

IN THE SETTLEMENT MOVEMENT

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THE IDEOLOGICAL PRINCIPLES OF THE SETTLEMENT MOVEMENT

In a global perspective, the settlement movement has played a major role in the history of socially committed work. Originally, the movement was a counter-reaction to the social problems induced by urbanisation and industrialisation in the 19th century England. University students and graduates worked to address the cultural, pedagogical, and social needs of the poor population at the Toynbee Hall in the East End of London. In the United States the movement adapted a more reformistic approach in the hands of its female leaders, especially Jane Addams, the pioneer of social work. In the US the movement concentrated less on cultural 'elevation' and teaching of practical skills than in Britain.¹ The principles of settlement work reached Finland only a few years after the Toynbee Hall was founded in 1884, thanks to Ms. Alli Trygg-Helenius, and the first Citizens' Hall was founded in Sornainen, Helsinki, in 1890. However, the halls closed their doors already in the first years of the 20th century. The movement had a new start in the 1910s, when Sigfrid Sirenus and his socially inspired fellow men of the Lutheran church brought up the idea of starting settlement work in Finland. Special attention was directed to industrial cities and towns where they started to evangelise following the example given by practical work of the British settlement movement.

I will begin my summary of the origins of socially committed work undertaken by the settlements with the American social settlements of the turn of the 20th century. I am aware that most research on the movement concentrates on describing the largest and most famous model settlements and, according to Ruth Hutchinson Crocker, is inclined to idealise and glorify the movement.²



Local community work project in Manchester, Oldham, Where major part of inhabitants have come from Asian Countries

¹ Davis, Allen F.: Spearheads for reform. The Social Settlements and the Progressive Movement 1890-1914, Rutgers University Press, New Brunswick, New Jersey 1984; Stivers Camilla: Bureau Men, Settlement Women. Constructing Public Administration in the progressive Era. Lawrence (Kan.), University Press of Kansas, cop, 2000,56; Trolander, Judith Ann: Hull-House and the Settlement House Movement. Journal of Urban History, Aug 91, Vol. 17 Issue 4, 410-420.

² Crocker, Ruth Huthchinson: Social Work and Social Order. The Settlement Movement in Two Industrial Cities, 1889-1930, 1992, University of Illinois Press, Urbana and Chicago, 1992.

I will not, however, start to explore the truth behind these stories but give the reader a short introduction to early settlement work which will serve as a background against which the Finnish settlement movement will be examined.³

NEIGHBORHOODS, NOT BENEFACTORS

Originally, the settlements were residential houses and 'colonies' of university people situated in the slums of big cities. The idea of settling down in the midst of the poor population was truly radical in the segregated urban society, where different social groups lived in their own neighbourhoods hardly ever getting in touch with each other. In this connection, the term 'colony' is justified, because the founders landed at alien grounds to meet strangers - some of them were immigrants, others were their own countrymen.

Already the first settlement, Toynbee Hall, worked to moderate class differences, to ease mutual suspicion, and to reduce social distance between the polarised sections of the society.⁴ The 'objective', political target of these activities was to bridge the gap between different social groups, nationalities, and religious communities. At the same time, however, this was a means of addressing the 'subjective' necessity of the universities to offer middle-class young people opportunities for doing purposeful work and leading alternative lifestyle. For example, for some of the women volunteers the settlements provided a continuation of student life and an alternative for marriage.⁵

Settlement workers thought of themselves as good neighbours rather than benefactors. Detachment from paternalistic philanthropy connects the settlements with the empowerment tradition of social work⁶ that emphasises the significance of being able to meet the requirements of the community and encourages people to join peer networks. In charity work, the person who is receiving help easily turns into a victim and the helper becomes a saviour positioned above the victim. The idea of empowerment is that the attention is directed to the customer's resources: even a person who is completely socially excluded is not merely a bundle of problems. Even they have various resources for improving their situation. Instead of labeling 'the customers' according to different problem categories, they are referred to as 'causal agents', 'healers', and 'survivors'.⁷

It has been claimed that the frequently used metaphors of the settlement movement 'family', 'home', 'friendship', and 'hospitality' - come from the women who worked with local settlements. Men have tried to sound more like structural reformers by using concepts such as 'institution', 'area', 'city/town', 'programme', or 'career'. Despite the different social backgrounds of the settlement women, they shared the same communal values of 'good citizenship' and 'motherhood', which in turn became the corner stones for social policy that benefits mothers and children. The family became a metaphor for a society that would provide women with a channel to full citizenship.⁸

³ Compare: Soydan, Haluk: *Det sociala arbetets idéhistoria*. Studentlitteratur. Lund, 1993

⁴ Davis 1984, 6-7.

⁵ Ibid. 26; Stuart, Paul H.: Linking clients and policy: social work's Distinctive contribution. *Social Work*, July 99, Vol.44 Issue 4, 335-347; Trolander 1991.

⁶ Simon, Barbara Levy: *The Empowerment tradition in American Social Work. A History*. Columbia, University Press, New York 1994; look also Satka, Mirja: Kansalaiskeskeinen sosiaalityö. *Utopia ja vaihtoehto. Sosiaalityö* (1993)20:3:23-26.

⁷ Simon 1994.

⁸ Stivers 2000, 60-61, 90, 93.

PERSONAL RELATIONSHIPS WITH THE NEIGHBORHOODS

The principle of neighbourly relations is related to the idea of getting to know people through their living conditions - people who know each other, trust each other. Although in the early days the everyday work of the settlements was primarily instruction and education of the poor, it was believed that the reciprocal relationship would benefit also the helpers. Local people benefited from intercourse with more educated and culturally sophisticated settlement workers, whereas for the settlement workers the neighbourhood offered a field of action and an opportunity for personal growth. Educated settlement workers served as links between the poor neighbourhoods and their environment at large.⁹

Sigfrid Sirenus, the pioneer of settlement work in Finland, also shared this idea:¹⁰

"The settlement movement is based on the conviction that personal contact is the resource through which people best influence each other and promote each other's elevation. Especially for the better-off people this sets the obligation of sharing what they have with those in distressed circumstances through personal contacts. They should also position themselves so that they could receive what the less fortunate have to offer."

Right from the beginning a great number of people from volunteers to professionals of various fields have been involved in the settlement movement. Although the activities were locally based, volunteers signed up from other areas as well. In practice, the communal aid with its volunteers and group and recreational activities set itself opposite the more academic and individualistic help offered by people with the right qualifications and regular paycheques. Quite soon, however, the settlements moved to a more professional direction: their residents and volunteers were replaced by workers who started to see themselves more as professional social workers than social reformists - after all, many settlement activists were training to be social workers.

Barefoot helpers were replaced by professional helpers, former neighbours became customers and empirical knowledge was replaced by theoretical knowledge. The career-oriented new generation insisted on regular working hours and lived in their own suburban neighbourhoods rather than settled in the poorest areas of the city. This new orientation changed the character of settlement work.¹¹

SOCIALLY COMMITTED WORK CHERISES ALSO AESTHETIC VALUES

The holistic settlement work has always entailed a cultural dimension in addition to the traditional common kitchens and instruction. Settlement halls used to function as cultural centres of the neighbourhood. They served as common forums for displaying the cultural characteristics of the inhabitants - both local and ethnic - in the form of music, visual art, dance, poetry, literature, and handicraft. Local museums were founded and they exhibited also the culture of the immigrants' home Countries. The extensive repertoire of Hull House included theatre, music school, employment agency, and library. Later, in the 1920s, many services such as libraries, swimming

9 Davis 1984, 19; Stivers 2000, 57; Trolander 1991.

10 Sirenus, Sigfrid: Kirkko ja suurkaupunkien seurokuntatyö Englannissa. Suomalaisen teologisen kirjallisuusseuran julkaisu X. Helsinki 1917.

11 Davis 1984, 88-90

pools, playgrounds, and visual art exhibitions were replaced by public services. Pioneer work had catalysed a reform.¹²

REFORMS INSTEAD OF MORALISING

The growing divorce between Jane Addams and traditional philanthropy positioned her opposite another pioneer of social work, Mary Richmond. Ms. Richmond's systematic work was more individualistic. Instead of 'neighbours', philanthropy referred to 'cases' and 'customers', whose social situation had to be diagnosed before any measures could be taken. In this model a social worker played the role of an expert, whose task was to carry out a theoretically formulated plan leading to change. Individually oriented 'case work' with its 'friendly visitors' was based on the view that the reason behind social problems could be found in the individuals themselves and that needy people can be divided into worthy and worthless ones. Control and rehabilitation were thought to be the remedy for poverty. Charity concentrated its energy on the poorest segments of society and the unemployed, whereas settlement workers believed they could best help those who were employed and still above the poverty line. The philosophy of charity organisations led to philanthropy, whereas the settlement movement accompanied reform.¹³

In the ideological history of social work, the settlement movement represents social justice as opposed to the charity tradition that emphasises the idea of moral responsibility of the individual.¹⁴ On the map of Finnish volunteer work, the work undertaken within the settlement movement has been placed in the vicinity of civil society and non-governmental organisations (NGOS) as opposed to Christian charity work.¹⁵ In contrast to charity, the settlement movement emphasises mutual support and reciprocity, as well as necessity of social change. It was thought that private and individual help was not enough. There was a call for public and communal responsibility. Still, work in the settlements has not been seen as a method based purely on mutualism as is the case in self-help groups. Instead, it has been placed in the category of 'we-for-you' / 'I-for-you' organisations together with other NGOs based on the ideology of civil society and philanthropy. The different traditions of helping diverge from each other in such aspects as their informational basis. The 'we-for-you' / 'I-for-you' organisations and self-help groups emphasise the subjective significance of experiences, volunteer work rely on layman knowledge and common sense, whereas professionals, naturally, put their trust in expert knowledge. Experiences and layman knowledge are closer to families and the unofficial sector, whereas expert knowledge is closer to the public sector and the market economy. Self-help groups are based on horizontal peer support at the grass roots level, whereas volunteer work and official professional help are based on vertical, 'up-down' aid.¹⁶

THE REASON FOR SOCIAL PROBLEMS TO BE FOUND IN SOCIETY, NOT IN THE MORAL WEAKNESS OF THE INDIVIDUAL!

The pioneers of the settlement movement thought that the reason for social problems can be found in the structures of the society and in people's living conditions. In the studies of the ideological roots

12 Ibid. 1984, 88-89

13 Davis 1984, 18-19; Soydan 1993

14 Ibid. Haynes, Dennis & White, Barbara W: Will the 'Real' Social Work please stand up? A call to stand for professional unity. *Social Work*, July 99, Vol.44, Issue 4, 385-391.

15 Nylund, Marianne: Oma-apu- ja vapaaehtoistoiminnan kasitteellinen ja sisällöllinen paikantaminen. *Hyvinvointikatsaus* 1/2000a, 29-33.

16 Nylund 2000a, 31-33, Nylund 2000b, 34-37.

of social work ¹⁷, the settlement movement has been placed under the heading structural social work. Correction of defects has to start from social conditions, not in the moral weakness of individuals or groups of people.

The working vision of the settlements emerges from their practical, directly acquired awareness of the life of the community, not from theoretical principles. Problems are identified and defined at 'the grass roots level', together with those who need support. ¹⁸ Interest in the everyday life of local communities has led to political activism at local, national, and international level alike. ¹⁹ The structural vision of the settlements has supported the view that the government should not be seen as a threat to individual freedom or as a service provider which one should turn to only if everything else fails. Instead it has been seen as an essential safeguard of social rights. ²⁰

RESEARCH IS NEEDED!

Right from the beginning, settlement work has had close connections with university people, especially social scientists. After all, many of the early settlements were founded by universities. At Hull House, research was conducted in the neighbourhood and in the whole city in order to promote reforms. Participating observation, compilation of statistics, and surveys were prerequisites for actions and reforms at a time when reliable information about the character and extent of social problems were scarce. The approach was pragmatic: research reports were used to chart problems and to convince the authorities and decision-makers. Research was done on child labour, tenement houses, tuberculosis, and problems of urban living with all its special characteristics. Articles and books written by settlement workers were the only available source of information on social problems also for those not involved in the settlement movement. With more experience, research reports became more sophisticated and detailed, but graphic presentations and charts did not, of course, make them objective. In these surveys the normative function was more important than objectivity. All research projects were motivated by the desire to accomplish a reform and the reports included moral judgments. It was firmly believed - at least at the beginning - that statistics were the catalyst of change.



Community based activity for elderly people is carried out in Self Help and Advicing Centre in Tallinn.

17 Davis 1984, 18-19; Soydan 1993

18 Soydan, 133-134.

19 Trolander 1991.

20 Stivers 2000, 60.

It was thought that collection of information would convince the authorities of the necessity of change. Despite the fact that the surveys carried out by the settlements have later been assessed as being contorted by stereotypes and sentimentality, what was valuable about them was empathy towards the target group, who were seen as equals. Settlement workers, just like other researchers of urban life, were strangers on an alien ground, but they did have a certain advantage in relation to the latter: they had a permanent address in the neighbourhood, the settlement, so in a way they were playing on home ground.²¹

After all, although some sceptics did not always agree, settlement work was something else than sociological tourism of intellectuals into an exciting underworld or students' long-term field trip amidst the dwellers of slums."²² The aim was to improve the environment of the poor through research, not just to describe it.

TRADITIONAL METHODS

The traditional working methods of settlement work include at least social services, training and recreational activities as well as social reforms.²³ In the implementation of social services; the central feature has been personal contact with those in need of help and their encouragement to self-help. Especially in the early years, settlement work concentrated on various direct support measures. One of the subsequent activities that seemed to work well was serving as an information and interpretation agency for immigrants. In addition to direct support actions, the settlements played an important role in the neighbourhood as "the big brother", "whose presence at the playground alone kept some of the bullies away from the younger children."²⁴ From today's point of view, the training and recreational activities carried out by the settlements can be seen as preventive work. These methods are considered to be the predecessors of group and community work later undertaken by social work."²⁵

The third key method of the settlement movement was the implementation of social reforms. The settlements served as an instrument for various social, pedagogical, humanitarian, and civil rights reforms. The concrete needs of the immediate surroundings were addressed by offering unmediated help and services. Nurseries were founded, people learned how read, immigrants were taught English, and people also learned about nutrition and cooking.

The settlements also functioned as communes that tried to combine housekeeping, social aspects, and democracy in its activities. Internally a settlement was an experiment on a lifestyle and a new type of accommodation. It served as a commune for young adults, where they could spend a few years after graduating from university, before they got married and moved away. The common kitchens offered their services also for those who did not live in the settlement. In addition to social incentives, the opportunity to lead a new kind of life attracted young university graduates.²⁶ The early settlements have been compared to the alternative movements of our time.²⁷

21 Davis 1984, 170-174

22 Ibid 1984, 104

23 Soydan 1993.

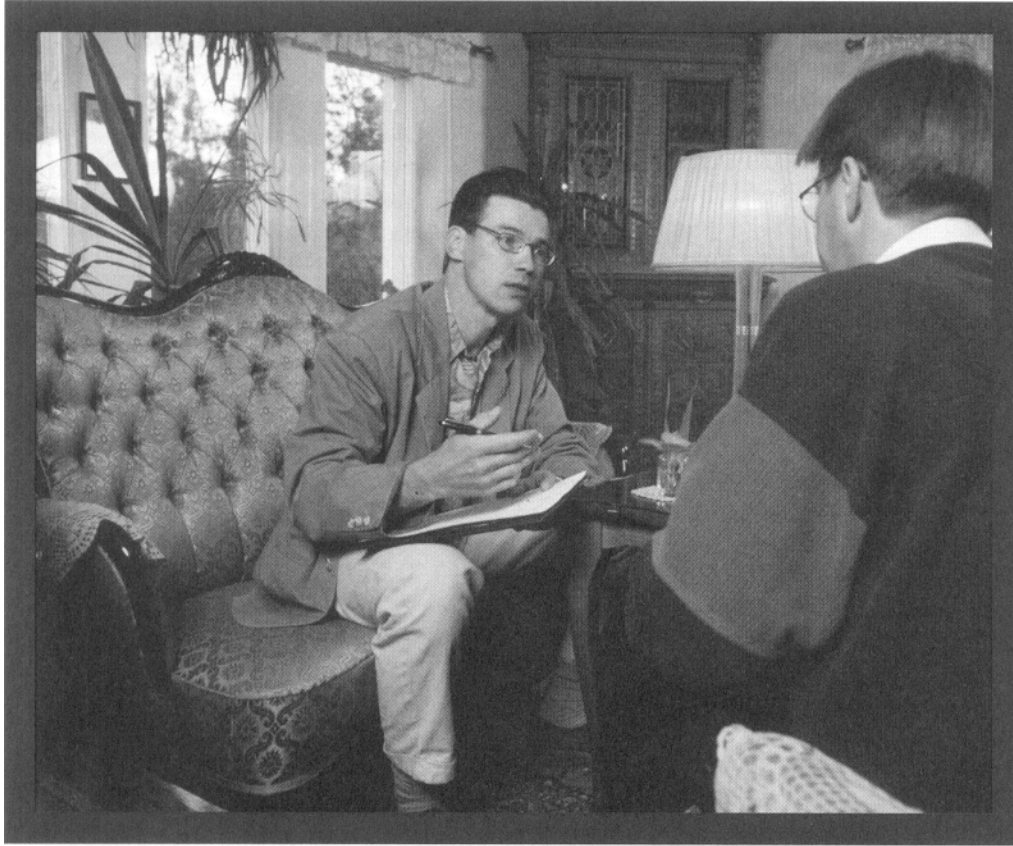
24 Ibid. 119.

25 Ibid. 120.

26 Davis, 1984, 29-39.

27 Sipila, Jorma: *Sociaalitoiminta ja yhteiskunta*, Tammi, Helsinki 1989.

In settlement work a question with an urgent need for reforms was the 'child question', i.e., child labour and the poor juridical position of juvenile delinquents. Measures were taken and some of the results include an initiative on prohibition of arresting an individual under 14 years of age, the establishment of a youth court, and a surveillance system for the protégés of Hull House. Another effort to improve the children's situation was foundation of pre-schools and playgrounds to improve the social life of people living in the city.²⁸



Settlement work is based on the equal face to face contact

SOCIALLY COMMITTED WORK IN THE FINISH SETTLEMENTS

A HISTORICAL CONNECTION

The settlements have been involved in what could be placed under the heading of socially committed work, which was carried out by the government, municipalities, and various non-governmental organisations (NGOS) before the creation of the welfare state and the concept of public social work.

Socially committed work originated in the social circumstances of the end of the 19th y. It was a time when socially aware citizens started to take measures to supplement the public services for the poor and needy. Characteristic of these efforts was the desire to address social safelessness in everyday life caused by shortcomings in medical treatment, lack of funds, or need for control. Every individual case was given practical consideration. The work was carried out in the form of self-help, volunteer

²⁸ Davis 198, 29-39; Soydan 1993, 121.

work, and other methods with various titles coined by the trade.²⁹

Between the World Wars the division of responsibilities between the government and civic activities became clearer: the line was drawn somewhere between remedial and preventive work. The public community took care of the remedial work and private organisations of the preventive work. In child protection, for example, municipalities invested in home relief, tightened up the control of childcare and welfare, and supported the starting of training of child welfare workers, whereas non-governmental child protection work took care of preventive measures almost exclusively.³⁰

In the history of Finnish social security settlement work is mentioned as an example of preventive social work between the World Wars. For example, in addition to evangelisation, Kalliola offered deaconess and social services, versatile education, and youth clubs. Settlement work was flexible and it adapted to local conditions easily. Some settlements ran kindergartens or child health centres, others opened work centres in the 1920s. This work received considerable government subsidies.



Pulling together.

As a consequence of the wartime, the number of professionals involved in socially committed work increased. This did not, however, make volunteer social work unnecessary, it only changed the relationship between official and volunteer work. The aim was to concentrate and intensify the work of the volunteer sector and to encourage it to co-operate with the public sector. The Ministry of Social Affairs emphasised that municipal care was the primary source for help and the third sector represented exceptional measures that supplemented the services of the official sector. The third sector had, of course, a different view of the matter: they emphasised the innovativeness and flexibility of non-governmental work, although they acknowledged the primary position of public work as 'care of the masses'.³¹

²⁹ Satka, Mirja: Sosiaalinen työ peräankatsojamiehestä hoivayrittäjäksi. Teoksessa: Jouko Jaakkola & Panu Pulma & Mirja Satka & Kyösti Urponen (toim.): *Armeliaisuus, yhteisoaopu, sasioaaliturva. Suomalaisien sasioaalisen turvan historia*. Sosiaaliturvan Keskusliitto, Helsinki, 1994, 261.

³⁰ Ibid. 273, 275.

³¹ Ibid. 286, 300, 302.

The welfare and social work that the public sector has been providing since the 1970s has been referred to with a single term: social work. Over the past decades all segments of socially committed work - including also the work of the third sector - has been characterized by the increasing control of the government and a growing number of professional workers and services. The civic organisations have, however, maintained their position as catalysts of new activities and interpreters of people's needs.³²

Settlement work was based on municipal adult education and guided recreation and it has been estimated that its working methods lost some of their relevance when the movement had to face the challenges of the 1960s and 1970s. The buzzword in structural social work was 'community work' which was developed according to the examples drawn from the contemporary debate and practices of social work in Sweden.³³

Since the end of the 1980s, a great change has taken place in the social work provided by the welfare state, and as a consequence a step has been taken back towards the situation of the beginning of the 20th century, where volunteer and non-governmental social work formed an essential part of social work.³⁴

Considering the most recent developments, however, it is justified to discuss the work carried out by the NGOs under the heading 'socially committed work' and to use the term 'social work' when referring to official social work organised by the public sector.

SETTLEMENT WORK AS AN ALTERNATIVE TO AND PARTNER FOR SOCIAL WORK

In order to clarify the concept of socially committed work, we can start with Aila-Lee- na Matthies' (1990) idea that social work can be divided into official and alternative one. Official social work is institutional and it is carried out in social services centres, hospitals, prisons etc., whereas alternative social work is unofficial and autonomous. Official social work can also be seen as actions that start from 'the higher levels', within the mechanisms of the Organisation, whereas alternative work starts from 'the grass roots level', from the needs and circumstances of the citizens. It has been claimed that official social work makes the customers dependent on the system and assimilates them, whereas alternative social work equals comprehensive, versatile support provided by one's own community. Further, it is said that official social work is based on the *who's-helping-who* hierarchy, whereas the alternative one rises from mutual support and self-help. At the same time as official work offers a number of individual services, the alternative one provides a wider spectrum of activities: socialising, studying, chopping wood etc. Historically, settlements share many features with alternative social work, such as keen individualistic approach, peer support, and personal growth.³⁵

Matthies' analysis (1990) establishes an ideal and categorical picture of social work and implies a good-bad dichotomy between official and unofficial social work. This categorical assessment of the situation rises from the social circumstances of the time when the volunteer sector held a marginal position compared to the provision of public services. During the 1990s, however, the third sector became a partner for the public sector and acquired more visibility thanks to its effective network

³² Ibid. 305

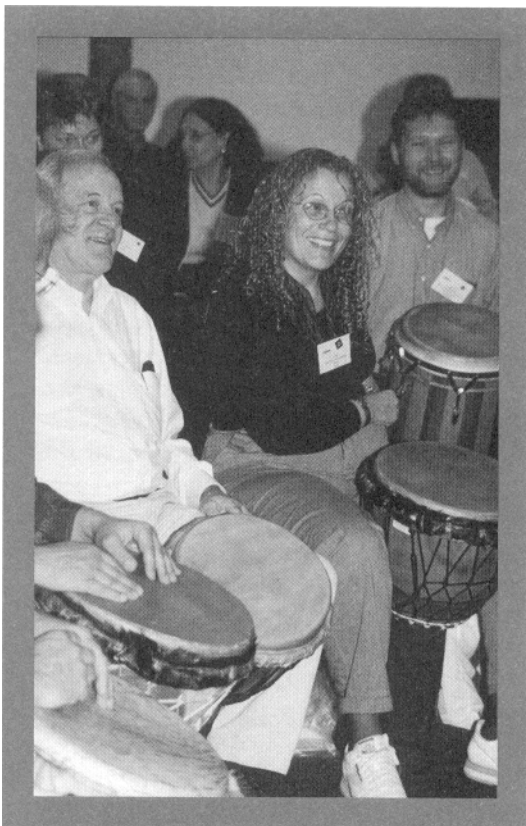
³³ Ibid. 327.

³⁴ Ibid. 334.

³⁵ Matthies, Aila-Leena: Kapinasta muutoksen malliksi. Vaihtoehdotoin sosiaalityö Suomessa. Hanki ja jaa, Helsinki 1990, 20.

system.³⁶ And today even the official system cannot be accused of making the customers dependent on it and assimilating them: the welfare state is being dismantled and there are not enough resources to take care of the increasing workload. Due to the cuts in the socio-political system, more and more people need social services. This forces the official sector to find partners from the third sector and to explore models for working methods with a more individualistic approach.

It has been estimated that the significance of the third sector will increase especially in the area of peer activities and some traditional fields of social work.³⁷ The ideology of the third sector is generally characterised by ethos about charity, humanitarian help, altruism or reciprocal support, whereas the public sector is implementing functions based on legislation and 'the fourth sector', i.e., the unofficial help of fellow citizens, is based on personal attachment and unwritten rules.³⁸ The third sector has gained more room to manoeuvre also because the trade unions no longer see it as a threat to the professionals of the trade.³⁹



A joint drum session in a seminar where community work was on the focus.

³⁶ Nylund, Marianne: *Varieties of mutual support and voluntary action : a study of Finnish self-help groups and volunteers*. Finnish Federation for Social Welfare and Health, Helsinki 2000 (b), 43-44.

³⁷ Niiranen, Vuokko. Kuntalaisten asiakkuus ja osallisuus järjestöissä - kooptaatiota, saastoja, osallisuutta - vai jotakin muuta? *Kunnallistieteellinen aikakauskirja* (I 998) 26:4, 236-336.

³⁸ Nylund, Marianne: Kolmannen sektorin tutkimus Pohjoismaissa-yhdistyksiä, osuuskuntia ja vapaaehtoistoimintaa. *Janus* 5 (I 997):3, 3 1 S-326.

³⁹ Helander, Voitto: Municipalities and Third Sector in Finland. *Kunnallistieteellinen aikakauskirja* (I 999) 27:3, 322-331.

Contrary to the situation in Germany that has a long tradition of subsidiary or Great Britain with its welfare-mix economy, in the Nordic countries the NGOs supplement the public services - not vice versa - and their activities tend to be seen as a contribution to the development of new forms of social work and creation of opportunities for the citizens to make a stand, rather than dismissing them as substitutes for the existing services.⁴⁰ It has been estimated that the nature of the third sector would change if it was linked tightly with the official sector and its planning. Along with financial and functional dependence, dependence on local administration would increase and the role of an NGOs would be reduced to that of a service provider, which would mean drifting away from its basic function as the provider of well-being and supporter of personal life management. The question is, to what extent an NGO would be capable of safeguarding its membership- and customer-based approach and its key areas, and how would co-operation with municipal administration affect the use of municipal subsidies.⁴¹ Also the NGOs have had reservations about taking up responsibilities of the public sector. For example, the social and health care organisations still insist that their key task is the one they have always been dedicated to, not any other, such as offering people employment.⁴²

The NGOs are in a key position in forming a sense of responsiveness and communal unity and in strengthening representational democracy. Civic involvement strengthens the feeling of communal unity and increases commitment of the members more than the passive role of service consumer. Indicators of the autonomy of an NGO are thought to be solid membership base, low number of professional workers, free volunteer services, and democratic decision-making process.⁴³

The NGOs and the public sector do not necessarily need to be seen as exclusive segments. For example, this situation has been analysed through the theory of social capital synergy formulated by the British scholar Michael Woolcock to describe the welfare mix and the networking environment. According to this model, public institutions, private businesses and social networks are interdependent - the public sector is an umbrella and the third sector is a genuine 'bottom up' party. For the public sector, this setting may mean acquisition of additional resources for activities it could not afford alone or volunteer resources. The third sector serves as the mouthpiece and supporter of the field that conveys the hopes and needs of the field to the public sector. Trust and networks that are built 'upwards' on the one hand and appropriate institutions 'in upper parts' on the other are prerequisites for each other. This 'both- and' model is a game of a positive sum, in which both parties are needed to achieve the goal. Ideally, the third and the public sector complement each other functionally, but in order to achieve this, the third sector needs to be open and unreserved and the public sector has to acknowledge certain guidelines and the principles of individualistic and community-based work.⁴⁴

Woolcock introduces also a model entitled communitarianism, which is based on the third sector entirely. This model sees local NGOs, civic groups, and unofficial networks as social capital that build trust and encourage reciprocity thus improving the well-being of the community.⁴⁵

⁴⁰ Look eg. Katajamäki, Hannu: Yhteisöalouden aamu. *Futura* (1998) 17:2, 22-24; Helander Voitto: Suomalainen kolmas sektori. *Hyvinvointikatsaus* (2000), 11:1, 2-7; Helander, Voitto: Municipalities and Third Sector in Finland. *Kunnallistieteellinen aikakauskirja* (1999) 27:3, 322-331; Helander, Voitto: järjestöt ja kunta: Muutamia tutkimuksellisia perspektiivejä. *Kunnallistieteellinen aikakauskirja* (1998) 26:3, 203-212; Pattiniemi, Pekka (2000): Kolmannen sektorin liepeiltä - sosiaaliset yritykset. *Hyvinvointikatsaus* (2000) 11:1, 34-38.

⁴¹ Niiranen 1998, 328-329, 332.

⁴² Poteri, Riitta: Meissa on ytyä! : selvitys valtakunnallisten sosiaali- ja terveysjärjestöjen toiminnasta. Edita, Helsinki 1998.

⁴³ Nylund 2000b, 44.

⁴⁴ Look: Kajaanoja, jouko: Sosiaalinen paaoma ja kolmas sektori. *Hyvinvointikatsaus* (2000) 11:1, 21-24.

⁴⁵ *Ibid.* 22.

GLORIOUS PAST, PROMISING FUTURE?

Settlements around the world still offer community-based services and social activities for families who live in poor neighbourhoods. However, the 1990s witnessed reductions in public funding. Furthermore, in order to be entitled to government subsidies, the settlements had to provide services for specific problem groups, such as the unemployed, the illiterate, and families suffering from domestic violence. These conditions are thought to contradict the settlements' principle of offering comprehensive, coordinated, and community-based help. The new development might entail the risk of the settlements starting to resemble their sponsors that employ specialised staff and organise categorical programmes. In that case, the settlements would mainly respond to the requirements and manoeuvring of the financing party, and not to the changing requirements of the neighbourhood, as was the original idea of the movement. For example, a teenage mother with a drug addiction might need guidance in childcare and help with finishing comprehensive school, or support in entering working life, but none of the projects directed for 'problem groups' would address her needs inclusively.⁴⁶

Thus the local settlements have started to reverse the development described above. For example, the settlements in New York City launched a co-operational project in early 1990s to integrate their services in order to make co-operation between the settlement houses more effective and to share the models of successful programmes with others.⁴⁷

One of the results of this initiative was a day-care programme in which local settlement houses combined their resources in provision of day-care services. A joint annual schedule helped to make the services more effective and also costs were reduced thanks to improvements in space and staff management. The service users benefited from these arrangements not only because the service hours were extended and became more flexible, but because social, health and education services were combined for the convenience of families. The settlements joined their forces to carry out preventive actions and offer remedial and support services as well as cultural and other recreational activities for different age groups. The strength of the settlements proved to be genuine presence of their employees and activities in the community: community awareness makes settlements valuable partners for the public sector. The responsibilities between the official sector and the settlements have been divided so that the settlements concentrate on preventive work and community-based activities, and intensive work with individual families.⁴⁸

In principle the settlements accord well with the current trends in the development of the welfare state. In the current situation, one of the assets of the settlements is that they are usually capable of combining private and public funding as well as professional and volunteer work force. The fact that the settlements work in the midst of people has proved to be an asset now that social services are being decentralised. As private, non-profit making organisations they manage to reduce the gap between the rich and the poor who live in the same neighbourhood. The settlements are thus an

⁴⁶ Marks, Emily Menlo: Settlement Houses Today: a public-private collaboration. *Public Welfare*, Fall93, Vol. 5.1 Issue 4, 24-26

⁴⁷ Ibid.

⁴⁸ Kraus, Allen & Chaudry, Ajay: *The Settlement House initiative: merging head start and daycare in New York*. *Public Welfare*, Fall95, Vol. 53 Issue 4, 34-43.

asset to the prevailing social politics. Contrary to the categorical welfare programmes - job centres, mental health counselling, treatment of in- toxicant abusers etc. - the settlements do not exist to address just certain problems and they do not serve only customers that have been identified as deviant or problematic. On the contrary, the settlements aspire to be community centres for recreation, education, and culture. The theoretical background of the settlement movement includes the idea of being the living room of the community, where everyone in the neighbourhood can come with their personal needs. Instead of direct counselling, people are helped by encouraging them to assume an active role in the community. Thus we can keep the civic perspective and avoid the formation of the who's-helping-who hierarchies.⁴⁹

It is a fact, however, that the settlements have been forced to resort to subsidies and to function as private, non-profit service providers for specific groups. However, this has been a way for them to safeguard those activities that could not get any public funding directly. Historical research has emphasised the role of the settlement movement as a spearhead of progressive social politics and reforms, but the view that reduces the movement into an educated solicitor of welfare state is considered problematic, because then it would have only two alternatives: to either wither away or to confine its efforts to lobbying new initiatives against poverty. Of course, in a narrow perspective, the settlement houses can be seen as multi-service centres, but in that case many of the key characteristics of the movement would be dismissed, such as bridging the gap between different social classes and genuine commitment to the everyday life of the community.⁵⁰

Although today's settlement with its responsibilities of service provision and emergency work that resembles charity deviates from the traditional methods of the movement, the old principles can still be revived. The settlements still appeal to a wide segment of the population in the neighbourhoods, not just those who have problems. When the public sector tries to direct socio-political funding for programmes centred around social problems, the settlements continue to help maintain the well-being in the community. For example, we do not offer 'drug-free programmes' but 'cooking societies' that are open for everyone. The aim is not to offer 'vocational guidance' but pastimes that foster 'friendship'. Traditionally the settlements have raised new generations to be part a community where everyone is responsible for one's actions. One of the assets of the settlements is that they have premises for different kinds of meetings!⁵¹

⁴⁹ Husock, Howard (1993). Bringing back the settlement house. *Public Welfare*, Fall 93, Vol. 51 Issue 4, 16-25.

⁵⁰ Ibid.

⁵¹ Ibid. 1993.