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New Social Risks and the Organizing of Labour Market Interests

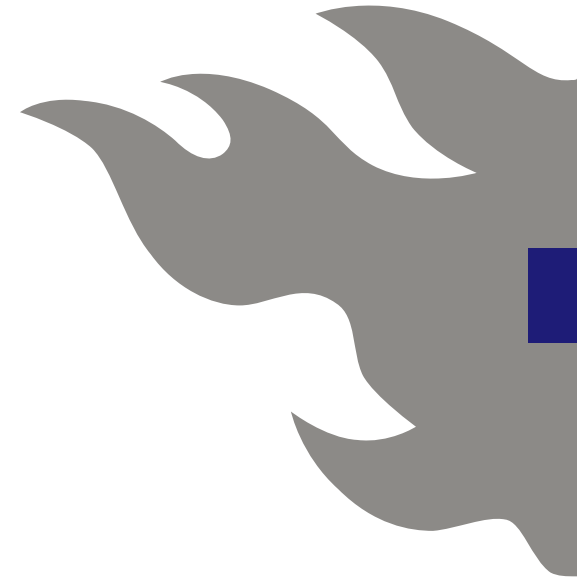
Pauli Kettunen

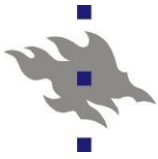
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New Risks in the Nordic Societies

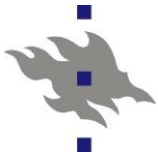
Helsinki, 1 October 2010





”Old and new risks”?

- the problematic distinction between old and new risks
- the problematic concept of risk
- changing social and political contexts in which some dangers and events are discussed as risks
- the fate of two intertwined principles of Nordic social policies and industrial relations:
 - 1) the protection of the weaker party of social relationships
 - 2) equal social citizenship
- a new combination of market and community against the old notion of society
- facing a (social) risk and taking an (economic) risk



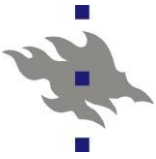
”Decommodification”?

- the thesis of decommodification (Esping-Andersen) fails to grasp crucial elements of the so-called Nordic model
- social policies and labour-market regulations contributed to the development of labour markets
- the normalcy of wage work and the principle of social citizenship



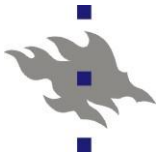
A Utopian vision of egalitarian wage-work society

- the simultaneous reinforcement of the normalcy of wage work and the principle of social citizenship:
- the objective of full employment
- social security and labour market rationalities
- public social services and a particular complex of welfare state, labour market regime and gender system
- the vision of equality within worker-employer relationships
- the widening and deepening of symmetrical relationships between labour market parties
- different from the idea of social citizenship through more extensive individual rights (T. H. Marshall)
- social citizenship within wage-work relationships



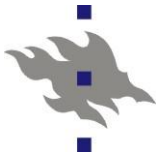
The society of virtuous circles

- since the 1930s: confidence in positive-sum game between organised economic interests within a national society
- linking three ideological aspects of Nordic modernisation: idealised heritage of the free Nordic peasant; spirit of capitalism; utopia of socialism
- post-war horizon of expectation: the self-reinforcing circle of social equality, economic growth and widening democracy
- the dual role of 'society': the possibility to blame 'society' for the hard conditions of living, and the possibility to seek for support from 'society' against the troubles and suppressive practices



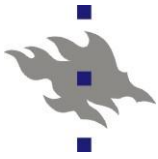
The erosion of the idea of parity

- virtuous circles within a nation-state society?
- symmetries of labour market parties?
- who and where are employers and employees?



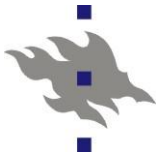
The making of competitive national 'us'

- the nationalism of coercive comparisons in global economic competition
- the dual meaning of 'environment':
 - 1) globalisation taking place in 'our' external environment
 - 2) 'we' are producing and marketing a competitive operational environment for global economic actors
- 1) naturalised globalisation
- 2) commodified national community
- 'economy' and universal interest
- 'social partners' and 'social dialogue'; cf. 'labour market parties' in the Nordic countries
- from compromise to consensus



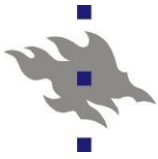
The split of the 'social'

- community and competition; cf. the notion of society associated with the formation of the Nordic welfare states and industrial relations
- 'social cohesion' instead of 'social equality'
- the Janus face of the social, associated with:
 - 1) people as subjects of innovation ('social capital' and 'competitiveness')
 - 2) people as objects of activation ('social exclusion', 'social cohesion', 'integration')
- 1) post-welfare-state meanings of the social
- 2) pre-welfare-state meanings of the social



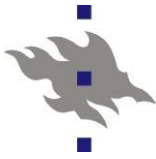
A dualism of work

- 1) work as an unending demonstration of a person's individual innovative capacity
- 2) work as the basis of social order and self-discipline
- from 'active labour market policies' to 'activation policies':
- from the principle that everybody should have the right to fulfil his or her duty to work ...
- ... to the principle that everybody has the duty to fulfil his or her right to work
- individual rather than society to be blamed and changed



New functions to old institutions

- changes within a considerable institutional continuity
- welfare-state institutions modified to serve competition-state functions
- a tension between institutional preconditions of competitiveness and the contents of competitiveness



Trade unions: how to manage risks and restrict competition

- the generalised ideal of self-commodifying entrepreneurship
- changing motives and meanings of trade union membership: buying security services
- how to keep up the power of producing these services?
- how to meet the critical potentials of the ideal of individual entrepreneurship?
- globalization as an integral part of national labour markets and industrial relations
- trade union responses to the harder competition between the sellers of labour power:
 - 1) engagement in the strategies for national competitiveness
 - 2) protectionist regulation of national labour markets
 - 3) strenghtening the role of trade union movement as inter- and transnational actor