indecency and excess have only been typical to men, while women had the role of controllers, with the attributes of being disciplined, abstinent and ascetic. (Jokinen & Veijola 1990, p. 26.) In this respect shopping and consumption as carnivalistic behaviour was an exception, because it was the same for both genders. With their loose money, both male and female tourists had liminal experiences at the Soviet consumer market. For a moment, they passed beyond everyday austerity.

The micro-level black market had its impact on Finnish tourists, particularly in the 1960s and 1970s. But the impact of Western items on Soviet citizens – and possibly on the future of the whole Soviet consumer economy – was remarkable. A case in point is when a Finnish tourist group visited Tallinn in 1967. At the departure they gave a present to their young guide: a leather bag filled with chocolate, ten pairs of stockings and some money. The girl wept with happiness. (NBA K28, p. 59.)

To conclude, the inexpensive package tours to the Soviet Union became popular among Finns from the lower social orders during the 1970s and 1980s. The unique Soviet tourism experience included – in addition to the overall oddities of Soviet society – cultural highlights such as ballet and art, fancy three-course dinners and impulsive purchases of consumer durables, all of which were out of reach in everyday life in Finland. The liminal crossovers into *another reality* as well as the carnivalistic experiences were far more complicated than the stereotypical image of a vodka tourist. The journeys were a real breakaway for both men and women, either in the sense of a shock or of pleasure and indulgence. And for many, paradoxically, consuming socialism meant abundance and excess.

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Fashion show and sale
in a Tampere department
store in 1966.

Photographer unknown
(Työväenmuseo Werstas).





FROM BACKGROUND TO FOREGROUND: MUSIC PRODUCTS FOR PRODUCTION AND CONSUMPTION SPACES

Kaarina Kilpiö

Manipulative music products are discussed less frequently today, but the general idea that music “makes things happen” and lubricates nearly every type of business is even more pervasive than it was in 1950s and 1960s. Dividing music into functional/non-functional categories no longer constitutes a meaningful perspective since there are few genres left that *cannot* be put to use. Studying and discussing previous styles of background music and other functional music can still be worthwhile in understanding how everyday (and everyplace) music has developed. To this end, I have gathered and analyzed marketing material and media texts on Muzak in Finland and conducted interviews with local background music salesmen.

MUZAK: SOCIAL ENGINEERING LINKED WITH ENTERTAINMENT

The term *muzak* is commonly used when referring to bland, most often instrumental, recorded music used to create a desired atmosphere in, for example, public facilities and telephone systems. Many are also aware of the word’s origin as a corporate name, with a history dating back to the 1930s in the United States.

In 1922, Major General George Squier sold The North American Company his patented plan for transmission of sound entertainment, education, and advertising via electric power lines. Squier envisioned and planned the system as one result of his work with electro-magnetic systems during his army career. It was inspired by ideas on soothing and energizing piped-in music in Edward Bellamy's novel *Looking Backward (2000–1887)* (Lanza, 1995, pp. 22–25). Organizing and refining the idea led to the creation of Muzak and the start of piped-in background music business in 1934. George Squier pieced together the company name from the word *music* and the highly successful compact camera brand *Kodak*, which he felt embodied “one-solution-fits-all-consumers” ingenuity.

The Muzak corporation's product line, titled *Stimulus Progression* and developed according to the company's quasi-scientific principles of subconscious manipulation, constitutes possibly the most full-fledged form of functional background music¹ so far. In the widest sense, the term background music can be used to describe any music that is meant to be heard but not listened to. Typically, it is employed in situations where other activities – predominantly those connected with producing and consuming – are supposed to play the primary role.

The starting point of this discussion is what happened when the commercial background music solutions were imported into a small northern country with a rapidly growing market economy. A company called Finnestrad acquired the Muzak franchising deal in 1960. At the time, Finland had succeeded quite well in remaining economically open and finding ways to prosper in spite of its small size and population (Ojala, Eloranta and Jalava, 2006). This was an environment for many innovations and ideas, often propelled by individuals or small groups of men. One such idea was to sell music as a production/consumption enhancement tool to the Finnish business administration. The idea of a subliminal, pleasant way to persuade citizens to produce and consume more fit nicely in the U.S.-derived paradigm of ‘consumer republic.’

¹ The terms environmental music and production music have also been used. For more on the origins and developments, see Toop (2007).

This paradigm, with its faith in mass consumption as a weapon in the Cold War struggles, combined economic abundance and democratic political freedom — as opposed to the “impoverishment” of the Soviet system (Cohen, 2003, pp. 125–127).

“Scientifically” created background music products raised considerable expectations in the early 1960s. As promised by Finnestrad, they had been designed not for listening, but for subliminal effects. The central characteristics of Muzak material are effectively summarized by Radano (1989, pp. 451–2) as follows:

Notably, there is a distinct lack of abrasive tone colors, harmonic ambiguity, rhythmic complexity, and swing that might make overt reference to musics outside the normative order. ... Broadcast over multi-speaker public address systems, the recorded program lacks physical locus. ... Muzak, broadcasting continually and quietly below the dynamic level of normal speech, “hides” from the listener, becoming a kind of sonic wallflower, or as it has been described pejoratively, wallpaper music.

At the same time, a change was occurring in the listening conventions of the Finnish music culture. At one end of the (imaginary) listening continuum was the subliminal manipulation of the human brain to increase economic growth through Muzak, and at the other end were the Finnish proponents of contemplative listening and “serious music”. The latter were gradually losing the battle against non-attentive listening and ubiquitous popular music. Both ends of the continuum seem somewhat faded away now, and in their place is a mentality of a comprehensive “soundtrack of our lives”. Music continues to be an element in intensive design processes: both individual listeners (via, e.g., mobile personal music technology devices) and specialists create sound environments, and branding with sound is essential in commercial and public spaces.

In a world where the number of actors in musical “soundscape design” has multiplied and continues to do so, neither subliminal manipulation nor contemplative concentration on listening, controlled by one agent, is likely to continue working. Since the 1980s, subliminal background music has been replaced in most commercial environments

with *foreground music*: a recognizable repertoire with a more audible character and volume. An overwhelming amount of music encounters in public spaces (of at least Western societies) is now music for branding purposes, intended for listening while performing other actions, usually consuming.

According to Michael Malone, founder of the highly successful foreground music supplier Audio Environments Incorporated, foreground music is “simply an offshoot of the popular music explosion of the 1960s” (Schuch and Van de Mark, 1998). He is right to use the word explosion; it includes the practice of combining music with everyday life, changes in the importance of customer services and in the notion of a citizen, and erosion of listening from contemplative to situational. Popular music “on the fore” emerged, slowing down scientifically justified musical manipulation a la Muzak.

MAKING UNNOTICEABLE MUSIC A STANDOUT PRODUCT

In Muzak sales promotion in the 1960s, several distinctions were made between the product and other types of music, and other ways of improving productivity. One main point was to emphasize the difference between tested, researched background music and “music as art”. The Muzak product was claimed to be essentially different from the “surrounding music culture”, that is, other ways in which people were involved with music. Perhaps the most important single defining feature of Muzak products and the key of branding Muzak – its USP², so to speak – was the stimulus progression principle. This concept was developed during the 1940s in order to set Muzak deliberately apart from radio stations, which were, up to that point, its rivals.

Stimulus progression was launched at the end of the decade. It was based on an elaborate analysis of Muzak’s emotional content and energy levels in its music repertoire. Music was then placed in 15-minute blocks

2 USP = Unique selling proposition/point; a distinct idea or claim communicated to the customer that sets the product favorably apart from generic competitors. The term originates in Rosser Reeves’ 1961 book, *Reality in Advertising*.

in an order that (by way of musical energy levels) counteracted the average worker's "fatigue curve" and so contributed to a psychological "lift". Between music segments, equal time spans of silence (or, at least, no musical input) were programmed (Lanza, 1995, pp. 48–49; Sumrell and Varnelis). The silence segments were absent from the products for use in consumption spaces.

For almost half a century, Muzak could be described as a successful business in the United States and several other locations worldwide. There were also places where business faltered at times. One such market seems to have been Finland. Background music was imported and initially marketed mainly as an innovation for enhancing production within workplaces. Muzak products were met with interest in the early 1960s. Despite its good start and thus advantage over other suppliers, Muzak ultimately failed to keep up with competition in Finland. The business was stymied by the end of 1970s as a result of several changes in business life and music culture. Muzak's sales tactic, which until then had been working, turned people against the product when the "surrounding" music started to make its way into the substance of everyday life.

IMPORTING THE IDEA

The man behind Finnestrad, and the idea of importing background music, was Eero Vallila, the then secretary-general of the Finnish public broadcasting company Yleisradio. Vallila took an interest in the background music industry and imported the concept. His career in Yleisradio continued until the end of 1960s and included appointments such as assistant manager and financial director. He also had a significant role in the recurrent debate concerning Yleisradio's commercial rivals and their licensing. Toward the end of the 1960s, Vallila was a strong candidate for the director general as well. He was sidelined from the race, mainly due to a possible conflict of interest between business leadership and Yleisradio and for political reasons (Raatikainen, 1980; Salokangas, 1996). Vallila then moved in on the background music business for good.

The business agreement between Finnestrad and Muzak dates from 1959, and the first clients started using the service in early 1960s (Vallila, 2006). The former executive director of Finnestrad remembers exciting times at the start of the franchising business:

We had read about this and I travelled to the US and contacted the Muzak Corporation – naturally, we were just a tiddler, nothing, really. ... But at that time, we were somewhat exotic, I guess. So when we contacted them as the first Nordic country – and third from Europe, if memory serves me right – it somehow struck a chord. Then the general director came to visit us and got a positive image, so the franchise was ours. (Lindén, 2006)

Vallila was highly motivated and energetic: His ideas on diffusing Muzak products went as far as to suggest radio programming based on Muzak's repertoire for Yleisradio (Henriksson, 2009). The proposal was never tried out, but discussion about his idea resurfaced before launching *Sävelradio*, Yleisradio's brand new program concept, which was a response to the audience's changing listening habits and taste in music (Melakoski, 1983, p. 22). The program was a significant change in Yleisradio's broadcasting policy and an acknowledgement to the wide support gained by pirate radio stations in the early 1960s. Vallila also collected statements from his customers for years in an effort to track down specific features of the background music system that were most valued among clients. These views of the clientele, somewhat homogeneously worded in letters and compiled in Vallila's archives in a file titled "Muzak-Gallupin vastaukset", are likely to have been gathered with marketing uses in mind.

Newspaper coverage was used extensively when launching the service:

After the turn of the year, Muzag [sic] music will begin to play in work places and public facilities. ... The purpose of Muzag has been to create music that, played in work places, would brighten up workers and enhance their performance. ... Performers of this music are chosen from among the pick of the orchestras, and the desired music is transferred to each customer individually from a special central studio. (US, 1961)

[R]emoving the ill effects of noise and the dangers of weariness, Muzak enhances both the happiness of employees and the work efficiency for the benefit of all parties. (*HS*, 1966).

It is worth noting that the latter paper, in 1966, refers to “parties” by the same Finnish word (“osapuolet”) that is used when reporting the incomes policy negotiation process. In the years to follow, relationships between these “parties”, employers, and employees, drew increased attention as discussion on working conditions radicalized by the end of 1960s.

“SOMETHING COMPLETELY DIFFERENT” FOR THE ULTIMATE WORK PERFORMANCE

Although the first Finnish background music client was – perhaps prognostically – a restaurant,³ Finnestrad’s marketing was initially aimed primarily at workplaces with monotonous jobs. In Finnish industrial psychology literature, there were previous notions of a need for musical, or at least rhythmic, elements in workplaces. In 1948, Ohto Oksala, an influential figure in Finnish industrial psychology, complained about the machines of his time:

The rhythmic moves, knocks and rattles of the levers in quaint machinery have turned into a continuous drone of wheels. ... Workers have quite a sensitive ear for such rhythm, which they often downright create themselves in order to make the work easier. ... Factors that disturb the rhythm of work are among the gravest drawbacks of factory work. (p. 17)

Oksala considered music an important factor for a certain group of people in the workforce. This group – often women who performed production line and routine office work – could be adapted to repetitive

³ The restaurant of the Engineering Society of Finland, in Insinööritalo, Helsinki (Krister Lindén, 2006).

and monotonous work, provided they had a distraction that would help them endure it. For their employers, music was useful and helpful in the all-important readjusting of the workforce to modern conditions in the workplace (Oksala, 1948, p. 8–9).

Oksala's manner and idea of (wo)man is typical of the efficiency movement and its descendants, such as Taylorism and rationalizing. He gives exact advice and models based on observations from working conditions, the ultimate aim being enhanced efficiency in employment and work performance. Taylor and Squier worked on their efficiency enhancement systems concurrently, and Muzak also suits the Taylorist work practices perfectly.

One essential feature of workplace music – the reproduced version, not traditional working songs – is to provide an outlet for daydreaming and other mental activities that are, as Oksala puts it, “something completely different” from monotonous work. Music's capability of evoking an emotional response is significant for Industrial Age work music. Lyrics are absent from Muzak's Stimulus Progression, and, as Jerri Ann Husch (1984, p. 131–2) states in her study, “Music of the Workplace: A Study of Muzak Culture”, “The missing lyrical content of the work music is usually related to issues of love and friendship,” thus evoking strong emotional responses, that do “not reflect the reality of current events, but the emotional impact of previous social interactions”. The social content of the music is, in other words, hinted at by familiar melodies, and the social experience is transferred from the present working situation to past personal experiences. This enables workers to manage their time in a similar manner – the mental outlet from monotonous work is provided not in real time but through musically-aided fantasy. The product is, as promised in marketing, formulated according to efficiency and production expectations.

PLANNED, SCIENTIFIC, SUBLIMINAL

For many business leaders, solid proof of profitability was crucial in considering music investments for the workforce. Music had to be introduced as a calculated tool for personnel management and efficiency, not a frivolous novelty. There was no consensus on how exactly the

longed-for advances in efficiency and competitiveness would be attained. More importantly, there was no one trusted Finnish authority on which to base local marketing. It proved much easier to argue for the important role of planned conditions in welcoming customers in consumption spaces, which later comprised the main market for Muzak products.

In marketing the products, the careful, accurate planning with the client in mind behind the service was emphasized, as well as individual delivery to each client. Krister Lindén (2006) trained sales representatives for Finnestrad, and he remembers:

This, however, was somewhat of a quality product, not exactly cheap either, there were these sustained costs and all. So that's why it was much costlier than what these competitors had. ...[W]hat was essential, when presenting the product, was highlighting its special and unique character. The main definition was that people had to understand they were not buying any old thing; they were buying an absolutely unique product, one that was going to hold up 100 %.

In sales manuals and representative training, the focus was on convincing clients of the distinctive quality exclusive to the Muzak brand (though the term “brand” was not in use in the 1960s). A point to be made repeatedly was Muzak’s superiority over any other musical content the management might consider playing during the day, for example, radio, record collections, and solutions based on playback from magnetic tape.

SONIC FORCE-FEEDING AND ITS (FEW) DISCONTENTS

In the mid-seventies, when the Muzak business was still expanding in Finland, a columnist for the newspaper *Kaleva* wrote acidly about the qualification set for Muzak tunes: they could not contain singing, be too interesting or ear-catching, or otherwise meet the demands “normally set for music”. The columnist uses several other sarcastic expressions in his text, inserting quotation marks around the word “composer”

when mentioning that some Finnish tunes have also been selected for Muzak's repertoire. He calls the repertoire "castrated", "senile without a doubt", and an "ear-injected music sedative". These are familiar characterizations from critics of background music. They have been conspicuous since the 1960s and continue to be used in the debate on functional music. In the end of the column, the writer takes note of foreground music and finds it just as disturbing, stating that the "bawling jukebox in the corner" confirms there is "no shelter from sonic force-feeding" (Karemo, 1975). At the end of the column, Karemo thus speaks out more for concentrated listening and the right to silence than against manipulation.

The early stages of the background music business in Finland, however, did not meet very active public resistance from proponents of music's artistic value and attentive listening. This may have been because the Finnish "serious music" scene had controversies of its own in the 1960s. The new generation challenged old ways of composing music and communicating with audiences. Their experiments and concerts with elements adapted from performance art were ridiculed by several established composers and critics, who were irritated by the self-confidence of the reformers as well as their musical work. The generations had opposing views on the value of different music genres as well. Many young composers had turned to popular and/or folk music for influences. They started to take popular musical expression more seriously, adapting and developing their own styles and using popular genres to convey social messages.

By the end of the 1960s, it was clear that innovative forces worked within both so-called art music and popular music. These forces wanted music to be seen and heard as an important means of expression for meaningful, even political matters. Certainly not all music changed, but thinking about and discussing music became topical issues. Minor concerns, such as manipulative musical practices, were often overshadowed and left fairly undebated until the 1970s.

“DON’T START WITH SUCH NONSENSE!”

The task of launching American scientifically-produced background music in Finland had not been straightforward and easy in spite of good newspaper coverage and general goodwill. Some technical problems increased Finnestrad’s initial costs. The local telephone company was not prepared to let its technology be used for something quite new and unknown before extensive negotiations (Lindén, 2006). The Ministry of Finance did not assent to Finnestrad’s requests to import Muzak tapes free from turnover taxation.⁴ The Finnish Composers’ Copyright Society, Teosto, fought against making business with music while not paying the tariffs negotiated by Teosto, but lost the battle. The former director of Finnestrad, Krister Linden, noted in an interview in 2006 that this was a tough dispute and that Toivo Mikael Kivimäki’s (Finland’s war-time prime minister and a professor of civil law) personal interest and backing were essential.

Finnish management was not used to American ideas and methods in management consulting and rationalization. The local version of business leadership was young and mostly derived from German scientific management, not so much American Taylorism. This was partly due to a language barrier: proficiency in German was much more common than English. A new, more Western-thinking generation of business leaders was emerging in the late 1950s and started working during later decades, but the majority of management was still trained before and during WWII (Ainamo and Tienari, 2002, p. 72–3).

Some difficulties also arose from the divided music scene of highbrow classical music appreciators on the one hand and a widespread appreciation of popular music on the other. Former salesmen have vivid memories of the attitude problems they faced when introducing the idea of light music for customer service units:

4 Correspondence Dec 1961–March 1962 between Finnestrad, Ministry of Finance (the Finnish equivalent for the Department of the Treasury), Tullihallitus [National Board of Customs], and Oy Yleisradio Ab (the Finnish Broadcasting Company, consulted on whether public performance of Muzak products could be considered public service broadcasting. Finnestrad pointed to the fact that Muzak tapes only came to Finland for hire and were returned after use. Music was deemed the actual merchandise, not the tapes. Exemption from taxation was denied.

... and you can imagine – I mean it’s nothing today, but at that time – the kind of biased thinking there was... say, I’d go to banks and insurance companies: “What? Music, here?” like they had a holy church going there; “Don’t start with such nonsense”. So there were these huge walls of prejudice and one really had to work to knock them down. (Lindén, 2006)

“CUSTOMERS WILL STAY LONGER AND BUY MORE”

Music had already been successfully employed in constructing the – mostly feminine – consumer identity of department store patrons in the United States starting in the 1880s. The soundscape – musicians hidden behind screens or “vine-hung lattices” playing amiable music – was a crucial part of women’s experience of feeling safe and proper at a luxurious shopping floor (Tyler, 1992, pp. 82, 102–104). There is an interesting contrast here with the Soviet ideology of “retailing the revolution”, which was described in detail by Hilton (2004). When the Soviet GUM department stores were introduced, the concept was designed to make it easy for working-class men to approach the consumption space and was thus

[a] process that favored working-class males by symbolically clearing the commercial sphere of middle- and upper-class women, and securing it for working-class men. Certainly, this image did not reflect reality, but symbolically it speaks to the masculine political culture of the Bolsheviks. (Hilton, 2004, p. 943)

Introducing the gentle atmosphere of background music in Finnish retailing spaces was a step towards a Western, femininely-oriented notion of mass consumption.

The Muzak repertoire was never pronouncedly arranged with feminine traits in mind. However, it did lack certain characteristics frequently associated with masculinity in Western listening culture: active bass lines and brass sections, clearly audible percussive instruments, rhythmic irregularities, and so on (see, e.g., Tagg and Clarida, 2003, pp.

669–670). The “feminine” string-dominated *legato e cantabile* melody lines were definitely characteristic of consumer space Muzak.

Stockmann, the largest and most luxurious department store in Finland, conducted a small-scale enquiry with their employees in 1951 (*City*, 1951a, 1951b). After the results proved the majority of employees found background music desirable, Stockmann installed a public announcement system and played music for employees during certain times of day. The basic idea had been copied directly from Muzak’s ideology: Music served as a tool in combating fatigue during the workday. Stockmann was a pioneer in many such smaller and larger reforms, for example, a day-care center for the saleswomen’s children as early as 1946. But companies that provided their own background music within retail or customer service settings were not unusual by the time Muzak products hit the markets. This is why Finnestrad had to tackle the growing business of consumption spaces. When asked about the best-selling background music product, Krister Lindén (2006) replied:

Well yes, customer service was it, of course... and we had to naturally [adapt] then, although we were ideologically, so to say, trying to promote specifically this work music – the idea of it – so that it would not just be the ordinary kind of background music.

The “ordinary kind of background music” refers to several different solutions, not all of them as thoroughly considered as in Stockmann’s case. Judging from the “before–after” material used by the Muzak salesmen, the companies settled on solutions that were different compilations of personal record collections and radio sets, resulting in varying degrees of satisfaction from employees. The owner of Finnestrad commented in a television interview that background music “programming for services – the function there is, of course, completely different – it is *just entertaining background music*, and the aim is not the same as within workplaces” (Vallila, 1972).

In the 1970s, there were simply not enough customers for the Muzak product in its original form as an industry psychology tool. Restaurants and stores formed the fastest growing shares of clients.

In Finland, competition also tightened. Several new formats and technical solutions, which were often based on the inexpensive and easily transferable c-cassette, were introduced for prospective clients. Music programs tailored to each client's needs encroached on the market. This development quickly supplanted the carefully created idea of "scientific" music aimed at the subconscious as the right solution for efficient production and consumption. A salesman for a competing music supplier, Fazer Musiikki, recalls:

In Finland, this [claim for increased productivity] was pretty quickly inverted in the way that [the music] extracts the juice from the worker: the best input possible ... Our other point was "hey, *we* can make you music that fits *your* image". With Muzak, you had no choice. But this precise "feeling of the shop"... that we can in, say, a blue jeans shop, introduce this "jeans style", as it were – some jeans music. (Hietanoro, 2006)

One of the eight "ready-made" styles advertised by Fazer Musiikki in 1983 for restaurants and shops was thus called *Jeans*. This style was marketed as "pop, rock, and purkka⁵ for youth shops, gas station cafes, interval music in dance restaurants – music for action-packed places" (*Vitriini*). *Jeans* was a potent brand name for such a product: denims had been an important part of Westernization and youth consumption in Finland from 1950s on (Heinonen, Kortti and Pantzar, 2003). This concept was already a far cry from the stimulus progression based work music, which by its very definition was not to be listened to. It evolved quickly into the foreground music we know today, which was to take over the bulk of business music for public and semi-public spaces. The heavily branded stimulus progression principle did not work for the new tertiary sector uses of music; tertiary production reached a share of 50% of the Finnish GDP for the first time in 1966, and there was no turning back (Ojala et al., p. 333).

⁵ *Purkka* literally means bubblegum; like its British counterpart, it is a popular music term from the 1970s, referring to such pop-rock bands as the Archies, (early) Sweet, and The Osmonds.

Thus, the situation was once more open for competition. Music for consumption spaces was now expected to have its own characteristics, quite unlike the ones dictated by the Stimulus Progression principles, and not dissolve into the subconscious. Modified, watered-down instrumental versions of hits were not enough; they were not necessarily accepted by listeners in the 1980s.

There was also the old adversary, radio, once more. Commercial radio did not reach Finland until 1985, but by the 1970s, there had already been many changes in the policies of the Finnish public broadcasting company, Yleisradio. These changes made radio less edifying but more accessible. New lighter features in music programming were a result of a long struggle, where public broadcasting management in music programming had often been between a rock and a hard place. When Yleisradio's program director, Jussi Koskiluoma, was asked in 1955 by his friend, the bishop of Tampere, for more "sublime" music in the evenings, he replied, "We already have so much music of value in our programs we are on the verge of audience rebellion" (Salokangas, 1996, p. 101). The amount of "light music" on air thus increased little by little since the 1963 launching of Sävelradio. Classical music was not excluded from programming by any means, but the amount of popular music increased more than concert music. At the end of the 1960s, there was also serious discussion within Yleisradio about whether or not public broadcasting should denounce so-called background radio music (Salokangas, 1996, p. 239).

FROM BACKGROUND TO FOREGROUND: A SUDDEN CROSSFADE?

By the early 1970s, the old concept of background music as efficient workplace and customer service music was increasingly burdened by negative associations of manipulation and exploitation. Meanwhile, overall consumption of music recordings soared in Finland. Record sales skyrocketed from a little under a million records per year, a figure that had remained stable since the 1950s, to nearly 5 million per year by 1978. Sales increased as much as 80 percent during top years. This was more than the industry had been anticipating, and it dramatically

affected the home market (Muikku, 2001, p. 164). Access to music also became considerably easier when compact cassettes were introduced – a recurring pattern worldwide in the 1970s. More Finns became interested in new genres and styles. A previously somewhat homogeneous music scene now moved toward dispersed audiences, with more than one or two “hot” phenomena at a time.

Mobility of listening increased with the introduction of car stereos and portable cassette players, the latter turning out a “must-have” purchase of the decade. In 1970, there was a cassette player in one Finnish household out of ten, but by the end of the decade, the penetration had risen to more than one per household (Muikku, 2001, p. 167). This meant, among other things, that music – especially popular music – was now more intensively present in everyday life than ever before. Young people grew into music consumption habits that were very different from their parents’ listening habits. They were increasingly attached to everyday routines and, importantly, to memories of everyday life. Social activities were associated with recorded popular music hits of the day – a phenomenon with the national hits as well as products of the international popular music scene.

This trend also affected industrial working environments, the former bread-and-butter market of Muzak’s business. When Finnish employers made decisions on workplace music in the 1970s, they often faced the fact that the “new background” had taken over. Employees actively wanted foreground music. In a 1972 TV documentary, *Musiikkia tiskin alta* on background music, a foreman of a noisy printing press was interviewed.

Foreman: Yes, originally we had the so-called psychologically studied workplace music. But it did not interest the printers enough for them to keep the headphone-protectors on.

Interviewing journalist: What kind of music was that?

Foreman: This was mainly piano music, so-called classical music, as far as I can tell.

Journalist: This was not cared for?

Foreman: Noo-oo.

Journalist: How is this current music then?

Foreman: This music is—it’s hits of the day and ... evergreens, and a bit more brisk, somehow.

Private music listening had changed, so other uses of music had to adapt. Finnestrad went along and offered its clients foreground music via British Rediffusion Music. For a while, they represented both Muzak and Rediffusion. According to Eero Vallila's son, Kari Vallila, who currently works in the background music business, Muzak's interest in Europe faded dramatically in mid-1970s, largely due to changes in the market. In many countries, Muzak representatives were reduced and the company apparently only kept an office in Germany throughout the 1970s and 1980s.⁶ In 1981, Muzak's plan to "enter the foreground music market" is reported in the Moody's Industrial Manual (Westerkamp, 1990, p. 229).

IDEOLOGICAL CHANGES AND RESISTANCE TO MANIPULATIVE PRACTICES

The 1970s have often been viewed as a politically active decade: leftist movements gained wide support and gave many established political systems a stir in Europe and elsewhere. When the political climate shifted in favor of leftist thinking, Muzak's marketing claims ended up putting the products at a disadvantage. Finland was no exception from the rest of the Western world; for example, active leftist youth movements made passionate and strident demands on several questions relating to the market economy, including worker and consumer manipulation. Finnish media texts from the decade are often indicative of these ideological efforts, since a fresh generation of reporters had been trained in the 1960s and started working in the media branch. In its conclusion, the above-mentioned television documentary on background music states:

Stimulation of the human subconscious, with the purpose of squeezing more efficiency out of the worker exhausted by monotonous work, means that all other ways have been used. The thing to realize is that the solution lies not in humans, but in arranging the whole working process

⁶ Vallila 2006. Muzak has not confirmed this information or answered inquiries on the history of their operations in Europe.

in a way that it better suits the natural human needs to experience work as a meaningful activity. (*Musiikkia tiskin alta*)

More general writings criticizing industrial psychology's methods and applications attracted readers. One such publication was a 1974 translation of an edited publication by Swedish educationalists and doctors called *The Art of Sweating*. It was not unusual for Sweden to lead the way for Finnish theories and ideas about working life. The book in question presented clear proposals on how science, including work psychology, should not pretend to be unconnected with societal issues. It also spoke strongly against manipulative psychological techniques as harmful and alienating ways to cover drawbacks in society and in working life. One such harmful trend was "psychological language". "The most important goal of psychological language is to psychologise political concepts. [...] they are thus unpoliticized and actual polarities hidden. Concepts initially political are given psychological content" (Christiansson, Kauppinen and Pietarinen, 1974, p. 129). The "actual polarities" in working life were clear to the writers: The interests of workers and employers were far from common and instead often proved contradictory. They saw industrial psychology and consequential innovations in working life as cosmetic maneuvers to conceal and avoid the system's inherent inequality. Small improvements in the workplace did not, they wrote, mean actual democracy, concentrating on the individual worker's experience and not the larger picture of exploitative relationships (Christiansson, Kauppinen and Pietarinen 1974, p. 70). Thus, the negative approach toward what would later be called psychobabble.

The music within Muzak programming was American, either by origin or at least in terms of arrangement and sound. Anti-Americanism did not, however, play a noteworthy role in the 1970s argument on music for workplaces and consumption spaces in Finland. There are some instances where the Americanized sound and arrangement style are called into question, for example, the *Kaleva* columnist's critical view of Finnish tunes having been "castrated" by Muzak – an interesting choice of words in light of the character of "feminine" consumption space. All discussion seems to have been based on other things than nationality: The class struggle foundation briefly described above and, especially,

the qualities of background working music that led to alienation from work or consumption on the one hand and from music on the other. These were the same qualities Oksala had been optimistic about in the 1940s: music enabled workers in monotonous jobs to daydream and detach their minds from the work that had been deprived of all but instrumental value to them.

One salient point was certainly a shift in the idea of citizenship, in public discussion and private life. Retailers and the service sector flinched from any hint of manipulation; this trend is also observable in advertising film music of the 1970s and 1980s (Kilpiö, 2005, pp. 67–8, 309). Thorough changes were taking place in music-listening practices. The gamut of music tastes in Finland kept splintering into smaller fractions. As listeners were able to transport their “own” music anywhere they liked with portable devices, they were also less receptive to repertoires concocted on “scientific” grounds for all humans.

As a brand name, Muzak disappeared in 2013 (*NYT* 2013)⁷. The music – or to be precise, the recordings carrying Muzak products – are rarely available to the public, since they were always shipped back to the headquarters after the designated time for their use had expired. Compilations of the sounds of stimulus progression Muzak do exist, and the one-time franchising partners may have sample recordings in their private archives, as did the Finnish partner Kari Vallila. The type of background music that followed the principles of stimulus progression is still audible by request (and apparently used extensively in some areas, one of which is Japan⁸) from several companies. The sounds marketed as powerful tools for management are still around, only now they perhaps serve more as reminders of an idea about the optimal sonic space for consumption.

⁷ The chosen term for services provided by the current company Mood Media is ‘sensory marketing’, creating the perfect consumption scene with sights, sounds and smells.

⁸ See e.g. <http://ontheroadthroughasia.wordpress.com/2012/02/06/japans-muzak-obsession/>

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Weighing the catch at a winter-time fishing competition in March 1968. Photographer Yrjö Lintunen (Kansan Arkisto).

AFTERWORD

Summer houses and saunas, parks and libraries – spaces of private and public consumption in Finland

Matti Peltonen and Visa Heinonen

We Finns are heavy drinkers. But it is not beer or spirits that we prefer when we are thirsty. Our drinks are coffee and milk. When it comes to coffee, we are actually top consumers in the world with around 10 kg of roasted coffee per capita annually. As coffee drinkers, however, the inhabitants of other Nordic countries are not far behind the Finns. The status of milk, however, has suffered during the last half century. During the 1950s we consumed more than 300 kg of milk per capita annually, at the moment the level of individual consumption of milk is around a third of that. Milk used to be on the table at every meal to supply enough energy both to children and adults. Today water has replaced milk in this regard.

So we Finns drink coffee. Accordingly, the coffee-table is an important place of consumption. Coffee is often sweetened with sugar and many Finns add milk or cream to their coffees. Coffee used to be made in a special coffee pot, but nowadays we drink filter coffee (which is in many European countries called *Café Americano*). So-called special coffees like espresso, capuccino or coffee latte have also gained popularity. A whole universe of sociability is constructed around the Finnish coffee table, which we gather to sit around many times during any given day. It starts with breakfast, which for most Finns includes coffee. During the working day coffee breaks are essential. The last thing before going to sleep can be a cup of coffee, or tea. When there is something to celebrate

it can be done around the coffee table with the help of some cake or sweet rolls and cookies. When you have guests, meet your friends or need a dessert after a meal, you make coffee. During the last 10–15 years, however, sparkling wine has gained popularity over coffee on more festive occasions (or both coffee and wine are available).¹

The favored position of the coffee table as a special Finnish place of consumption is obvious and can be easily seen in the statistics of coffee consumption. But there are also other places or spaces of consumption, which are not so obvious, because they are not tied as closely to any specific articles of consumption as the coffee table. One of these other places is the summer house. In spite of the low standard of living, many Finns have had summer cottages. With some 550,000 summer houses, Finland is probably the leading country in this respect, although summer cottages are popular also in neighboring countries, both to the east and west.² In many families the summer cottage is the childhood home of either one of the parents. An ideal summer house is situated on a lake and includes a separate sauna. Many families spend their whole summer vacation at their summer place. If the summer cottage is not far away, it is also visited during the weekends during the whole summer. The special feature of consumption at a summer cottage is its primitivity. Because the cottage is often quite old-fashioned and small, many consumption activities must be simplified. The food is more simple than at home. One does not necessarily have a television set in the cottage, for example (and there is nothing to see during the summer months anyway!). One probably reads old books and magazines lying around in the summer house, perhaps one's favourites from childhood. The direction of consumption in the summer cottage goes backwards, towards the past, towards childhood and is, in a way, anti-modern. It is difficult to detect the existence of the summer-house culture by looking only at the statistics on the consumption of goods. It has to be perceived as a special space of consumption.

The favorite hobby of Finns is fishing. Especially winter fishing on lakes is popular in the same way as in Russia. Compared to many other

¹ On Finnish coffee consumption, see the recent work of Saarinen 2011.

² Pertti and Maarit Alasuutari's study *Mökkihulluus* (Summer cottage madness) gives the basic data on Finnish summer-house culture, see Alasuutari and Alasuutari 2012.

hobbies fishing is quite inexpensive, that is, if one does not travel to the rivers of Lapland for some truly stunning salmon-fishing. When interviewed, almost two million out of five and a half million Finns mention their fishing hobbies as being one of the most important. During the winter season, people fish on lakes while sitting on camping stools near the small holes they have bored through the ice themselves. Sometimes there are fishing competitions where several hundred persons, sometimes many thousands, participate and cover an otherwise snow-white lake like eager mosquitos with mobile drilling equipment. In short, we Finns fish by the sea, we fish in our rivers, and we fish on our numerous lakes.

The really Finnish space of consumption, however, is the sauna. Every family has at least one sauna, and those who own summer houses usually have at least two, one in town and one in the countryside. One of the editors of this work lives in Helsinki in a rather new apartment building. His family actually has two saunas in their home. First a smaller one, which is attached to the bathroom and takes only two to three persons at a time. They use it at least once a week. In addition, there is a bigger sauna on the top floor of the building. This bigger sauna is heated on two days of the week, Friday and Saturday, and families living in the building can use it when it is suitable for them. His family has reserved the bigger sauna on Fridays from 18.00 to 19.00. So after a busy working week one can wash away any troubles in a sauna heated by someone else. In spite of its everydayness, the sauna is really one of the luxuries of Finnish consumption.³

The sauna is a special place, without doubt. It is customary, for example, not to sing or even talk in a loud voice in a sauna. And one moves carefully, if for no other reason than at least to protect oneself from the hot stove, on which water is poured to create *löyly*.⁴ In a Finnish sauna at least soap, shampoo, and conditioner are consumed. Furthermore, it is a very typical habit to have a beer or two or some soft drink after the sauna. Sometimes sauna is considered an almost holy place. In former times children were born in saunas and when people

³ A comprehensive study of the Finnish sauna is the recent work of Särkikoski 2012.

⁴ *Löyly* is the rush of hot steam that the stones in the stove instantly produce, as one pours water over them every now and then when enjoying the sauna bath.

died they were taken to the (unheated) sauna, washed and given clean clothes. It is commonly believed that the sauna has many favourable effects for human health and well-being. At least many people praise the excellent experience and good feeling that the sauna and possible swim in a lake or sea can give. The sauna can be considered as the Finnish “heterotopia,” a space of difference (or separation), as defined by the French social critic Michel Foucault.⁵ Sauna, in existing as a utopia, is a counter-space both for working places and other living spaces. Although we have statistics for the number of saunas in Finland, in other ways its meaning for Finnish consumption is difficult to assess. One uses shampoo and soap, but these products are used, of course, daily anyway. Some Finns still enjoy, especially in the countryside or if they are forest owners, a bunch of birch whisks in the *löyly* to smoothen their skin. The scent from the birch leaves is also, if one is used to it, just wonderful and reminds one of the sauna near the summer cottage or the saunas of one’s childhood.

Parks are important places of recreation and well-being in towns and cities. People go there for a walk, to exercise or simply to sit on a bench and maybe read a book or discuss with a spouse, some other family member or a friend. Pet owners walk dogs regularly in parks. Retired people can enjoy a beautiful summer day, flowers and trees in the open air sitting on a bench. In Helsinki it is easy to see joggers, people with Nordic walking sticks or cyclists in parks. Nowadays it is fashionable for young people to gather in parks to have picnics and spend time with friends. One can see skaters or youngsters throwing Frisbees to one another. In a couple of parks, open air concerts are organized. Because the city of Helsinki is situated by the sea, many people like to walk around the seashore on a sunny day. A cool sea breeze makes it comfortable even on a hot summer day. In the winter one can see many people skiing out on the sea ice. The park around the Töölö bay in the center of Helsinki is a kind of “outdoor living room” for many

⁵ For some inexplicable reason in his 1967 lecture on “heterotopias,” Michel Foucault spoke about “Scandinavian saunas,” even though he had previously, in the late 1950s, worked many years in Sweden and should have known better. See Michel Foucault 1998, 183.

townspeople. There are many parks in suburban areas of Helsinki as well. Parks are maintained with tax money. Gardeners hired by the city take care of the flowers, trees and bushes, for example. Public parks are a good example of public expenditure, offering nice experiences to anybody absolutely free of charge.⁶

In the Nordic countries, public consumption financed with tax money has an important role in citizens' well-being. This is the situation in Finland, too. Schools and universities, libraries, day cares, elderly people's homes, health care centers and hospitals are normally financed by the public sector. Also many museums, theaters, orchestras and opera houses get subsidies from the state and communes. Libraries have been especially important for Finns, because people have traditionally been very eager readers. Libraries offer quiet spaces for students, researchers, and the general public to absorb themselves in novels, nonfiction books, and study materials. One can loan CDs and videos in libraries, and in university libraries there are computers and a limited number of rooms available for student study. In many libraries there are also newspaper rooms, where the public can freely read daily newspapers and magazines. Everybody knows the general rule of silence and obeys it. Libraries organize many kinds of public lectures, discussions and even concerts that are open for all. A new main library public building is one of the main projects for the year 2017 in Helsinki, when the Republic of Finland celebrates 100 years of independence.

In the city of Helsinki a very nice tradition is the Night of the Arts that was celebrated for the 25th time in August 2013. The event started in 1988 as a carnival night of the arts free of charge to everyone, and it has been very popular year after year; it has now also spread to several other Finnish cities. People can experience open air concerts, film screenings, theater pieces and opera performances, just to enjoy culture together. In the beginning, the event took place in the city center but nowadays it is organized all over the city of Helsinki. The Night of the Arts is a good example of cultural events open to all free of charge, where the public can participate and become part of a cultural carnival. In this manner, city people become both consumers and producers of

⁶ On the parks of Helsinki, see, e.g., Häyrynen 1994.

cultural events and experiences. There are many types of cultural events for different audiences like children, youngsters, and elderly people too, and one need not be a professional to participate.

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